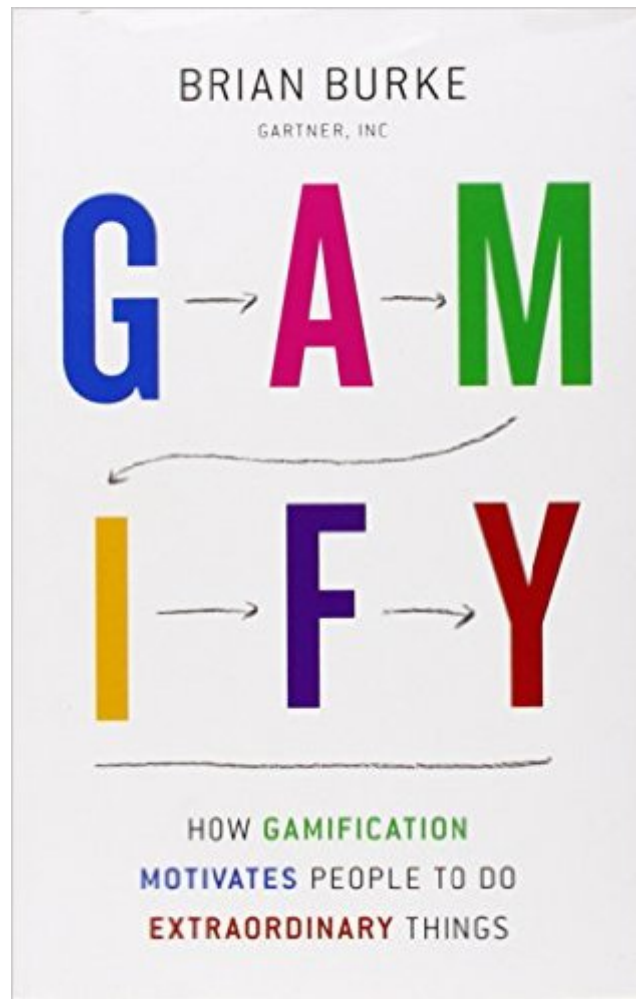


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# Gamify: How Gamification Motivates People To Do Extraordinary Things



## Synopsis

Organizations are facing an engagement crisis. Regardless if they are customers, employees, patients, students, citizens, stakeholders, organizations struggle to meaningfully engage their key constituent groups who have a precious and limited resource: their time. Not surprisingly, these stakeholders have developed deflector shields to protect themselves. Only a privileged few organizations are allowed to penetrate the shield, and even less will meaningfully engage. To penetrate the shield, and engage the audience, organizations need an edge. Gamification has emerged as a way to gain that edge and organizations are beginning to see it as a key tool in their digital engagement strategy. While gamification has tremendous potential to break through, most companies will get it wrong. Gartner predicts that by 2014, 80% of current gamified applications will fail to meet business objectives primarily due to poor design. As a trend, gamification is at the peak of the hype cycle; it has been oversold and it is broadly misunderstood. We are heading for the inevitable fall. Too many organizations have been led to believe that gamification is a magic elixir for indoctrinating the masses and manipulating them to do their bidding. These organizations are mistaking people for puppets, and these transparently cynical efforts are doomed to fail. This book goes beyond the hype and focuses on the 20% that are getting it right. We have spoken to hundreds of leaders in organizations around the world about their gamification strategies and we have seen some spectacular successes. The book examines some of these successes and identifies the common characteristics of these initiatives to define the solution space for success. It is a guide written for leaders of gamification initiatives to help them avoid the pitfalls and employ the best practices, to ensure they join the 20% that gets it right. Gamify shows gamification in action: as a powerful approach to engaging and motivating people to achieving their goals, while at the same time achieving organizational objectives. It can be used to motivate people to change behaviors, develop skills, and drive innovation. The sweet spot for gamification objectives is the space where the business objectives and player objectives are aligned. Like two sides of the same coin, player and business goals may outwardly appear different, but they are often the same thing, expressed different ways. The key to gamification success is to engage people on an emotional level and motivating them to achieve their goals.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An interesting look at gamification and the impact it can have in business and other areas. According to Wikipedia, "gamification" is defined as "the use of game thinking and game mechanics in non-game contexts to engage users in solving problems". This book explores "gamification" and how it be used in different contexts to change behavior, develop skills, and drive innovation. As a former game designer, someone who enjoys business books, and someone who loves to explore how ideas and principles from one field can be applied in another, I was really looking forward to this book as it combines a several of my interests. Unfortunately, I was a bit disappointed by this book. My main issue with this book is that while it starts with a fairly broad definition of gamification ("the use of game mechanics and experience design to digitally engage and motivate people to achieve their goals"), the examples it focuses on seem far more narrow in scope. It also puts a big emphasis on "points, badges, and leaderboards" as the main types of game mechanics used in gamified approaches, and very few (if any) other types of game mechanics are discussed or described. I also expected more discussion or reference to "serious games" and the application of gamification in training and instructional design. While the book does include references to these, it felt to me like it was only skimming the surface. I also expected more references to other works focused on the application of game design in non-game related fields. I was particularly surprised that the book made no mention of Jane McGonigal's "Reality is Broken", a book focused on the idea that "games make us better" and "can change the world".

I was introduced to game theory when I enrolled in a course one summer at the University of Chicago taught by a professor of John von Neumann. He encouraged us to check out Theory of Games and Economic Behavior, co-authored by von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern. I did,

finding it a challenging read but thought-provoking. In essence, game theory is a study of strategic decision-making. More specifically, what David Nelson has characterized as "the study of mathematical models of conflict and cooperation between intelligent rational decision-makers." I recalled this background as I began to read *Gamify* in which Brian Burke explains how and why gamification (a term attributed to Nick Pelling) "engages and motivates people across all kinds of activities using game mechanics such as badges, points, levels, and leaderboards." According to Burke, the working definition of the term at his firm, Gartner, is "use of game mechanics and experience design to digitally engage and motivate people to achieve their goals." He poses three questions that he then proceeds to answer: "What's new about gamification? Who is getting it right? How can your organization be successful with gamification? When should you think about using gamification in your organization?" These are excellent questions. For Burke, if the objective is motivation, then gamification is the process by which to achieve it. I commend Burke on his skillful use of reader-friendly devices that include dozens of "Figures" that illustrate key points or relationships as well as an end-of-chapter "Wrap Up" section (Chapters 1-11).

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