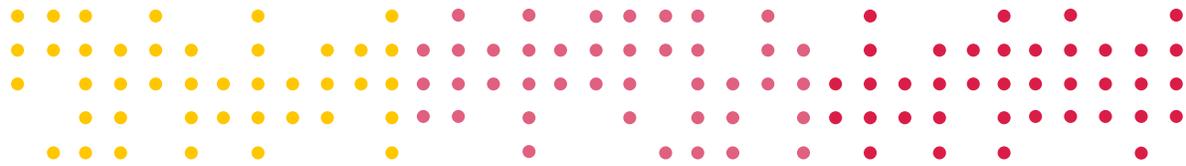




How to Get Better Training Results with Social & Gamified Learning

Modern Learning for the Future of Work



OVERVIEW

What's inside

- What is gamification?
- How gamification promotes a people-centric learning culture
- Retention & increased engagement as a result
- Best practices for socialized & gamified learning

For many, games are a part of everyday life: 75% of all U.S. households have someone who plays video games. In fact, [64% of U.S. adults play video games regularly.](#)

It only makes sense to harness this trend to create a happier and more productive team at work. Gamified learning seeks to do just that. Through games and friendly social competition, many companies have improved several aspects of training and work experience.

Professional development and learning have evolved past the standard PowerPoint presentations, large and intimidating handbooks, and long tests. Use of social and gamified learning promotes a healthier and happier company culture, makes employees more enthusiastic about learning, and encourages retention of the material.

This whitepaper discusses what leaders need to know about gamified learning, its benefits for their teams, and some tips for its successful use in professional development.

What is Gamification?

Gamification is the use of gaming formats and tactics to improve engagement in particular activities. In the case of learning and professional development, gamification increases participation and engagement in learning activities.



Gamification uses game elements, such as leaderboards, points, and leveling up, to simultaneously train and motivate. Other game features include:

- **Game mechanics.** Game-based problem-solving is an active learning approach.
- **Story platforms.** Players are embedded in the plot of a story and choose their actions to progress.
- **Competition modes.** Many games are based on player competition, whether it's against their own record, other employees, or the game itself.

The Benefits of Social & Gamified Learning

Gamified learning has exciting potential for improving employee learning, boasting an astounding [annual growth rate of 27.8%](#) in the Human Resources sector.

Here are a few of its notable benefits for organizations:

Promotes a People-Centric Learning Culture

Employees are every company's most significant asset. The more an organization invests in its people, the bigger the payoff. A culture of learning, with people at its center, builds a well-trained, empathetic, and enthusiastic staff.

Research shows high-performing organizations are five times more likely to have a learning culture. Learning as a core value drives the innovation and collaboration critical to company success, which is why [66% of Learning and Development experts advise reshaping organizations as the priority for this business year.](#)

“ If employees don’t retain and apply what they learn, even the most impressive learning curriculum is a failure.

— The Future of Leadership Development, Harvard Business Review

But a learning culture in and of itself is no longer enough. Creating a people-centric learning culture requires leaders to focus on their employees and their behaviors first. Rigid training structures fail to address your employees’ needs for motivation and engagement. People-centric learning is designed around positive and effective strategies for boosting both.

Gamified learning takes a people-centric approach to learning culture. It seeks to improve motivation and engagement, so employees grow into enthusiastic and innovative learners.

Boosts Retention

The ultimate goal of learning is to produce employees who confidently and consistently apply new principles and understanding to their work. If they don’t retain and apply what they learn, even the most impressive learning curriculum is a failure.

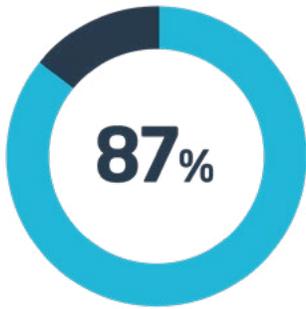
Gamification helps learners put new material into practice immediately, which boosts retention. Studies show [reducing the gap between when a skill is learned and when it’s applied](#) increases the probability of information retention.

Reducing the gap between learning and doing is at least part of the reason research found gamified learning effective for increasing employee skills and understanding. In one University of Colorado study, researchers found that [learners who experienced gamified learning scored higher in learning assessments than those who learned in a more passive environment](#). They also demonstrated better retention afterward.

The social aspect of gamified learning also improves retention. [Research shows learners respond positively to mild social pressure when competing within a community](#). Companies that use social learning create a stimulating environment that incentivizes engaging with the material and retaining learned information.

Enables Real-Time Feedback

One of the challenges learners and leaders face is knowing when new information is absorbed well enough to make a difference. Workers may understand the mechanics or theory, but do they know enough to apply it to their work? Spend too little time on the subject matter, and employees will quickly forget. Spend too much time, and employees get bored while companies waste valuable time.



Engaged workers are **87%** less likely to leave their company.
inc.com

Skill transfer gaps can waste corporate training resources and fail to make the desired impact in the workplace. The real-time feedback gamified learning provides helps everyone know whether they should move on or spend more time on the material. Employees receive an accurate assessment of their skills to see whether they need more practice or more time to review the learning materials first.

Real-time feedback also informs leadership whether new information is sufficiently understood or if they need to provide employees with more time or learning resources.

Increases Engagement in the Workplace

Retention is an increasingly significant challenge for companies. One in four employees quit their jobs in 2021 alone, and most organizations are still struggling to find ways to retain their existing talent. In fact, 63.3% of companies said retaining workers is harder than hiring them.

Engagement is a critical component of retention. A survey of 50,000 employees found engaged workers 87% less likely to leave their company. Organizations that concentrate on keeping their employees engaged face far less turnover.

Gamification and social learning create engagement in employees by building community. In one survey, 89% of employees said a point system, like those used in gamified learning, would help them feel happier at work, and 83% said they would feel motivated. Of those who already use gamified activities, 79% said they experience increased purpose and motivation at work. On the other hand, 61% who have not experienced gamified or social learning reported feeling bored and unproductive, a recipe for turnover.

Increased engagement via gamified and social learning will only grow more important as younger generations make up more of the workforce. A Gallup poll found only 29% of millennials feel engaged at work. In fact, millennials are often called “the burnout generation” based on their lack of engagement at work. But they are also among the most likely to respond to gamification. 83% play games on their phones, and 86% say they find gamification enjoyable at work.

The rewards and recognition inherent in gamification and social learning mean organizations can reshape workplaces to be more engaging and motivating for employees.

79% of employees experience increased purpose and motivation at work with gamified activities.

– Talent LMS, 2019 Gamification at Work Survey



Best Practices for Gamified & Social Learning

Gamification provides employers with many benefits, but not all gamified learning platforms are created equal. Here are some tips for getting the most from gamified and social learning:

Invest in Visual Design

Draw learners in with an appealing design and a visually stimulating experience. Research shows visual design affects the amount of time users remain on a platform. It will also affect how much your employees choose to engage with their learning. When the platform is intuitive and appealing, your workers will be much more likely to use it.

Make it Challenging

Games must tread a fine line. If they are too hard, players will give up in frustration, but when they're too easy, players are quickly bored. Whatever type of gamification you choose, it should be challenging enough to engage and hold your employees' interest.

Try to increase the difficulty gradually as your employees learn more. A progression in difficulty will keep players engaged without discouraging them.

Create Friendly Competition

Use leaderboards for a healthy dose of competition that motivates and encourages players to keep their eyes on the prize. Learners will work at peak performance when healthy competition requires them to outdo one another.

To provide motivation and foster a sense of team spirit and collaboration, consider putting employees in groups for competitions.

Use Collaboration Tools

Working together encourages a healthy company culture and boosts team spirit. Collaborative tools are essential for increasing social learning and enhancing the overall learning experience. Workers can provide examples from their individual experiences to help each other understand and apply learned material.

A learning experience platform (LXP) provides several useful tools to encourage social learning, such as group boards and chats that enable employees to come together as a team.

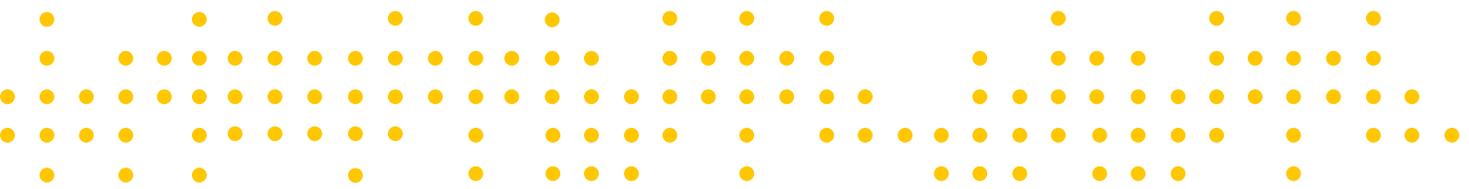
Incentivize With Rewards

Encourage participation in games with some type of reward. Badges, medals, and new game levels are common ways for employees to gauge how well they're absorbing information and making progress.

Switch Things Up

Research shows when the novelty of gamification wears off, users may lose interest in the subject matter. To maintain the benefits of gamified learning, switch up the competition to keep things fresh and interesting. For example, use team competition for some games and keep it individual for others, or make some games story-driven and use leaderboards for score-driven games.

Avoid sticking to one tried-and-true (i.e., boring) formula. A learning platform can help you choose from a variety of games to keep your employees engaged.



Gamified Learning for a Better Learning Experience

Gamification and social learning are investments in your company's most valuable asset: your employees. These learning techniques bring enthusiasm and motivation to even the most routine employee training – and make workplace learning more fun and more effective. Real-time feedback allows employees and their leaders to pinpoint exactly where they need to spend more time learning and when they can level up to new subject matter.

But gamified learning strategies aren't one-size-fits-all. Switching up games and competition modes, increasing difficulty over time, and encouraging collaboration and team spirit boost continuous, long-term engagement and improvement for optimal learning benefits.

For companies seeking maximum results from their learning material, gamification is essential. An LXP encourages engagement, collaboration, competition, and enthusiasm to keep your employees learning. And it offers your organization proven strategies for retaining talent, maintaining a well-trained staff, and achieving even greater success.

We talk a lot about gamification in learning because it's a big part of Wisetail's platform.
Ready to see gamified learning in action?

[VIEW OUR DEMO ON DEMAND](#)

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