

## 10 REASONS TO USE A GAME IN YOUR LEARNING ACTIVITIES

You have assessed the training need, identified the audience and outcomes required. Now you need to think about the best method for closing the gap between current and required performance. Have you considered a game or simulation? Christine Elgood, Managing Director of Elgood Effective Learning, has produced this quick guide to what they offer....

1. **Improve Engagement** - The average adult has a sustained attention span of 20 minutes. Even within this, people are inclined to 'wander off' mentally when they should be listening. Give them something to actually *do* and you will keep them engaged and receptive.
2. **Develop understanding** - Games and simulations allow individuals to try something out and to experience the outcome. They can make the links between cause and effect, and leverage that understanding into their everyday situations.
3. **Assess Competency** - Knowledge is only valuable if it is applied. When you introduce games and simulations into your learning offering, participants have to apply their knowledge to play them successfully, making it easier for you to assess their levels of competence.
4. **Increase Retention** – Let me borrow a quote “The increased retention over time of learning appears to be one of the most consistent findings within the research into the potential of games for learning” Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen. University of Copenhagen
5. **Reveal the ‘true self’** – Despite initial reservations, almost everyone who participates in a game or simulation becomes involved and reverts to their true self: exhibiting their most dominant characteristics, good and bad, and revealing the true extent of their skill.
6. **Multimodal Experience** - Individuals have to use a variety of senses to take in and process the information required to participate in games and simulations, increasing their involvement in the process. They will listen to others, express their ideas, they may have to visually create something, and there are often materials to touch. NLP teaches us that some people need 'things' to fiddle with when engaged in the learning process.
7. **Ownership of the experience** - There are many different learning styles, but one thing that people of all ages have in common is that everyone learns better from their own experience rather than from being told what to do by others.
8. **Risk-Free Environment** - Games and simulations allow players to test their decision-making without costly consequences for your business. Mistakes are entirely acceptable and allow the participants to learn from their own experience without fear of repercussions.
9. **Get Instant Feedback** - In the real world there is generally a delay between taking a decision and discovering the consequences. It's only after working with a new staff member for six months that you really know whether you made a good choice and, if you didn't, that's a lot of wasted time and effort. With games and simulations the feedback on your decisions is almost instant.
10. **Get New Generation Learners on board** - The average age of the population in the UK is 39. That means over 50% of the working population can be categorised as Generation Y or Z. Games and simulations play to the characteristics of these learners, who typically prefer to find answers for themselves and learn from their peers, rather than accept the perceived wisdom of their seniors.

Elgood Effective Learning have over 45 years experience in creating and facilitating business simulations and packaged business games, producing effective and engaging material to enliven the corporate learning process.

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