WHITE PAPER

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7 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RECRUITMENT GAMES AND ASSESSMENT GAMES

What are the main differences and why is it important to understand those differences? Learn more about the top 7 differences.

1. Goal

Marketing vs. selection

A. Recruitment games are developed with the aim of interesting a particular target population in your value proposition on the job market. You want to create brand awareness in your target population and tempt them to apply for a job or at least to give you permission to approach them directly. A recruitment game enables you to fill your recruitment funnel.

B. The primary goal of an assessment game is to find a meaningful way of reducing the numbers of candidates who have already shown interest in your job market value proposition. In this case you aim to minimize the number of incorrectly rejected applicants who are actually suitable whilst still being able to optimize the rejection of unsuitable candidates.

Ironically, a recruitment game is actually a *sourcing* activity, whereas an assessment game is more suited to the *recruitment* phase. Strange but true.

2. Selective mechanism

Self-selection vs. informed decision

A. Recruitment games are actually developed in order to reach the maximum number of potential employees, so they require good graphics, an exciting narrative and ease of use. Paradoxically, you also want a process of self-selection to occur. That implies that you have to present a realistic picture of your organization, the type of work and the degree of complexity so that players can decide themselves if the organization and the job suit them. This paradox is not too much of a problem if brand awareness is high and you have a top reputation amongst your target population. But if you don't have a premium brand, you will have to make a choice: how attractively should I present myself given the reality the target population will experience later on in the process. Painting a too rosy picture will result in people dropping out during later stages of the selection process or, even worse, lead to increased outflow in the first year.

B. For assessment games, you want to be able to make an informed yes/no decision about whether an individual is going through to the next round and hence if you are going to spend more resources on them (time and money). The goal of an assessment game is to provide information so your organization

can make that decision. An informed decision has to be based on psychometric arguments so you can ensure you are making an evidence-based decision.

3. How can I measure effectiveness?

Conversion vs. validation

A. The quality of recruitment games is measured using conversion ratios. What percentage of my target population did I succeed in reaching? How many were tempted to play the game and leave behind their personal details? And of these, what percentage goes straight on from the pre-application phase to the application phase?

B. The effectiveness of an assessment game is measured using validity data. How well does this game predict successful job performance? The ultimate goal is to be able to demonstrate the predictive validity of the game, after one or more years. The first step to achieving this is to determine the concurrent validity. Does this game measure the same constructs with a high degree of reliability compared to a validated test or questionnaire taken at the same time? If the assessment game provides the same results as a comparable psychometric test or questionnaire, then the goal has been achieved. Since an assessment game is more accessible and more fun, it can be deployed far earlier in the recruitment process.

4. Building a game

Grand design vs. iterative approach

A. The building phase of a recruitment game is usually characterized by a grand design, working on the basis of an overall concept. This can use the waterfall approach in which the specifications, timeline and budget are fixed. It is increasingly common, however, for it to take an agile approach whereby interim results are delivered in sprints. This has the advantage of flexibility, giving scope for adaptability and changing insights. The disadvantage is that it is not possible to see clearly from the beginning what the final product will look like.

B. In fact, developing an assessment game can only be done using an agile approach because at every stage, it is necessary to test if a game concept works. That often starts right from the beginning with an offline simulation of the game concept. From this point on, this is tested and adapted. If something doesn't seem to be working, it's back to the drawing board.

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5. Costs of building

Graphics vs. calibration

A. Following on from the previous point, you can see the possible areas of focus during game development. For a recruitment game there is a concept, a story and the game mechanics are known at the start of building. That means that attention and budget can both be focused on the storyline and the graphics.

B. In assessment games, the constructs to be measured are known, there is also an idea of how they can be measured (the Psychometric Attribute Measuring System or PAM) and then it is time to experiment, to build and test as quickly possible whether the path followed was the correct one. In this case, the majority of the budget goes on testing and calibration.

6. Who builds it?

Serious gaming studio vs. test publisher

A. Recruitment games are built by serious game studios following the work-for-hire principle. The project is accepted and a product is delivered. The customer organizes the marketing of the game and then sets to work on the data left behind by the players. The game runs actively for a period and can then become passive or can be taken offline by the customer.

B. For assessment games, the process is still done differently. They are usually developed by test publishers or start-ups at their own cost and at their own risk. They then attempt to sell the game to companies, thus financing further development or extensions.

7. Who is it for?

Early majority versus early innovators

A. A reasonable number of good recruitment games are now available. Several serious game studios focus on developing and building them and already have an impressive portfolio. Concepts and pieces of code can be reused so it's possible to describe fairly accurately what can be implemented for a particular budget. A fair-sized market for this sort of serious game already exists. It is difficult to estimate the current stage of the technology adoption life cycle for this market, but somewhere between the early adopter phase and the early majority phase seems a reasonable assessment.

B. Assessment gaming is still in its infancy. This is a rapidly developing profession characterized by innovation. The concepts measured, the field of application

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as well as the method of development and building are still in their starting phase.

Why is it important to make this distinction?

In general, developing a serious online game is not cheap. Before you invest, it is a good idea to know what you expect to achieve with it. What is realistic? How are you going to spend your budget? Positioning your company attractively on the job market, making high rates of conversion from pre-applicants to applicants and subsequently having a validated method for predicting which of those can successfully do the job; it all sounds almost too good to be true. And it is; the industry hasn't reached that point yet, but it is the holy grail. However, do you want to be the Indiana Jones who dares to take that risk?

Can I combine a recruitment game and an assessment game?

The answer comes in two parts:

- Why would you want to? The added value of a recruitment game on its own can already be enormous. Predicting successful candidates can then be done perfectly well using psychometric testing. That is precisely its added value. Don't make it too complicated; gaining more experience and continually developing is the way to go.

- If you want to start using assessment gaming, decide first what you want to measure. Keep it simple. Choose one or at the most a few constructs and try to validate those so that you are sure that what you are doing is worthwhile.

Cross-over effects?

This is possible; an assessment game can also lead to more volume in the recruitment funnel. Especially if the game has a high fun factor or provides real relevant feedback to your target population. However, you should view this as an added bonus. If you deliberately set this as your goal, you are spreading your focus too wide.

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We predict job performance using assessments and games. Well-designed and fun. With candidate experience as our starting point. Using the latest modern tools, in over 40 languages. For integration in every recruitment process, using multiple measuring moments, resulting in better talent decisions in less time.