

7 Serious Game elements - Design questions



1 - Boundaries

How many players can join? What if more or less will join?
Are observers allowed or even required?
How much time will be needed for a full experience?
What's the minimum time to spend on play and debrief?
What physical or online room is needed?



2 - Invite

How do you seduce or trigger people to become players?
Does it address one of their challenges to solve?
Will sharing too much here spoil the gameplay?



3 - Game world

What 'normal' world rules will be suspended for some time?
How to create a psychological safe space where failure may occur, experiments can be run and new behavior may be tried?
How does the framing impact participation or learnings?
Which metaphors will be represented?



4 - Goal

What are the players striving for?
How do they know when the game ends?
Which way can they tell if someone won?
When do we close the game world again?



5 - Materials

What do the players interact with?
How is feedback provided?
Which metaphors are the materials representing?
Is it allowed to include items not specifically supplied?
Can they modify or break the provided materials?



6 - Rules

How do we play?
What rules are added or changed from normal life?
How to interact with each other and the materials?
Which behaviors are considered cheating?



7 - Debrief

Never skip or rush this, as this is the deciding factor that makes a serious game valuable!
How will the experience and insights transfer to the real world?
What did players objectively observe?
How did they feel?
Which metaphors did we spot?
In what way do they relate to our work?
Did we recognize interactions and dynamics from other situations?
What made us fail or succeed?



Make it possible for 2
or 3 teams to play at
the same time



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Boundaries



Make it possible for 2
or 3 teams to play, but
not at the same time



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Boundaries



You only have 30
minutes to play AND
debrief



Craft your invite to
your target audience:
managers



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Invite



Craft your invite to
your target audience:
coaches or facilitators



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Invite



Craft your invite to
your target audience:
team members



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Invite



Craft your invite to player archetypes: Explorers



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Invite



Craft your invite to player archetypes: Socializers



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Invite



Craft your invite to
player archetypes:
Killers



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Invite



Craft your invite to
player archetypes:
Achievers



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Invite



Frame your game in an
isomorphic setting



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Game world 

Frame your game in a
Neutral setting



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Game world 

Frame your game in a
Abstract setting



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Game world 

Frame your game in a
Fantastical setting



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Game world 

Finish more structures
in 5 minutes



Finish faster than the
team next to you



The game is now
competitive instead of
coöperative



You forgot your
blocks, but still want
to play the game



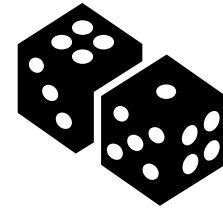
You forgot your cards,
but still want to play
the game



Some of the players
turn out to be visually
impaired



Incorporate dice
(1 or more)



Someone else will give
you instructions what
to build



Make up a rule to
make it harder to win



Take away a rule to
make it easier to win



Make sure to debrief
on 'interactions'



Make sure to debrief
on 'practices'



Make sure to debrief
on 'Principles'



Make sure to debrief
on 'Thoughts'

