

Gamification of Business and Process Analysis

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Use a shrewdly planned competition at a critical point in your business planning process to keep team members sharp and engaged.

Your team, working on the most important initiative in the company, has completed business scenarios and process flows as part of process analysis, and it's been a long road. How can you keep the team engaged through business requirements? The impact of missing a business requirement — or creating an inaccurate or incomplete one — could require rework, costing your organization significant money and time. The value of a focused team during this final stretch is enormous. Gamification could be the answer.

THE RELEVANCE OF GAMIFICATION TO PROCESS ANALYSIS

“Gamification” refers to the process of using competition to drive engagement in a given task or

project. Jabian’s Business and Process Analysis Methodology™ (BPA) used to understand the scope of a project and comprehensively define the technology-agnostic needs of the business, namely the business process flows and requirements.

BPA does this through a four-step process:

1. Determining the impacted business process areas;
2. Defining the business scenarios to be addressed;
3. Creating visual process flows depicting how those scenarios will be addressed; and
4. Writing a comprehensive set of business requirements that detail the needs to enable the process flow.

For additional information, see “Process Analysis: The Foundation of Business Analysis” from the *Spring 2013 Jabian Journal*.

Using gamification within the BPA methodology can motivate and focus the team during an inherently challenging, yet critical, early phase in any large transformational project. By providing incentives to increase engagement, you can generate significant value and mitigate risks.

WHY DO IT?

The importance of an engaged team cannot be stressed enough when discussing process analysis. Because all business solutions can be traced back to a set of foundational business processes, making certain all key stakeholders are engaged during the development

of those processes is imperative. If you do not engage your stakeholders, you risk:

1. Overlooking an affected area of the business;
2. Missing a key scenario within a process area;
3. Incorrectly drawing the future state; and
4. Developing incomplete, inaccurate, or inconsistent requirements.

During process analysis, developing scenarios and flows can take a significant amount of time — and that's before a single requirement is written. Consider this case study:

A company was undergoing a large transformation. To give context to the breadth of the effort, the first scoping exercise indicated more than half of the company's business processes would need analysis and redesign to accommodate the strategic objectives.

After three months, nearly 350 scenarios were analyzed and 32 visual process flows were collaboratively produced. The first work stream was ready to start writing requirements. As this immense effort reached a crescendo,

the importance of the quality of the deliverables became apparent. As illustrated in Figure 1 on the next page, the impact of any missteps would result in rework, which can be costly in both time and money for an organization, especially the later missteps are found.

HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT?

Consider three guiding principles when leveraging gamification during BPA:

Principle No. 1: **Pick the Right Opportunity**

Turning every phase of each project into a competition would be fatiguing. Therefore, picking the right opportunity to use gamification as an incentive preserves its effectiveness over time. The cost of a missed, vague, inconsistent, or incomplete business requirement can be enormous. Each instance causes wasted time in clarification meetings, potential rework of deliverables, and pushed timelines.

Those costs are much greater than the time it takes to manage a simple competition, the willingness to receive real-time feedback, and the nominal cost of a prize such as



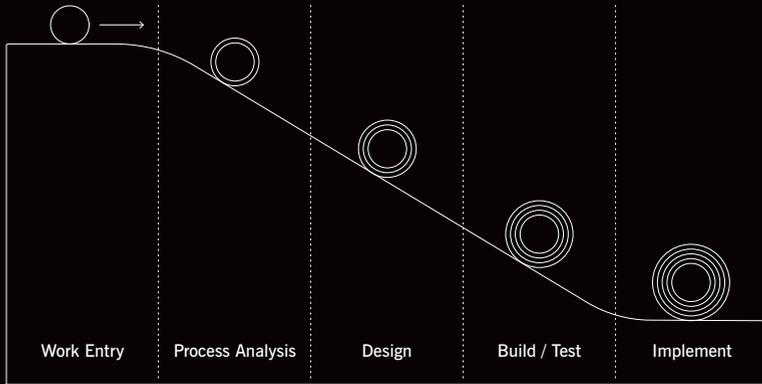
Picking the right opportunity to use gamification as an incentive preserves its effectiveness over time.

a gift card for dinner or tickets to a sporting event.

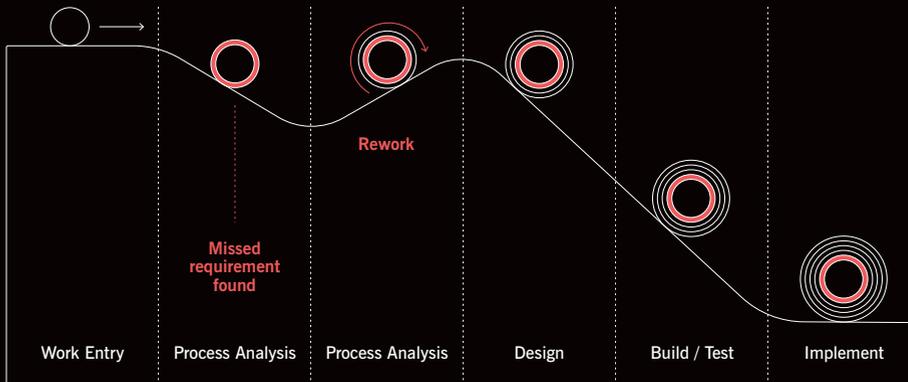
In this case study, as with all large transformation projects, the case is easy to build. The project was the company's most important and was expending more technology resources than any other project at the time. If there was ever a time to emphasize stakeholder engagement, this was it. Picking the wrong opportunity to use gamification can elicit eye rolls. Picking the right opportunity can spur a project team to a higher level of performance.

FIGURE 1: THE IMPACT OF MISSING REQUIREMENTS

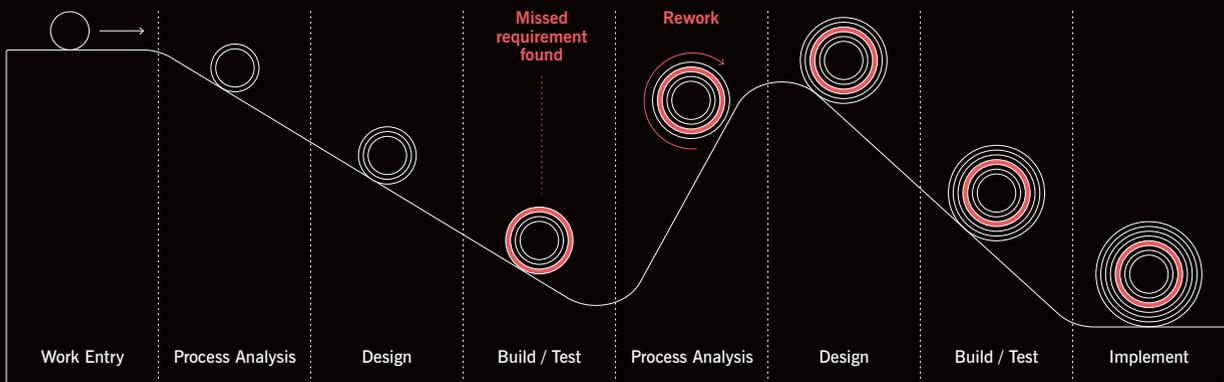
Scenario 1: No missed requirements



Scenario 2: Missed requirement early in process



Scenario 3: Missed requirement late in process



TIME / MONEY / EFFORT

**Principle No. 2:
Define the Rules to Incentivize
Desired Behavior**

It is important to clearly understand what you'd like to encourage as you set the rules of the game. In this case, a set of seven characteristics for quality business requirements was used as a rubric with which to provide real-time feedback. If a deliverable or requirement we produced was inconsistent with another, they'd point it out, and we would award them a "quality assist" point.

Be careful not to overcomplicate the rules; simplicity spurs participation and keeps competition fun. For instance, adding in a final rule of "no arguing with the scorekeeper" can leave you the flexibility to adjust if unintended behavior arises from ultracompetitive team members.

**Principle No. 3:
Keep Score Visibly**

People can be energized by watching themselves rise on the leaderboard each week, as well as by the prize at the end of a competition. Showing scores week by week can enable engagement, improve attention to detail, and align the focus of client team members with ours.

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In this case study, a weekly update of "Quality Assist Statistics" was sent to make sure everyone knew the score. Over seven weeks, 92 quality assist points were awarded. Assuming only 10 percent of those were a net result of the competition, nine or 10 opportunities for potential poor requirements, and the cost to fix them, were avoided.

CONCLUSION

The bigger the project, the higher the stakes. Gamification is one tactic to keep your team engaged through to the finish line. It can

save money and time, and provide the much required quality assurance every team hopes to find when going through a vital phase such as BPA. Try gamification during your team's next big project. As the concept takes hold, notice the energy and focus of the team aligned around the challenge and the successes to come.



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