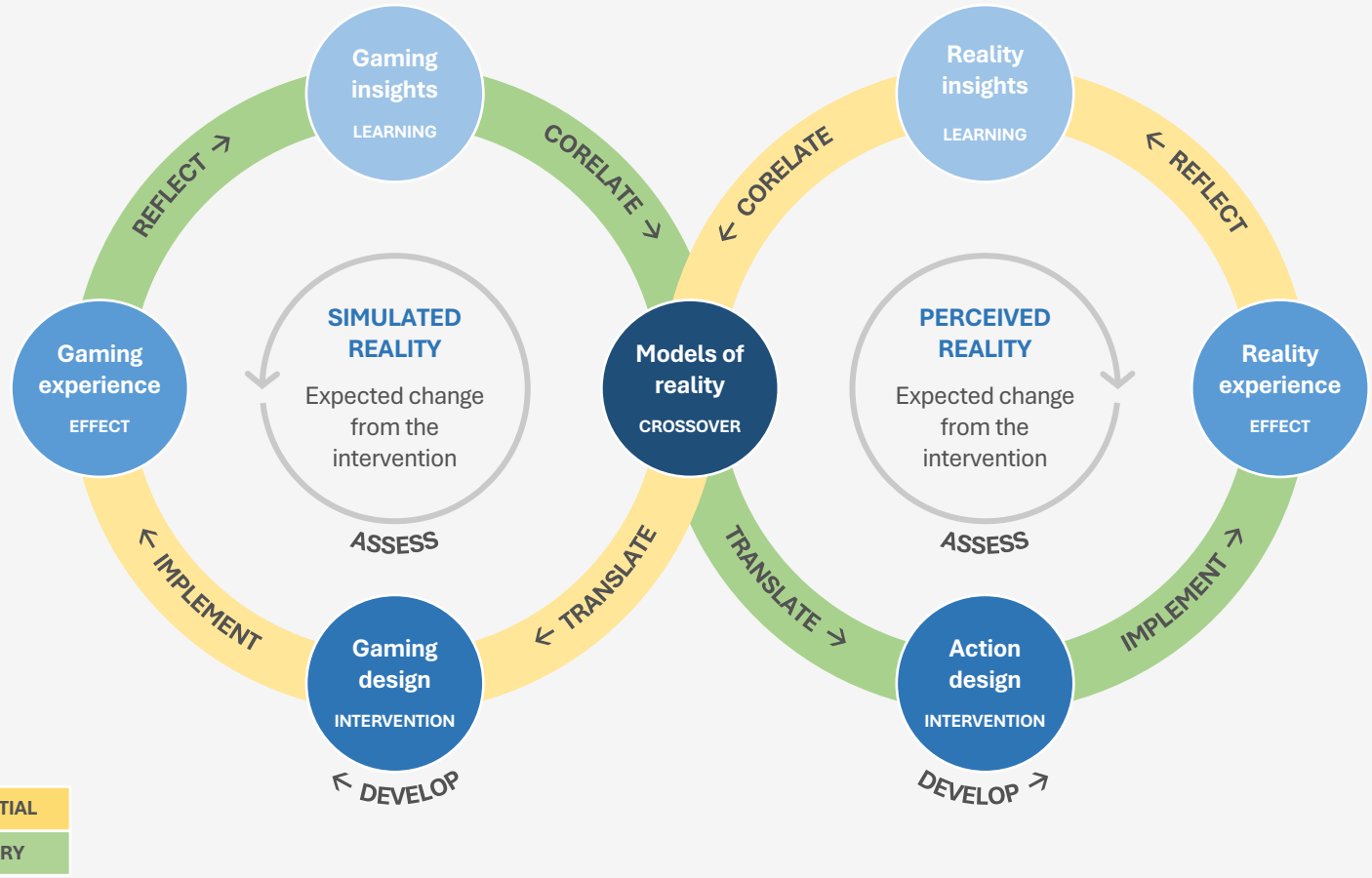
EFFECTIVE FACILITATION OF SERIOUS GAMES



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LEMNISCATE OF REALITY

FACILITATING GAMES IMPLIES MOVING FROM VALUE POTENTIAL TO VALUE DELIVERY



For more information on the lemniscate of reality, see presentation: **Serious gaming methodology.**

10 COMMANDMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE FACILITATION OF SERIOUS GAMES



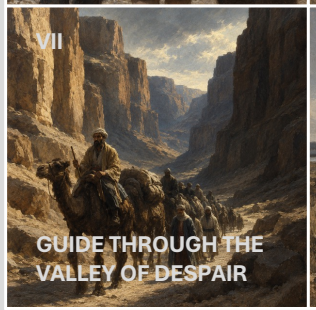




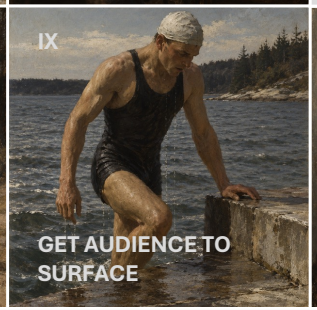


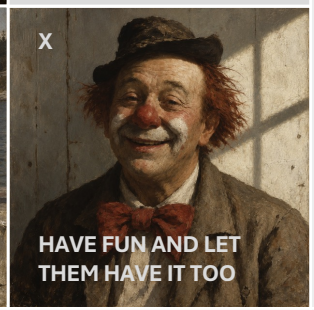












Effective facilitation requires focus on several key requirements to ensure the experience yields actionable insights.

Facilitating serious games demands more from facilitators than simply guiding players through the mechanics and their roles.

Facilitators must also ensure players engage with the intended content and that the game ultimately meets its objectives.

Crucially, this must be done without the facilitator dominating the process or becoming overtly involved in the gameplay dynamics.

For more information on possible game debriefing topics, see presentation: **Serious gaming debriefing topics.**

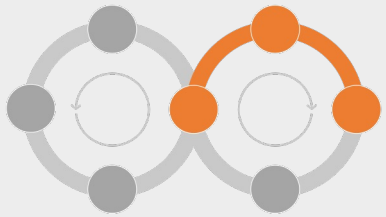
COMMANDMENT | **I**

UNDERSTAND THE GAP THAT NEEDS TO BE BRIDGED



If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up somewhere else.

Yogi Berra





TO CONSIDER

- What are the specific expectations for improving the participant's knowledge, skills, and behaviors?
- What is the current level of relevant knowledge, skills, and behaviors for the intended participants?
- What is the size of the gap between current and expected competence, and what is the required timeline to close it?

Although the structure of a specific game remains the same, the gaps it addresses can vary across audiences!



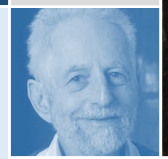
EXAMPLE

- The first run was conducted with the leadership team to give them a sense of the scale and complexity of the change that needed to be managed.
- Subsequent runs were done for the global recruitment staff to help them understand differences between current situation and target state.
- For the leadership team, facilitation took the form of joint exploration, whereas the staff required a more explanatory approach.

COMMANDMENT

II

UNDERSTAND THE AUDIENCE YOU ARE WORKING WITH



My play was a complete success. The audience was a failure.

Ashley Brilliant



TO CONSIDER

- What motivates the players to participate – is it out of obligation, or genuine interest?
- What value does the game offer to them – how will they benefit, and why should they care?
- What are their backgrounds, social styles, capabilities, readiness for change, and social or organizational cultures they operate within?

The characteristics of the intended audience influence the facilitation approach for the game run!

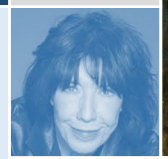


EXAMPLE

- The significantly different cultural backgrounds and personalities of players created a need to facilitate the game in diverse ways.
- Initiating gameplay and facilitating subsequent debriefings had to be approached differently in most engagements.
- Minimizing personal exposure was often necessary to respect the cultural norms and sensitivities of the players.

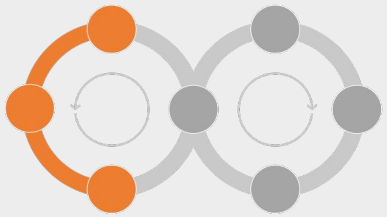
COMMANDMENT III

UNDERSTAND THE ROLE YOU ARE TAKING



All my life, I always wanted to be somebody. Now I see that I should have been more specific.

Lily Tomlin





TO CONSIDER

- How to ensure the game runs smoothly and that players fulfill their roles effectively – *process* role?
- How to ensure players are engaged with appropriate content at the right level of detail – *content* role?
- How to ensure the game achieves its intended outcomes in knowledge creation or knowledge transfer – *objectives* role?

Each facilitation role carries its own set of expectations and limitations regarding how it is carried out!



EXAMPLE

- The game requires two distinctly different facilitation roles, which are simultaneously perceived by players as in-game roles.
- By taking on the role of a shareholder in different companies, the facilitator manages the flow of gameplay and the timing of activities.
- Through the role of a marketplace, the facilitator helps participants focus on the appropriate content and behaviors related to client service.

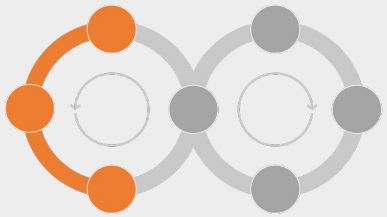
COMMANDMENT **IV**

BE AWARE OF THE MULTIPLE PERSONALITY SYNDROME



All I have is me, myself and I, and we are all getting really tired of each other.

Carl R. White





TO CONSIDER

- To what extent is it necessary to complete all planned activities within the allocated timeframe – reflecting the need for *objectivity*?
- How important is the quality and quantity of content being discussed, used, or produced – reflecting the need for *truth*?
- How to balance the tension between desired outcomes and the focus on process or content – reflecting the need for *results*?

Taking on multiple facilitation roles as a single facilitator requires both intense focus and high flexibility!



VALUE QUEST GAME

EXAMPLE

- Facilitators primarily assumed roles representing company management, internal stakeholders, supplier representatives, and internal consultants.
- Together, these roles encompassed all facilitation responsibilities, managing in parallel the process, content, and achievement of objectives.
- Due to the game's dynamic nature, facilitators had to continuously maintain a balance in their interventions across these different roles.

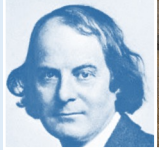
COMMANDMENT V

KNOW HOW TO GET YOUR AUDIENCE TO DIVE IN



TO CONSIDER

- How to ensure that players understand, accept, and begin operating within the boundaries of the simulated reality?
- What is the most effective way for players to leave their comfort zone – should they dive in quickly or transition gradually?
- How to engage all players in the gameplay simultaneously and with equal intensity?



Everything comes too late for those who only wait.

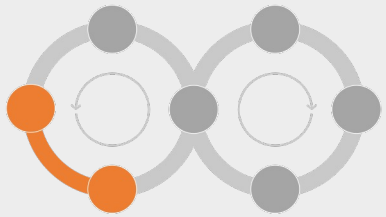
Elbert Hubbard

Sometimes players find it difficult to leave their comfort zone of observation and actively participate instead!



EXAMPLE

- Due to the nature of the metaphor, it was essential to keep the introduction brief and have players engage with the game immediately.
- To support this rapid transition, facilitators assumed their simulated game roles right after the introduction.
- Framing the game as a competition between teams heightened peer pressure both within and across teams, encouraging prompt participation.



COMMANDMENT VI

FACILITATE AND OPERATE FROM WITHIN



TO CONSIDER

- How to consistently reinforce each player's suspension of disbelief in the simulated reality?
- How can the facilitator effectively become part of the new reality and guide the game from within it?
- How to ensure that players perceive the facilitator as a character embedded in their new reality?



The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.

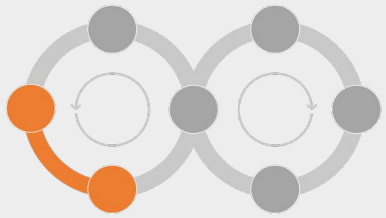
Kenneth Blanchard

Facilitation is more effective when players see the facilitator as an integral part of the game narrative!



EXAMPLE

- From within their simulated game role of a client, facilitators can adopt all three facilitation roles, shaping players' activities and experiences.
- They do this primarily by disclosing or withholding information and by providing feedback on players' interactions with the client.
- Because these interactions occur within a game role, players perceive the facilitator as an integral part of their overall experience.



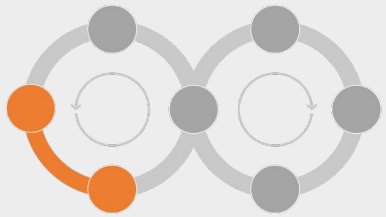
COMMANDMENT VII

GUIDE THEM THROUGH THE VALLEY OF DESPAIR



All things are difficult before they are easy.

Thomas Fuller





TO CONSIDER

- What level of discomfort is acceptable for players to recognize and appreciate the need for change?
- How to support players in progressing up the 'learning curve' and enable opportunities for their improved performance?
- How to ensure a satisfying conclusion that fosters a sense of accomplishment and a commitment to future action?

Effective facilitation guides players in their learning, helping them move from discomfort to resolution!

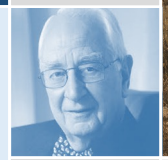


EXAMPLE

- Through their roles, facilitators must ensure that players not only experience the discomfort but also comprehend its underlying causes.
- The marketplace role achieves this by introducing events and adjusting prices and exchange rates for goods being bought or sold.
- The news reporter role achieves this by creating news headlines that highlight specific issues players are succeeding in or struggling with.

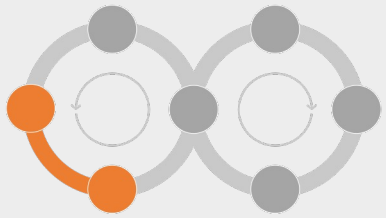
COMMANDMENT VIII

BE INVISIBLE IN YOUR SERVICE AND INFLUENCE



The first responsibility is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.

Max DePree





TO CONSIDER

- How can the game be influenced subtly, so that players do not perceive it as external manipulation?
- How can facilitator support players in achieving their objectives, rather than shifting focus to perceived goals of a facilitator?
- How to cultivate a genuine “we did it ourselves” mindset of players while preserving the credibility of the outcome?

Facilitators should continuously reinforce the idea that players are in control of their own experience!



EXAMPLE

- One of the facilitator’s simulated roles is that of a management consultant who coaches different teams on how to approach the challenge.
- Competing teams can ‘hire’ the management consultant to support their interactions with various stakeholders.
- Players perceive this coaching as self-initiated, while the facilitator leverages it to subtly enhance their engagement.

COMMANDMENT IX

KNOW HOW TO GET YOUR AUDIENCE TO SURFACE



TO CONSIDER

- Should players conclude the game experience by gradually ‘walking out’ or by energetically ‘springing out’?
- When should the relevance of the experience be revealed – during the game or during the post-game reflection?
- How can players be effectively guided from the game’s ‘simulated reality’ back to their ‘actual reality’?



Winning doesn’t always mean being first. Winning means you are doing better than you have done before.

Bonnie Blair

The way the game concludes and the debriefing that follows are critical for achieving game objectives!



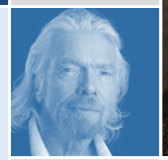
EXAMPLE

- To avoid blaming the game for the lack of performance, facilitators shifted the focus from game’s differences to its similarities with real-life contexts.
- By removing perceived differences, players could concentrate on how they functioned as a team and made decisions under time pressure.
- This enabled players to reflect on their behaviors and translate these insights into actions for their personal leadership development plans.

COMMANDMENT

X

HAVE FUN AND LET THEM HAVE IT TOO



If you're not having fun, then it's probably time to call it quits and try something else.

Richard Branson



TO CONSIDER

- How can the game be facilitated to ensure an enjoyable and engaging experience for players?
- How can fun be used to expand players' comfort zones and promote more open, effective interactions?
- How can the facilitator make the audience laugh and be perceived as genuinely enjoying the facilitation yourself?

Having fun is the most effective way to engage players and help them go beyond their perceived limits!



EXAMPLE

- To keep teams both challenged and engaged, facilitators sometimes need to intervene with humor during the game.
- One way to do this is by displaying exaggerated and humorous images that reflect the client's level of satisfaction and emotional state.
- Acting in the role of a shareholder, facilitators can also enhance players' enjoyment by interacting with them in a playful and humorous manner.



THANK YOU

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