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EDCI 556: Educational Video Game Design

TEAM UP!

Game Design Document

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**Introduction**

Game Overview

Team Up is a game that focuses on soft skill development and promotes key skills amongst the group of learners. My game will have various categories that will represent soft skills and will have related team-based challenges that will mimic real-life scenarios that the players must “Team Up” to solution.

Team Up is not a stand-alone game, to be the most effective and to realize meaningful learning, it should be combined with a larger training program such as New Manager Training Program or Leadership Essentials Program, which are focused on developing both hard and soft skills.

The hard skills will be developed through eLearning modules, on-the-job training, shadowing, teach-backs etc., but soft skills such as communication, interpersonal relationship, collaboration, strategic decision-making, conflict resolution, priority management, productivity, coaching etc., will be developed through this co-operative game.

**Target Audience**

Team Up has two audiences. The first audience is businesses/companies who would be interested in leveraging this game and combining it with their own internal learning programs such as New Manager Training, Leadership Essentials Program, or for any other leadership or aspiring leader role-based training. Any organization would benefit from using the game Team Up especially if the focus is on developing soft skills within both experienced and non-experienced leaders. Companies can also choose to customize the game to their companies needs so that the scenarios are customized to their organization rather than generic for maximum learning benefit and impact.

The other audience for this game is the adult learners who are enrolled in manager/leader-based training programs within the context of an organization. This is the intended audience for this game who will benefit from the game and will be using it to expand their soft skills.

**Implementation Context**

The game will be incorporated into a training program. To incorporate the game into a larger training program, the program manager/facilitator/coordinator must:

* Establish clear learning objectives. For example, what are the desired learning outcomes or objectives of the game within the larger context of the program?
* Develop a pre-assessment for learners to complete at the start of the program and prior to gameplay. This can be done in a program kick-off workshop or via email. The pre-assessment will entail two to three questions to get an understanding of the learner’s competence in the soft-skill areas prior to any gameplay. This data will serve well later for evaluation of the game using Kirkpatrick’s four levels.
* Establish learner gameplay and logistics. Unlike a classroom and “period” setting in a school, adult learners will require a lot more flexibility and will receive a “at my own pace” learning experience with guidance and facilitated workshops to hold them accountable. It is important to identify how and when the gameplay will take place.
* Develop a post-assessment of two to three reflection questions for learners to complete at the end of gameplay. This can be done during the facilitated workshop or sent via email. This would help identify if behaviors changed, stayed the same or did not improve. Again, this data will serve well later for evaluation of the game using Kirkpatrick’s four levels.
* To further application and evaluation, in the final program workshop learners will get to play the game with different team members (those who were not in their original team) to showcase how they will apply best practices they learned over several weeks of playing the game with their teams. Additionally, players will be assessed by senior leaders will sit in and observe game play and they will share key observations with the larger group later. Certain players who do incredibly well will receive recognition. A final group debrief about the gameplay will take place.
	+ Sample program schedule (90-days): New Manager Training
		- Week 1: Program Kick-Off **Onboarding** (60 mins)
			* Review program overview and schedule
			* Review program workbooks (Rise 360 guides)
				+ Learners must complete and then attend a workshop to learn more/participate in activities
			* Establish teams (for Team Up)
			* Complete soft skill pre-assessment
		- Week 2 and 3: Learners to complete **workbook 1** by the end of week 3 (provides learning on hard skills related to the role + effective communication, conflict resolution soft skills)
		- Week 4: Learners to attend **workshop** **1** for 120 mins (first 30 mins we discuss workbooks and do 1 activity to apply a hard skill) and the remaining 90 mins they get to play the game focusing on conflict resolution and communication soft skills).
		- Week 5 and 6: Learners to complete **workbook 2** by the end of week 6 (provides learning on hard skills related to the role + emotional intelligence, strategic decision-making soft skills)
		- Week 7: Learners to attend **workshop 2** for 120 mins (first 30 mins we discuss workbooks and do 1 activity to apply a hard skill) and the remaining 90 mins they get to play the game focusing on emotional intelligence, strategic decision-making soft skills).
		- Week 8 and 9: Learners to complete **workbook 3** by the end of week 9 (provides learning on hard skills related to the role + coaching and relationship building soft skills)
		- Week 10: Learners to attend **workshop 3** for 120 mins (first 30 mins we discuss workbooks and do 1 activity to apply a hard skill) and the remaining 90 mins they get to play the game focusing on coaching and relationship building soft skills).
		- Week 12: Final program **workshop 4** (90 mins)
			* Send learners to a breakout for final gameplay (30 mins)
			* Complete post-assessment
			* Full group debrief and wrap up

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the game, players will be able to:

* Recognize the role of effective communication in fostering teamwork and achieving shared goals by identifying verbal and non-verbal communication techniques and by adapting leadership style to align with diverse audiences
* Apply conflict resolution strategies in leadership scenarios by identifying conflicts, explore resolution styles, and collaboratively select appropriate strategies to navigate workplace tension
* Apply effective interpersonal communication by practicing active listening and empathy to build trust and facilitate productive dialogue during challenging interactions
* **Demonstrate strong collaboration and communication skills to enhance team dynamics and productivity** by engaging in team-based challenges to practice inclusive collaboration, and navigate differing viewpoints
* **Implement key soft skills to lead and support team members effectively in a leadership role** by applying emotional intelligence, active listening, and decision-making skills to delegate tasks, mediate team conflict, supporting peer growth and more
* Develop a leadership action plan for how you will actively embed or integrate these skills into your role
* **Reflect on your leadership style and team contributions** by analyzing your role and decision-making process within team activities, identifying strengths and areas for growth in leading and supporting others

**Hook**

Team Up is a multi-player game as it requires teamwork and collaboration. Playing the game with other players who are your peers within an organization will increase not only the collaboration but will make it an even more exciting experience. The game focuses on solving real challenges, which will help set the players up for success in their respective leader or aspiring leader positions. Whether an employee is new to a company or new to a manager role; Team Up has something to offer to everyone. The game will offer challenging scenarios with some choices to help guide the players’ thinking and ultimately the players must work together to build innovative and creative solutions.

**Game Mechanics**

The following game mechanics are some examples of what the players will be able to achieve in the game:

* Analyzing scenarios to identify root cause for the problem (e.g., team conflict)
* Assigning tasks and roles to players within the game based on their strengths or weaknesses, while ensuring all players get an equal chance at role-playing each role
* Dividing tasks effectively amongst the players to meet the challenge
* Navigating changes to processes mid-way through the game or working together to overcome any potential hurdles e.g., direction change
* Making decisions and choices as a team with full consideration of all the key roles

**Game Elements**

**Characters:** Team Up is a role-playing, scenario-based game that offers a variety of characters and roles depending on the scenario the players are tasked with. There are no consistent characters that players will adopt and nor will they be playing the game as themselves.

**Artificial Intelligence**

Team Up uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) once teams submit their final recommendation. AI will be used to review their recommendation in comparison to the other teams who submit their final recommendations, and all responses will then be compared against an “ideal recommendation” that will be embedded but players will not see. Note: Players are asked to submit two solutions and a final recommendation. The final recommendation is the only the only one that will be graded and compared using AI. For the other two solutions, they will receive +10 points for simple completion, and they will receive immediate feedback to help them make adjustments or modifications prior to submitting their final recommendation.

Teams will receive +20 points and feedback so they know what they did well/can improve on if their recommendation passes on the first try. Otherwise, players will see a message with feedback if their recommendation needs rework. They will have an unlimited number of reworks, but they must pass the level to move to the next one.

**Story Overview**

Team Up offers elements of both simulation and story-based gameplay. The simulation aspect of the game is evident through the fact that teams will focus on solving real-world workplace challenges in specific roles allowing them to engage with realistic scenarios that can be even tailored to the organization they’re working in. This creates a strong simulation-based game environment as players are acting within a structured system to experience the challenges of their given roles.

On the other hand, the story-based aspects are built into the game through the various scenarios/challenges and roles within each soft skill category. Additionally, each scenario/challenge story of every level within each soft skill category will expand on the previous scenario/challenge and the roles will remain the same.

**Game Progression**

Once the game begins, players will be asked to select a soft skill category to begin the game. They will see that only the first category will be available, and the rest will be locked. The reason for this is they must pass all 3 levels within each category to unlock the next soft skill. Once a category is selected, players will be asked to choose a role that they will roleplay for the 1 of 3 levels of the challenge/scenario. Each round, players will need to change their role, but the set of roles will remain the same for all 3 levels of the game. For example, if the first soft skill is conflict resolution, players will be presented with 3 levels, and each level will showcase a different challenge/scenario related to conflict resolution within the workplace. Each challenge will become more complex. However, the roles for all conflict resolution levels will remain while the scenarios/challenges will change. Players cannot not choose the same role they have played in level 1 for level 2 and so forth until all levels are completed. In the next category they will be presented with new roles, scenarios and so forth. In addition to the roles, the players will see a short description so they can choose what makes sense for each player.

Once roles have been decided, then the players will be asked if they are ready to proceed or not. If not, they will be taken back to the screen to select a role. If yes, they will proceed in the game.

Then, they will see a set of instructions to play the game as a reminder. Next, they will enter level one and click on a scenario folder to view the challenge. Then, the scenario will be presented, and players will review it as a team. There is no time-limit or cap on how many times they can refer to the scenario. Then, they will receive various “Call to Action” prompts and opportunities to receive more details about the challenge/scenario to help them through the gameplay.

Finally, the team will receive a badge one that category and all levels within it have been attained.

**User Interface**

Team Up has a simple user interface. Once the player enters the game, they will see a menu, where they will see several buttons. The buttons will be in this order: Start (to start the game), Game Overview (to review gameplay instructions and purpose of game), Badges (to review the reward badges), Exit Game (to exit or leave the game).

Imagery, interactive buttons, and text will be added to enhance the overall look of the game.

**The Game Minute**

Once the game begins, the first minute or so will be spent on reviewing and understanding the scenario/challenge at hand. Once the players have understood the scenario, then using their roles they must work with the rest of the team to solution the problem ultimately submitting their final recommendation. Whether players decide to do live role-playing, or they just talk it out from the perspective of the role they’ve been assigned… they have full rein in how they would like to play the game.

**Storyboard**

See attached document called “Team Up Game Design Storyboard.”