Gamification and the Evolution of Management Education

Abstract

It is exciting to wonder how management education will evolve as we move forward into technology driven learning environments. Schools are focusing on 21st Century Learning skills, how students learn and their capacity for learning is changing, all of which impact how we teach. Yet, how will these factors influence management education and what might a management curriculum look like in the future? This session will discuss and analyze activities and concepts found in gamification and how they may be applied in a management classroom to evoke high levels of student engagement while embracing benefits of personalized learning.

Keywords: gamification, 21st Century learning, personalized learning

As schools begin to shift their teaching and curriculum to compensate for 21st Century learners there is a ripple affect spreading throughout all forms of education. In one way, the classroom itself is changing as more technology is being brought in to accentuate and 21st Century learning skills and to accommodate for how students are learning. In another way we are seeing the method for presenting and processing content change as well which embraces the ideals which embody a 21st Century learner. However, some of this change has been slow to reach the annals of higher education and as K-12 schools continue to shape and mold students in such a way that embraces learning found in technology rich environments, it is natural to wonder how and when these changes will have to be embraced at all levels of education. It is with this thought in mind that we chose to explore the application of one of the more progressive methods for student instruction in a technology rich environment, gamification, in a management education environment.

The concept of gamification is not a new one, however its affects in education and business are its infancy, comparatively to other methods for teaching and learning. In much of this research, gamification has been found to increase cooperation, cultivate collaboration, and increase engagement (Morschheuser, Riar, Hamari, & Maedche, 2017). With such positive results, and much research still available, we decided to look at how gamification might impact a management education course, specifically at the higher education level. What we found were a number of activities and teaching strategies that embraced the pillars of gamification which revealed similar positive outcomes as found in the research but were also met with some difficulty in the practical application of such a progressive approach to teaching.

The learning objectives for this session are that the ideas shared will reveal more possible ways that management education, and education in general at the higher education level, could evolve towards in an effort to match the teaching and learning styles that are being engrained in K-12 students across the globe. We also hope to spark possible interests in other ways that gamification can be brought into management courses to embrace personalized learning and 21st Century skills while still maintaining the rigorous expectations of understanding management and organizational behavior.

Our hope is to showcase a number of activities that can be brought into any management education course which will embrace the concepts of gamification and produce some of the benefits found in the research. Our main focus will be on one activity that incorporates Google Apps for Education learning tools (i.e. Google Drive and Google Sheets) to create a badging and system driven by point accumulation. Attendees will be able to participate in an activity which will use an example of the badging system and be give the resources needed to create their own model/template for use in their own courses.

The session will begin with a small presentation on the research of gamification and its benefits and applications in business and education. Then a brief explanation of the activity will be given which will give participants an opportunity to engage in a learning activity with gamification concepts and strategies. Following this activity, their will be a debriefing of the benefits of such an activity and how it can be further applied in a management course and then a look at some other practical forms of gamification in the classroom.

References

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