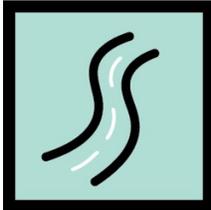


Insights from SuperBetter by Jane McGonigal

“When we play a game, we volunteer to be challenged. No one forces us to try to solve a game’s puzzles, or defeat another team, or reach a certain score. Because we are fully in control of whether we accept a game’s challenge, we don’t experience anxiety or depression when we play— despite the very real possibility of loss or defeat. Our primary experience is of agency, not of threat.” – Jane McGonigal

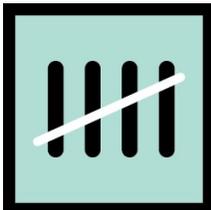
4 steps to develop a ‘gameful’ mindset at work:



Embark on a quest of self-efficacy

“Self-efficacy means having confidence in the concrete skills and abilities required to solve specific problems or achieve particular goals. It is usually context-specific: you might have high self-efficacy at work but low self-efficacy about public speaking or losing weight. Self-efficacy is the crucial difference between having lots of motivation but failing to follow through, and successfully converting motivation into consistent and effective action. With high self-efficacy, you are more likely to take actions that help you reach your goals, even if those actions are difficult or painful. You also engage with difficult problems longer, without giving up. But with low self-efficacy, no matter how motivated you are, you’re less likely to take positive action— because you lack belief in your ability to make a difference in your own life.” – Jane McGonigal

To build your self-efficacy, seek out and complete quests - simple, daily actions that get you closer to reaching a bigger goal. Just like a hero in a video game, you can use each quest as an opportunity to gain experience points and develop new skills. These experience points (XP) give you the confidence to take on larger and larger quests.



Keep score

“Keeping score will highlight your progress ... and to get a deeper understanding of your own play. This has been true of games as long as humans have played them. In fact, my favorite argument in favor of personal scorekeeping was written over one hundred years ago, in a 1914 issue of Baseball Magazine. “The Pleasure and Profit of Keeping Score” was an editorial that strongly encouraged baseball fans to fill out their own scorecards during professional games. Track every run, hit, and error, it argued, in order to better understand, remember, and enjoy the game: Most spectators watch a great play with an interest, which, however intense, is forgotten in the thriller of the next inning. They leave the grounds with a hazy idea of a rather enjoyable afternoon, whose main features are scarce refreshed by reading press accounts of them some hours later. Keeping score remedies all this. It burns the play into memory. It greatly increases the spectator’s knowledge of the game. . . . And, best of all, it is a pleasure in itself.” – Jane McGonigal

Keep track of the experience points that you gain throughout the day (i.e. the relative difficulty of the tasks that you complete). For example, journal in the morning: 10XP, read 10 pages of a book: 12 XP, draft a proposal: 25 XP (XP = experience points).



Recruit allies

“Having social support makes it easier for us to achieve our goals. It’s not just that our friends and family help us directly by offering their time, advice, or resources. Medical research shows that our bodies respond to social support in dramatic ways, getting stronger and more resilient every time someone helps us.” – Jane McGonigal

Call a co-worker to ask for help. Ask a friend to join you at a coffee shop to brainstorm ideas for your next project. Tell your spouse about the challenges you’re facing at work.

Search for power-ups:



Physical



Social



Emotional



Mental

Examples of Power-ups: *“Look out a window for thirty seconds (mental). Hold my husband’s hand for six seconds (social). Eat ten walnuts, because they’re good for my brain (physical). Send a text message to my mom (social). Listen to a song from one of my favorite Bollywood movies (mental). Do ten push-ups even if I’m exhausted (physical).” – Jane McGonigal*

“You are stronger than you know. You are surrounded by potential allies. You are the hero of your own story.” – Jane McGonigal