Who Cares?

This month we want to talk about your intended audience. Your game will only reach its full potential if you think about how you want your players to feel, react, and think about their experience. To do this, a successful designer will think of the following questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Who:

Who is the intended audience? It is important to consider some particular characteristics of your audience (such as age, education and cultural backgrounds) that can influence how a game is presented to players.

What:

What is the goal of the game? Knowing what the learning objectives of the game are supposed to be, and considering how different groups may interpret information will influence how a game is designed. Particularly if this is a training game, as the designer you must ensure the correct outcomes are being achieved and digested by the audience.

Where:

Where are your participants located? Considering the geography of your participants is important for two reasons. First, this can provide cultural clues as to what language and approach might be most appropriate. Second, this determines if the game will be distributed or localized and thus also digital or tabletop.

When:

When is the game being played? It is important to recognize how much time will be allocated for play, and if it will be part of a larger session or if it will be a stand alone game. When designing also consider time constraints, such as schedules and availability of participants, designated sessions, replayability.

Why:

Why are they playing? The purpose of the game, when paired with knowledge of the target audience can be very influential. Whether a game is for training, awareness, or analysis will change the way content is presented. Training games are often mandatory, and it is more important to accurately reflect reality than to be engaging as it is likely mandatory participation. On the other hand, awareness games should be immersive and appealing for voluntary play.

How:

How can you tailor a game to a particular audience?

Language: Use language already adopted by the industry, cultural group or age group. The more you speak the same language as the intended audience, the easier it will be for participants to engage with the exercise.

Art: Presentation is key. Using art and colour schemes that are appealing for your audience will help grab their attention initially, and maintain it throughout the experience.

Kinetic versus digital experience: For some potential players, kinetic approaches will be more immersive, engaging, and accessible whereas for other participants, digital approaches may be more effective or appealing for game experiences.

Accessibility: Consider the accessibility of your game and how many different people may be able to participate. This can be mitigated by understanding language barriers, colour blindness, tactical barriers, among many others.

Updates

- Transcripts and recordings are available on our **website**, under the Notice Board tab!

- The first Game Night, will be taking place on **Wednesday June 8th**! We will be playing Undocumented: Journey to the American Dream. Register **here** or on our **website** to participate!