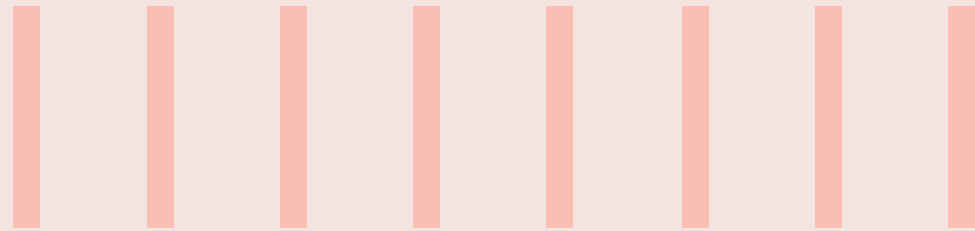# GAMING THE POSTAL SYSTEM

Abstract

Dismayed by the high attrition of his delivery staff, Eric Gordon, the Director of a European national postal carrier realised he needed to fundamentally change his retention strategies. That's when he deployed gamification techniques developed by the Infosys Center for Emerging Technology Solutions to bring about significantly increased motivation and job satisfaction.

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Dealing with bad weather

Eric Gordon is the Director of Process Management at a European national postal carrier. His primary responsibility revolves around developing and executing operational plans to ensure that letters and packages get delivered on time. Over the last few years, Eric had been modernising his legacy systems and processes to keep pace with the changed nature of the postal business – especially the increase in parcel volumes and the decline in traditional letters. However, a bigger issue threatened the postal carrier's competitiveness. Due to the country's harsh and bitterly cold weather in which they had to go out to make deliveries, there was a high attrition of Eric's postal delivery workers, and he was constantly struggling to find and train replacements.

As Eric reviewed the situation, he realised he needed an action plan to engage and motivate newly hired staff and ultimately reduce their attrition. He also knew that the company's existing rewards programs lacked transparency and had already proved to be counterproductive. Needing a fresh approach and given the size of the proposed program, Eric decided to partner with an external service provider who had experience delivering on an enterprise's goals using cutting-edge technology and resources.

Bringing in the fun and games

The search for a suitable service provider led Eric to the Infosys Center for Emerging Technology Solutions, which had developed a platform called the Infosys Enterprise Gamification Platform (iEGP). The platform tapped into the human desire for competition, achievement, status, altruism, and community collaboration by rewarding users for increased engagement and for accomplishing desired tasks. As the iEGP could apply gamification to any enterprise scenario, Eric wanted to explore its potential in improving engagement among his delivery workers.

After due process, Eric brought in the iEGP team, led by Infosys' Sam Andrews, to design and implement a gamified rewards program that would touch around 2000 delivery workers. Sam and his team collaborated with Eric and having understood his challenges, created a mobile application, Route Master, that would interface with the iEGP platform. The new engagement model the Infosys team devised involved a rewards system for the postal delivery workers based on the percentage of their assigned routes they completed each day.

Approach summary

- Collaboration to create mobile application
- Deployment of application among workers
- Performance measurement with badges and points

Once Route Master was installed on their devices, workers could update their delivery statuses on the go, and receive points, rewards, and badges for clearly defined milestones. The system's design also factored in those delivery workers who handled multiple routes and made special considerations for bad weather conditions. To make the program fair for all participants, new and experienced workers were rewarded using different badges and points. The application also included rewards for exhibiting good behavior, such as mentoring and helping others complete a route. Moreover, it had daily in-app and push notification features to boost engagement and the morale of the users.

A rewarding journey

A few months after Route Master's launch, Eric started noticing a definite and positive change in attitude among the program's participants. He dug a little deeper to try and quantify the impact of the gamification initiative.

Over 70% of the participants expressed an inclination to continue working with the postal service, alleviating Eric's biggest concern – attrition rates. The solution also worked its magic on morale, improving job satisfaction among ~50% of the participants. By making achievements and milestones visible through leader boards, the program succeeded in bringing out the competitive side of over 50% of his workers, inspiring them to work with greater motivation.

Key benefits

72% showed willingness to continue employment

48% saw improvement in job satisfaction

51% saw increase in motivation

Increased instances of good behavior

But, as Eric mentioned to Sam, the benefits of gamification extended beyond the tangible. Through a few examples, Eric shared how delivery workers were now actively helping and mentoring each other with tasks. And as more stories emerged, it was clear that a healthy work environment was in the making.

Today, as Eric seeks to scale up the rewards program to include more workers, he is confident that with the innovative iEGP team's support, the postal carrier can boldly face the future, irrespective of the weather.

Names have been altered to preserve the identities of the individuals involved.

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