

Public summary

This thesis project is about the development of a serious game. The assignment is provided by the company Ondernemende Gasten, which is specialized in serious game development. This small company located in Utrecht aims to develop a serious game about behavioral preference in relation to influence.

The purpose of this assignment is to answer the main research question; 'How could a serious game be developed that stimulates its players in using behavioral preference to influence others?'

Possible theories that could be used to achieve this goal were analyzed. The most interesting theory researched is the DISC methodology. This method uses the behavioral preferences of people to create a profile of these individuals. Incorporating this theory into the game, stimulates the players to focus on the behavioral preferences of others and themselves.

A third party, was asked to assist with the content of the game. This organization is experienced in using the DISC methodology, because they often give trainings about this subject.

The learning goals for the game were defined in cooperation with Ondernemende Gasten and the third party;

Behavioral preference

- Exploring own behavioral preference.
- Recognizing behavioral preference of others.

Communication

- Communicating effectively with each other.
- Experiencing the importance of communication.

Influence

- Using the proper communication to influence others.
- Adjusting to others by using their behavioral preference.

More research was conducted and combined into a list of requirements. These requirements were the basis for the three alternatives. All three concepts had the same theme of a criminal investigation. This theme is familiar for most people and therefore fits the broad target group the best. Also, with a game about a criminal investigation, the learning goals are automatically integrated to a certain degree. Communication and influencing of suspects or witnesses are often crucial for a successful investigation.

The main difference between the alternatives is the way of imitating behavior. The first concept makes use of an actor that will reflect a certain behavioral preference, while the players should play a role in the second concept. The third concept avoids any roleplay and focuses on 'natural behavior'.

After conducting a multi-criteria analysis, the second alternative was defined as most suitable for this assignment and was further developed. This concept divides the players into two teams; a team of detectives and a team of witnesses of the crime. The game consists of a number of phases the teams will pass through separately. There is a different storyline for each team in the game. The detective team should investigate and gather information about the suspects during the game phases. The witnesses on the other hand, will gather

information about the events they witnessed on the day of the crime. After both teams gathered information about the crime during the first rounds, they will come together in the 'interrogation round'. During this round the teams will question each other in order to solve the case.

Each game phase emphasizes some of the learning goals and these will be communicated to the players during the game. Between the phases, short reflection rounds take place. Reflecting on each phase and its learning goals is important for the added value of the game.

This concept development led to a first user test in which the functionality and understandability of the design were tested. For this test, four people were invited to play the game. The game materials were developed and the test participants responded positively to the game. With some minor adjustments the final game design was created. This design is delivered to Ondernemende Gasten, who will further develop the game and bring it on the market eventually.