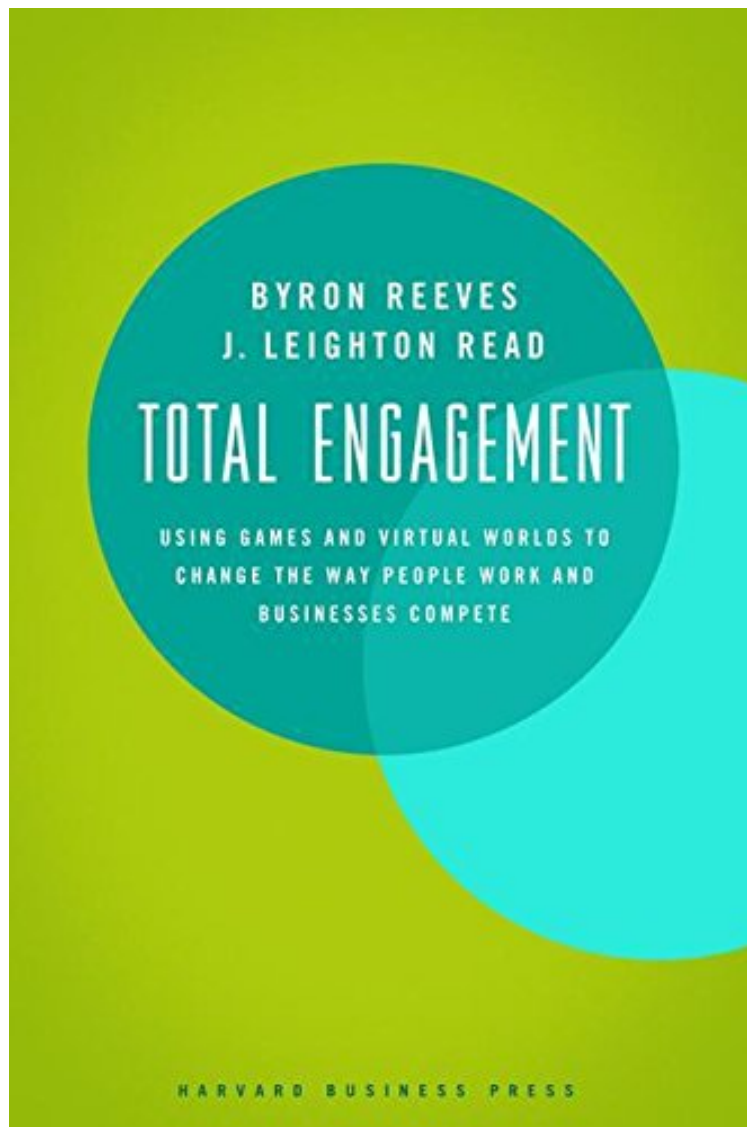


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Total Engagement: How Games and Virtual Worlds Are Changing the Way People Work and Businesses Compete

Byron Reeves, J. Leighton Read

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Byron Reeves, J. Leighton Read : Total Engagement: How Games and Virtual Worlds Are Changing the Way People Work and Businesses Compete before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Total Engagement: How Games and Virtual Worlds Are Changing the Way People Work and Businesses Compete:

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. A Peek into the Future?By James FruchtermanI just finished

reading the book Total Engagement. It's rare that I read a book that has me wondering if the authors have caught a glimpse of an unexpected future, and that ten or twenty years from now people will be looking back and be saying: that was the book that spotted this crucial trend. Having lived in Silicon Valley for many years, I'm used to having that experience of being exposed to the future ahead of its time. This could be one of them. The thesis is simple. Millions of people pay each month to participate in massive multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs). I've tried them, and I have friends (and kids) that have been totally sucked into them. They punch a bunch of psychological tickets for humans: the game designers know what they're doing. The book discusses how this is done: * an epic story line (we're saving the galaxy from the Crumlons) * clear paths to advancement, with transparency about your skills and performance * intensely meritocratic societies called guilds that work together in groups to accomplish major tasks * strong social interactions with other people * the ability to try, fail and try again rapidly, learning quickly * the option to try on leadership roles For many people, these games are where they come alive and truly experience their potential to solve problems, meet challenges and lead a team. And then they go into the modern workplace, which is frequently as stultifying as these virtual worlds are thrilling. Fail! Read and Reeves are convinced that at least some smart workplaces of the future are going to adapt some of the ways of the games to more fully engage their employees and become more effective as economic organizations. They don't have a magic formula for how to do this, but do invest a great deal of time analyzing what makes people inside these games tick and how those concepts transfer to the workplace. Fascinating ideas, and well worth watching and thinking about. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Total Engagement is totally engaging! By DSE Each chapter in this book begins with an interesting short story. The story immerses you into the plot and you want to read the rest of the chapter. Passionate and enthusiastic employees outperform the average workforce. 3D virtual game environments, to do work in, is certainly the engaging and entertaining way to get work done with high productivity and quality, within organizations. The book starts with a great introduction with excellent references in first chapter. You will be surprised by who plays and by how much, the topic of the second chapter, along with why these people play the games. Chapter three acknowledges that certain tacit work sucks and discusses corporate problems that games *might* solve (note emphasis). Chapter four describes the elements of best games. The book dedicates a chapter each to virtual currencies, teams, individuals and leaders. Another chapter discusses play and work productivity and suggests a natural convergence of work and play driven by the strong need of engaged workers in a workplace, and improvements in technology in the coming years. I highly recommend this book. I still have to read chapters 10 and 12, but the authors in chapter 11, caution against the side effects of using games in businesses and concludes - the somewhat obvious - that not every type of work is suitable in a game environment. Thank you, Byron and Leighton for this excellent resource! 7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Game on! Your move. By MaltBalls "...on average many [game] players are physically healthier, work harder, make better grades, earn higher salaries, and are more socially connected than those who play less or not at all." Total Engagement, p. 13 I have always been intrigued with the notion that one's work should be challenging, and at the same time: fun. Seriously fun. So, of course, this book by Byron Reeves and J. Leighton Read caught my attention: Total Engagement: Using Games and Virtual Worlds to Change the Way People Work and Businesses Compete. The book successfully fueled my "fun notion" with compelling business cases and research showing that gaming is not just for high school boys anymore. [Or grown-up kids such as myself.] If businesses want to compete successfully in today's culture, then we will have to overcome our taboo feelings of "playing games" at work. I could easily write a paper around this book, but I want to keep this brief - so I'll just share three ideas from the book: * On why people play games: In short, it's all about achievement, immersion, exploration, competition and socializing. Do you see the correlation to the business? * On virtual money: One economics professor teaches that "economics is less about money than it is about making choices in the face of scarcity." This principle is demonstrated well in the context of gaming, and aptly applied to the art of making leadership decisions. * On which large enterprises are already experimenting in the field: Check out IBM and Oracle Sun for starters. If you are in a senior leadership role in your company or run your own business, I invite you to visit the book's website to read the executive reviews and the excerpts. If anything, it will help you understand why the leadership practices of "yesterday" really don't work well with this generation entering the workforce. Game on! Your move. [This review is a cross-post from my personal blog.]

Can the workplace be more productive by including avatars, three-dimensional environments, and participant-driven outcomes? This grounded and thought-provoking book by Byron Reeves and Leighton Read proves that it is not only possible, it is inevitable. Implementing components of multiplayer computer games in the workplace will address a host of age-old problems. Games can not only stem boredom and decrease turnover, but also enhance collaboration and encourage creative leadership. Games require extraordinary teamwork, elaborate data analysis and strategy, recruitment and retention of top players, and quick decision making. Recreating some elements of games - such as positioning tasks within stories, creating internal economies, and implementing participant-driven communication systems - can not only boost employee engagement but overall productivity. Of course, the strong psychological power of games can have both positive and negative consequences for the workplace. That's why it's important to put them into practice correctly from the beginning - and Reeves and Read explain how by showing which good design

principles are a powerful antidote to the addictive and stress-inducing potential of games. Supported by specific case studies and years of research, Total Engagement will completely change the way you view both work and play.

From Booklist This collaboration between a Stanford University professor and a venture capitalist, both geeks at heart, turns out to live up, quite literally, to its title. By engaging their readers via immersion into fictional characters' work and play, Reeves and Read prove points 1 through 857: that games and virtual reality provide the right kind of business platform to solve common corporate people problems. Case one involves repetitive, boring routine work, as in call centers, being transformed in true-game environments by creating a stage, rules, and rewards that make continuous answering a compelling and intriguing job. Case two involves safety-driven video surveillance workers, when repositioned in a virtual world, becoming more attentive, more involved in the task, and, essentially, more productive. That the likes of IBM, Microsoft, and Sun are already proactively using avatars and games with style sheets as partial guidance should come as no surprise. The real amazement is that by erasing the boundaries between work and play, both these four-letter words can ring with employee passion and commitment. --Barbara Jacobs

About the Author Byron Reeves is a professor at Stanford University, and has authored over a hundred published studies on responses to immersive features of media, including games. J. Leighton Read is a physician, inventor, successful biotechnology founder, CEO, and venture capitalist.