

The Playcentric Design Process

- Setting up player experience goals

- the faster you can get players involved the better
- these are goals the designers sets for the type of experience the player will have in the game
- these are not features,
- What are features? Name some features?
- player experience goals are descriptions of unique and interesting situations you hope players will find themselves in
- Example: players will have the freedom to choose to play the game in any order they want
- doing this at the beginning of the design process will focus your creativity
- these descriptions do not mention how these goals will be implemented in the game
- this is the hardest thing to do when learning how to design games
- seeing past the features of the game and exploring goals requires the designer to analyze why games are fun, how the player is experiencing the game

Playtesting and Prototyping

- should be done as early in the design process as possible
- make a prototype and play it
- could be paper, pens, cards or acting it out
- you want to do this during its most simplistic form
- Why?
- making changes is easy
- do this before you hire any programmers, artists or producers
- it becomes harder to change the design of the game once you begin production

Iterations

- design, test and evaluate your game over and over and over again
- each time strive to improve your gameplay, feature, characters and story
- play, play, play and play some more

Steps of Making a Game

1. Brainstorming

- a. set play experience goals
- b. come up with game concepts or mechanics that achieve player experience goals
- c. narrow your list to three
- d. write up a one-page description of these 3 goals
- e. test them

2. Physical Prototype

- a. create using pen and paper or other materials
- b. playtest
- c. when your prototype works and you are able to achieve your player experience goals, then write a 3-6 page treatment explaining how the game functions

3. Presentation

- a. include demo artwork and your 3-6 page gameplay treatment

4. Software Prototype

- a. create rough computer models of the core gameplay
- b. playtest simple computer model
- c. when working software prototype meets player experience goals, then move on to documentation

5. Design Documentation

- e. write down every aspect of the game, including every level, complete story arcs and gameplay features

6. Production

- a. this is where you work with team members to make every aspect of the game
- b. it is critical to make sure that game assets match what is described in the design document
- c. this is the stage where you create final artwork and 3D models
- d. playtest every piece of in-game art, levels and animation
- e. this is where a lot of designers end up designing their game = bad

7. Quality Assurance

- a. playtest playtest playtest
- b. make sure all types of gamers test your game