

***KEEP THE FUN ALIVE!!!* COMMON PROBLEMS WITH GAMES**

GUIDELINES TO MAKE SURE YOUR GAMES KEEP PLAYERS ENGAGED UNTIL THE VERY, VERY END.

"A game is not fun unless a player believes they have some reasonable chance to win until the moment the game ends."

-- DAVE HOWELL, author and game designer

"A Player will have fun as long as they comprehend all their options, but just don't know which will be the right solution."

-- RAPH KOSTER, author and game designer

AVOID KINGMAKING: a situation when a player is made to choose *who else* will win the game at a certain point.

- Kingchoosing: one player is forced to make the decision of who will win the game
- Kingmaking: stealing the win from one player so it lands in the lap of another
 - Rewarding a kingmaker: making it "more fun" for the clear loser to sabotage another player's chances at winning.
- Kingbreaking: the clear winner is utterly crushed by a clear loser, so the second place (or worse-off) player wins.

STOP REWARDING THE LEADER

- Prevent a "runaway leader" situation, which makes it easier for the leader to stay ahead of anyone else.
- "Rubber-banding": making sure players behind the leader can catch up.
- "Inherent deceleration": a form of "rubber-banding" that makes it tougher for a leader to move ahead and/or clinch the victory.

MONITOR PLAYER INFLUENCE

- "Group Solitaire": a game where there is pretty much NO interaction between other players.
- "Pile On": where everyone has free and open license and ability to crush the player in the lead.
- Find a "happy medium" between these two extremes.

FORCING A REVERSAL CAN SUCK: making players "move back" on the track as a penalty.

- This is a key mechanic in many simple games: Candyland, Sorry, Aggravation, Snakes & Ladders
- Can be applied to "secondary resources" instead of obvious progress monitors
 - Money
 - Speed/Lose-a-Turn
 - Effectiveness at tasks
- Setbacks can be temporary or permanent, even phase-based

...REASONS TO INCLUDE AT LEAST *SOME* LUCK

- Can go good or bad for a player: it's a "fork in the road" or "flip of a coin"
- Players won't feel so bad about losing
- It's gratifying to feel that luck is on your side
- Gives less-skilled/intelligent players a chance to win, even against highly-skilled/hard-thinking players
- Unless a game is 100% luck, attempt to conceal the reliance on luck