

The Importance of **Fun** in the Workplace



Holly Cummins
IBM **Cloud** Garage
@holly_cummins



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A GARAGE THAT DEVELOPERS CAN CALL HOME FOR CLOUD INNOVATION



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LAST MONTH MY company opened the first [Bluemix Garage](#), a place where developers, product managers and designers from the smallest startups to the largest companies can congregate, network and collaborate to build the

I'm from the IBM Cloud Garage.



Culture

Create a high-performance culture

Culture is key to the success of an agile transformation. The culture must support small, colocated teams that are autonomous and able to make decisions that are based on efficiency and knowledge.

Your squads have a diverse set of skills that support your transformation and enable the team to pivot in response to market feedback. Defining the right set of organizational roles and ensuring that teams respect and understand those roles are important aspects of a successful business that moves with speed and can pivot based on feedback.

Build your team



Follow agile principles



Fail fast and learn fast



Have fun at work



Manage your work by using Kanban



Run daily standups



Create a clear definition of done



Plan physical spaces for great outcomes

Let's talk

Discover

Learn

Think

Operate

Develop

Reason

Culture


Culture

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Run daily standups



Create a clear definition of done



Plan physical spaces for great outcomes

Let's talk

Is this a fun talk?

Is this a fun talk?

No. It's a talk about fun.

That's **different**.

Obviously.

10 step plan to achieve FUN.

1. Quantify and Qualify your **FUN** metrics
2. Create a Chief **FUN** Officer (CFO) role
3. Gamify your daily tasks to make them more **FUN**
4. Enthusiastically high five everyone each morning for **FUN**
5. Install a **FUN** ball pit
6. Inject a **FUN** word of the day into conversations
7. Wear **FUN** clothing, something with flair
8. Create **FUN** certificates with gold star systems - relive the fun of kindergarten!
9. Nominate **FUN** assessors for each team
10. Laugh Out Loud (LOL) once a day in the office, others will enjoy your **FUN**

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who thinks this is a
good idea?



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Holly Cummins

Cloud Garage WW Development Discipline Leader at IBM

IBM • University of Oxford

London, United Kingdom • 500+

Specialties: Bluemix , Having fun at work

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Are you brave enough?





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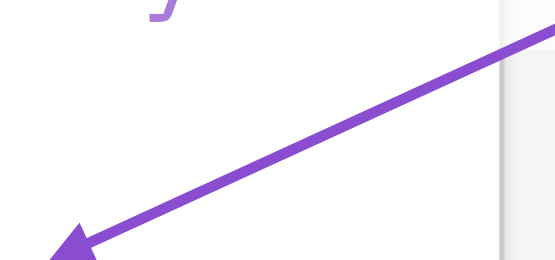
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Specialties: Bluemix

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Are you brave enough?



I'm not :)

20 POWERFUL

WORDS TO USE IN A COVER LETTER

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. SOLVED | 11. INNOVATIVE |
| 2. PROMOTED | 12. TRAINED |
| 3. OVERSAW | 13. BUILT |
| 4. IMPROVED | 14. INTRODUCED |
| 5. ADAPTED | 15. STRENGTHENED |
| 6. POSITIVITY | 16. DIRECTED |
| 7. INITIATED | 17. PERSUADED |
| 8. PLANNED | 18. ORGANIZED |
| 9. MANAGED | 19. PROJECTED |
| 10. LEAD | 20. ASSESSED |

-REMEMBER-

Don't over use it and be yourself!

20 POWERFUL

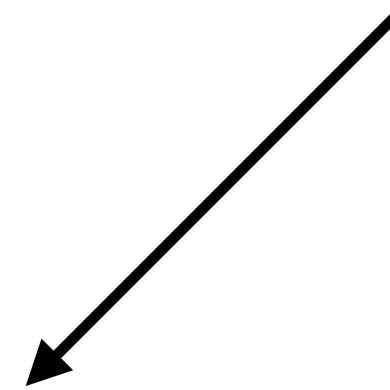
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-REMEMBER-

Don't over use it and be yourself!

Wait. Where's "fun-loving"?



20 POWERFUL

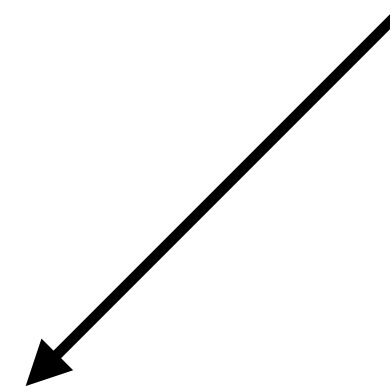
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-REMEMBER-

Don't over use it and be yourself!

Wait. Where's "fun-loving"?



We keep fun a **secret**.



I HAD FUN ONCE

What is Fun?

"Fun is a point on the intersection of engagement levels and social interaction for a given activity."

Fun: An Exploration in its Relevance to Interaction Design - Elise Woolley, 2010

Exploration



Photo by Linearahandmade@etsy

Puzzle



Photo by William Warby

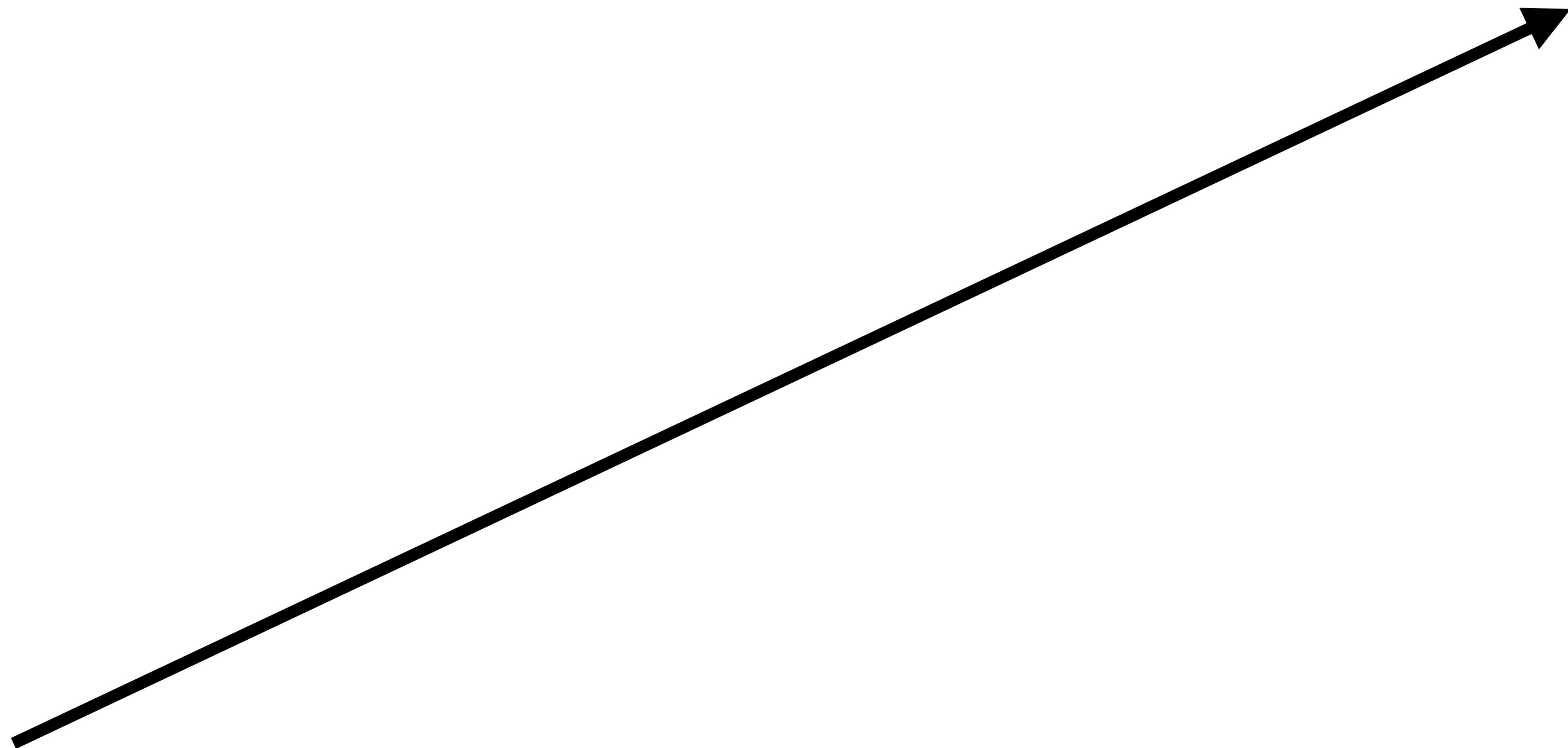


Play

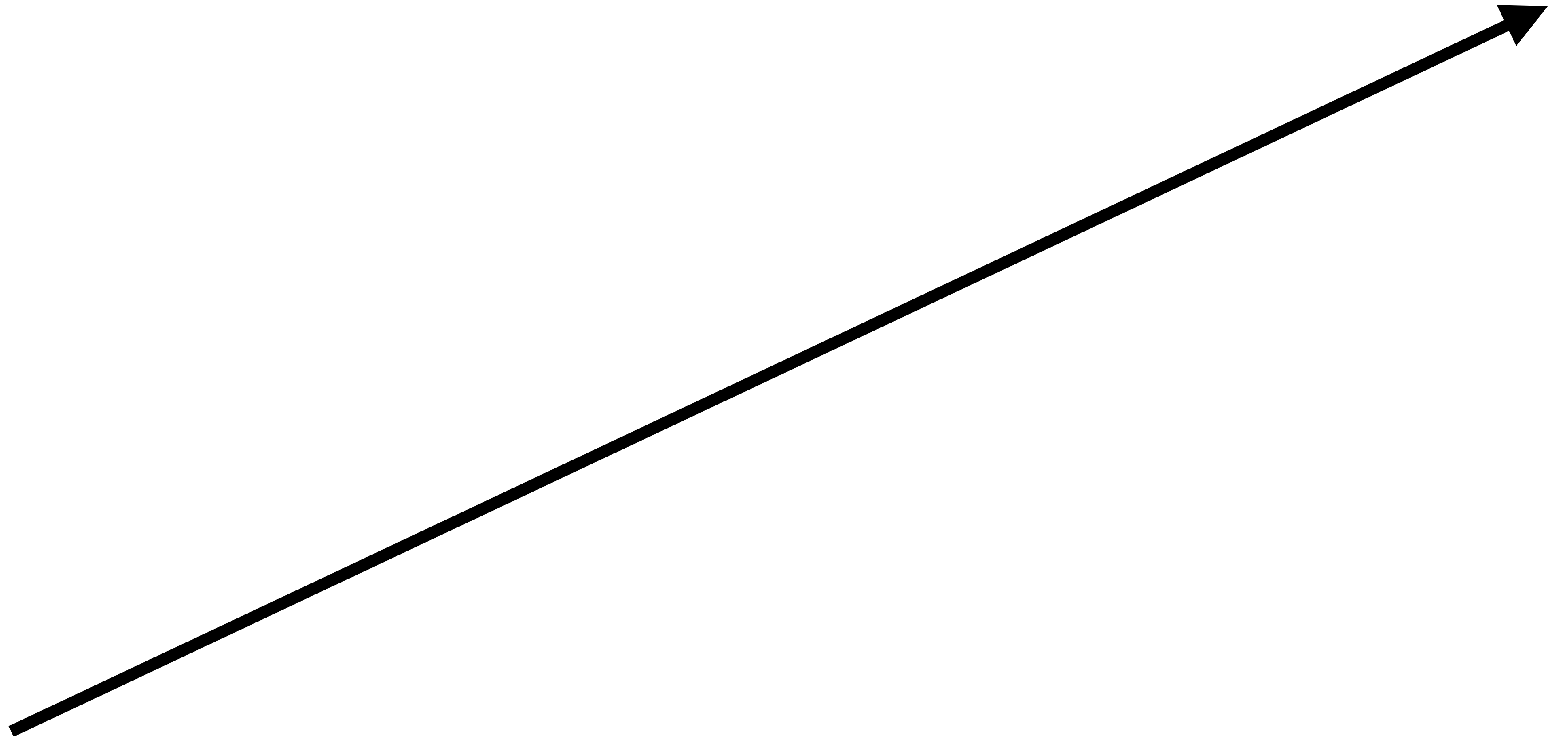
Game



Work?

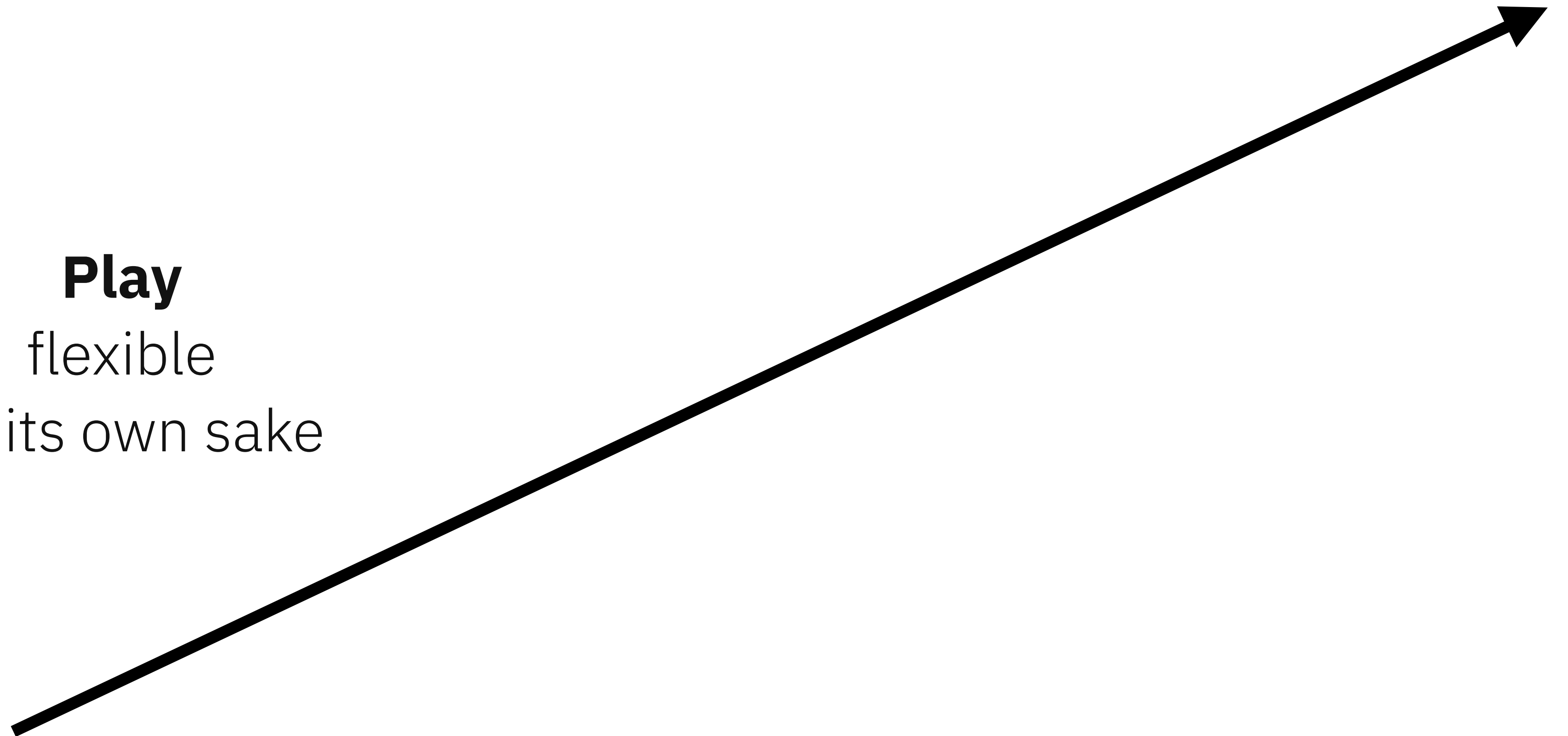


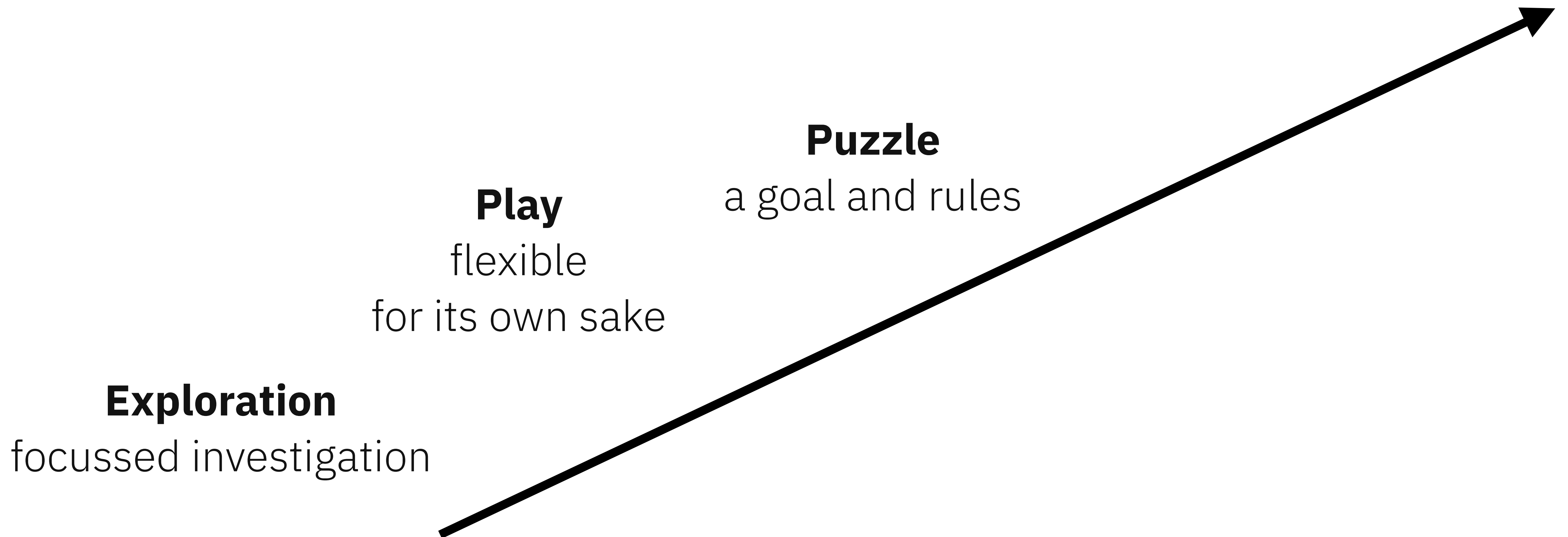
Exploration
focussed investigation

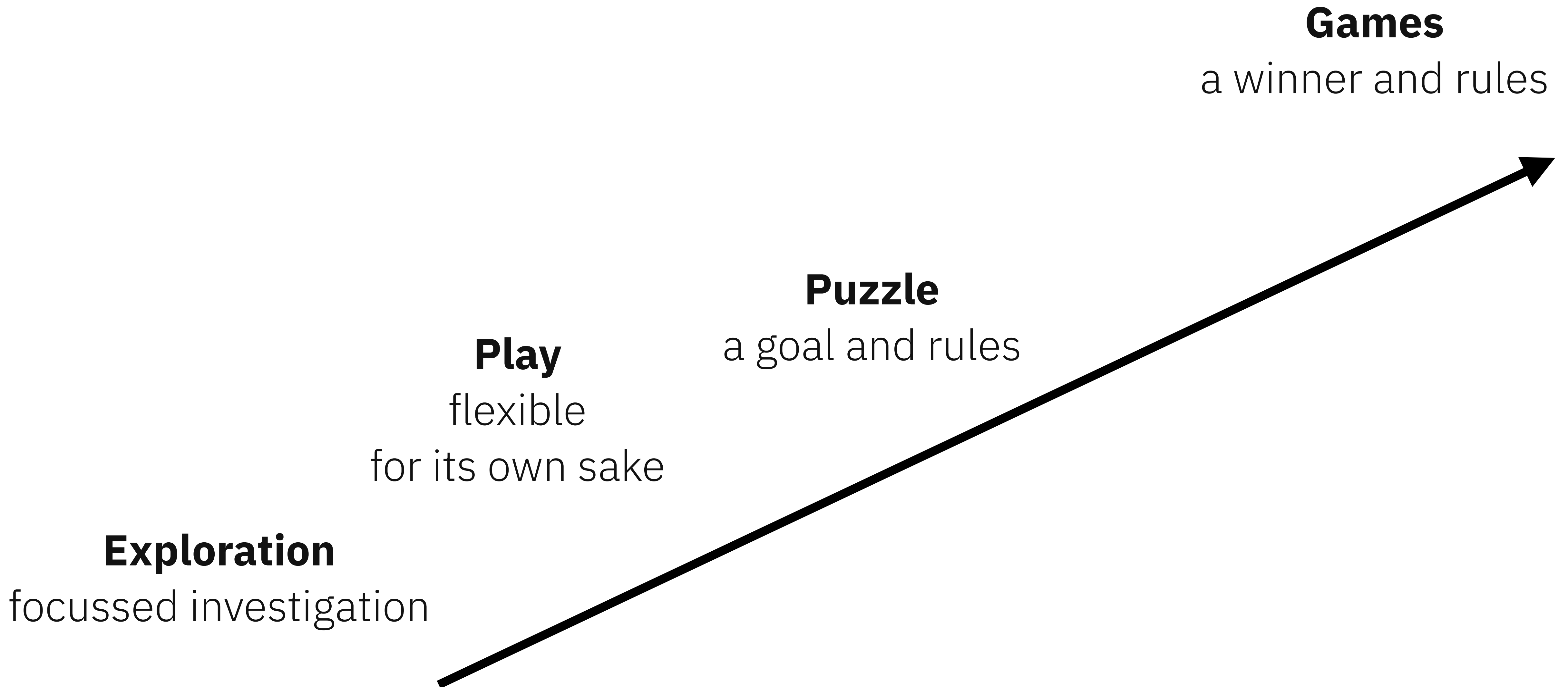


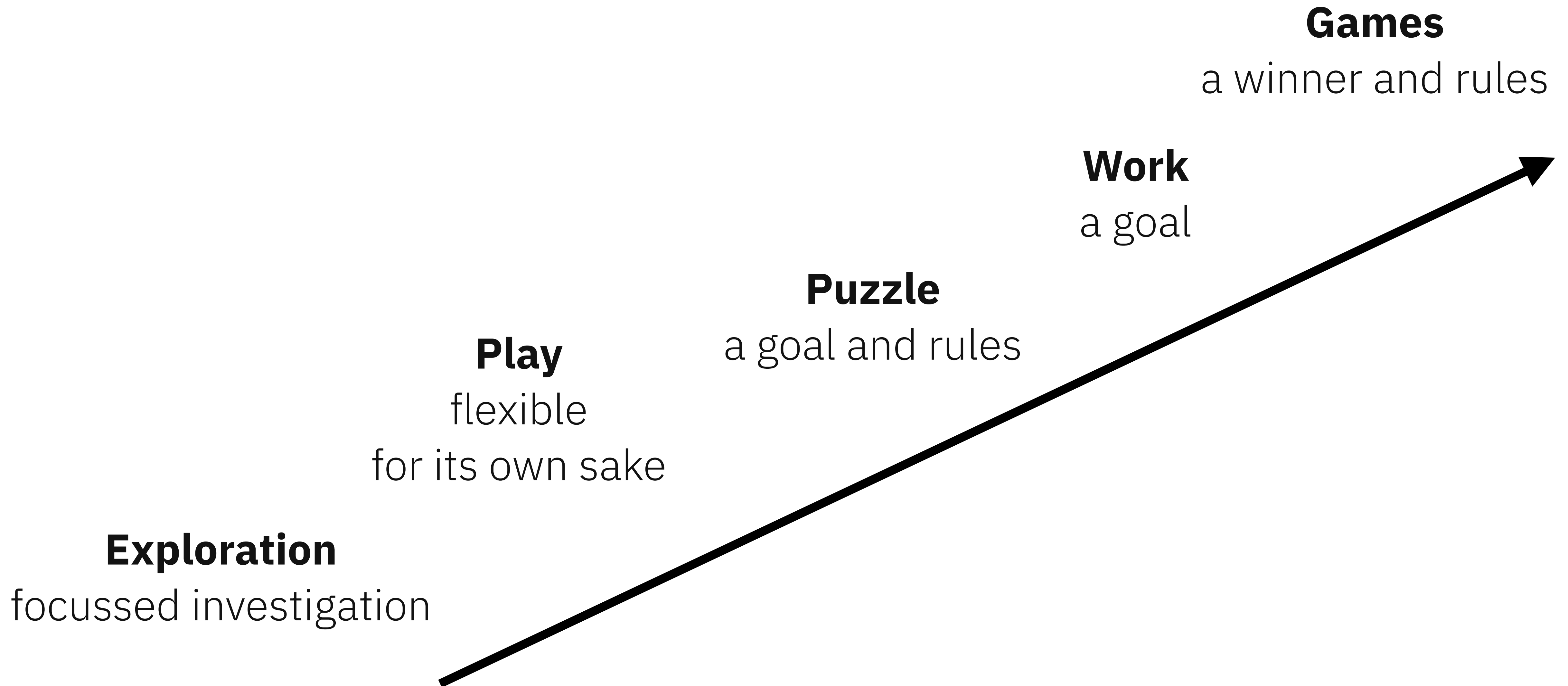
Play
flexible
for its own sake

Exploration
focussed investigation











Positive
affect



It feels
good

Computers are **fun**.

Exploration



Photo by Linearahandmade@etsy



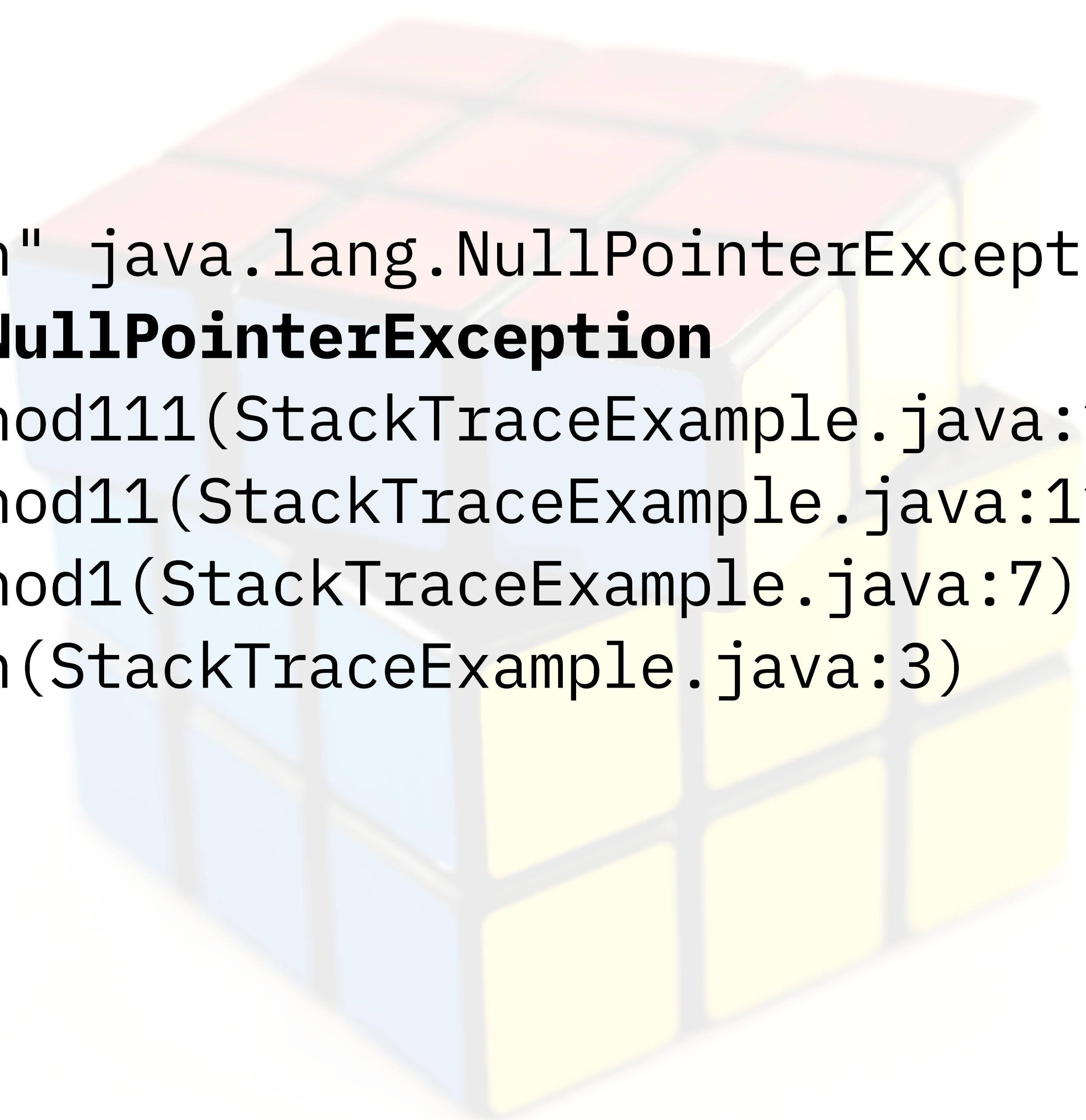
> Hello, World

Exploration

Puzzle



Photo by William Warby



Exception in thread "main" java.lang.NullPointerException:
WhyWhyWhyIsThisHappeningNullPointerException
at StackTraceExample.method111(StackTraceExample.java:15)
at StackTraceExample.method11(StackTraceExample.java:11)
at StackTraceExample.method1(StackTraceExample.java:7)
at StackTraceExample.main(StackTraceExample.java:3)

Puzzle

Game

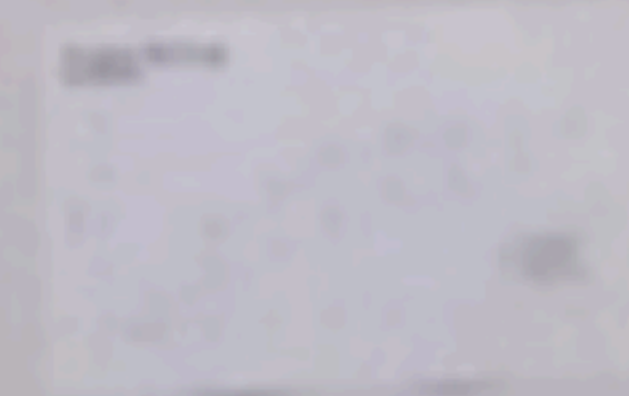
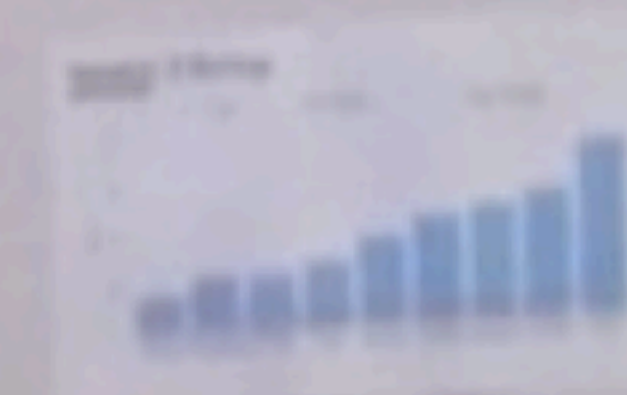
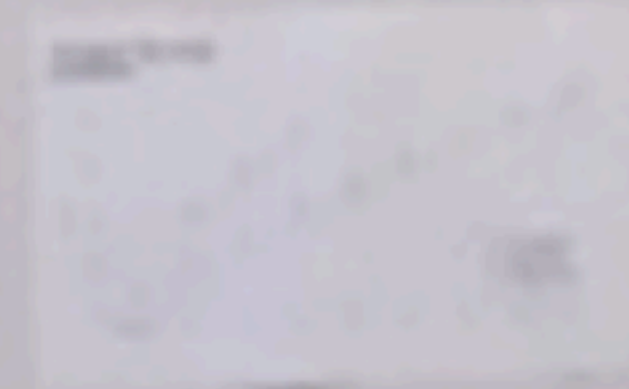
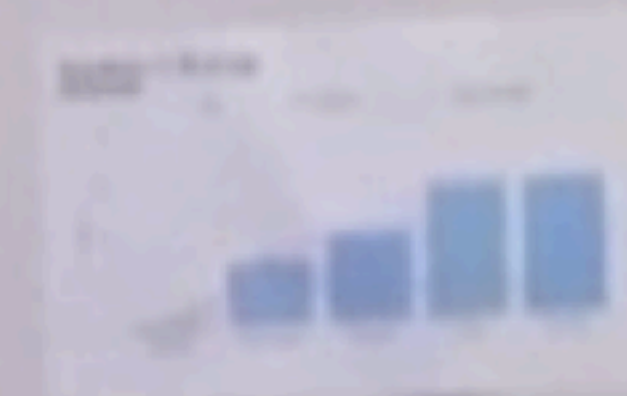
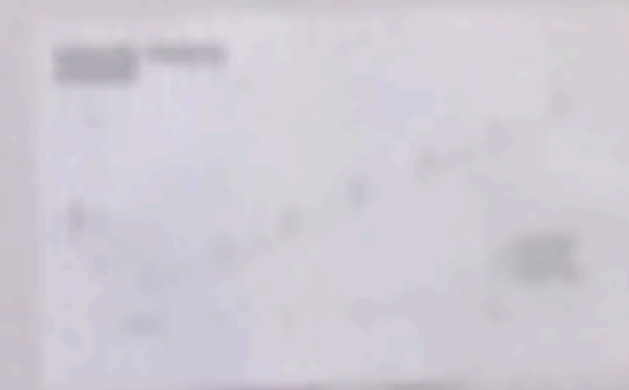
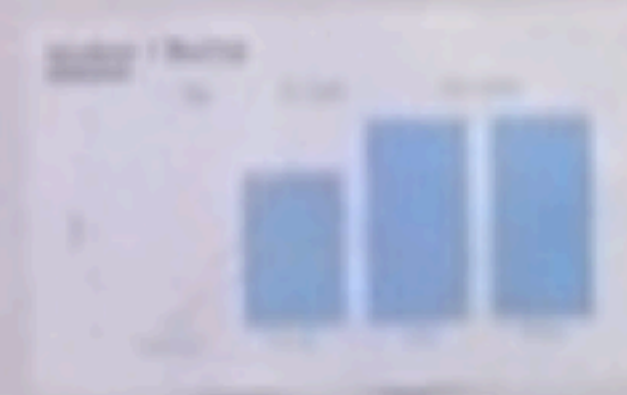


Design

Review low-fidelity wireframes and clickable prototypes quickly and iteratively.

Velocity

Experience weekly iterations and track development velocity to plan and prioritize.



Game

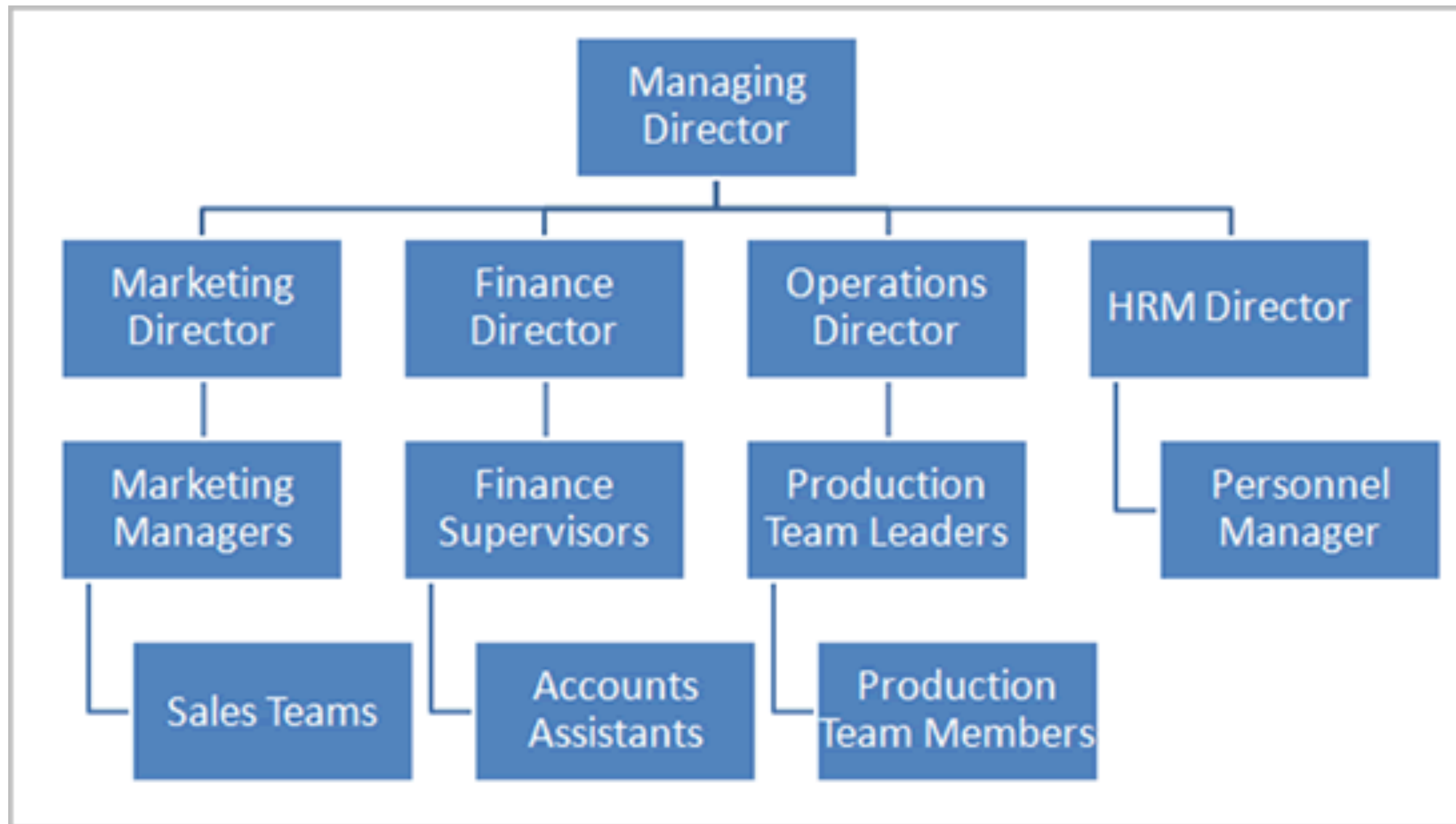
It feels
good





Why are most of our workplaces
Not Fun?

The 1980/90's Management Model



Very hierarchical

Control favoured over autonomy

Technology seen as a cost centre





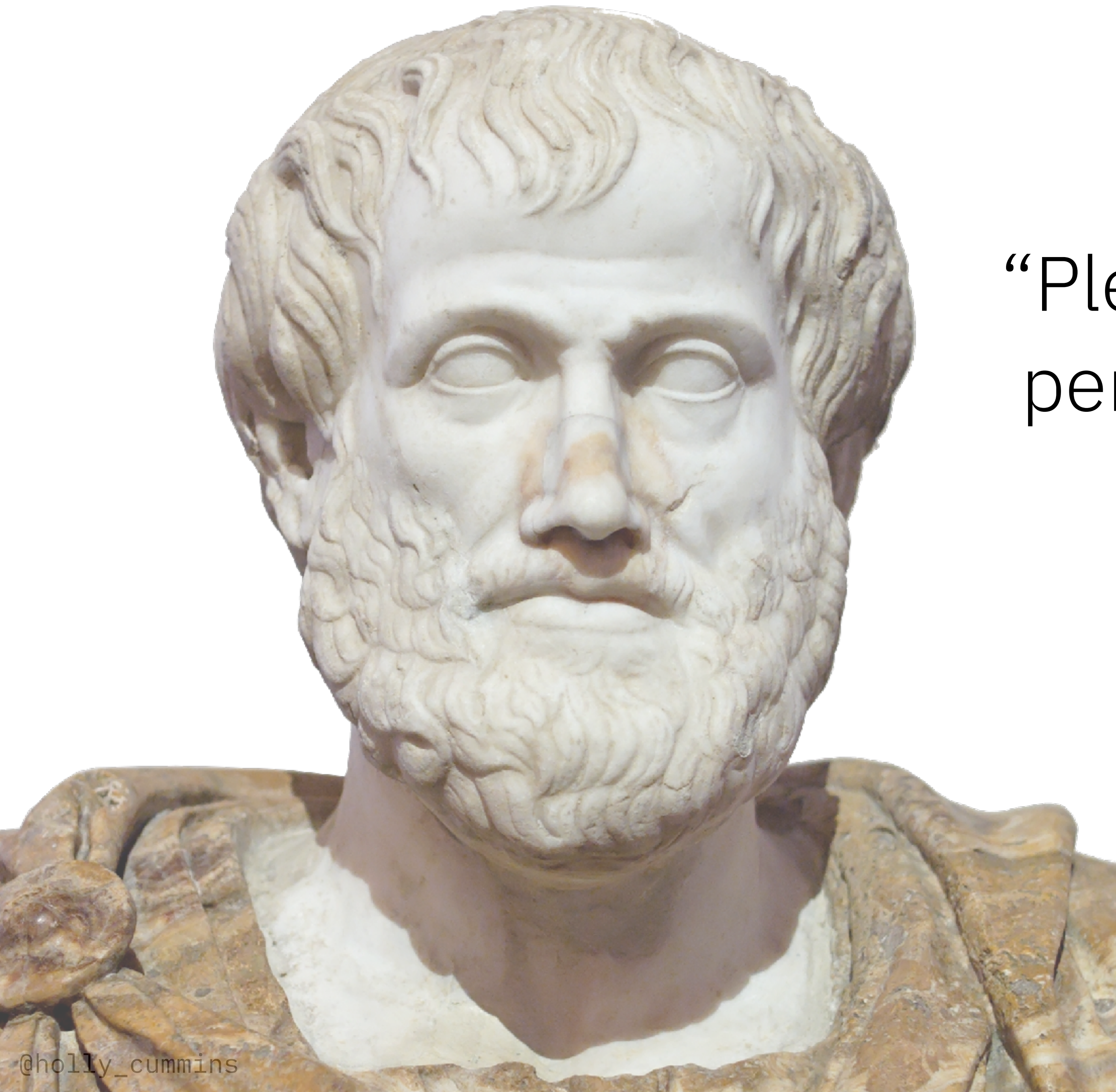
the value of
fun in the
workplace

IBM Watson IoT Centre, Munich



You must take the time to
play to be creative.

John Cohn



“Pleasure in the job puts
perfection in the work.”

— Aristotle

Research shows:
Fun is good for business.

Does Happiness Promote Career Success?

Julia K. Boehm
Sonja Lyubomirsky
University of California, Riverside

Past research has demonstrated a relationship between happiness and workplace success. For example, compared with their less happy peers, happy people earn more money, display superior performance, and perform more helpful acts. Researchers have often assumed that an employee is happy and satisfied because he or she is successful. In this article, the authors review evidence in support of an alternative hypothesis—namely, that happiness is a source of why particular employees are more successful than others. To this end, the authors consider evidence from three types of studies—cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental—that relate happiness to various work outcomes. Taken together, the evidence suggests that happiness is not only correlated with workplace success but that happiness often precedes measures of success and that induction of positive affect leads to improved workplace outcomes.

Keywords: happiness; subjective well-being; positive emotion; work; career; success

A wealth of research suggests that happy and satisfied individuals are relatively more successful in the workplace. For example, happiness is related to income (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2002), favorable evaluations by a superior (Cropanzano & Wright, 1999), helping fellow workers (George, 1991), and social support from col-

Research shows:
Fun is good for business.

**Effects of Workplace Fun on Employee Behaviors:
Focused on Generation Y in the Hospitality Industry**

Young Gin Choi
Hospitality Management and Dietetics
Kansas State University, USA

Junehee Kwon
Hospitality Management and Dietetics
Kansas State University, USA

and

Wansoo Kim
Tourism Management
Dong-A University, Korea

ABSTRACT

The conceptual model of this study was tested based on responses from 234 hospitality students in the US who are Generation Yers and had worked in the hospitality industry for more than 3 months. This study revealed that Generation Y employees' attitude toward workplace fun positively affects their experienced workplace fun. In turn, Generation Yers' experienced workplace fun showed direct effects on their job satisfaction, task performance, and interpersonal citizenship behaviors. Affected by experienced workplace fun, job satisfaction significantly enhanced employees' task performance and interpersonal job satisfaction. In essence, for Generation Y employees in hospitality businesses, workplace fun is a significant factor in their job satisfaction, task performance, and interpersonal citizenship behavior. These findings provide a significant insight to hospitality employers who typically have a hard time to attract best young talents and motivate them mainly due to low-paying, low-status nature of hospitality jobs.

Keywords: *workplace fun, Generation Y, hospitality business, job satisfaction, task performance, interpersonal citizenship behavior.*

INTRODUCTION

A growing number of business writers and consultants maintain that fun at work is essential for enhancing employee motivation and productivity, reducing stress (Karl, Peluchette, Hall, & Harland, 2005). According to Glasser (1994), having fun is the highest level of need of workers and often unmet at work while the lower levels of needs are mostly met at work. Bolton and Houlihan (2009) even articulated that fun at work seems become an established and accepted contributor to advisable people management and thus the bottom line. Indeed, previous academic studies have linked workplace fun with job satisfaction (Karl & Peluchette, 2006) and with task performance and organizational citizenship behavior (Fluegge, 2008).

Studies have shown...

Employee fun

Studies have shown...

Employee fun 

Studies have shown...



Studies have shown...

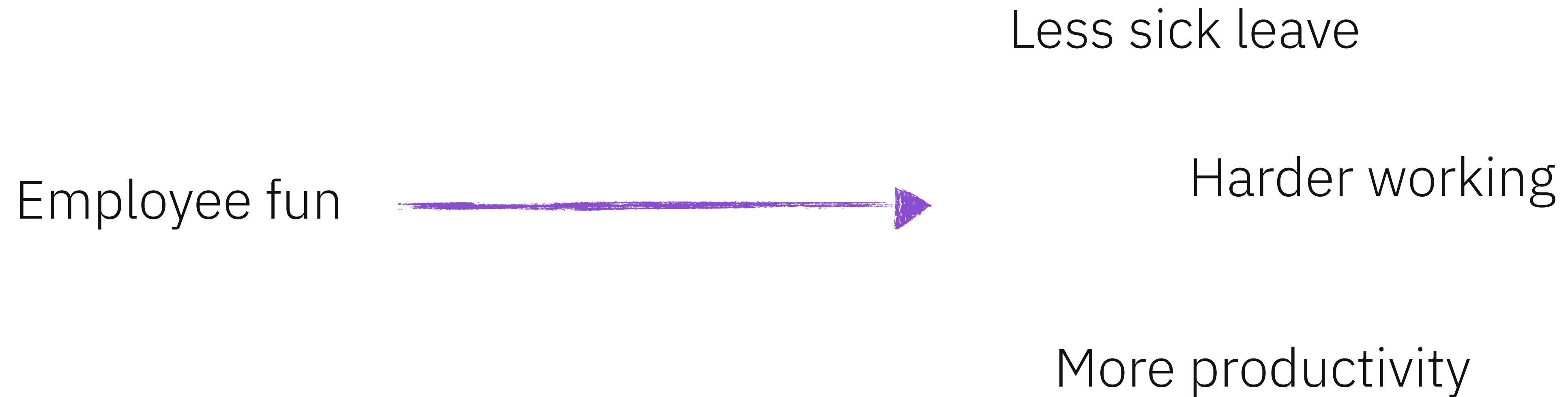
Employee fun



Less sick leave

Harder working

Studies have shown...



Play behaviour is common in young farmed animals. Research shows that litters of pigs vary consistently in how much they play - more playful litters grow faster!



temperature which is captured in the thermal image.



Livestock

4.7m pigs
9.9m cattle and
33.3m sheep and
167.6m poultry

Source: Defra Agriculture in the UK 2015



Researchers are assessing the degree to which early life experiences affect animal welfare. Mothering reduces anxiety in ewes, promotes learning in the lamb and is a source of positive experiences for both mother and young, so improving their chances of survival.

piglet litters **grow** faster if they play more



Positive Intelligence

by **Shawn Achor**

FROM THE JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2012 ISSUE

 SUMMARY  SAVE  SHARE  TEXT SIZE  PRINT **\$8.95** BUY COPIES



In July 2010 Burt's Bees, a personal-care products company, was undergoing enormous change as it began a global expansion into 19 new countries. In this kind of high-pressure situation, many leaders pester their deputies with frequent meetings or flood their in-boxes with urgent demands. In doing so, managers jack up everyone's anxiety level, which activates the portion of the brain that processes threats—the amygdala—and steals resources from the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for

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"Your brain at positive is 31% more productive than your brain at negative, neutral or stressed."

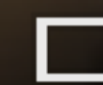


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MashupZone



0:15 / 4:17



Happiness and Productivity

Andrew J. Oswald*, Eugenio Proto**, and Daniel Sgroi**

*University of Warwick, UK, and IZA Bonn, Germany

**University of Warwick, UK

JOLE 3rd Version: 10 February 2014

Emails: andrew.oswald@warwick.ac.uk; e.proto@warwick.ac.uk; daniel.sgroi@warwick.ac.uk

JEL Classification: D03, J24, C91

Keywords: Well-being; productivity; happiness; personnel economics.

Address: Department of Economics, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, United Kingdom.

Telephone: (+44) 02476 523510

Acknowledgements: For their suggestions, we thank the referees and the editor Paul Oyer. For fine research assistance, and valuable discussions, we are indebted to Malena Digiani, Alex Dobson, Stephen Lovelady, and Lucy Rippon. For advice, we would like to record our deep gratitude to Alice Isen. Insightful suggestions were provided by seminar audiences in Berlin, Birmingham, Bonn, Leicester, Glasgow, HM Treasury London, LSE, Maastricht, PSE Paris, Warwick, York, and Zurich. Special thanks also go to Johannes Abeler, Eve Caroli, Emanuele Castano, Andrew Clark, Alain Cohn, Ernst Fehr, Justina Fischer, Bruno Frey, Dan Gilbert, Amanda Goodall, Greg Jones, Graham Loomes, Rocco Macchiavello, Michel Marchal, Sharon Mukand, Steve Pischke, Nick Powdthavee, Tommaso Reggiani, Daniel Schunk, Claudia Senik, Tania Singer, and Luca Stanca. The first author thanks the University of Zurich for its hospitality and is grateful to the ESRC for a research professorship. The ESRC (through CAGE) and the Leverhulme Trust also provided research support.

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*"Individuals [who just
watched a comedy video]
have approximately
12%
greater productivity."*

How **much** fun can you
expect to have?



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/paulesson/3065570366>

How **much** fun can you
expect to have?

(Yes, this is a picture of
lots of fungi. You're
welcome.)



"I love the smell of napalm in the morning
.... smells like victory."

Bill Kilgore,
Apocalypse Now



"I love the smell of napalm in the morning
.... smells like victory."

Bill Kilgore,
Apocalypse Now

Is **everyone** having fun?







Fun. What could **possibly** go wrong?



Fun. What could **possibly** go wrong?



Fun. What could **possibly** go wrong?

2008: A developer had a lot of fun with Groovy.



Fun. What could **possibly** go wrong?

2008: A developer had a lot of fun with Groovy.



Fun. What could **possibly** go wrong?

2008: A developer had a lot of fun with Groovy.

2009: The others who had to maintain the code
had less fun.

Enjoy fun.
Responsibly.



How to achieve fun

Warning: This is our context and our experience of Fun.

Your workplace culture may be different.

Step 1.

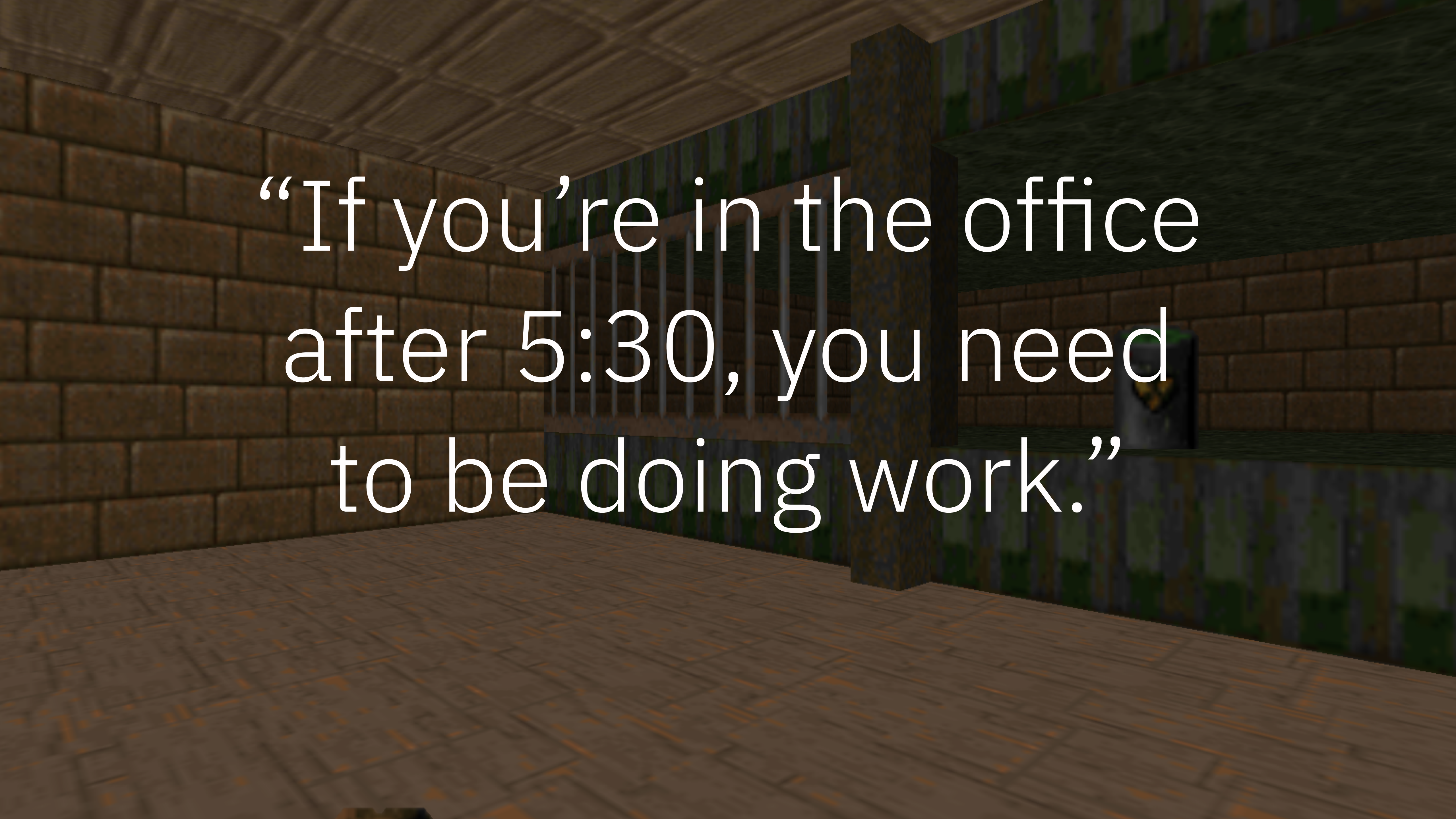
Find un-fun things.

Get rid of them.

Step 0.
Stop prohibiting fun.
Obviously.

“Please stop sending
emails telling people
you are sharing cake.”



A 3D rendered scene of a prison cell. The walls are made of dark brown stone blocks. The floor is made of light brown stone tiles. A barred window is visible in the background. The text is overlaid on the scene.

“If you’re in the office
after 5:30, you need
to be doing work.”

“Why are you smiling? Work isn’t a place to be happy!”

- a prowling project manager

Step 1.

Find un-fun things.

Get rid of them.

Three red flags are flying on tall, thin poles against a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. The flags are positioned diagonally across the frame, from the bottom left towards the top right. Each flagpole has a gold-colored finial at the top. The text is overlaid on the lower left portion of the image.

A process being unfun
is a red flag that it's not
adding **value**.

Step 1.
Find un-fun things.
Get rid of them.

... because they're probably **waste**.

Get **rid** of the stuff that
stops us doing what we
enjoy.

Not-Fun
Meetings
Criticism
Process/Ceremony
Repeating
Sizing
Status reporting
Interruptions
Being a cog

Fun	Not-Fun
Programming	Meetings
Collaboration	Criticism
Just doing it	Process/Ceremony
Learning	Repeating
Designing	Sizing
Doing	Status reporting
Interactions	Interruptions
Making a difference	Being a cog

We can **fix** these.

Fun	Not-Fun
Programming	Meetings
Collaboration	Criticism
Just doing it	Process/Ceremony
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We can **fix** these.


	Fun	Not-Fun	
Findable documentation	Programming	Meetings	Pair programming
Streamlined process	Collaboration	Criticism	#noestimates
Self-generating status	Just doing it	Process/Ceremony	Automation
	Learning	Repeating	
	Designing	Sizing	
	Doing	Status reporting	
MVP	Interactions	Interruptions	Self-directed teams
	Making a difference	Being a cog	

We all hate being told what to do.

Usually, because we know it's wrong.

Let people make their **own** decisions.

Step 2: Add fun

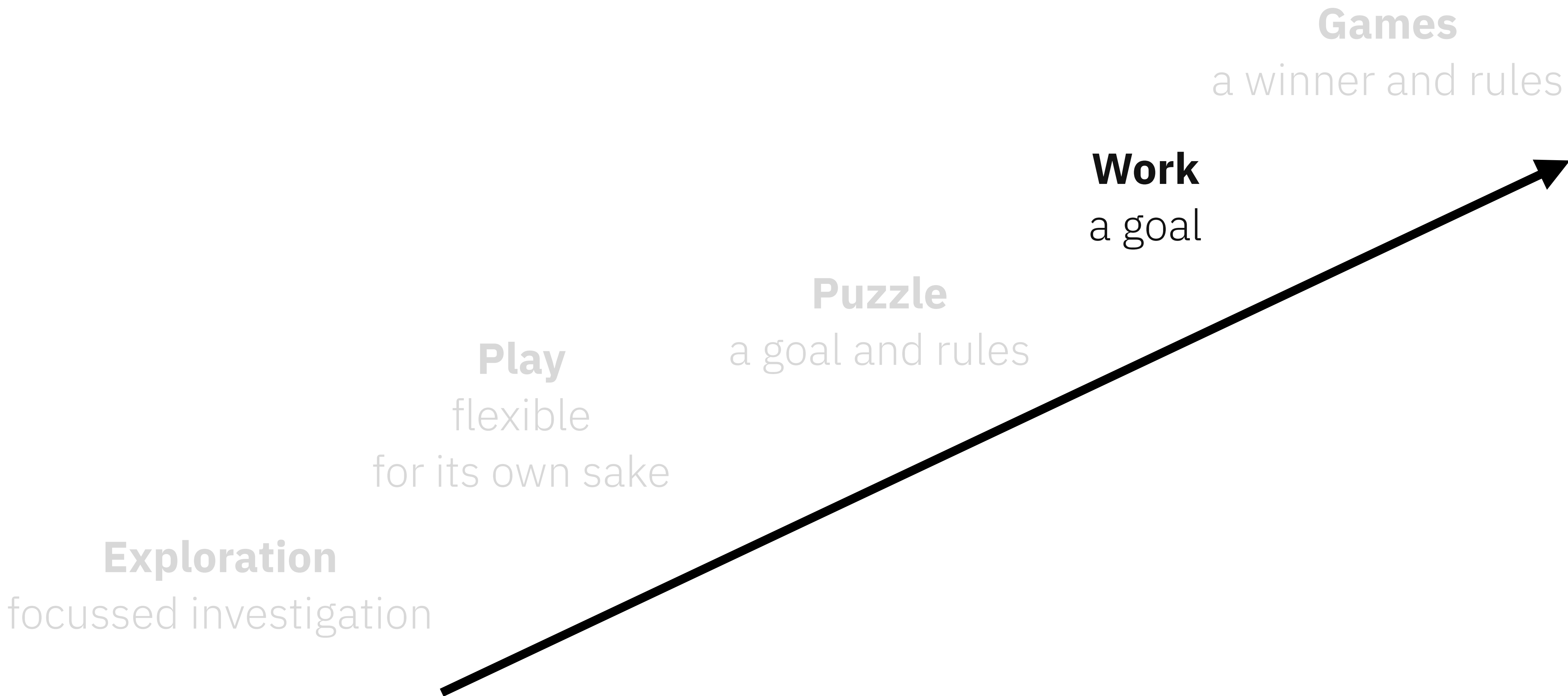
A modern office lounge with wooden floors and pendant lights. In the background, two men are playing ping pong on a black table. To the left, two men are standing near a wooden slat partition; one is holding a red paddle. In the foreground, a red table is set with food, including a pizza box, plates of food, and black mugs. The walls are decorated with butterfly patterns.

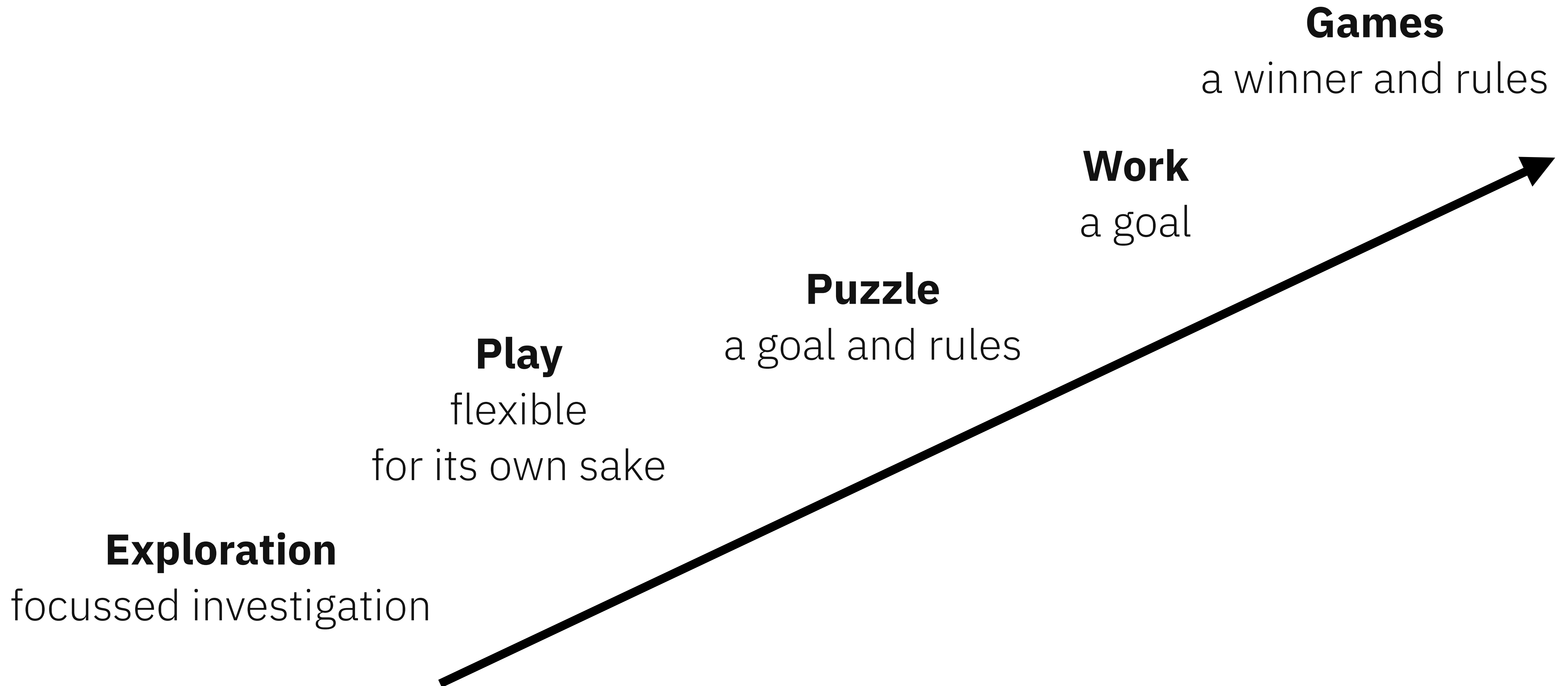
Your brain needs **breaks.**
Breaks with exercise are even better

A modern office lounge with wooden floors and pendant lights. In the background, two men are playing ping pong on a black table. To the left, another man is holding a red paddle. In the foreground, a red table is set with food, including a salad box and plates of food. The walls are decorated with butterfly patterns.

Your brain needs **breaks.**
Breaks with exercise are even better

Can **our job** be fun?





gamification


(management loves)
gamification

what can be gamified?

StackExchange

4,987 3 11 18 43 review help

[java]

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Java (not to be confused with JavaScript) is a general-purpose object-oriented programming language designed to be used in conjunction with the Java Virtual Machine (JVM). "Java platform" is the name for a computing system that has installed tools for developing and running Java programs. Use this ...

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1 question with new activity

0 votes

0 answers


4 views

ListView and custom SurfaceView in same fragment

I'm writing a custom SurfaceView implementation: CustomSurfaceView.java: public class CustomSurfaceView extends SurfaceView { private void init() { } // ... } I want to call CustomSurfaceView ...

[java](#) [android](#) [listview](#) [android-fragments](#) [surfaceview](#)

asked 7 mins ago

sryznfyra446 1 5 23

0 votes

0 answers


8 views

Reading Manifest.mf in war file using java

I am trying to read MANIFEST.MF inside a war file. I am using Eclipse. InputStream inputStream = getClass().getClassLoader().getResourceAsStream("/META-INF/MANIFEST.MF"); BufferedReader reader =...

[java](#) [eclipse](#) [war](#)

asked 9 mins ago

ashlrem25 1 7

0 votes

0 answers

Can't edit Android SQLite database name

I can't edit my database name and I can't find the list of information I putted into the database. If I try to change the database name from "diet" to something else, I'm still able to run but there'...


[java](#) [android](#) [sql](#) [android-sqlite](#)

asked 17 mins ago

1,133,030 questions tagged

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 Documentation Update, August 29th

HOT META POSTS

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Morgan Stanley

SECURITY BOOT CAMP

HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES?



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SECURITY BOOT CAMP

HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES?



Completed

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Submit Result Key:

Submit

Insecure Direct Object Reference Challenge Two

The result key for this challenge is stored in the private message for a user that is not listed below...

Paul Bourke
Will Bailey
Orla Cleary
Ronan Fitzpatrick

Show this profile

TDD

when the rep start, middle and end exceed goals

✓ returns true

when the rep end is less than the start goal

✓ returns false

when the rep start is less than the start goal

✓ returns false

when the rep intermediate is more than the end goal

✓ returns false

calculateROM

when start and end angles are the same

✓ returns the correct ROM

when the start and end angles differ

✓ returns the ROM for the largest angle

when the middle angle is greater than start/end

✓ returns the absolute ROM angle

calculateAvgRomForSet

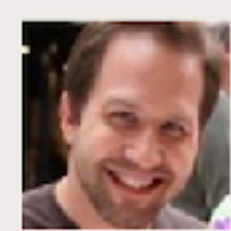
for a set with one rep

✓ returns the appropriate angle for the rep

for a set with two reps

✓ returns the appropriate value for two reps

103 passing (423ms)



Scott Hanselman

"If you've got a continuous integration server setup, you really need a way to guilt people that break the build. You need a Siren of Shame."



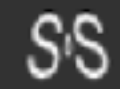
Darrin Maidlow

"It's a fun team building tool that also serves a very important purpose. Broken builds slow people down, and slow scrum teams are bad :). The siren notifies us of problems and ensures they get fixed quickly!"



Travis Stevens

"The Siren has been great for getting people to respond to broken builds and has really increased our team's awareness of broken builds."



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Scott Hanselman

"If you've got a continuous integration server setup, you really need a way to guilt people that break the build. You need a Siren of Shame."



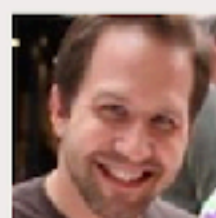
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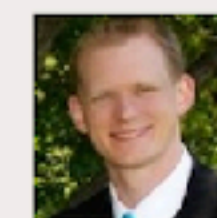
Scott Hanselman

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Travis Stevens

"The Siren has been great for getting people to respond to broken builds and has really increased our team's awareness of broken builds."



Java, JVM,
Javas SE/EE

Sonar Smash : fueling the removal of technical debt through competition

Helen Wallace

James Mac

Mahon



7186 new lines of coverage

7186 new lines of coverage
1000 new tests added

7186 new lines of coverage
1000 new tests added
230 issues fixed

7186 new lines of coverage
1000 new tests added
230 issues fixed
10 years of tech debt resolved

7186 new lines of coverage
1000 new tests added
230 issues fixed
10 years of tech debt resolved

7186 new lines of coverage
1000 new tests added
230 issues fixed
10 years of tech debt resolved

what **dazzling** reward achieved that?

what **dazzling** reward achieved that?



what **dazzling** reward achieved that?



1 free lunch ➡ 230 issues fixed

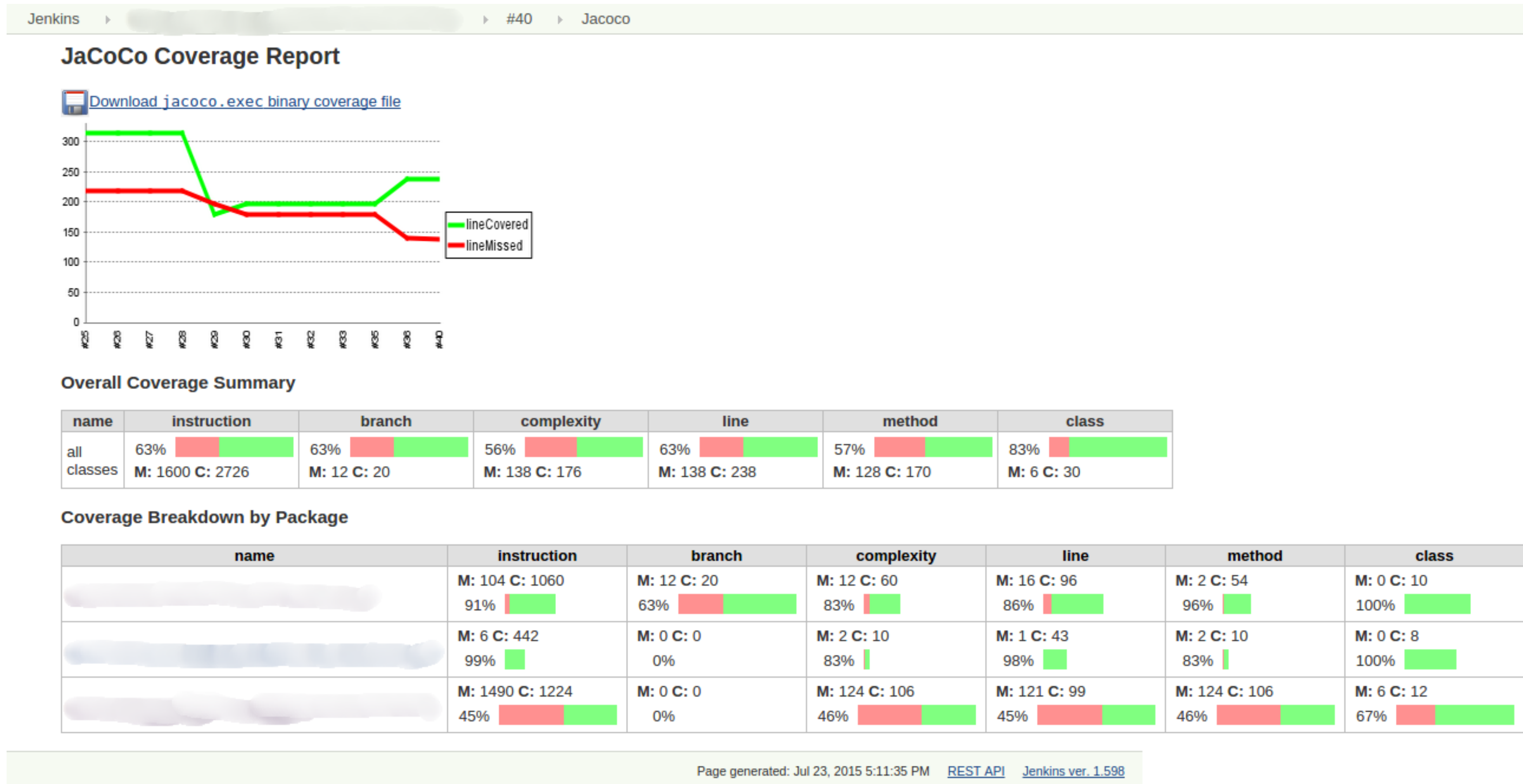
$(\text{issuesRemoved} \times 5)$

+

$(\text{linesOfCode} \times \text{changeInCoverage} \times 2)$

metrics matter

remember, you get what you measure





Select Marker

Mark Craters

Mark Feature

Delete Marking

View Mode:
Image|Markings|**Hybrid**

Image Has:
☐ Linear Features
☐ Odd Features
☐ Bad Image

Done Working

Minimum crater:
18px diameter

Interface tutorial



gamification is so motivating it will drive people do the **wrong** thing

Play

Children should learn mainly through play until age of eight, says Lego

Toy company funds research suggesting educational development can be hindered by early formal schooling. So are UK schools getting it wrong?

Lucy Ward

Tuesday 15 March 2016 07.00 GMT



Comments
170



theguardian
website of the year



Quirkiness



Quirkiness

How do a production-train slack-integration **nicely**:



fat-controller BOT 7:59 PM

Spotted approval request - raising IDS ticket...

Train is waiting at the station, ticket 96381, waiting on approval from one of: @ralph,@colin,@tonyg,@cullepl,@fat-controller,
<https://jazzop27.rtp.raleigh.ibm.com:9443/ccm/resource/itemName/com.ibm.team.workitem.WorkItem/96381>

(prod-trains approval to deploy Sensus check to monitor for Ibaas agent on network nodes. squad: Container Runtime)



tonyg 10:20 PM

approve 96381



fat-controller BOT 10:20 PM

approval recorded in RTC

Ticket 96381 resolved

Mind the doors please! Choo Choo 🚂🚂 @marian



marian 10:20 PM

Thanks

Feedback matters.

MANDATORY



"FUN"

memegenerator.net

Failing
at
Fun

31% of us dislike team-
building activities.

How to ruin an office party?
Take attendance.



Failing at Fun

Forgetting to fix the other stuff.



A layer of fun



A layer of fun
... on top of a terrible
workspace ...



A layer of fun
... on top of a terrible
workspace ...
is **still** terrible.



-
Fun is **important**.

Recap on achieving fun:

1. Get rid of un-fun things
2. Add fun things

Doing 2. without 1. is going to **fail**.



Questions?

Holly Cummins
IBM **Cloud** Garage
@holly_cummins



Austin
Copenhagen
Dubai
London
Madrid
Melbourne
Munich
New York
Nice
Raleigh
San Francisco
São Paulo
Singapore
Tokyo
Toronto