УДК 334.012.6:658.1; JEL classification: M12, J29

Котлик Андрій Валерійович¹,

університет імені Семена Кузнеця

кандидат економічних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри менеджменту, бізнесу і адміністрування **Терещенко Даніїл Андрійович¹,** здобувач вищої освіти ¹Харківський національний економічний

DOI: https://doi.org/10.36887/2415-8453-2025-2-36

Kotlyk Andrii Valeriyovych¹, Candidate of Science in Economics, Ass. Prof., Ass. Prof. of the Management, Business and Administration Department, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3626-3884 Tereshchenko Daniil Andriyovych¹, Higher Education Student

¹Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GAMIFICATION SYSTEM TO MOTIVATE PERSONNEL IN THE SALES DEPARTMENT

ВПРОВАДЖЕННЯ СИСТЕМИ ГЕЙМІФІКАЦІЇ ДЛЯ МОТИВАЦІЇ ПЕРСОНАЛУ ВІДДІЛУ ПРОДАЖІВ

Котлик А. В., Терещенко Д. А. Впровадження системи гейміфікації для мотивації персоналу відділу продажів. Український журнал прикладної економіки та техніки. 2025. Том 10. № 2. С. 185 – 188. Kotlyk A., Tereshchenko D. Implementation of the gamifycation system to motivate personnel in the sales department. Ukrainian Journal of Applied Economics and Technology. 2025. Volume 10. № 2, pp. 185 – 188.

In the context of evolving business challenges, employee motivation – especially within sales departments – has become a critical concern for organizational success. Traditional motivational tools such as fixed salaries and bonuses are increasingly insufficient to sustain engagement and performance in dynamic, high-pressure environments. This paper explores the growing relevance of gamification as an innovative strategy to enhance motivation, performance, and employee satisfaction. Rooted in historical practices from both Soviet and American contexts, modern gamification applies game mechanics – such as points, levels, badges, and leaderboards – to work environments to fulfill psychological needs and stimulate intrinsic motivation. The paper reviews key contributions from leading scholars including J. Hamari, K. Seaborn, S. Deterding, G. Zichermann, K. Werbach, and B. Burke, whose research laid the theoretical and practical foundations for gamification in management. Despite positive findings, gaps remain regarding long-term effectiveness, ethical concerns, and standardized evaluation metrics. Focusing on sales departments, the study outlines practical gamification programs and their roles in boosting employee engagement, learning, and teamwork. These include reward systems, challenges, training modules, and performance tracking mechanisms, all of which align with both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational theories. A structured implementation model is presented, covering the stages from planning and CRM integration to pilot testing, full deployment, and long-term optimization. Advantages such as improved performance and data-driven decision-making are balanced against challenges like over-competition and potential declines in intrinsic motivation. Ultimately, the article concludes that gamification, when thoughtfully designed and tailored to the company's culture and objectives, offers a compelling and adaptable method to modernize motivation systems. It serves as a practical guide for HR managers and team lead

У контексті сучасних бізнес-викликів мотивація працівників – особливо у відділах продажів – стала ключовим фактором успіху організацій. Традиційні інструменти мотивації, такі як фіксовані зарплати та бонуси, дедалі частіше виявляються недостатніми для підтримання залученості та високої продуктивності в динамічному та стресовому середовищі. У цій статті досліджується попралити залу поност на басова просултавления со банам тому та стресоваци, у ча статта вовломустеля зростаюча актуальність гейміфікації як інноваційної стратегії підвищення мотивації, результативності та задоволеності працівників. Сучасна гейміфікація, що має історичне коріння в практиках як СРСР, так і США, використовує ігрові механіки — такі як бали, рівні, бейджі та рейтинги – для задоволення психологічних потреб і стимулювання внутрішньої мотивації в робочому середовищі. У статті проаналізовано внески провідних науковців, зокрема Й. Хамарі, К. Сіборн, С. Детердінга, Г. Зіхерманна, К. Вербаха та Б. Берк, чиї дослідження заклали теоретичні та практичні основи гейміфікації в управлінні. Попри позитивні результати, залишаються прогалини щодо довгострокової ефективності, етичних аспектів та відсутності єдиних стандартів оцінки. Зосереджуючись на відділах продажів, дослідження описує практичні програми гейміфікації та їхню роль у підвищенні залученості працівників, навчанні та командній роботі. До таких програм належать системи винагород, челенджі, навчальні модулі та механізми відстеження результатів, що поєднують зовнішню та внутрішню мотивацію. Представлено поетапну модель впровадження: від планування й інтеграції з СRМ-системами до тестування, повноцінного запуску та подальшої оптимізації. Переваги, як-от підвищення ефективності та можливість ухвалення рішень на основі даних, урівноважуються викликами, зокрема надмірною конкуренцією та ризиком зниження внутрішньої мотивації. У підсумку, гейміфікація, за умови ретельного проєктування та адаптації до корпоративної культури й цілей, є ефективним та гнучким інструментом модернізації систем мотивації. Стаття слугує практичним орієнтиром для HR-фахівців і керівників команд, які прагнуть зміцнити зв'язок між залученістю працівників і досягненням стратегічних цілей компанії. Ключові слова: мотивація, мотивація персоналу, мотивація збутового персоналу, гейміфікація, процес впровадження гейміфікації, бізнес-процеси, удосконалення бізнес-процесів.

Statement of the problem

In today's business environment the question of how to have well-motivated employees began to come up very often. Modern sales departments face constant pressure to deliver results, requiring workers to stay motivated, productive, and engaged. Traditional motivation methods such as fixed salaries and basic bonuses are no longer sufficient to meet these demands. As a result, teams may experience low morale and high turnover.

The history of gamification for motivating employees can be traced back to early 20th-century practices, with significant developments in both Soviet and American contexts. The Soviet Union experimented with games to boost productivity and morale [1], while American management later integrated game-like elements focused on integrating a sense of play into work, aiming to reduce the distinction between work and play [1]. These historical precedents laid the groundwork for modern gamification strategies, which aim to enhance employee motivation by incorporating game mechanics into the workplace. This approach has evolved to include various elements such as points, badges, and leaderboards, which are believed to fulfill psychological needs and improve job satisfaction.

Numerous scholars have significantly contributed to the theoretical and methodological development of employee motivation and the integration of gamification in management practices. Among them, J. Hamari and K. Seaborn [11] have been at the forefront of academic research, providing empirical and meta-analytical studies that explore the psychological and behavioral impacts of gamified systems in organizational and educational contexts. Their work has helped establish foundational frameworks for understanding user engagement and intrinsic motivation within gamified environments. Similarly, S. Deterding has contributed extensively to defining gamification conceptually and differentiating it from other motivational strategies, emphasizing its roots in game design and behavioral economics.

G. Zichermann [9] and K. Werbach [13] have played influential roles in popularizing gamification in business and management circles. Their frameworks, such as Werbach's "D6" model, offer practical tools for implementing gamification © Kotlyk Andrii Valeriyovych, Tereshchenko Daniil Andriyovych, 2025

 $ISSN \ 2415 - 8453. \ Ukrainian \ Journal \ of \ Applied \ Economics \ and \ Technology. \ 2025. \ Volume \ 10. \ N^{\circ} \ 2.$

strategies aimed at enhancing employee engagement, productivity, and learning. B. Burke's contributions, meanwhile, have focused on the strategic implementation of gamification in corporate training and talent management, advocating for its potential to drive performance and organizational culture change.

Different research has shown mixed results regarding the effectiveness of gamification, with some studies indicating positive impacts on motivation when game elements align with job characteristics like feedback and autonomy. The Job Characteristics Model has been used to hypothesize relationships between game elements and motivational properties, moderated by employees' attitudes towards games [6].

Gamification today involves using game elements like badges, points, and leaderboards to motivate employees by satisfying psychological needs, as suggested by the Self-Determination Theory. These elements are designed to enhance employees' sense of achievement, work affiliation, and recognition [6].

Despite these advancements, several gaps remain in literature. Much of the existing research focuses on the shortterm effects of gamification, with limited longitudinal studies that examine its sustained impact on employee motivation and performance. Additionally, there is a lack of consensus on standardized metrics for evaluating gamification outcomes, making it difficult to compare results across different organizational settings. Cultural differences in gamification responsiveness and ethical concerns surrounding surveillance and manipulation in gamified systems also remain underexplored. Addressing these gaps through interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research could significantly deepen our understanding of how gamification can be optimally and ethically applied in the realm of employee motivation and management.

While gamification has shown promise as a motivational tool, its effectiveness can vary based on implementation and individual attitudes towards games. Some studies highlight challenges in applying gamification, particularly in small enterprises, and emphasize the need for further empirical research to validate its benefits.

The purpose of the research

The goal of the paper is to study the peculiarities of implementing the gamification measures into motivation system of sales department.

Presentation of the main research material

In recent years, the role of innovative motivation methods has grown significantly in human resource management [1]. As organizations adapt to changing employee expectations and a more dynamic work environment, traditional approaches to motivation often fail to deliver the desired results. This shift has led to increased interest in tools that not only reward performance but also engage employees on a deeper level. Among such tools, gamification has emerged as one of the most relevant and effective strategies. By integrating game-like elements into the business processes, gamification helps create a more interactive and motivating environment, making routine tasks more meaningful and stimulating.

Particularly in sales departments, the importance of motivation cannot be overstated. Sales employees are often in the front line of business operations and play a key role in generating revenue and ensuring customer satisfaction. Their performance directly impacts the company's profitability and long-term success. In many organizations, a significant portion of income is formed because of effective sales efforts. Therefore, investing in the motivation of sales personnel is not only reasonable but necessary. A motivated sales team is more likely to meet performance targets, adapt to challenges and contribute to a positive work culture, making motivation systems in this area a top priority for management.

Gamification is a strategy that involves applying game elements and principles to increase employees' engagement, motivation and participation in business processes. This approach can be highly effective in commercial enterprises, where competition and high pressure to achieve goals are common phenomena. Creating an engaging work environment includes integrating game elements into daily routine tasks to make the work environment more interesting and stimulating, using gaming mechanisms such as levels, achievements and badges to track and reward employees' successes [1]. It is essential to select the right programs that align with the company's objectives and the team's structure (table 1).

| | Table 1.1 Otential gainineation program | 15 |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Program | Description | Goal |
| Points and levels | Employees earn points for completing tasks, reaching goals or attending training. Levels reflect overall progress. | To encourage ongoing participation and achievement. |
| Leaderboards | Ranking system based on sales results or completed challenges. | To stimulate healthy competition and visibility. |
| Achievement badges | Digital rewards for completing specific milestones ("Top seller of the month"). | To provide recognition and motivation for excellence. |
| Missions and weekly challenges | Short-term goals with rewards for completion. | To keep employees focused and engaged consistently. |
| Marketplace or reward shop | Employees can exchange earned points for real benefits (gift cards, days off). | To connect performance with tangible rewards. |
| Gamified training modules | Interactive learning through quizzes, simulations or competitions. | To improve knowledge and skills in an engaging way. |
| Source: propose | ed by the author. | |

Table 1. Potential gamification programs

ource: proposed by the author.

One of the most foundational elements is the points and levels system. Employees accumulate points for achieving specific tasks, meeting sales targets or participating in training activities. This structure encourages consistency, fosters a sense of advancement, and provides immediate feedback on performance. It also stimulates internal motivation by offering a clear pathway for progress and self-improvement [2].

Leaderboards are another widely used tool in gamification. They display employee rankings based on sales performance or completed challenges, making achievements visible and promoting healthy competition within the team. Public recognition via leaderboards boosts engagement and pushes employees to strive for better results, especially in high-performing sales environments [3].

To recognize individual accomplishments, many systems include achievement badges. These virtual tokens are awarded for reaching specific milestones such as "Top seller of the month" or completing training programs. Badges serve as non-monetary rewards and are often displayed on internal dashboards or employee profiles. They help build professional identity and strengthen the emotional connection between employees and the company [4].

Missions and weekly challenges are used to maintain short-term engagement. These elements break larger objectives into smaller, manageable tasks that are time-bound and rewarding. Challenges often include reaching weekly sales goals or participating in team-based activities [5].

Another essential feature is the marketplace or reward shop, where accumulated points can be exchanged for tangible benefits such as gift cards, additional days off or small prizes. This adds a direct and meaningful link between performance and reward, supporting extrinsic motivation while still preserving the internal satisfaction of achievement [2].

Finally, gamified training modules integrate game-like features into learning. Quizzes, interactive simulations and knowledge competitions help enhance employee skills in an engaging format. These modules not only support professional development but also contribute to the creation of a learning-oriented culture [6].

There are several key stages that a company should go through before implementing a gamification system in the sales department, presented in fig. 1.

| System planning and customization |
|-------------------------------------|
| |
| Integration into sales operations |
| |
| Pilot testing and optimization |
| |
| Full deployment and training |
| |
| Continuous monitoring and evolution |
| |

Fig. 1. Stages of implementation the gamification system *Source: proposed by the author.* The first stage involves careful planning and customization to align the gamification system with the company's specific needs. At this stage, the primary focus is on defining the key performance indicators (KPIs) that will drive motivation among sales managers [2]. KPIs could include metrics such as the number of closed deals, revenue generated, client retention rates or successful participation in training programs. By establishing clear performance benchmarks, the company ensures that sales managers understand what is expected of them and how they can achieve rewards. The next step is selecting appropriate gamification tools. This includes determining which elements such as points, leaderboards, achievement badges, and sales challenges will be integrated into the system [4]. These elements should be chosen based on their potential to enhance engagement, drive performance, and align with company culture. For example, a points-based reward system will provide continuous incentives, while leaderboards will encourage healthy competition among employees.

Once the system is planned, the next step is to integrate it into the company's existing sales operations. This requires embedding the gamification framework into customer relationship management (CRM) software or other digital platforms used by the sales team. By doing so, performance tracking and reward calculations can be automated, ensuring that managers do not have to manually assess results [7]. The CRM system will be programmed to track real-time sales activities, measure KPI achievements to evaluate business process performance and assign corresponding points or rewards automatically. For example, when a sales manager closes a deal, the system will record the transaction, update their leaderboard position, and grant them experience points. This real-time tracking and feedback mechanism will make performance progress transparent and encourage immediate engagement.

Before deploying the system across the entire sales department, a pilot test is essential to evaluate its functionality and effectiveness. A small-scale implementation with one or two sales managers will allow the company to assess how well the gamification system works in real-life conditions. During the pilot phase, feedback should be collected from participants regarding their experience with the system [7]. Important things to look at include how easy the system is to use, how involved employees feel, whether rewards are given out fairly, and if there are any technical problems. Based on this feedback, changes and improvements will be made where needed.

After the system has been optimized through pilot testing, it will be introduced to the whole sales department. At this stage, all sales managers will receive full training to help them understand how to use the system and apply it to support their professional development [3].

Training should cover various aspects, such as 1. How points and leaderboard's function. 2. How to track individual and team performance. 3. How to participate in challenges and claim rewards. In addition to formal training, ongoing support and troubleshooting should be provided to address any questions or issues that arise during the initial launch. A dedicated administrator or HR specialist may oversee the system to ensure that all employees fully integrate gamification into their daily business processes. Finally, the last stage provides that the gamification system remains effective in the long term. Continuous monitoring and data analysis will be conducted to assess engagement levels, performance improvements, and system is achieving its intended goals. One of the critical aspects of this stage is introducing new challenges and incentives to keep employees engaged. Over time, sales managers might get used to the system, which could lower their motivation and interest. To avoid this, the company should regularly update the gamification features by adding new types of rewards, seasonal challenges or competitions focused on specific skills.

Before implementing gamification as a motivation strategy for the sales department, it is important to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of it (table 2).

| Aspect | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Motivation | Increase employee engagement and drive to exceed targets. | Requires constant updates to maintain interest and relevance. |
| Performance tracking | Allows transparent, real-time evaluation of sales activity. | Needs proper CRM integration and data analytics tools. |
| Learning and development | Encourages continuous learning and professional development. | Might require additional training resources and time investment. |
| Team collaboration | Strengthens teamwork through shared challenges and missions. | Risk of creating excessive competition leading to workplace tension. |
| Innovation | Fosters creative problem-solving and adoption of new sales techniques. | May not be effective for all employees, especially those resistant to change. |
| Reward system | Provides both financial and non-financial incentives, increasing job satisfaction. | Overemphasis on rewards may reduce intrinsic motivation over time. |
| Data-driven decisions | Sales performance data helps with strategic decision-making. | High reliance on digital tools may lead to technical complexities. |

| Table 2. Advantages and disadvantages of gamification as a motivation tool |
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|--|

Source: proposed by the author.

In terms of motivation, gamification significantly enhances employee engagement by making tasks more dynamic and goal oriented. It encourages individuals to exceed targets and take initiative [2]. However, one challenge is that gamified systems require regular updates to remain effective. If elements such as challenges and rewards become repetitive, they may lose their impact, leading to decreased interest over time.

Performance tracking becomes more transparent with gamification. Real-time data allows both managers and employees to clearly see progress toward goals. This supports fairness and accountability [3]. Nevertheless, for accurate and efficient tracking, companies must ensure strong integration with CRM systems and have the necessary data analytics tools in place, which may involve additional technical setup and maintenance.

In the area of learning and development, gamification promotes continuous professional growth by integrating training into engaging formats like quizzes or interactive challenges. This helps improve skills and encourages self-

improvement [6]. On the downside, implementing gamified training requires time, planning, and potentially extra resources, which may place an additional burden on the organization, especially during the early stages.

About team collaboration, gamification often includes shared missions or group competitions that can improve cooperation and strengthen team spirit. However, if not managed properly, it may also lead to excessive competition among employees, creating stress or conflict within the team environment.

Gamification also supports innovation by fostering creativity and encouraging employees to experiment with new techniques. It rewards non-standard thinking and helps shift organizational culture toward continuous improvement [4]. Still, the approach may not be equally effective for everyone. Some employees, particularly those who prefer traditional structures or are resistant to change may find gamified elements distracting or unnecessary.

The reward system in gamification includes both material (financial) and symbolic (non-financial) incentives, which together can improve job satisfaction. Employees feel more appreciated and recognized. However, too much focus on external rewards may eventually reduce intrinsic motivation -employees might begin to work only for bonuses or recognition, rather than personal growth or commitment to the company's mission. Finally, gamification contributes to data-driven decisions by generating performance metrics that help managers make informed strategic choices. These insights can be used to adjust goals, refine training programs, or redesign tasks [3]. Yet, the effectiveness of this approach depends heavily on reliable digital tools. If technical systems fail or are poorly configured, it may result in errors or misunderstandings. In summary, gamification offers multiple benefits across motivation, collaboration, performance, and innovation. At the same time, its success depends on thoughtful design, ongoing management, and alignment with the team's specific needs and working culture.

Conclusions and prospects for further research

Gamification is presented as an effective tool for motivating employees, particularly in sales departments where performance is measurable and closely linked to business outcomes. By incorporating elements such as points, levels, leaderboards, and challenges into business processes, it helps increase employee engagement, focus, and commitment. Several gamification programs were revealed, each addressing different aspects of employee motivation, including personal development, team collaboration and learning. The implementation process involves several key stages: planning, integration into daily operations, pilot testing, full deployment with training, and regular system updates - ensuring long-term effectiveness and adaptability. Although gamification offers clear benefits such as improved engagement and performance transparency, it also requires ongoing updates and careful design to prevent negative effects like excessive competition or dependence on external rewards. This article can be especially valuable for HR professionals and team leaders aiming to modernize their motivation strategies. It provides a practical framework to improve sales results, support employee growth and strengthen alignment between individual efforts and organizational goals.

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Стаття надійшла до редакції 10.04.2025 р.

ISSN 2415-8453. Український журнал прикладної економіки та техніки. 2025 рік. Том 10. № 2.