Player Elements

- **Player Motivation**: Why do people play games? Understanding this can help you develop games that will fulfill these needs. Game developers should always consider this question so that the components of games that are most attractive to players will be utilized enough to keep the players interested.
- **Social interaction**: Social interaction can be a motivating factor for some players. Although social interaction can take place in the immediate environment (real-life interaction), it can also occur in-game—especially in social games and MMOs. Players in MMOs are often allowed to communicate through the game itself—often discussing non-game-related topics rather than "staying in character." Sometimes players who meet through games arrange to meet each other in real life at game conventions.
- **Physical seclusion**: Players motivated by physical seclusion would probably prefer to play games in a private place—such as their homes. The idea of seclusion might seem to be the opposite of social interaction. However, players who want to be secluded are still interacting socially with people—but in the privacy of their own physical environments. This challenges the definition of "being social." Some would argue that people who prefer to stay home and play an MMO must be antisocial. Others would argue that these same people must be highly social because they are most likely interacting with many more people than would be possible.
- **Competition**: Some players enjoy the thrill of competing with other players. The competitive spirit has been associated with games throughout history— and it forms the basis of the tremendously successful sports industry.
- **Knowledge**: Players can be motivated to gain knowledge of particular concepts, processes, and strategies by playing games—although this motivation often is unconscious. If players made it clear that they truly wanted to learn while playing, game developers might market their games as educational tools—providing "fun learning" for everyone.
- **Mastery**: Some players are motivated to master the game itself—demonstrating their ability to dominate the game world and figure out how to become advanced players. Mastery is most obvious during games that depend on increasing character skills to "win." Players motivated by mastery focus on assessing their status in the game by attaining high scores and rankings

- **Escapism**: Players often indicate that they are motivated to play to escape from the ongoing stresses and challenges of real life. An imaginary game world follows its own rules, some of which are less restrictive than those in real life. Although people can escape into the "worlds" of other media such as books and movies, they do not directly participate in those worlds like they do in games.
- **Addiction**: Unlike the comparatively "passive" entertainment of television and film, games offer players the opportunity to take active roles in the entertainment experience—including making decisions and getting feedback. This can be highly rewarding for players, but it can also make them crave and indulge in continuous play to the point of ignoring other more important areas of their lives.
- **Game Market**: If you plan to develop games, you need to understand the game market—the people who play games. You need to understand who your market is to create a compelling game that suits your market's needs. Learning how to identify target audience personas ensures that you can take your brand (games) to market in the most cost-effective and efficient way.
- **Geographics**: Geographics relate to the players' geographic locations, which could include various countries or even regions within those countries. For example, you can target players within the local country so that one specific language will only be used within the game.
- **Psychographics**: Psychographics consists of people's values, attitudes, and lifestyles. Unlike demographics, a group's psychographics are more difficult to guess externally, since these are more relevant to their personality.
- **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)**: In 1943, Isabel Briggs Myers and her mother, Katharine Briggs, developed a model to measure personality types.
  - **Extrovert (E) vs. Introvert (I):** Energy is more outer or inner-directed.
  - **Sensing (S) vs. Intuitive (N):** Perception is more present or future-oriented.
  - **Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F):** Judgment-formation is more objective or subjective.
  - **Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P):** Approach to the world is more structured or spontaneous.
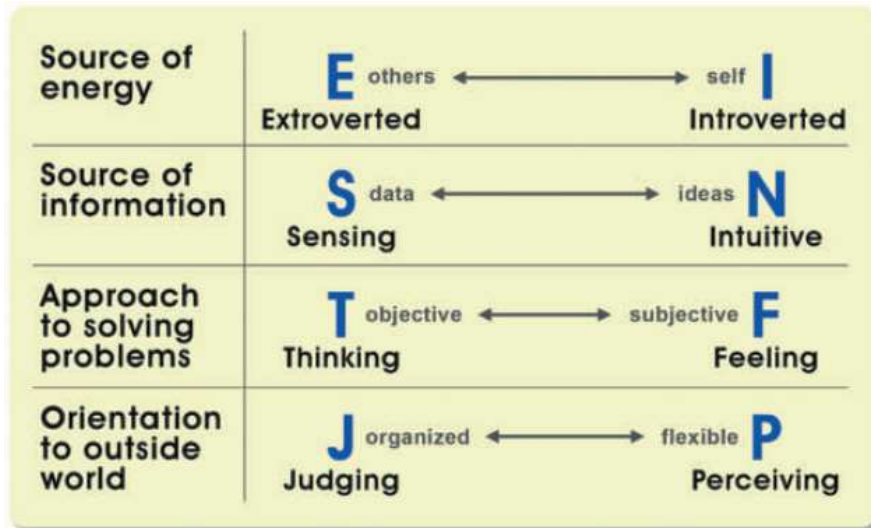
Figure 1. MBTI diagram

- **Demographics**: The demographics of players include statistical information such as gender, age, income level, education level, marital status, ethnicity, and religion.
  - o **Generation**: Generations are considered part of both demographics and psychographics. Although associated with a discrete age range, members of each generation as a group have experienced particular historical events and climates—including economic, cultural, social, and political shifts—during their lifetimes. Therefore, they likely have developed a particular set of beliefs, attitudes, and values.

There are four generations of players currently in the United States:
  - o **Silent Generation (Born 1924 –1943)** – Members of this generation experienced the Great Depression and World War II as small children—and came of age during the 1950s as the United States' postwar economy boomed. As children, they were sheltered and protected—and as young adults, they displayed a conformist, adaptive mentality. If you were to create a game that focuses on the Silent Generation, it is perhaps a game with heroes who are clean and cold—but who are not motivated by cynicism or revenge—might connect with this generation.
  - o **Boom Generation (Born 1943–1961)** – Members of this generation were small children during the postwar boom. While young, they experienced a relatively safe but confined social climate based on material wellbeing. In reaction to this, they started a society-wide, values-oriented "spiritual" revolution in their famous coming-of-age during the 1960s and 1970s. If you were to create a game that focused on the Boom Generation, it is perhaps a game with a social, spiritual, or political message that would be ideal.
  - o **Generation X (Born 1962–1981)** – Members of this generation were children during the social turmoil of the 1960s and 1970s—and were the targets of an anti-child cultural bias difficult for younger generations to understand. In their youth, they experienced the divorce epidemic, hands-off parenting, "latchkey" self-reliance, falling fertility, and declining investment in children. If you were to create a game that focused on Generation X, it is perhaps a game that focuses on an independent, nomadic character who is "on the edge" and takes risks would be ideal.
  - o **Millennial Generation (Born 1982–2002) –** Members of this generation grew up during the 1982–2000 economic boom—the greatest in history and fueled by high-technology. A "wanted" generation, they enjoyed parents who deliberately sought to conceive and raise them, resulting in an "echo boom" in the 1980s and 1990s. Compared to Xers, Millennials have benefited from their parents' increased spending and the rising standards in education. Suppose you were to create a game that focused on the Millennial generation. In that case, it is perhaps an online game involving a lot of communication and cooperation between players would be ideal.

References:
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