# CORPORATE FRENZY

a fresh take on rogue-likes

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Developed by

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# 1. Game Overview

Corporate Frenzy presents a rogue-like game with a twist. Instead of the classic dungeon environments, it takes place in an hostile office building. The player starts at the bottom floor with the goal of reaching the management at the top of the building. On this journey, they have to fight hostile employees and collect keycards to proceed to the next level. The game approaches the rogue-like genre in a humorous and modern way. It targets a broad spectrum of people from teenagers onwards, who enjoy fast paced, atmospheric action games with a splash of dark humor.

To support the idea, the visual style of the game makes use of pixel art and a bright, pastel color palette. The game is underlined by a catchy and energetic soundtrack made of funky sounds and synthesizers. This creates a light-hearted atmosphere and reminds of retro games.

# 2. Gameplay

## 2.1 Play Flow

The first screen the player encounters is the menu, from which the actual game can be started. The character begins at the elevator in Level 1, Floor *a*, where the ingame timer starts. From there on the character moves through the office in search of the keycard. Once the card is obtained, the player can return to the elevator to proceed to Level 1, Floor *b*. This scheme continues to floor *c*, boss fight 1, level 2 floor *a*, *b* and *c* and a final boss fight to stop the timer. The finishing time can be saved to compare to earlier results. But should the protagonist die on any of the floors, the player has to start the game again from Level 1, Floor *a*. All found upgrades and weapons are lost.

## 2.2 Mechanics

As opposed to the grid/turn-based system in many games of its genre, the characters in Corporate Frenzy can move fluidly through the levels in real-time. Input keys for movement by default are W,A,S,D or the arrow keys. The character always faces the direction of the mouse, so backwards movement is possible to fight off enemies while retreating.

Combat plays a central role in Corporate Frenzy. The player is matched against many foes trying to stop them from progressing through the levels.
Even though the player starts the game unarmed, weapons can be found throughout the office. One catch: they can only carry two weapons at a time which will pose a tactical challenge, when planning the next run or preparing for specific encounters.
Weapons belong in either the melee or ranged category. The former includes a keyboard while the latter consists of a bag of throwable muffins that deal a lot of damage and a stapler that fires staples in rapid succession.
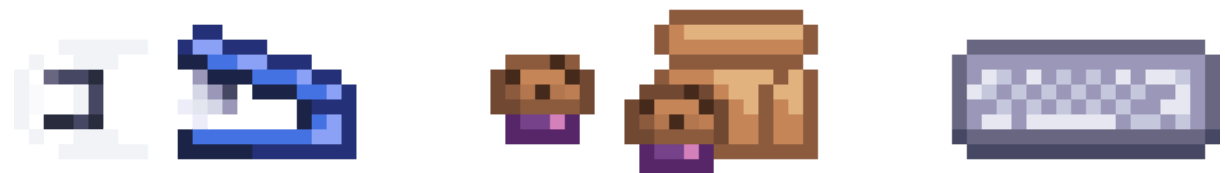


Img. 1: The three possible weapons. Ranged weapon stapler with staple projectile (left), ranged weapon muffin bag with muffin projectile (center) and melee weapon keyboard (right).

Players can also find and collect a six pack of beer. Each six pack contains of course six bottles, that the player can place anywhere in the office to lure melee enemies to that location. Enemies will pick up the bottle and stay still for the time it takes them to finish it, which is 2 seconds. This adds a layer of tactics to the combat in Corporate Frenzy. When overwhelmed by the amount of enemies, beer bottles can offer relief and occupy enemies, while the player either attacks them or runs away.

Img. 2: Assets of the bait: Sixpack of beer and a single bottle.

## 2.3 Game Progression

The game provides two different kinds of progression: temporary and personal .

### 2.3.1 Temporary Progression

The most valuable currency in an office are of course Vacation Days. They are scattered throughout the office and are occasionally dropped by defeated enemies. In order to become more powerful, the character can exchange collected Vacation Days for upgrades in the merchant room, which appears once in every level always at the c-Floor. The room may remain unseen but it's definitely worth looking for it. Once inside, the player is offered three random upgrades for purchase. Duplicates are possible. These upgrades add a permanent bonus to the character's stats for the rest of the run. This random aspect adds to the replayability and makes every run feel unique. The available upgrades are:
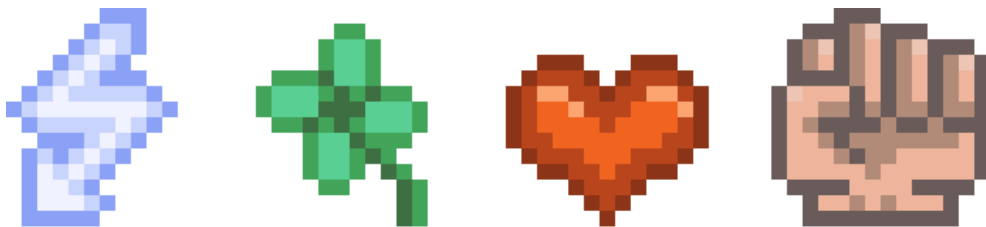


Img.3 Available upgrades (left to right): Energy, Luck, Health, Strength

#### Energy

Every single attack in Corporate Frenzy consumes energy. Different attacks consume different amounts of energy. Energy regenerates over time, by a fixed energy regeneration rate. This mechanic encourages players to choose their weapons and attacks wisely, because they will otherwise run out of energy pretty quickly. This also adds weight and importance to every single attack.
Players have different paths to restore energy. Some enemies will drop a flat amount of energy on death. Other sources of energy can be found within the office building.
Purchasing the Energy Upgrade increases the maximum amount of available energy allowing for more damage output and safer play.

#### Health

As in any other top-down shooter or roguelike, the character in Corporate Frenzy has a fixed amount of health. Attacks from enemies reduce this value and once it has run out, the

character dies and the player has to start from the beginning. To avoid this faith, the player can find small portions of health throughout the levels.

The Health Upgrade in the merchant room permanently increases the player's maximum health.

### Luck

Every time an enemy is defeated there is a small chance for that enemy to drop loot, such as energy or health. The amount of loot is also subject to chance. This chance is calculated with the luck of the character.

Increasing luck via the upgrade from the merchant room will in the long run result in a more steady supply of energy and health, but might leave the character more vulnerable against strong enemies when chosen over more energy or health.

### Strength

Each weapon obtainable deals a different amount of damage to enemies. The strength of the character is factored into this damage. The player begins with a strength value of 0. Strength can be upgraded in the merchant room to increase overall damage output.



Img. 4: Assets of all possible loot: energy (left), health (center) and vacation days (right).

## 2.3.2 Personal Progression

Additionally, apart from the in-game progression of the character within each play-through, the players themselves can progress and learn while playing Corporate Frenzy. A timer in the HUD indicates how long the current run is has been going on for, and the final time serves as a high score once the game is finished. Beating one's high score can be achieved by learning the mechanics and the layout of the office. The final score will be displayed at the end of the game and can be saved as a screenshot. This way, players are rewarded for trying different strategies and optimizing their movement, upgrade-strategy and game-knowledge.

# 3. Story and Characters

## 3.1 Story and Narrative

The player slips into the position of the nameless main character. He is a generic looking guy with a basic white shirt and tie, who has to fight his way to the top floors of the office building. The game does not provide a background story to the main character. The cause for him being in the office building as well as the reason for the employees' hostility towards him is for the players to figure out by themselves. This leaves space for each player to create their own story and experience. The experience is supported by the artwork and atmosphere of each level as well as hidden jokes and mechanics.

## 3.2 Game Setting and Levels

The game takes place inside a multi-storey office building with two different office types. Each consists of three regular floors (a,b and c) and an additional boss floor, for the head of department.  With a significant style, music  and unique enemies the player gets a different experience with each level.



Img. 5: Direct comparison of Level 1 artwork and enemies (left)
and Level 2 artwork and enemies (right). The main character is placed in the center.

### 3.2.1 Level 1

Every game the player starts in Level 1, which is a retro office. With turquoise carpet, pastel rose colored walls and wood elements a cozy atmosphere is created. The office equipment itself is outdated. Big old computer screens with wired mouses decorate the wooden desks, on which the employees Susanne and Gunther do their daily work. Additionally they have to

endure a 40 hour week on hardwood chairs, which would make anyone grumpy and hostile after only a few months.

### 3.2.2 Level 2

After beating the first boss Mrs. McBuff the player commences via elevator into a completely new environment in Level 2. A bright modern office with light wood flooring and the clear primary colors blue, green and red as color accents. Old technology has no place in an office like this. Interns such as Carl only work with big flatscreens and bluetooth mouses and keyboards. For a good working experience the employees get padded cantilever chairs. Even though everything in this office is constructed for productivity, having a boss like Ceovanni, who puts high pressure on his department, can produce amounts of stress no intern can handle.

### 3.2.3 Merchant Room

Throughout the building the player can stumble upon a utility room which doubles as the personal office of the building's janitor. Placed on his desk are upgrades, which he trades for vacation days. With these the player can strengthen their abilities and further progress throughout the game. This room has the same look and atmosphere in all levels. It is dark and gloomy, with water puddles and color stains on the floor. The wall behind the merchant is full of water or maybe even mold stains and a single light above the table lightens his merchandise.



Img. 6: Merchant room without merchandise.

## 3.3 Main Characters

The game has one playable main character and two main categories of enemies: *Bosses* and *Basic Enemies*. The former can be separated further into the classes *Melee* and *Ranged*. Generally, each level of the game houses one boss, one melee and one ranged enemy. However one single part-time worker, a more passive enemy, can be found throughout all of the levels. The basic enemies play an important role in the progression

system, since they are an important source of loot and will generally form the encounters during the usual floors.

At the end of each level the player will have to fight against the lead manager of their respective departments, a powerful boss enemy. Beating them will allow the player to progress onto the next level.
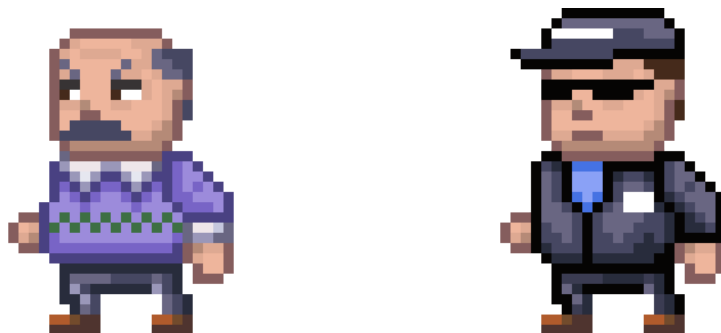
### 3.3.1 Gunther and the Security Guard

Gunther is most likely the first enemy the player will encounter in the office. He is an old grumpy man who is close to retirement and has had enough of it. He can be found throughout Level 1 and is this level's melee enemy.

As soon as the player enters his activation distance Gunther will start chasing them and attack by tackling them repeatedly until they are either out of range or until one of them dies. Each tackle deals a fixed amount of damage to the player character. Gunther's movement code uses the A*-Pathfinding package[1] to calculate the shortest path towards the player. For him to not always run in a straight line, the algorithm places a graph on top of every level and evaluates all of the traversable tiles via the corresponding layer settings. Paths that would lead through walls or objects like tables, shelves, trash cans, etc are not considered during pathfinding.

Gunther's respective counterpart in level 2 is the Security Guard. He doesn't hold personal grudges towards the player, but it's his job to keep the staff safe and externals out of the office. On a technical level the Guard follows the same algorithm but unlike Gunther he is equipped with a taser that has longer range, deals more damage and stuns the player for a short period of time. During this phase the player will keep moving in its current trajectory and won't react to new directional inputs.

Beating Gunther and the Security Guard may seem difficult, especially when getting too close, but the use of ranged weapons and learning to keep moving should ease the job.



Img. 7: Both melee enemies. Gunther (left) and Security Guard (right)

### 3.3.2 Susanne and Carl

Susanne is a middle-aged woman who works in the office. She, like Gunther, only resides in the first level and takes the spot of this environment's ranged enemy.

On sight, she too will move towards the player using the same pathfinding algorithm but unlike the melee enemies she will keep her distance and bombard the player with sharp

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[1] https://arongranberg.com/astar/ A*-Pathfinding-Package

pencils from a far. If the player chooses to approach her, Susanne will start retreating in order to stay safe.

The ranged enemy encounterable in level 2 is called Carl. He is a young and up incoming academic with ambitious goals. He doesn't take competition lightly and won't hesitate to injure the player by throwing scissors at them. This will result in more damage than Susanne's pencils. On top of that, Carl is also able to perform attacks from farther away.

Avoiding a direct faceoff while on low health and using the walls and objects for cover are useful tactics when dealing with Susanne and Carl.
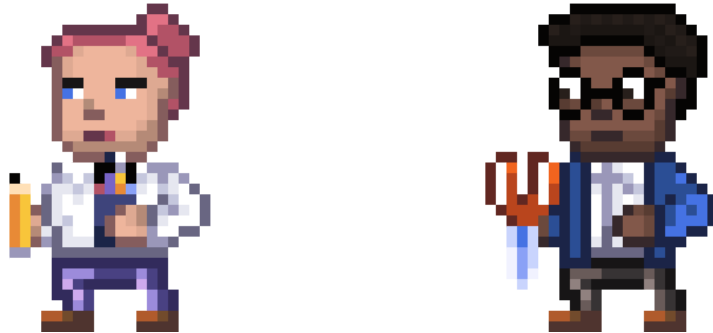


Img. 8: Both ranged enemies. Susanne (left) and intern Carl (right).

### 3.3.3 David the Part-Time Worker

David works part-time in this building and can be encountered on any floor. When it comes to workplaces he has seen better and worse. Either way, keeping the floors clean pays his bills. He doesn't have close feelings towards the corporation and would prefer to rather keep minding his own business. Hence he couldn't care less about the player and won't ever attack them directly.
His movement is based on a set of fixed points. Every now and then, David will move towards any one of those points leaving a trail of water behind him. Making contact with David or the water will result in the player taking damage.

It is generally advised to avoid fighting David since spending energy to take him out is not necessary if one could just avoid his path and move on. But sometimes it may still be worth it to go for the potential drop of a healing-orb when needed.



Img. 9: David the part-time worker.

### 3.3.4 Mrs. McBuff

Mrs. McBuff is the first boss to be encountered by the player. Her work ethic can be best described as "Work hard. Work harder." Her drive and dedication in the workspace is unmatched and most people would consider even her freetime exhausting. When Mrs.Mc Buff is not working she is most likely working out.

Her characteristics show in the ruthless and aggressive attack patterns. She will start the fight by repeatedly gathering energy and unleashing it in a powerful dash toward the player. Some of the released energy can be picked up in the form of energy-orbs.
Once Mrs. McBuff drops below half health, she will get enraged and bust open her shirt, indicating the start of the second phase of the fight. From now on she will occasionally stop the continuing onslaught to release a swarm of paper planes in every direction.

Beating Mrs. McBuff rewards the player with the keycard needed to continue into the next level via the elevator.



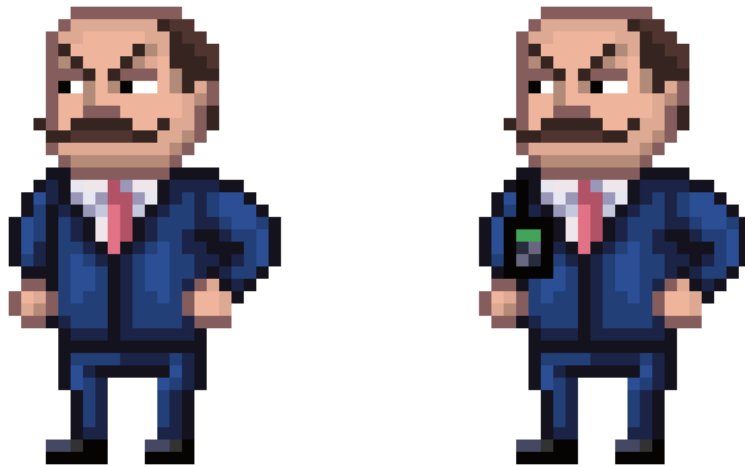Img. 10: Mrs McBuff in phase 1 (left) and phase 2 (right).

### 3.3.5 Ceovanni

After completing the entirety of level 2 the player will challenge the corporation's Chief Executive Officer Ceovanni. As expected from the head of a leading business, Ceovanni can't stand employees speaking up, since most of their complaints tend to come from insufficient corporate knowledge. He will only handle the most important tasks and has assistants for almost everything else. Most colleagues would describe him as rude and narcissistic.

Ingame he will slowly chase the player around his office. The player will have to dodge Ceovanni's attacks which consist of hard-hitting insults screamed at them angrily. Similarly to the first boss, the fight will pick up in difficulty once the threshold for the second phase is reached. In this case that is as soon as Ceovanni drops below two thirds of his maximum health. He will reach into his pocket and eqip a walkie-talkie. From now on the insults become personal and increase heavily in length. He additionally may start calling for security to get rid of the player. In that case a Security Guard as seen in level 2 will run in from one of the side entries.

The statues spreaded throughout Ceovanni's office can be used as helpful shields to block incoming insults.

Since Ceovanni is the highest authority in the building, defeating him and re-entering the elevator with his keycard wins the game for the player.



Img. 11: Ceovanni in phase 1 (left) and phase 2 (right).

# 4. Interface

## 4.1 HUD

The visual interface in Corporate Frenzy follows minimalistic design. The constant HUD-elements are placed in the top left corner of the screen. These consist of the health and energy bars and a counter displaying the amount of currently collected vacation days. The health bar specifically is coloured in green whilst at almost full-health and turns yellow and red whilst at medium- or low-health. The length of these bars is adjusted proportionally when the respective upgrades are bought. If the player still has bait left to use, the amount and a fitting icon are also shown in the top left, while a icon indicating a collected keycard always appears in the bottom right corner.

The current state of purchased upgrades can be displayed by sliding the character's ID-Card into view from the top of the screen.

The bottom left corner of the screen is reserved for a situational text box for showing additional information. This box is in two situations present.

When entering the elevator without the keycard, the box displays a text to remind the player that a keycard is necessary in order to progress and while inside of the merchant room, hovering one of the available upgrades causes the box to appear displaying the benefit of the given upgrade and it's cost.

## 4.2 Controls

The playable character can be navigated using the *arrow keys* or via *WASD*. Attacks are performed toward the mouse position and triggered with a mouse click (*MB1*). Additionally, *SPACE* picks up weapons, *Q* allows the player to switch between the currently equipped weapons and *E* is used to drop bait if available. *ESC* prompts the pause menu. *C* toggles displaying the current character statistics.

# 5. Game Art

The game is made up of pixel art assets and sprites with a top-down perspective. It is inspired by the style of Pokemon games in the late 1990s for Game Boy Color, which achieved a detailed and immersive atmosphere with few colors and grid elements, i.e., tiles, of only 8x8 px.

The environment of Corporate Frenzy is created as a tilemap, with each tile having a size of 16x16px. The bigger tiles were chosen since it is not developed for handheld consoles but for computers. This resolution gives enough pixels for creating detailed objects while still having the classic look of a retro pixel game. The map, objects and characters are all based around the tilegrid/gridmap. A room wall has a height of 3 tiles including a 1 tile wide view of the brick wall from the top. Objects like desks and bookshelves are made up of 2x3 tiles and plants of 1x2 tiles. The main character as well as common enemies mainly move in a space of 2x2 tiles, while bosses use up to 4x4 tiles.

All utilized assets as well as characters and animations were created by the developers with Aseprite v1.2.25. An example of a sprite sheet for an animation is given below. The picture depicts the transition between phase one and two of the Level 1 bossfight.



Img. 12: Mrs. McBuff animation of phase one to phase two transition

The following images show the tilemaps with all sprites used for each level except the boss rooms.



Img. 13: Level 1 tilemap.

Img. 14: Level 2 tilemap.

# 6. Technical Details

The game was entirely developed in Unity Version 2019.4.14f1 and C#. The software used for creating the visual assets was Aesprite. Sound effects and soundtrack were made for the game by Chandra Fries (inquiries: chandra.fries@gmail.com). The targeted platforms are Laptops and Desktop PCs.