Writing a
Game Proposal

Project Requirements

Original game providing 1 minute of engaging gameplay!

◦ Splash screen (3 seconds) showing the Vanier Logo, Game Programming 1 and names of team members
◦ Start screen with the name of your game
◦ Implementation of at least 2 core mechanics
◦ Interactions triggered by player's inputs
◦ Visual and audio feedback for each game interactions
◦ Background music

Delivery Schedule

1) **Game Proposal + Team members**   October 18
2) **Game Design Document**   November 8
3) **Game Project Implementation**   November 29
4) **Project Presentation + PPT Slides** December 3 and 4

What is a good project?
Focus on Awesome per Second!!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyFSbm79uBY

Game Industry Major Milestones

Pre-Production

Production

Final Stages

1. • **Game Design Document- GDD**
2. • **Technical Review**
3. • **Engine Proof**
4. • **Playable**
5. • **Interim Checkpoint**
6. • **Alpha**
7. • **Interim Checkpoint**
8. • **Beta**
9. • **Golden Master**

Proposal - Writing Tips

- Should be concise and powerful
  - Write specific nouns (*coin, dragon, steel grate*) over generic ones (*bonus, thing, barrier*).
  - Write strong verbs (*soar, dash, pummel*) over weak ones (*fly, race, hit*).
  - Avoid adjectives and adverbs; they consume space and conceal weak nouns and verbs.
  - Cut everything that isn't core to the idea. Watch out for "and" "or".

Proposal Components

The format is relatively strict, but feel free to add or remove sections if applicable.

Use this for:

◦ Brainstorming

◦ Proposing ideas to management

◦ Archiving ideas that emerged during one project, but meant for later projects.

◦ Overview in the beginning of a more detailed game design document (GDD).

Game Proposal Format (1/4)

- **Title:** While brainstorming just a place holder. In the final proposal it should be carefully crafted to inspire the reader with the setting, game mechanic and target audience.

- **Tagline**: Expanded title, a phrase or short sentence that epitomizes the game. Also more like a mission statement of the game.

- **Genre**: quick way to summarize gameplay.

Game Proposal Format (2/4)

Picture/Logo

Target Audience

Plays Like: name 2 games which have some similar aspects. "A meets B"

Goal: How does one score points or win?

Major Mechanics: Identify primary and secondary mechanics.

Example of Mechanics

Platform-based Navigation

Physics

Internal Economy

Progression Mechanics
◦ How to move though a level: levers, upgrades, etc.

Tactical Maneuvering

Racing

Shooting (or FPS Combat)

Puzzles

Precision Timing

Target Rating

The point here is to identify the target Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rating for your game.

◦ What rating are you aiming for?

◦ Why?

Game Proposal Format (3/4)

- **Setting:** Where does gameplay take place? Location, era, tone, … -> drives the art direction.

  - **References:** six titles of previous books, films, games, etc. serving as reference for concept material.

  - **Key experiences:** 3 key experiences the player will undergo.

  - **Selling Points:** marketing arguments – combination of financial, trend and audience concerns.

Proposal Format – More Fields

- **Related games:** Select 3 closest games to this one and describe how it is similar and how it is different, how it performed in the market, positive and negative criticisms.

- Metacritics.com is a good website to get the critics and fan feedback.

- VG Chartz is a good website to get sales figures

Game Proposal Example Half Life 2

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iib5XsGAUdw

An Example

Title: *Half-Life 2*

Tagline: "Run, Think, Shoot, Live. Again."

Genre: First-person shooter

Platform: PC or next-generation console

Target Audience: Men age 18–40; sci-fi fans

Plays Like: *Myst* meets *DOOM*

Goal: Battle for the resistance forces against fascist troops and aliens

Major Mechanics:

1. FPS combat

2. Physics puzzles

Setting: City 17: a near-future Eastern European police-state under siege from both a popular resistance and alien invaders who are malicious to all

Setting References:

1. *Half-Life 1* and expansion packs

2. *X-Files* TV series

3. *1984* novel

4. *Equilibrium* film

5. *Fahrenheit 451* novel

6. *Night of the Living Dead* (for gothic horror sequences)

Key Experiences:

1. Creativity with the gravity gun, a handheld tractor beam, including hurling saw blades, knocking over gun turrets, and righting vehicles after collisions

2. Holding the roof of a brownstone with a shotgun as zombies rattle up the drainpipes

3. Skimming along a drainage channel in a hovercraft, under fire from Apache helicopters and shore batteries

Selling Points:

1. Repeat the design and leverage the reputation of *Half-Life*, a critically acclaimed and a blockbuster (over 8 million copies sold) hit

2. Engine designed for mod creation so that *HL2* is a platform as well as a game, thus extending its effective market lifetime

3. First 3D game with effective, realistic physics puzzles

Related Games:

1. *DOOM 3*, PC; Activision/id Software, 2004

   Under development simultaneously with *HL2*. Both feature shader graphics, realistic physics, and FPS alien hunting. *D3* relies on superior technology and macho plot for tight, competitive FPS gameplay. *HL2* explores more beautiful locations, innovates with the gravity gun, and integrates detailed storytelling.

2. *Half-Life* for Windows PC; Sierra/Valve, 1998

   Stay true to the original *Half-Life* story line, adding more realistic physics and graphics and expanding the plot with real-world political issues. Increase the conspiracy aspects of the original and introduce new, younger characters.

3. *Tomb Raider: Legend*, Xbox 360; Eidos Interactive/Crystal Dynamics, 2006

   Also is story driven, with 3D platformer puzzles and action gameplay. *HL2* creates more interaction through the gravity gun and sidekick characters.