61. People are More Motivated to Complete When there are Fewer Competitors

Competition, in my experience, is how you get the best out of people. The text describes that too much competition can be a deterrent to bring the best out of people. It is like making a challenge that seems too hard. I do think it is person dependent. One person who enjoys competing with a lot of people may just enjoy the thrill of competition. I do think as a whole, people enjoy challenges that they can realistically compete.

In building web applications, it would be a challenge to have an open competition, such as a quiz, to attract people to your website. Potentially, the best way to do it is to limit it to a set number of people, so the competitors don’t feel like they are in an endless ocean of people.

62. People are Motivated by Autonomy

Being in control of one’s fate is a huge part of feeling empowered. The text mentions anecdotal evidence of people complaining about “The good old days when you can talk to an individual” An example is calling your internet service provider for general help. The book makes a great distinction that those people don’t feel in control when using these services. Generally, getting help from ISP via phone is terrible. The person has little control over whether the machine can understand their needs.