

How to TARGET Rapid Competence Development with Personalized Storytelling

Manuel Fradinho
R&D Director
Cyntelix
Upper Newcastle Road, Galway, Ireland
mfradinho@cyntelix.com

ABSTRACT

Approaches to competence development have tended to focus on training to reach a required level of performance in simple and reproducible contexts, rather than in the more complex and hard-to-replicate contexts that characterize real-world projects, such as sense-making (spotting patterns and key factors); bricolage (building on what is to hand, including others' skills, insights and experiences); contributing helpfully (sharing knowledge constructively); reflection (learning how to get faster and better at acquiring skills); and rehearsing (polishing skills in advance of demonstrating them).

The TARGET project offers users fast, transformative, adaptive, responsive and engaging ways to learn about, to master and sometimes improve upon, professional skills and insights in areas that are important to them, their peers, employers and society. At the heart of TARGET project is a way of delivering personalised "serious games" that present the user with complex situations that result in experiences that are gradually honed into knowledge. Interacting with the platform, each user will be presented with complex situations in the form of scenarios. The user can try out different strategies and solutions, completely risk free compared with real life, and see how these work. Over time this will result in deep and lasting learning. TARGET brings together five things that help people to build high-level skills:

1. Examples and insights that transform our understanding of a knowledge domain and help us to see patterns that are important; these are called "Threshold Concepts".
2. Ways to handle and accommodate new knowledge that evolves and matures over time; we base our approach on biological principles, a "Knowledge Ecology".
3. Ways to avoid or minimize overload and other sources of stress, so that people can internalize new knowledge efficiently and can perform at their peak level; we call this "Reducing Cognitive Load".
4. Ways for all of us to develop our competences by sharing what each of us knows and can do; we call this "Learning Communities".
5. Ways to accumulate lessons learned through real and theoretical situations using serious games dynamically tailored to the needs of the learner; we call this approach "Experience Management".

Bio:

Manuel Fradinho is the R&D director of Cyntelix and the scientific coordinator of the TARGET project. His research interests include problem-based learning using serious games and social media. He recently published a book on networked graphics for games and has more than 75 international referred publications.