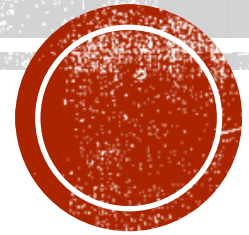


# GAMES OUTSIDE OF GAMES

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# INTRODUCTION

Currently working as a senior lecturer,  
experienced in:

- Teaching and Research
- Web development
- Project Management
- Database Integrations
- User Experience and User Interface Design
- Games Design
- Level Design

And more besides...





# ABOUT THIS TALK

The main focus of this talk is to look at transferable skills, and the possibility to change how you view your career.

Games development skills are needed outside of the games industry!



# WHERE DID THIS COME FROM?

My life, career and experiences have led me to this realisation:

**Look for work that you have the knowledge and skills for, not for a specific role or job title.**

If you're looking to have a digital career, you have the capability to transfer into other sectors using the same s



# PROFESSION AND PASSION

Most successful people I know have this one thing in common:

- Split their time between their professional job and a side project

These will change over time, but enable them to remain relevant and employable.

- Early career: Closely aligned.
- Established career: Less aligned.



# WHERE DID THIS START FOR ME?

A series of events:

- Half-Life: Learned how to use Worldcraft to create maps and minimods,
- Half-Life 2 Alpha Leak: Included Hammer,
- Doom 3 E3 Alpha Leak: Included D3Edit.

Doom 3 released in 2004

I joined Classic Doom 3 mod project as a level designer, quickly becoming project manager.





## PROJECT: CLASSIC DOOM 3

During the completion of this mod I learned how to:

- Create levels using D3Edit (and all this entails),
- Look at 3D space in a different way (user vs developer),
- Manage a project team of volunteers,
- Write effectively for the web (interviews, articles, news updates),
- Engage and manage an online community.

I was 22 at the time. I still use these skills today. Almost 20 years later.



# IMPACT ON MY PROFESSIONAL CAREER

I did this because I *knew* I wanted to be a professional games designer / level designer.

I achieved my dream, I became a professional level designer. It didn't work out and I still had to pay the bills.

Through desperation came this realisation:

“I have these skills, but don't want to work in games, where else can I use them?”





# WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

I became freelance and took on a range of small jobs and short term contracts, including:

- Games design consultancy
- Web development and copywriting for small local businesses
- Business IT support

Eventually established myself again outside of the games industry using the skills I had gained from the mod projects and full time employment.



# WHY DID THIS WORK OUT IN THE END?

Since that point in my life, every job I've done, I have stuck to these things:

- What skills and knowledge have I gained?
- What opportunities are available to me right now?
- What do I want to get out of my next career move?

You'll notice, the actual 'job title' isn't a consideration...



# PASSION PROJECTS

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Classic Doom 3	2004-6
Doom 3 Can Do It Too	2004-5
Zombie Slayer	2007
Hexen Edge of Chaos	2008
Jailbreak: Source	2008
GEEK (Games Expo East Kent)	2011-13
MSc dissertation using VR	2016-17
Project Borealis	2017/18
PhD using VR	2019 - present



# HOW CAN MY EXPERIENCES HELP YOU?

The approach is useful, regardless of where you are in your career:

- Looking to enter into the games industry
- Progressing sideways, onwards or upwards
- Leaving the games industry
  
- ... or unable to make it into the games industry



# HOW TO SELF ASSESS

It is incredibly difficult to self-assess your own knowledge and skills.

Find a mentor, a trusted friend, someone who you can have an open and honest conversation with.

Try the rubber duck approach (adapted from <https://rubberduckdebugging.com/>)



# GAMES OUTSIDE OF GAMES

Games development tools, techniques and technologies are used today outside of games.

Rise in the use of Virtual Reality:

- Business and industry
- Industrial training
- Formal education
- Digital conferencing and events
- Product development

Anything that uses remote collaboration and team-working!



# EXAMPLES

Some cherry-picked examples:

- Games development? Software engineer
- Producer? Project manager
- Games design? Business analyst
- Artist? Digital production





## FINAL THOUGHTS

Whatever stage of your career, focus on the skills and knowledge you have first, before looking at the 'job title'.

This is just one way, not 'the' way. It's worked for me, but might not be right for you. In either case, knowing your worth will raise your confidence regardless of where you are in your career.

Use your passion projects to support your professional career and be open-minded to new opportunities.

