UX & Development Process

Week #5

UX (User Experience)

Transparency, transparency, transparency!!!

Why is UX so important?

-Because no one read manuals

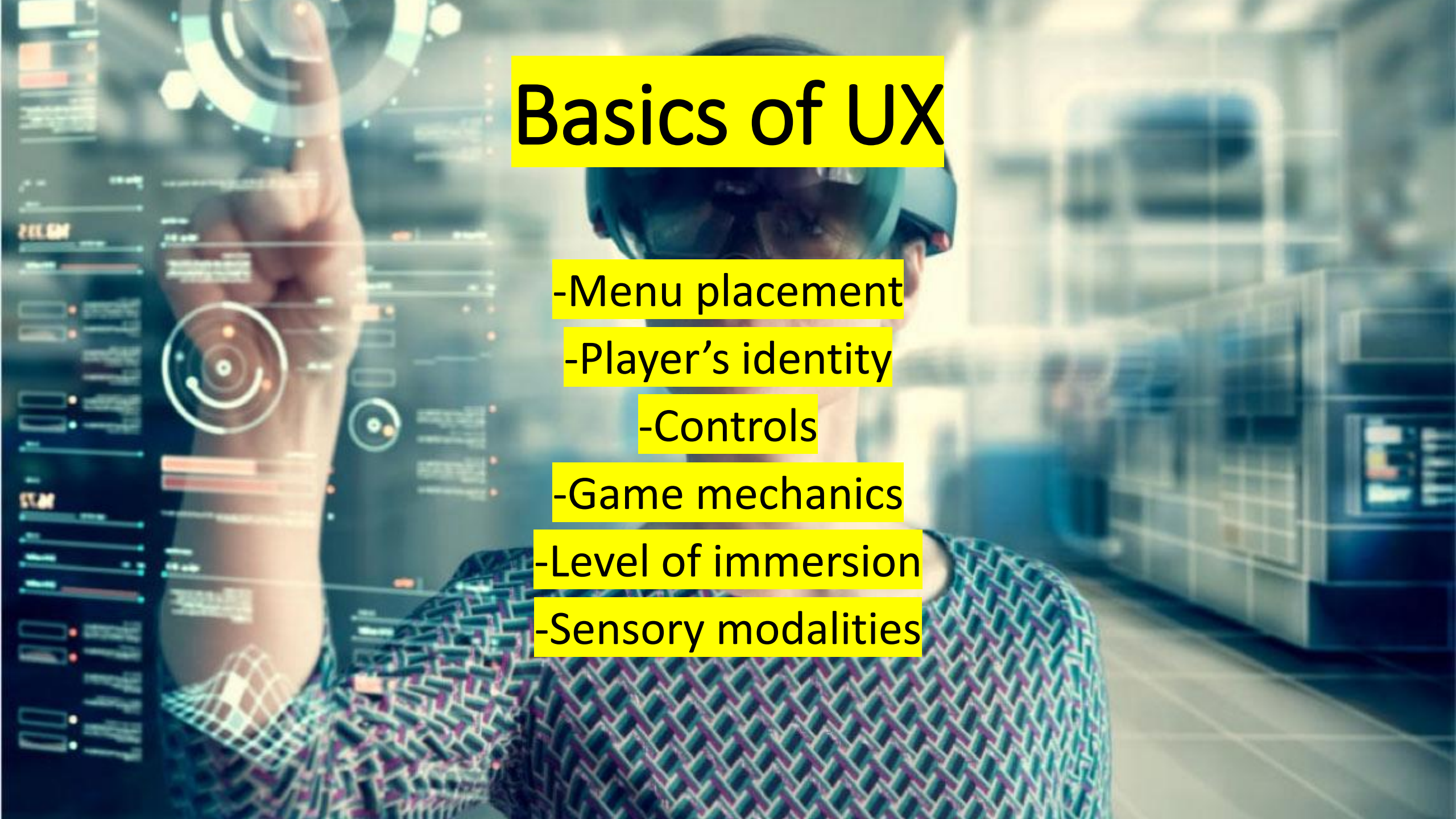
Why is UX so important?

-Worst thing for you as a creator is to see your audience struggling using a system you've designed.

-The user should never have to think about the game's mechanics.

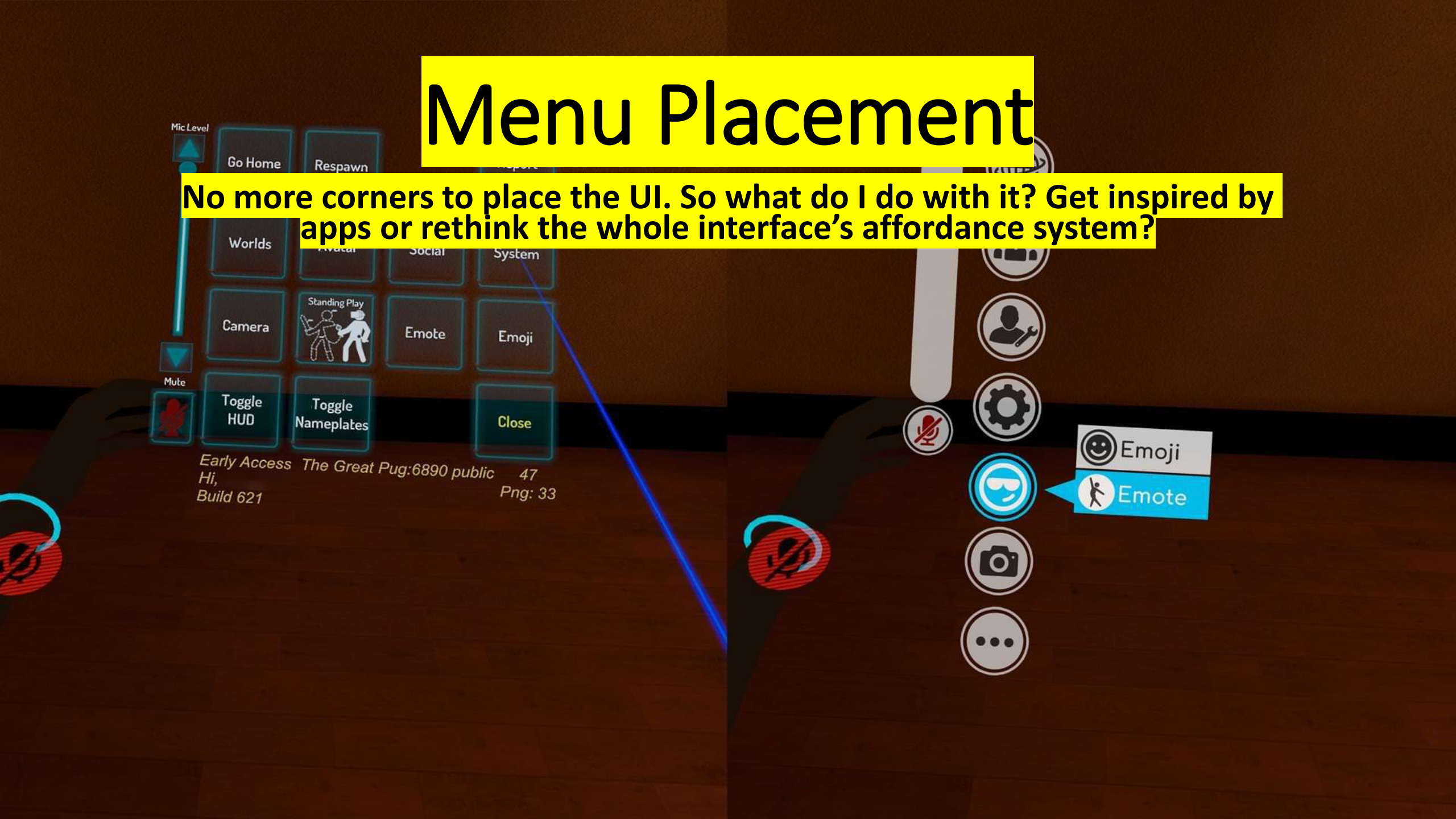
-The user should only think about playing more and enjoying it.

-Potentially make the game ready to be played on different interfaces.


Basics of UX
-Menu placement
-Player’s identity
-Controls
-Game mechanics
-Level of immersion
-Sensory modalities

Menu Placement

No more corners to place the UI. So what do I do with it? Get inspired by apps or rethink the whole interface's affordance system?



Player’s Identity

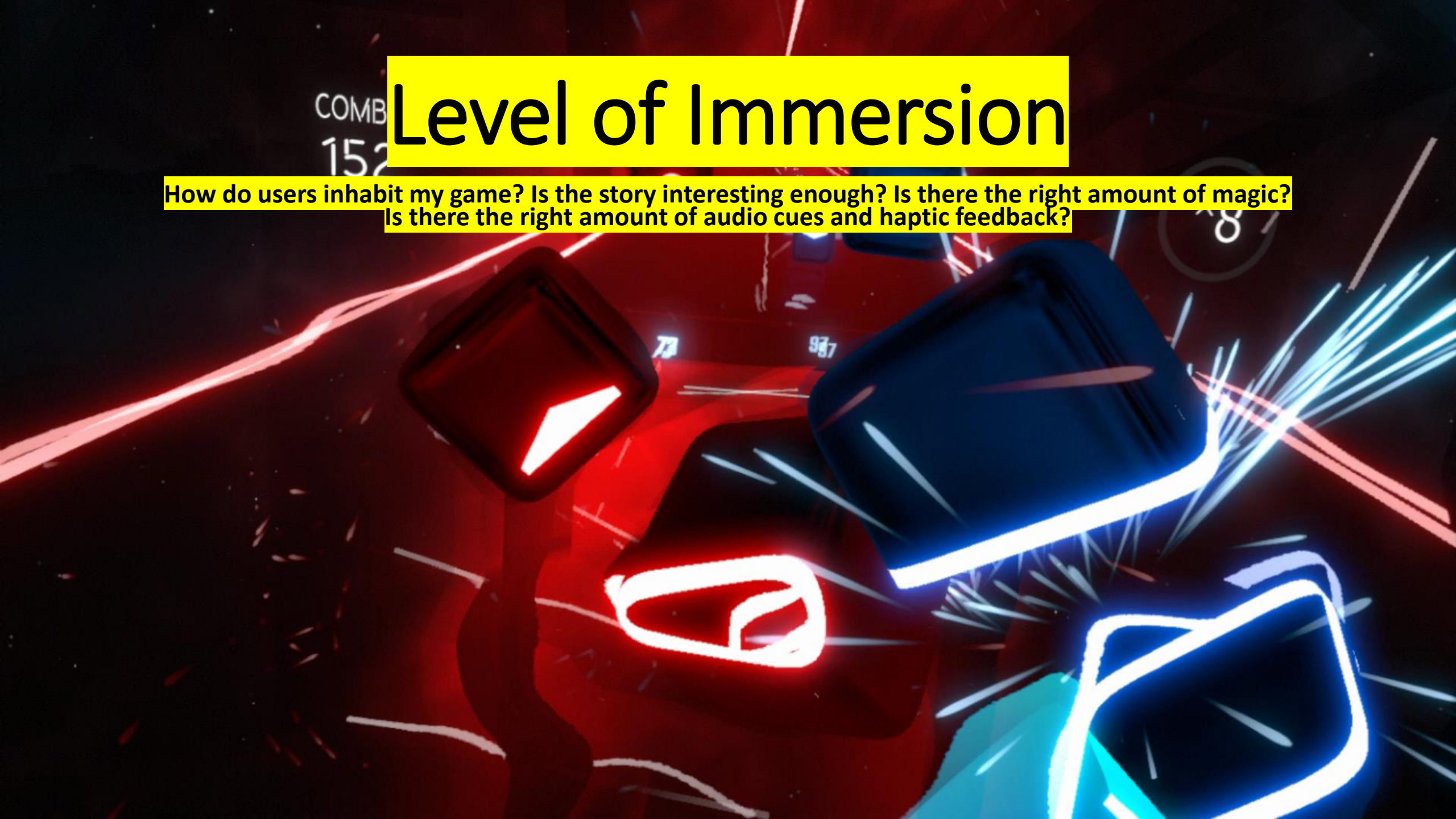
Who am I? How do I know? Is there an option for the user to customize their avatar?

Controls

How intuitive are my controls? Is it practical/logic for all users?

Game Mechanics

How do I highlight my interactive elements? How do I make it easy for the players to know what they have to do? How do I make sure they do not do what they're not supposed to?

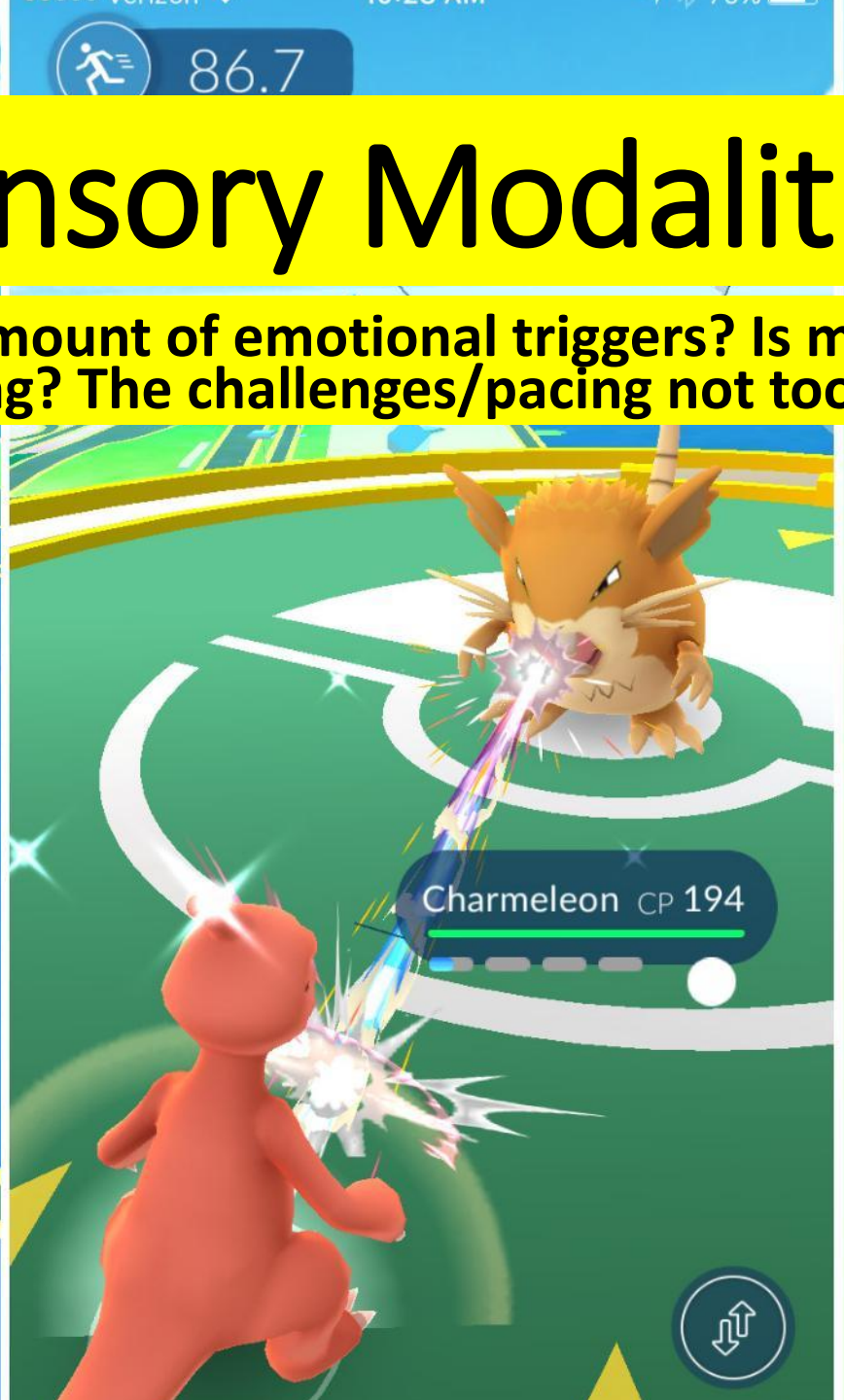


Level of Immersion

How do users inhabit my game? Is the story interesting enough? Is there the right amount of magic? Is there the right amount of audio cues and haptic feedback?

Sensory Modalities

Is there the right amount of emotional triggers? Is my narrative not too demanding? The challenges/pacing not too difficult?



Basics of UX for XR

-No more ‘touch’ inputs but gestures recognition

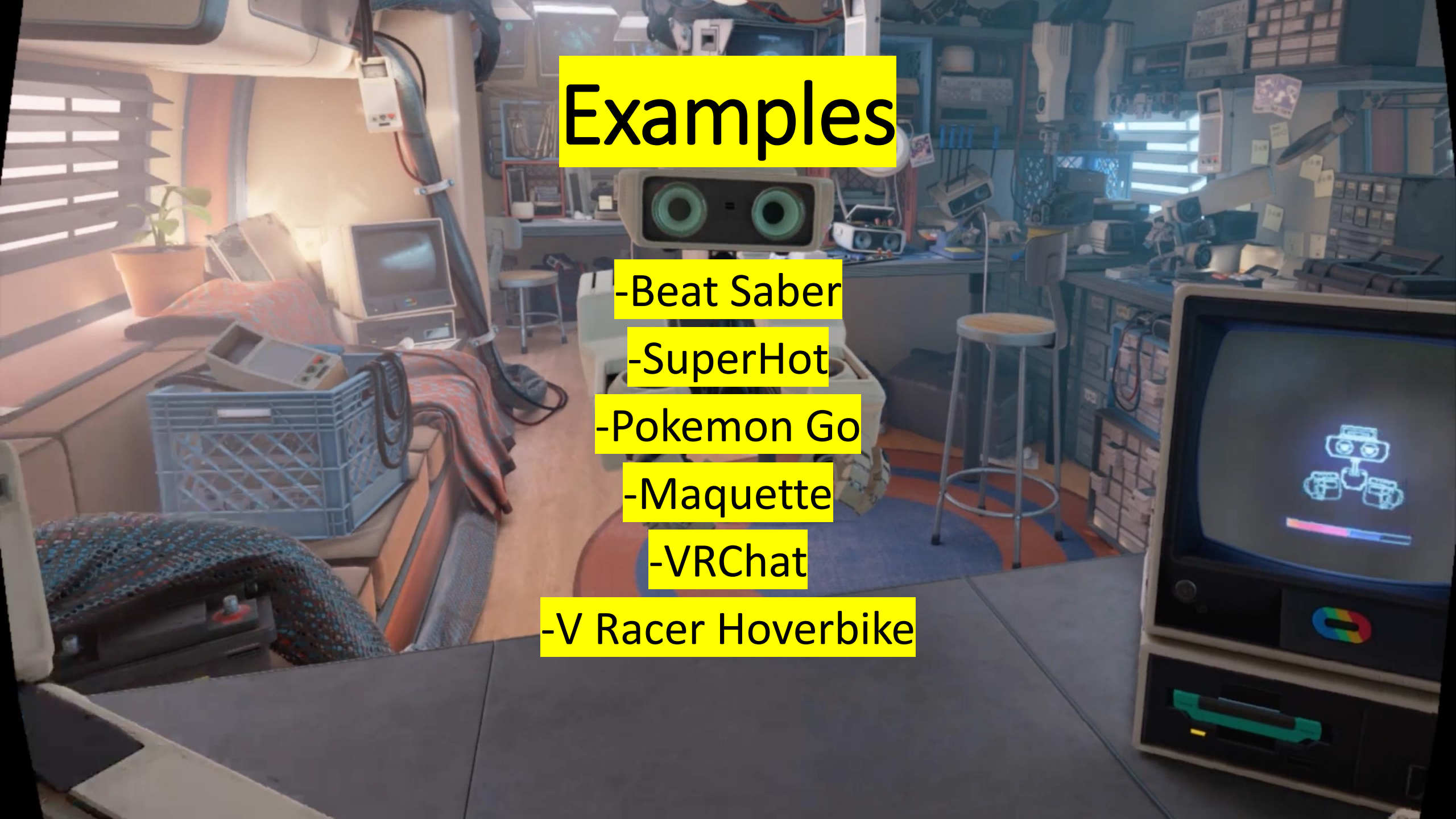
-No clicking on 2D pictures but manipulation of 3D objects

-Less textual menus and more AI and audio generated cues

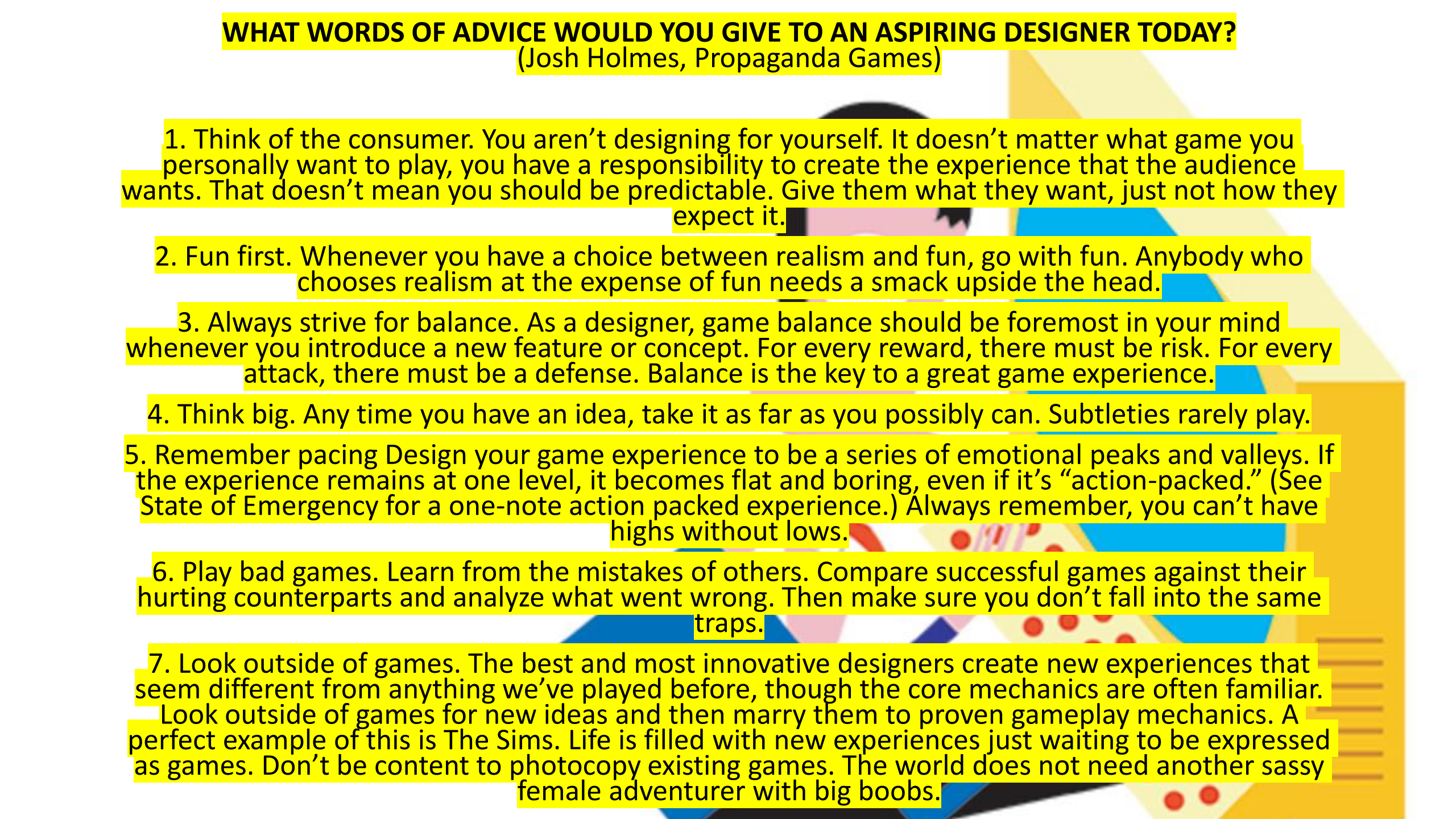
-No third view camera (in most cases) but first view player

- No more scene loads (and loading time) but scenes within scenes

- etc.


Examples
-Beat Saber
-SuperHot
-Pokemon Go
-Maquette
-VRChat
-V Racer Hoverbike

WHAT WORDS OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO AN ASPIRING DESIGNER TODAY?
(Josh Holmes, Propaganda Games)



1. Think of the consumer. You aren't designing for yourself. It doesn't matter what game you personally want to play, you have a responsibility to create the experience that the audience wants. That doesn't mean you should be predictable. Give them what they want, just not how they expect it.

2. Fun first. Whenever you have a choice between realism and fun, go with fun. Anybody who chooses realism at the expense of fun needs a smack upside the head.

3. Always strive for balance. As a designer, game balance should be foremost in your mind whenever you introduce a new feature or concept. For every reward, there must be risk. For every attack, there must be a defense. Balance is the key to a great game experience.

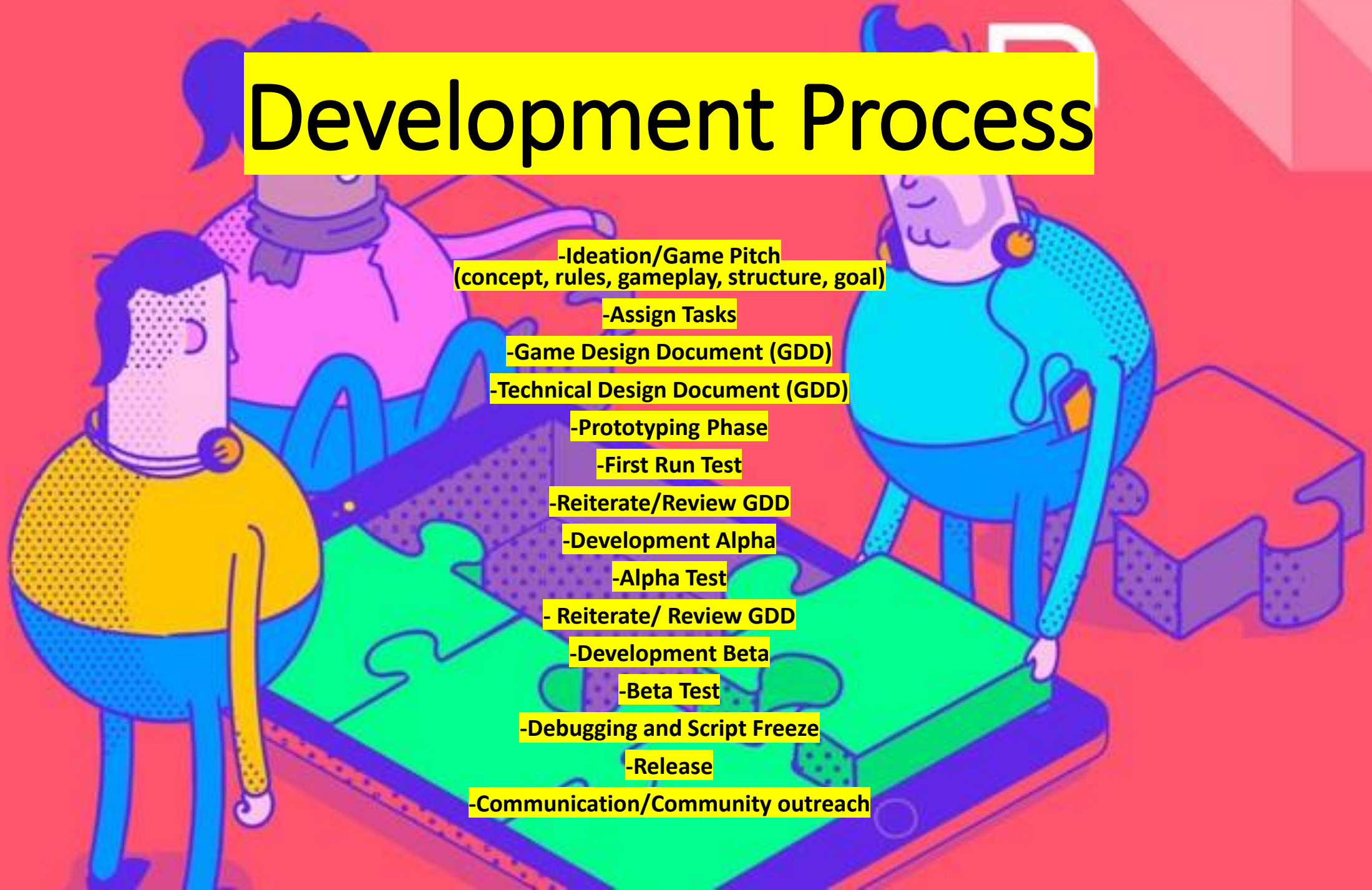
4. Think big. Any time you have an idea, take it as far as you possibly can. Subtleties rarely play.

5. Remember pacing Design your game experience to be a series of emotional peaks and valleys. If the experience remains at one level, it becomes flat and boring, even if it's "action-packed." (See State of Emergency for a one-note action packed experience.) Always remember, you can't have highs without lows.

6. Play bad games. Learn from the mistakes of others. Compare successful games against their hurting counterparts and analyze what went wrong. Then make sure you don't fall into the same traps.

7. Look outside of games. The best and most innovative designers create new experiences that seem different from anything we've played before, though the core mechanics are often familiar. Look outside of games for new ideas and then marry them to proven gameplay mechanics. A perfect example of this is The Sims. Life is filled with new experiences just waiting to be expressed as games. Don't be content to photocopy existing games. The world does not need another sassy female adventurer with big boobs.

Development Process



-Ideation/Game Pitch
(concept, rules, gameplay, structure, goal)

-Assign Tasks

-Game Design Document (GDD)

-Technical Design Document (GDD)

-Prototyping Phase

-First Run Test

-Reiterate/Review GDD

-Development Alpha

-Alpha Test

- Reiterate/ Review GDD

-Development Beta

-Beta Test

-Debugging and Script Freeze

-Release

-Communication/Community outreach

Draft a Game Pitch for a Social Justice-oriented XR game/experience

-What is the game's idea

-What are the rules the player have to follow?

-What is the goal for us (creators) and for the player?

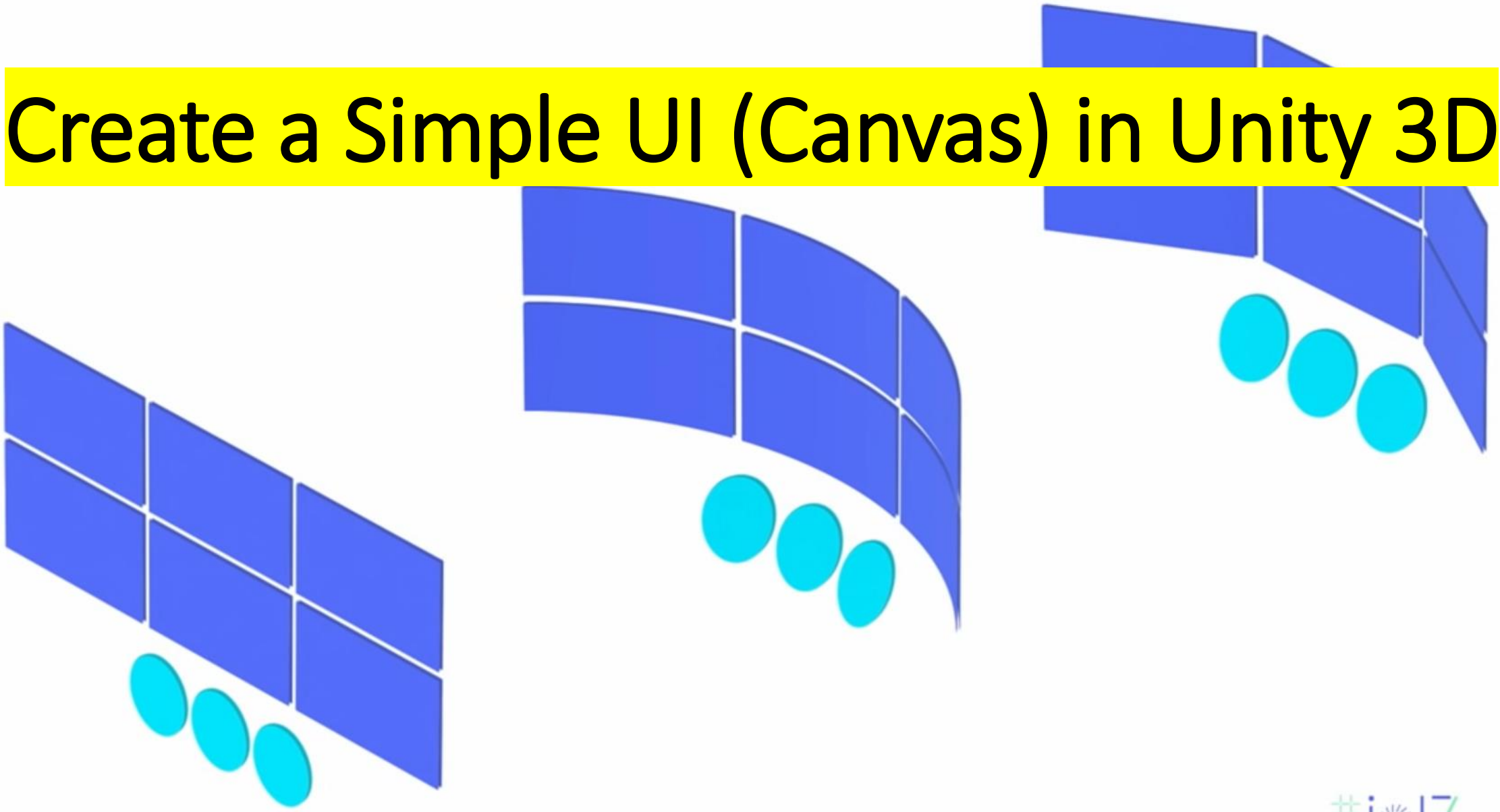
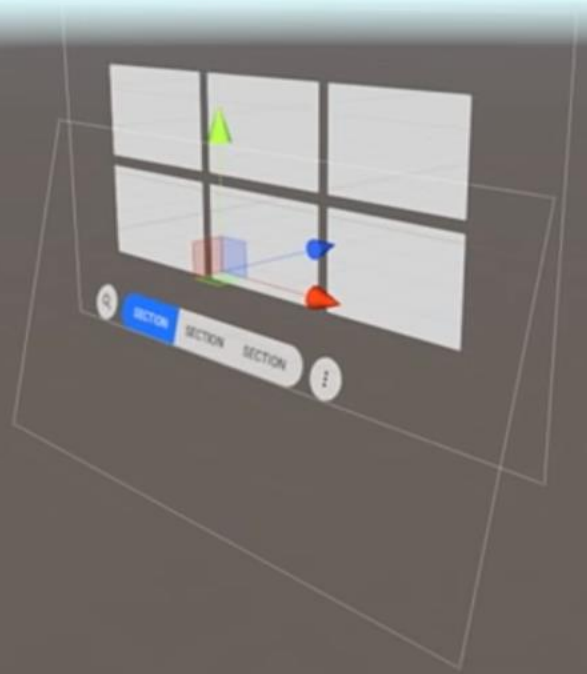
-For what platform/device is it designed for?

-What are the basics game mechanics?

-What made us create this game?

-How are we going to create the game assets?

Create a Simple UI (Canvas) in Unity 3D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