

Connections Next Gen goes to Connections UK!

In September, the Connections Next Gen presented a 3-part workshop on the importance of language in the designing of wargames.

What did I say?

How we engage the audience and ensure that the principles and objectives of our wargame are understood can be broken down into two categories:

Verbal:

- Who is your audience? What drives them, motivates them, and makes them want to engage with your product?
- Are they native speakers of your language? Consider language barriers but also on regional dialects and slang.
- Are they familiar with your organizational language (and you with theirs)? Not all audiences will be from your professional background.
- Is this the clearest/most concise way to communicate an idea? Along with a sea of acronyms, another potential pitfall is clarity.

Non verbal:

- Body language: When in person, keep your body language open and approachable. If it's over video, look down the camera but remember to blink! If you don't want to have your camera on, or if you're sharing your screen, keep a warmth to your voice.
- Imagery: Use images that relate to your game, not some random stock image you found on google.
- Fonts: Think about the message you're trying to portray, is this meant to be the mock up of a military briefing, is this a media report?

Why should I care?

Our job as designers is to bring the magic of engagement and immersion to our simulations in an inclusive way. If our players become disengaged, we have failed at our jobs as there is very rarely a possibility of regaining player attention.

We need to keep the design approachable, digestible, relatable, and understandable for our audience.

- Keep in mind WHO you are designing for.
- Professionals vs newbies
- Native speaker vs not
- Cultural perceptions (organizational, geopolitical)
- Gamers vs non-gamers
- Generational relatability

You must be able to identify your own assumptions about the audience demographic, and then challenge what you think you know.

What did you mean?

We all know exactly what we mean when we speak, although we can have trouble expressing it sometimes. But even if we express ourselves clearly, other people can interpret our words differently across languages (ex. schmoozing) and cultures (ex. chips).

Our brain makes shortcuts for connotations based on where you grew up, where you went to school, what language you speak and how your mind works. Some people also have difficulty understanding metaphors or similes, so it's best to use plain language where possible.

Updates

- Keep up to date on events and other information by checking our [website](#), under the Notice Board tab!
- The next Game Night, will be taking place on **December 14th!** Registration will be available in November.

- Contact us at info@connectionsnextgen.org or on social media if you have any topic or game suggestions!