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Level Up

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Imagine for a second that you are about to go into an interview and sitting across the waiting lounge is the only other applicant for the position. This person has had the same education and work experience as you. But there is one small difference—this person happens to play video games quite often. You smirk and think to yourself, “This job is in the bag.”

A week after your interview you get a call: you didn’t get the job—the other applicant did. Why? The answer: video games.

What could video games teach someone that could help propel them amongst others when they apply for a job? Video games have been proven to help better cognitive skills, organizational skills and social skills. As stated in the “Positive Association of Video Game Playing with Left Frontal Cortical Thickness in Adolescents,” a recent study conducted by German psychologists at Charité University Medicine, video games have many positive effects on our brains.

Since gaming has increased tremendously over the years, there has been an interest in finding new ways for gamers to interact with each other in games. Whether it’s with someone in person or online, people work together in games in order to complete objectives. Some games make it simple—defeat enemies together or help each other get from point A to point B.

Then there are games where each person controls a different character with specific abilities. These games are more challenging and require the players to communicate well and work together to achieve their goals.

World of Warcraft is a great example of such a game. Gamers work together to overcome challenges in a game, making perfect practice for the workplace. Many workplaces stress cooperation and video games are a prime example of how one could develop strong social skills simply by playing with others. Most gamers prefer to play with others, and thanks to the growth of the internet, gamers can easily enjoy playing with friends and other gamers alike.

Video games often require you to manage things such as time, your inventory, or in-game characters. Most jobs also require you to organize things—your work area or items necessary for your work. High level jobs especially require you to have the proper organizational skills to handle many tasks and people at once. Gamers who have been gaming since their early years have an advantage because they have a lot of practice using their organizational skills in games. Organizational skills are important to employers. They want to know that they can trust you with various tasks and that you have the ability to efficiently and effectively handle them. Remembering all of your tasks is something video games can also help you with.

According to Real-Time Strategy Game Training: Emergence of a Cognitive Flexibility Trait, a study conducted by various researchers from European universities, people that play video games have better memory, pay better attention to detail and can be more alert when various things are going on at once. Playing fast-paced, action games, as most gamers do these days, can help develop these skills. When playing these games, gamers have to focus on multiple on-screen tasks at once. As a game gets harder, more enemies appear along with more obstacles and dangers, which requires one to think quickly and pay closer attention. Gamers develop better memory since they have to identify patterns in games such as enemy movements. These skills are important to employers and gamers have to recognize this.

When we apply for a job, we never stop and think about how video games could help give us an edge. Some might even laugh if they were told video games could give them a boost. The truth is that video games help us develop these skills, but it is up to us, the gamers, to realize what they have helped us with and use it to our advantage.

Think about the games you have played and what skills you had to use in the game. You might be surprised that playing video games provides job experience after all. Use the skills you have developed and remember to keep gaming.