User guide for *Developer Inc.*:

https://store.steampowered.com/app/1612540/Dev_Inc/

UPSKILLS Domain Cluster:

- Research-oriented
- Organisational
- Transversal

Target Audience:

Undergraduate / postgraduate taking linguistics & language-related courses

Requirements:

No specific requirements

Gaming Experience:

Low

Skills Targeted:

- Analytical skills
- Ability to review a problem, identify a solution and foresee opportunities
- Project management skills
- Planning skills
- Teamwork and communication skills

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of game play, the students are expected to:

- Demonstrate skills related to analytical reasoning
- Identify the problem related to the task at hand, and think of possible alternative solutions
- Creatively devise novel solutions to help maximise the solution's effectiveness
- Acquire project management skills involved in the setting up a successful startup in the area of game design
- Use their planning skills to foresee any challenges related to the setting up of the company
- Use effective marketing and development strategies for the success of the game designed and developed by the fictitious company

Introduction (for academics & lecturers):

This is a game that mimics real life strategy in the formation of a successful technology startup. The objective of the startup is that of designing and developing a successful game to be launched to the market. This is a game that involves strategy more than just exploration, or other game mechanics. The players will work on a point and click method. The game, although marketed as a single-player game, would be ideal to be played in teams as there is the possibility of increasing the discussion about the setting up of a project and about elements that make up successful game design and development. This will also support teamwork, and therefore help users engage more in communication and interpersonal skills.

Although the target audience are not necessarily delving into game design, the technical jargon is one which can help them familiarise with other technical project management jargon, and will help them acquire soft skills related to leading successful projects whilst evaluating market expectations.

Pre-Game Briefing:

The game you are playing today is called Developer Inc. This is what is called a simulation environment game where you have to take the lead into a small startup company, to help design and develop a successful game that is launched on the market.

The game can take up to a few hours of play. Your scope is that of creating a game which is successful on the market. You need to decide what works and what doesn't but you also need to decide for your employees. You need to decide about their working conditions, what training would best work, and how in the end, you can maintain a good return on investment. If you play this in teams, you need to make sure that you have a consensus among the team player about which direction to take in the best interest of the employee/s and for the successful launch of the game you are designing and developing. Therefore you need to emphasise good communication between the team players and agree on the right strategy for developing this game.

Game de-Briefing (post-play):
• What game did you choose to develop?
• Did you go back and decide on a different strategy during your game play?
• Was your game successful on the market?
• Can you describe what strategies you have used to:
  Design the game?
  Train your employees?
• Was it single play or did you play in a team?

Possible discussion questions to raise to develop research & organisational skills:
• What steps did you start with to determine they type of game to develop?
• What problems/challenges did you encounter?
• What strategies did you think about to overcome those challenges?
• How did you manage your project overall? What plans did you have in place and how did those plans develop over time?

Possible discussion questions to raise to help develop transversal skills (in case of team play):
• What communication techniques did you choose during your team (face-to-face) game play?
• What different roles have been taken up within your team/group?
• On a scale from 1-10 with 10 being most difficult, how difficult was it to learn how to play this game, with a degree of success?

Conclusion (for academics & lecturers):
The following are a list of questions which you can make use of to evaluate the use of this game as part of your UPSKILLS course curriculum. You can use a journal to keep track of your answers.

• Was this game useful in the class that you have taught?
• Are the skills described in this guide well addressed during game play? If not, why do you think has this happened?
• Does this game have other potential skills that it can help develop?
• Would you have the students play this game individually or in teams? Why or why not?