

Breaking In: Designers and Writers

Katie Chironis
@katiechironis
katie@herinteractive.com

Who am I?



Microsoft
game studios™



Unhelpful Advice

"Make a lot of games!! :)"

"Write a lot of stuff!! :)"

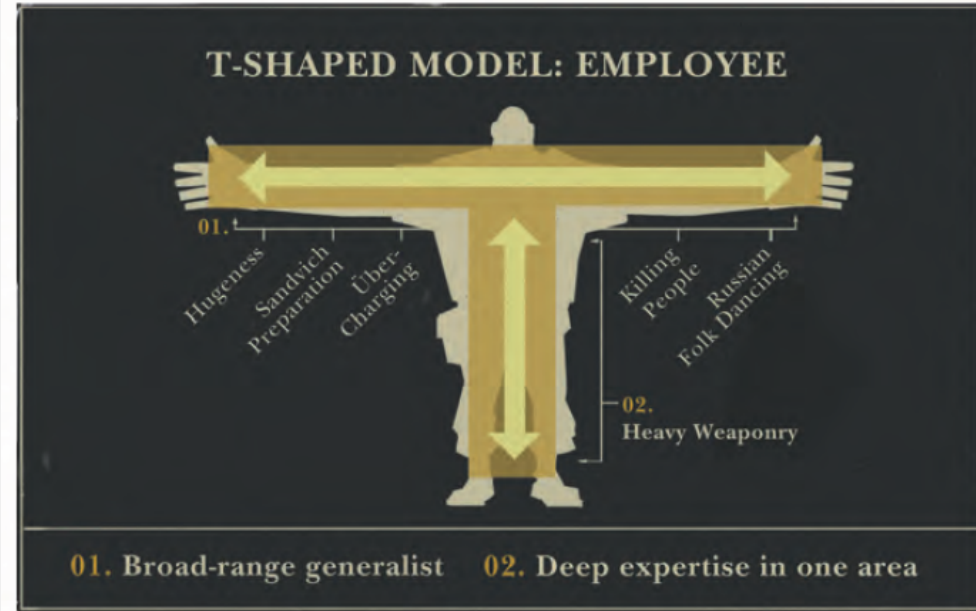


Step 1: Target Yourself

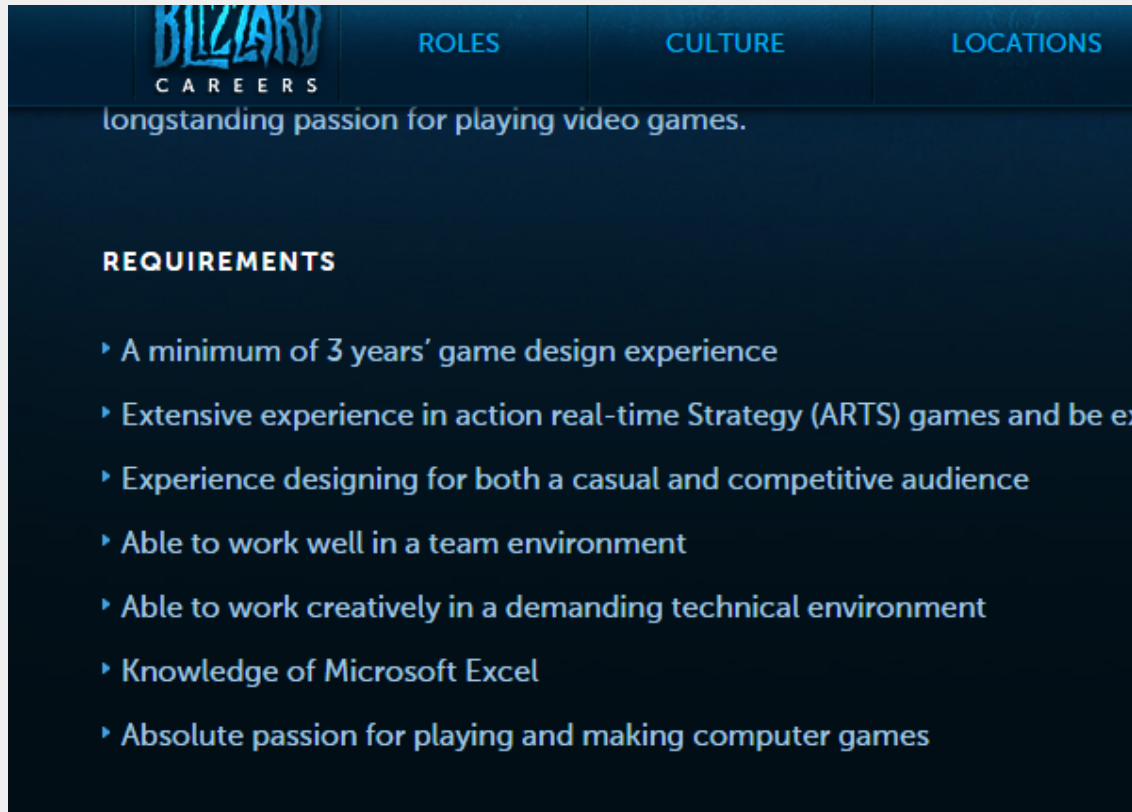


MULTI-CLASSING

All the disadvantages of both
and the benefits of neither



Step 2: What Do You Want?

A screenshot of the Blizzard Careers website. The top navigation bar includes the 'BLIZZARD CAREERS' logo and three menu items: 'ROLES', 'CULTURE', and 'LOCATIONS'. Below the navigation bar, there is a paragraph of text starting with 'longstanding passion for playing video games.' followed by a section titled 'REQUIREMENTS' which contains a bulleted list of job requirements.

longstanding passion for playing video games.

REQUIREMENTS

- A minimum of 3 years' game design experience
- Extensive experience in action real-time Strategy (ARTS) games and be ex
- Experience designing for both a casual and competitive audience
- Able to work well in a team environment
- Able to work creatively in a demanding technical environment
- Knowledge of Microsoft Excel
- Absolute passion for playing and making computer games

The Dreaded Line

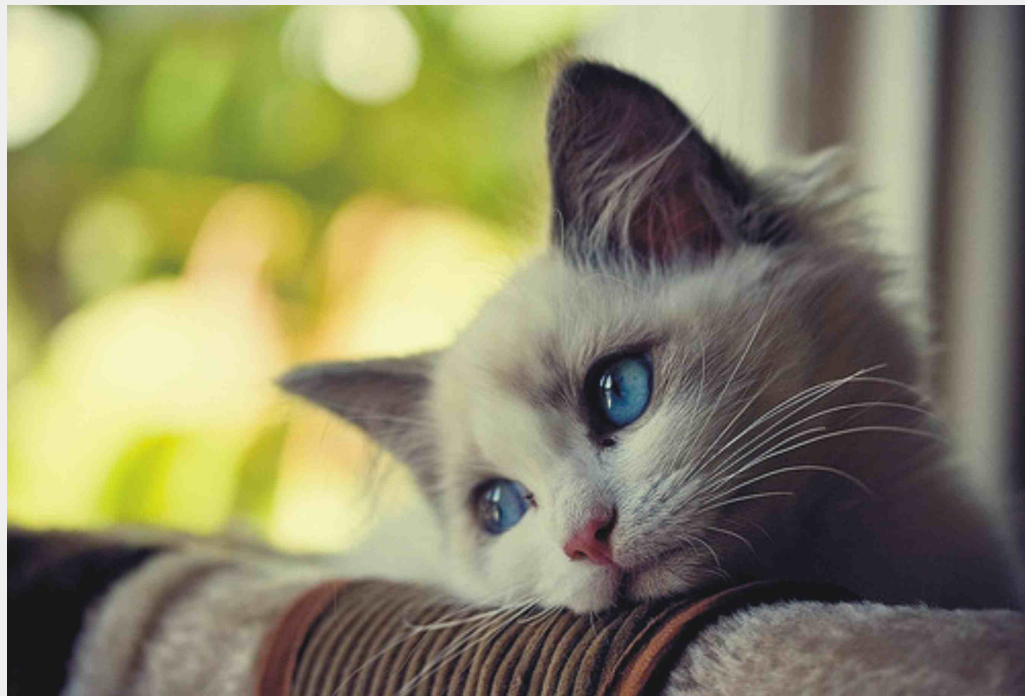
REQUIREMENTS

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imum of 3 years' game design experience

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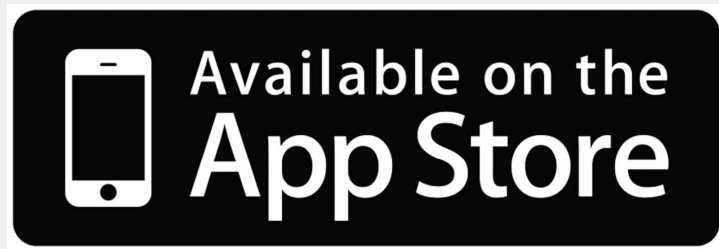
Lots of things count as "shipped!"

Did it have an audience?

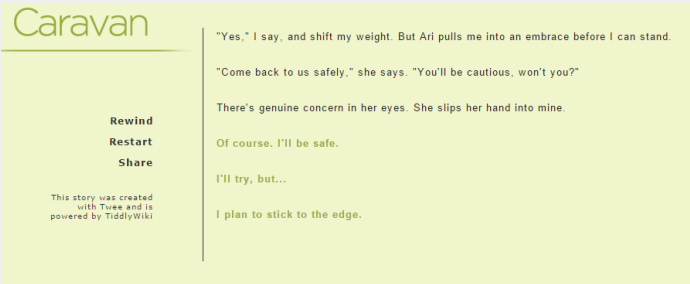
Did you release it publicly?

Is it available for purchase?

Does it look polished?



Step 3: Portfolio Pieces - More Isn't Better



Step 4: Go Back and Polish

Making games is about finishing the last 20% of a project, and doing it right.

Designers:

- Is my UI easy to use?
- Is feedback in my game fun, fast, and visually pretty?
- Have I had several public playtests and implemented changes?

Writers:

- Find a writing group - do they like your stuff? Playtest interactive work!
- Ask writing professors to give you targeted feedback, revise, revise more

Step 5: Your Portfolio Website

Page 1

ABOUT ME

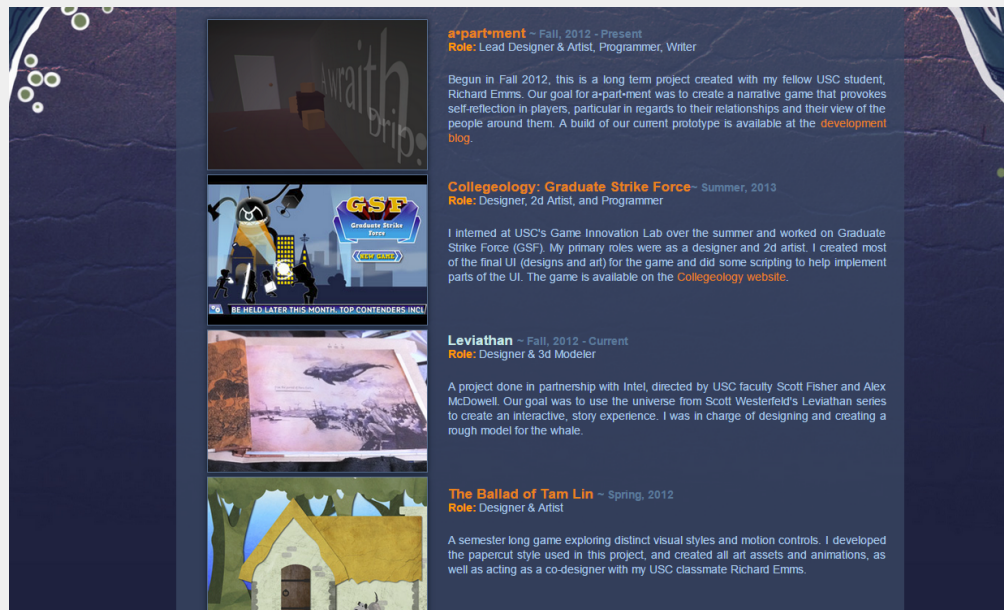
I'm Duncan Boehle, a programmer at [Double Fine](#), and a 2012 graduate of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University. I believe that there is no translation between the immersive interactivity of games and the passive entertainment of traditional media. My passion is to work on games that push boundaries to tell better stories, evoke more emotions, and enable richer experiences than any other medium.

Feel free to check out the [projects](#) I've been working on, or feel free to take a look at my [resume](#).



Step 5: Your Portfolio Website

Page 2

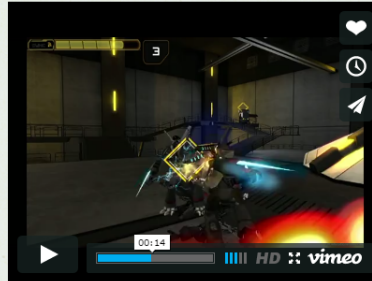


Step 5: Your Portfolio Website

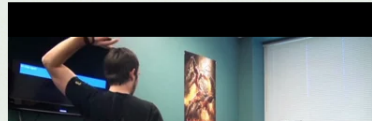
Page 3 - for each project



30 Second Teaser:



3 Minute Trailer:



Action in Motion

Action In Motion is a two-semester-long student pitch project at Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center. The goal of the Fall 2011 semester was to build a vertical slice of Hack-and-Slash gameplay using the Kinect.

Recently, the team was approved for a second semester of work on the project, beginning this Spring 2012. Moving forward, the focus will be on experimenting with a one-handed wireless joystick to supplement the Kinect.

The end goal is to build a Hack-and-slash demo that keeps a joystick for intuitive navigation, while preserving the best the Kinect has to offer for motion control in combat.

For this project, we worked in a team of four. The lead programmer and I collaborated on the game's design, while I took care of modeling, rigging, and animation.

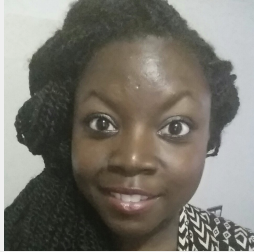
The screenshots to the left show playtests from late last December, when the game first became playable. I was responsible for modeling, rigging, and animating the characters, as well as modeling and lighting the environment. Peihong Tan handled all concepting and texture work for the project, while Anthony Palma and Adam Lederer acted as the core programmers.

[Project Website](#)

[Full Playthrough \(Part 1/2\)](#)

[Full Playthrough \(Part 2/2\)](#)

Step 6: Your Online Presence



Maria.Mendoza@Gmail.com



SenseiBattleStar334@Gmail.com



Step 7: Start Looking for Friends!



Step 8: Best Foot Forward

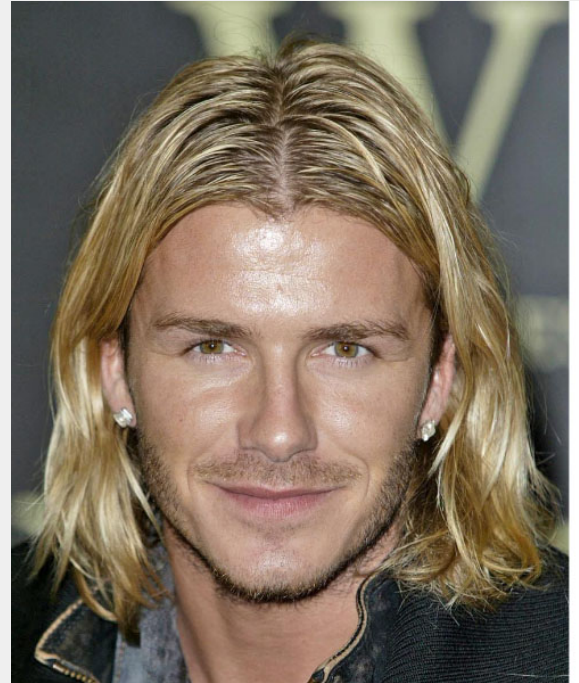
Do you wash your hair **multiple times** a week and shower **daily**?

Do you use deodorant that isn't Axe?

Do you use a body wash/bar soap?

Do you brush your teeth **twice a day**?

Do you sleep enough?



Step 8: Best Foot Forward

Should I wear this
fedora?



Are you literally Notch or
Don Draper?

Yes

What the hell are you
doing at this talk?

No

Don't wear the fedora

Step 9: Network Smart

- Follow up - Twitter, Facebook, email
- "Can I buy you a beer/lunch and listen to your stories from the trenches?"
- Congratulate contacts when they release games
- If competitive player: ask if they'd be up for playing a game sometime
- **FRIEND FIRST. CONTACT SECOND.**



Step 10: The Interview and Offer

I've got an interview, now what?



Penultimate Note

If anyone ever makes you uncomfortable about your gender, race, gender identity or sexual orientation at any kind of networking event, get out of there. You're worth more than that.

Final Note

"“The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out. The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something. Because the brick walls are there to stop the people who don't want it badly enough. They're there to stop the other people.”"

**Got questions? @katiechironis
or kchironis@gmail.com!**