



# game if you are

## Coronavirus Risk Assessment 21st October 2020

**Updates highlighted**

### Risks Identified

There are three broad categories of risk presented to Game If You Are by the current coronavirus pandemic.

- Risk to the physical health of staff and those whom they live or interact with.
- Risk to the psychological wellbeing of staff.
- Risk to the commercial health of the business.

### Risk to the physical health of staff and those whom they live or interact with

The risk to the physical health of our staff and those whom they live or interact with is currently **moderate due to an increase in coronavirus prevalence across the country and some staff members living in particularly affected areas of the country. However, the risk to the physical health of Game If You Are employees is low during the course of their work.**

Game If You Are acted swiftly to provide health guidance to staff at the start of the pandemic. Initially this involved a set of guidelines to be followed when working outside of our normal setting, for example at events or when meeting clients. However, as the pandemic worsened in mid-March, we moved to instruct all of our staff to work exclusively from home until further notice - this was several days prior to the government making this official public health advice.



On 15th July 2020, the management team met to discuss the possibility of a return to shared / co-working spaces. The decision was taken that Game If You Are employees should continue to work from home with the advice to be reviewed again in October 2020.

**After a brief period of encouraging workers back into offices, the government returned to its previous guidance that office workers should continue to work from home where possible, for the entire duration of the Winter. As such, as of October 2020, we anticipate that our guidance to employees will be to continue to work from home until at least the end of February 2021.**

Working from home may, in some circumstances, present its own physical health risks to staff. **As such, in July 2020, we encouraged staff to speak to management if they have any such concerns and we will consider mitigating factors which may include:**

- The purchase of equipment (for example, if a staff member does not have access to a suitable desk or chair)
- Flexible hours (for example, if a staff member struggles to sit comfortably at their home desk for an extended period of time)

**These issues were addressed with individual staff members at the time. However, new employees who may require assistance or flexibility on the above should speak to their line manager.**

We encourage all staff to take regular short breaks which may include taking outdoor exercise. To help accommodate this, on 15th July 2020, Game If You Are agreed to extend employees' paid lunch break to 45 minutes per day.

### **Risk to the psychological wellbeing of staff**

The risk to the psychological wellbeing of staff is moderate **to high**.

We recognise that these are exceptionally challenging times for everyone in the UK and beyond. We also recognise that individual personal circumstances will make



living and working through this pandemic more stressful for some people than others.

Management has proactively engaged with staff to discuss psychological wellbeing on an individual, confidential basis.

We understand the importance of stress management and, to date, we have taken the following actions to help staff through this challenging time:

- At the start of the pandemic, advised all Game If You Are clients that - while we will aim to deliver a business-as-usual service to the extent possible - our priority will be to ensure the physical and psychological needs of our staff are met.
- Permitted occasional 'personal days', which are not taken from annual leave allowance, on a case-by-case basis where the psychological needs of individual staff members warranted this.
- Encouraged regular short breaks from work, recognising that achieving a work/life balance can be difficult when working from home.
- Permitted additional flexible working patterns in certain circumstances, for example when caring for dependents.
- Put on-hold several non-critical internal projects and initiatives that we felt may apply an additional pressure on staff should they go ahead imminently.
- Checked in with individual staff members on a regular, private basis to ensure people are coping as well as possible.

On 20th May 2020, management agreed to two additional actions to help manage staff's psychological wellbeing during these times:

- Annual leave policy temporarily updated to allow staff to request annual leave of three days or less, up to two weeks prior to the desired leave period (instead of the usual one month). These requests are not guaranteed, however we will do everything we can to accommodate where possible. This



policy will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

- All senior managers will undertake a refresher course on people management at the next available opportunity, including a module on managing stress and the psychological wellbeing of staff.

On 15th July 2020, management agreed that it will be prudent to explore further options including providing more flexibility over working hours. This will be discussed and implemented if/where appropriate in due course.

**It is now looking increasingly likely that various parts of the country will be under significant restrictions for an extended period over the Winter months, and that coronavirus cases may continue to rise nationwide. While the nature of our work at Game If You Are should not directly pose a risk to employees' psychological wellbeing, it is important for the company to recognise that staff are likely to face increasingly complicated and extended stressors outside of work. As such, it is important that Game If You Are continues to provide a supportive and safe environment with the welfare of its staff placed as paramount importance.**

**In October 2020, management agreed to spend the next 3-6 months focusing primarily on improving the stability of its working practices rather than aggressively pursuing growth, to the extent possible. The intent of this is to allow employees a degree of consistency and predictability in their working lives. Management will focus on the refining of processes with the goal of removing unnecessary barriers and stressors with regards to workload and efficiency. It is important for employees to recognise that, due to the nature of our business as a growing start-up with sometimes unexpected pressures and requirements, we cannot promise an entirely stress-free Winter at work - however, management will take reasonable steps to minimise such stresses where possible.**

**Management is also committed to implementing new mental health guidelines at work via the Safe In Our World initiative.**



## **Risk to the commercial health of the business**

Despite the financial challenges faced by almost all businesses right now, the overall risk to the commercial health of Game If You Are remains reasonably low.

During April, Game If You Are experienced approximately a 30% reduction in expected revenue. This was largely the result of a significant reduction in new enquiries during the months of March and April, in addition to existing clients or leads deciding not to pursue a professional relationship with us on the basis of their own coronavirus-related financial concerns.

During the period April to July 2020, Game If You Are's total profit/loss position was -1.2%, meaning the company made a very small loss during this period. However, the company had and continues to have ample cash reserves available, meaning the overall risk to the business remains reasonably low.

**However, the profit margin in the period June to October 2020 was 12.5% suggesting significant improvements in financial stability since the first UK lockdown.**

**The Winter months, in particular December and January, often see a natural downturn in business and the company plans around this to ensure ample cash flow reserves. This year we are fortunate to have been pre-paid for an ongoing project with a major company, resulting in significant cash reserves in our bank account over the Winter. Although the business would need to act decisively on any significant downturn in financial performance, the result of any such downturn would be heavily mitigated by these cash reserves.**

In order to mitigate additional financial risk we have:

- Temporarily increased our advertising budget to bring in new leads. This greatly increased the number of new enquiries in late April and early May. We will review this advertising budget on a monthly basis to determine whether there is commercial value to continuing with a higher-than-normal advertising budget and management will take a decision on this each month. We are pleased to report that this has already led to a greatly increased number of



enquiries in May 2020.

- Undertook an expenditure review to determine ways to reduce our overheads without risking employee's jobs. The following actions were taken:
  - Reached an agreement with our Brighton office provider to suspend our contract and fees until August 2020. This will be reviewed again in July 2020.
  - The Indie Game Website's monthly advertising budget was reduced by 20% in January 2020 on a temporary basis; we agreed to keep this budget at its lower level for the foreseeable future.
  - Lewis had already reduced his director's expenditure allowance by 50% in February 2020, in accordance with spending less time working from home after moving into the Brighton office. Despite us now all working from home until further notice, we took the decision to keep this expenditure allowance at the reduced rate.
- On 15th July 2020, management agreed to terminate the company's agreement with the Platf9rm work space in Brighton for a cost saving of £550+VAT per month.
- To mitigate any longer-term financial risks caused by the coronavirus crisis, we have begun to explore ways to improve our business development processes and ensure we are more visible and more attractive to potential clients moving forward. So far we have:
  - Introduced a 'lower-budget' package of work for smaller clients who would not normally be able to afford our services; this can be rolled out and pulled back as required during quieter periods of business.
  - Slightly reduced the cost of advertising packages for The Indie Game Website.



- Begun to explore ways to improve the company's reputation, including looking at guest columns and award opportunities.
- Sought client testimonials with the view to improving and expanding our online portfolio and case studies.
- **Created a new company marketing plan, with plans in place to revamp the company's brand and digital presence over the Winter months.**
- **Revised our client strategy pipeline with a renewed focus on sales and business development, setting new revenue targets.**
- **Revised our operational expenditure budget and budgeting process as well as improving our ability to track project spends to create early warning signs in situations where profits may suffer.**

Thus far we have not needed to use any of the government's schemes to support struggling businesses. However, should the risk to Game If You Are's commercial health become higher, any currently available government support schemes would be explored before considering any changes to staffing levels.