

# Level-Up: Using Technology & Gaming as an Educational Tool for Offender Decision- Making

JEFF PFEIFER, PHD., M.LEG.ST.  
ASSOCIATE PROFESOR & INNOVATION FELLOW  
SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY  
CENTRE FOR FORENSIC BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE

# Program Information & Background

## What is the Program?

**Level-Up** is an educational program aimed at teaching participants the six basic decision-making tools which can then be used to assist them to make better decisions in their lives.

It is designed to be a short, very simple program, that is delivered through an education approach and which includes technology and gaming activities as part of the delivery as well as a built-in evaluation component.

# Program Information & Background

## The Basic Program Philosophy

*The basic philosophy of this program is that good decisions can only be made if a person uses the right decision-making tools. Given that many individuals (including those who have been involved in criminal activity) are struggling with these basic tools, the first step is to teach them what the tools are. This is the same approach that would be employed if someone were interested in building good houses, the first thing we would do is teach them what the tools are and how to use them.*

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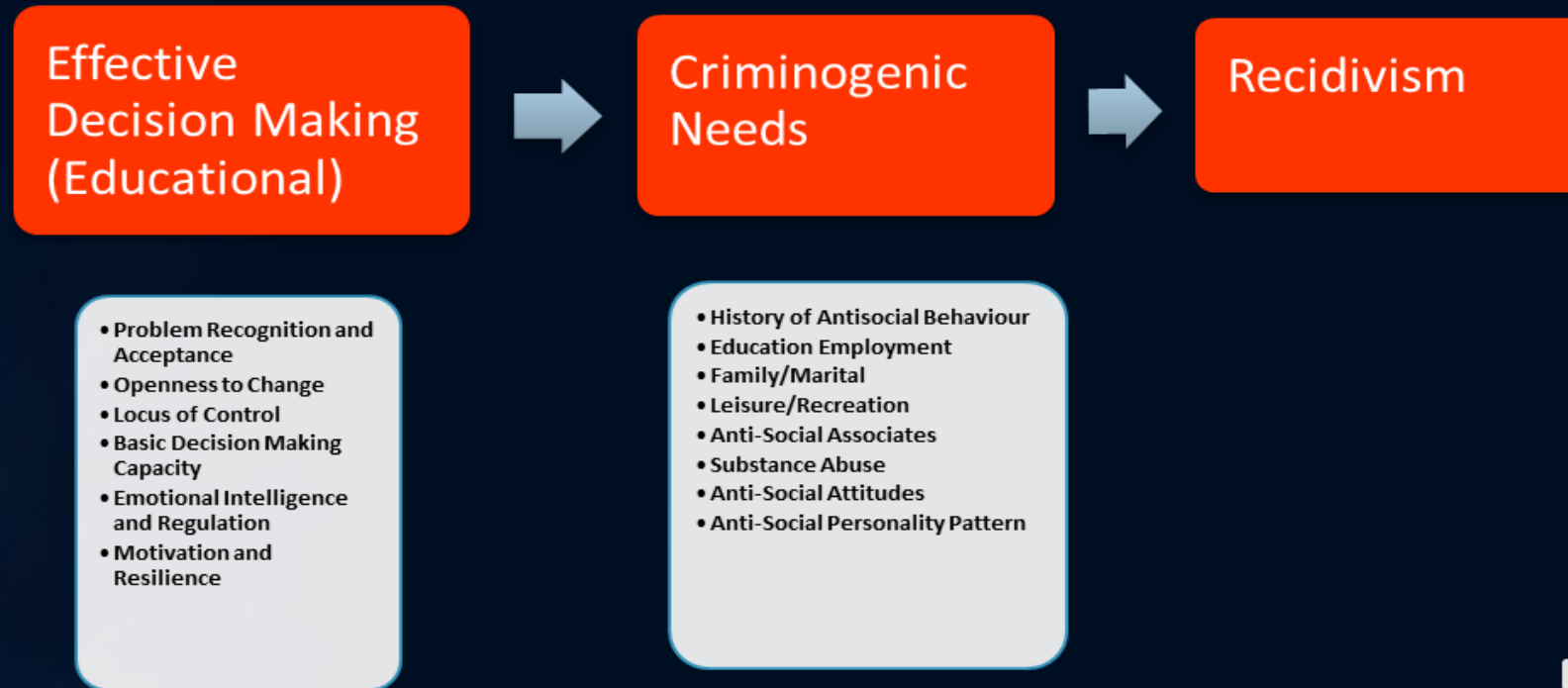
## Why Decision-Making?

Level-Up concentrates on the importance of teaching the six basic decision-making tools for three reasons:

1. The majority of corrections programs aimed at assisting offenders to make better decisions focus on either personality traits or attitudes/beliefs rather than on decision-making.
2. Correctional programs which do concentrate on decision-making tend to ignore whether participants have the basic decision-making tools.
3. There is a relationship between the decision-making tools and recidivism.



# Program Information & Background



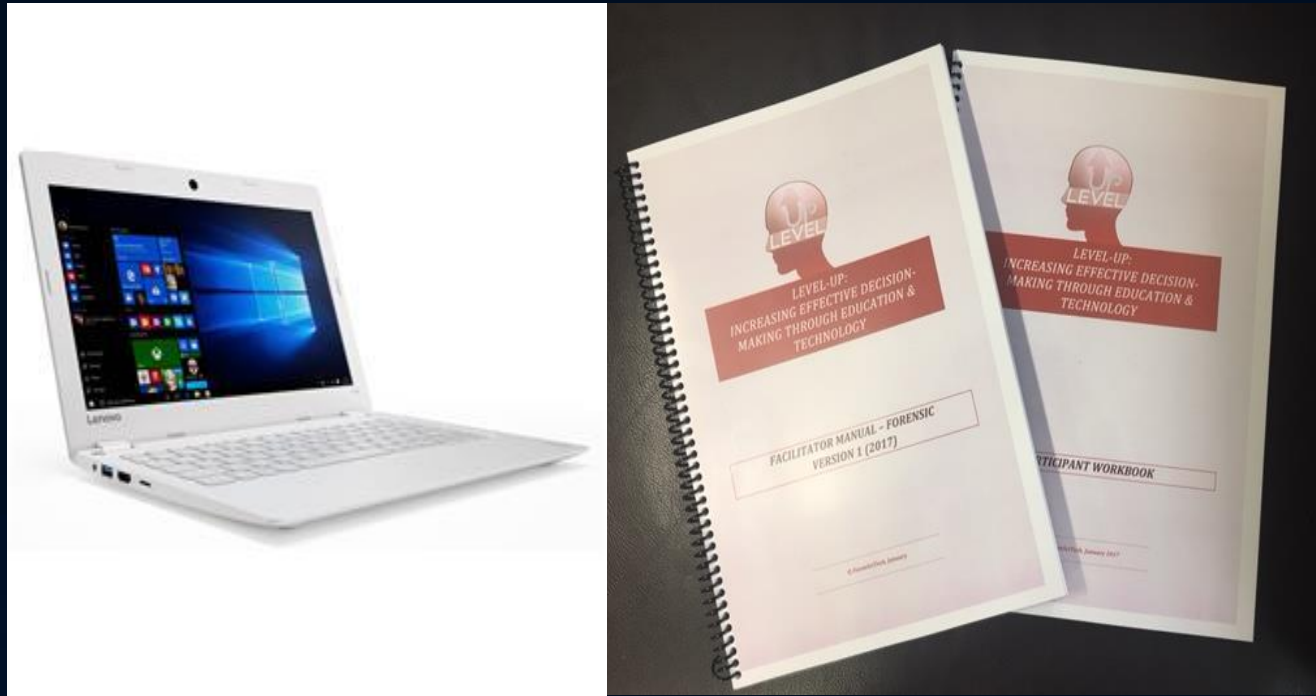
# Program Information & Background

## What are the Six Basic Decision-Making Tools?

*The six decision-making tools are simply the steps we all go through when making a good decision:*

- ***Problem Recognition & Acceptance*** – recognizing you have a problem and accepting that it is one you can do something about
- ***Openness to Change*** – being open to taking advice from others about how to deal with the problem
- ***Locus of Control*** – understanding which problems we can fix because they are in our control and which problems we cannot fix because they are out of our control
- ***Decision-Making Influences*** – understanding that people often make poor decisions because they don't like to think if they do not have to so will use short-cuts like stereotypes or information provided by others
- ***Emotional Intelligence & Regulation*** – being able to recognize and regulate your emotions and also recognize and take into account the emotions of others when making a decision
- ***Motivation & Resilience*** – being able to work on making good decisions even when it is hard to do and you have failed in the past

# Program Materials



**FORENSCITECH**  
FORENSIC/SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

# Technology & Gaming Activities

**Technology** – use of technology through the pre/post survey. Added components include:

- Normative Standards
- Evaluation

**Contextual Gaming/Activities** – activities that reflect a forensic situation

**Non-Contextual Gaming** – activities that are not based on a forensic situation but do relate to forensic issues (e.g., criminogenic needs, offender needs)



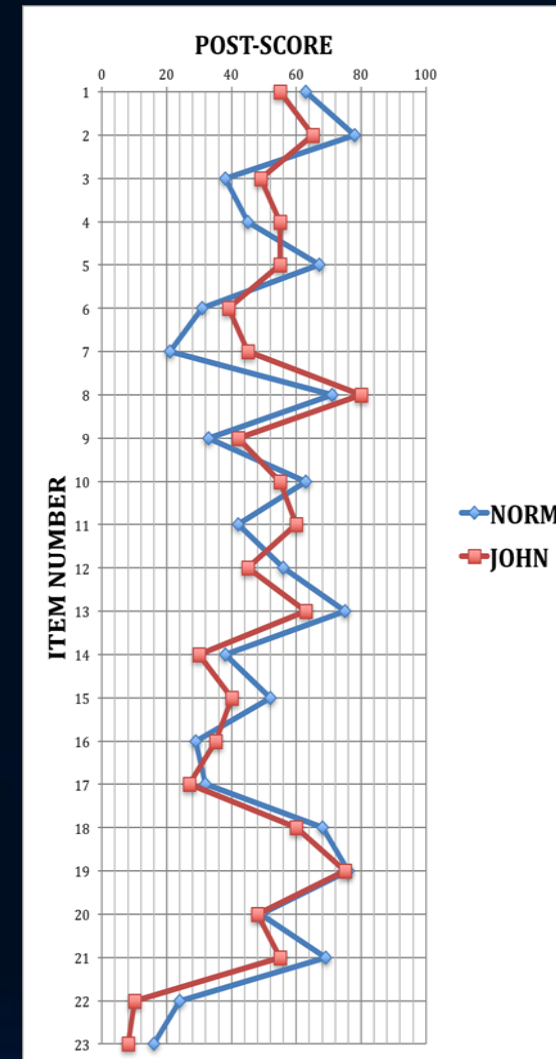
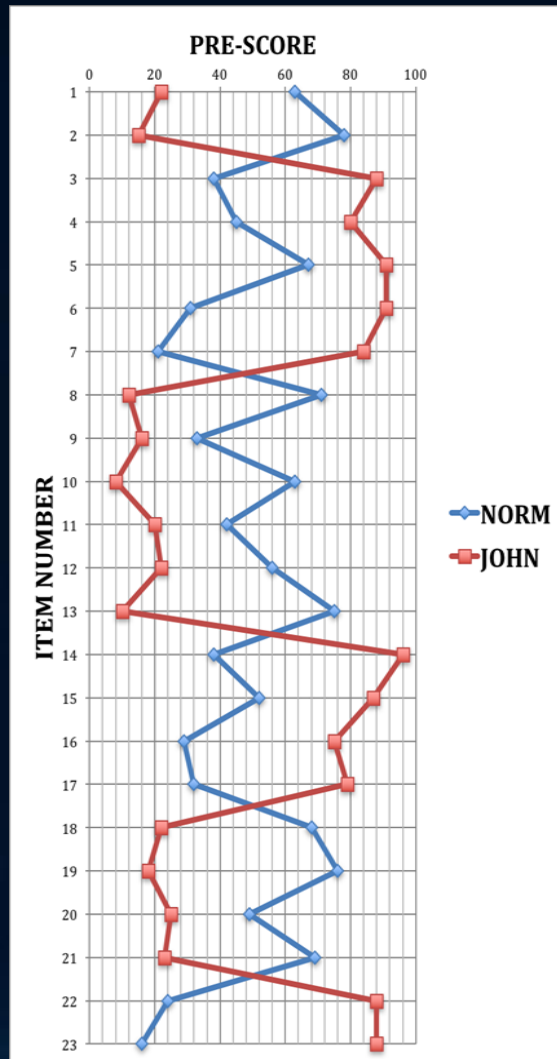
# Problem Recognition & Acceptance

- Item 1: *How much does something have to bother you before you label it as a problem? (0 = it has to bother me a little/100 = it has to bother me a lot)*
- Item 2: *When you have a problem, how important is it to you to make sure you know the "real" cause of the problem before you react? (0 = not important at all/100 = very important)*
- Item 3: *What percentage of the problems in your life do you ignore, even though you know you should deal with them? (% answer)*
- Item 4: *What percentage of the problems in your life would you say are more complex (rather than simple)? (% answer)*

# Problem Recognition & Acceptance

Problem Recognition & Acceptance (Questions 1-8)								
Survey Question	Overall Norm	Male (18-25)	Male (26-40)	Male (41+)	Female (18-25)	Female (26-40)	Female (41+)	Score Range
1	58	62	63	63	57	55	51	51-63
2	73	70	72	71	75	76	75	70-76
3	36	42	41	32	38	31	31	31-42
4	49	60	46	47	50	47	42	42-60
5	64	59	63	64	66	65	63	59-66
6	38	41	39	40	41	34	33	33-41
7	20	26	21	16	20	18	16	16-26
8	71	66	72	71	70	73	76	66-76

# Program Information & Background



# Gaming Activities





# Adoptions/Partners





# Results: Evidence

## *Summary of Program Impacts:*

- High Completion Rates – 92% of participants who started the program completed the entire course.
- Significant Program Impacts on the Decision-Making of Participants – analysis of the pre/post surveys shows that the program has significantly increased the ability of participants to recognize and use the six core decision-making tools.
  - **Problem Recognition and Acceptance** – 87% of participants positively increased their ability to better recognize when they are experiencing problems and to accept that they need to work on fixing these problems.
  - **Openness to Change** – 93% of participants positively increased the degree to which they are open to taking the advice of others regarding how to make changes in their lives.
  - **Locus of Control** – 89% of participants positively increased their understanding of when they can control changes in their lives and when changes are beyond their control.
  - **Basic Decision-Making** – 89% of participants positively increased their understanding of how to make better decisions including things like not using stereotypes to judge others and not using excuses for their behaviour.
  - **Emotional Intelligence & Regulation** – 77% of participants positively increased their understanding of how to control their emotions in difficult situations as well as increasing their understanding of how to recognize the emotions of others.
  - **Motivation & Resilience** – 79% of participants increased their levels of motivation and resilience relating to making positive changes in their lives.

## Results: Evidence

Program Engagement – 82% of participants rated this program as more engaging than other forensic programs they had participated in.

Program Value – 84% of participants indicated that the program provided them with valuable information that they had not been exposed to in other programs and 86% of participants indicated that they had learned something that will help them better integrate back into the community.

# Results: Evidence

## Facilitator Feedback

- 94% of facilitators who have been involved in the delivery of the program agreed that the program is an effective intervention for assisting offenders to identify and understand the basic decision-making tools.
- 90% of facilitators also indicated that the inclusion of technology and gaming in the program provided for a more engaging and impactful delivery.

# Technology-Based Self-Navigated Educational/Reintegration Programs

## Programs:

- **Emotional Intelligence** – enhancing the ability to better recognize and control one's own emotions and recognize and incorporate the emotions of others.
- **Decision-Making** – enhancing the understanding of the decision-making process (and the tools)
- **Locus of Control** – enhancing one's ability to understand what is under our control and what is not and how to cope accordingly.
- **Problem-Solving** – enhancing the ability to engage in effective problem-solving strategies
- **Motivation & Resilience** – combined approach
- **Life Skills** – enhancing an understanding of, and ability to deal with, life skills related to release and reintegration