

Video game vets to students: 'Fail fast, fail often'

By Marco Santana
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Two video game artists who have worked on video games like "Halo" and the "John Madden" football series were in Orlando recently to talk with some up-and-coming video game developers at the Florida Interactive Entertainment Academy.

The hour-long chat with senior character artist Mike Pavlovich and senior technical artist Luiz Kruel, both of Austin-based Certain Affinity, brought out several lessons for the students.

Here are a few lessons they shared.

- Fail fast, fail often

They say that failure on a project is inevitable so it's best to get as many iterations out of the way as quickly as possible to figure out what is not working.

- Run as fast as you can at whatever you are good at

Kruel said there is nothing wrong with specializing in a particular area of expertise and being the best at it.

- Work with other people

Kruel said working in a team enhances the end product. "Both of us combined can do stuff neither of us can do alone."

- Stay ahead of the industry

With online tutorials and other tools on the Internet, people can teach themselves just about anything they want, Kruel said.

- Keep that ego in check

The more you advance, the more likely you will be asked to contribute to small projects. Kruel said he once did artwork on NFL coach Tony Dungy's jacket.

- Play bad games

Pavlovich said: "Playing bad games is just as important as playing the good games because you see what not to do."

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