



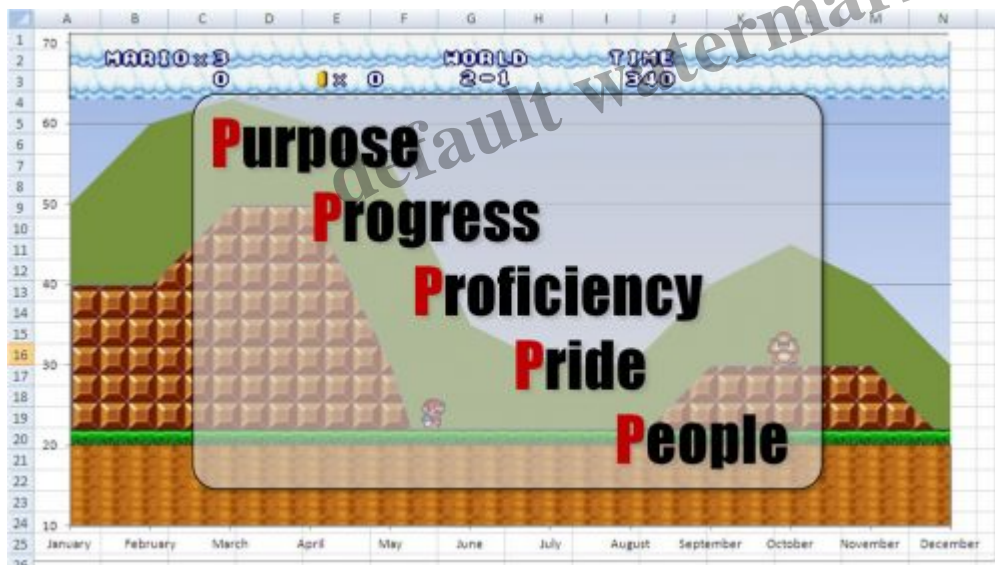
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Progress: Central to Gamification

Description

When we look at the [5 Ps of gamification](#), it is very easy to overlook all of the meanings of Progress. Just as a reminder, the 5 Ps are; Purpose, Progress, Proficiency, Pride and People.



5 P's of gamification

Progress can mean different things to different people. If you ask the great and powerful Google, it tells you

1. **forward or onward movement towards a destination.**
“the darkness did not stop my progress”
2. **development towards an improved or more advanced condition.**
“we are making progress towards equal rights”

The first definition is what most people think about when they think about progress. Heading towards a defined destination. When people hear progress and gamification in the same sentence, they usually

think of this.



The Humble Progress Bar

This certainly fits the profile of movement towards a destination. The bar fills up as you journey / move from 0% to 100% of whatever the task at hand is. We use progress bars a lot on gamification, in fact, they are one of my favorite “mechanics” to use. A progress bar is [simple, efficient and works](#) – LinkedIn would testify to that. There has even been research into how [effective progress bars](#) are, concluding that the majority of people liked to have the kind of visual feedback offered by a progress bar.

The other form of progress defined here is more interesting to me though, and it ties in neatly with another one of the Ps – Proficiency. When you start to internalise progress, it becomes all about a journey towards proficiency and mastery. This is as intrinsic as motivation can get, the desire to better one’s self, to progress through the journey of life, picking up everything we can along the way. This is not always a linear flat path from A to B to C. If it involves progression of skills, it is often a multipath journey that takes you from A to C to B to Z and back again – and anything but flat!

When looking at this kind of progress, you have to also take into account the concept of flow. To keep people in the optimal state, the challenge has to increase relative to the level of skill that the user possesses at that time.

Whether it is intrinsic progress, or just completing a form – always give them a way to understand where they stand in their journey. This doesn’t need to be a progress bar, it can just be the occasional visual or audio cue, an email to say well done, a virtual badge to represent some achievement along the way.

Category

1. Gamification

Tags

1. games
2. journey
3. learning
4. mechanic
5. progress
6. progress bar

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