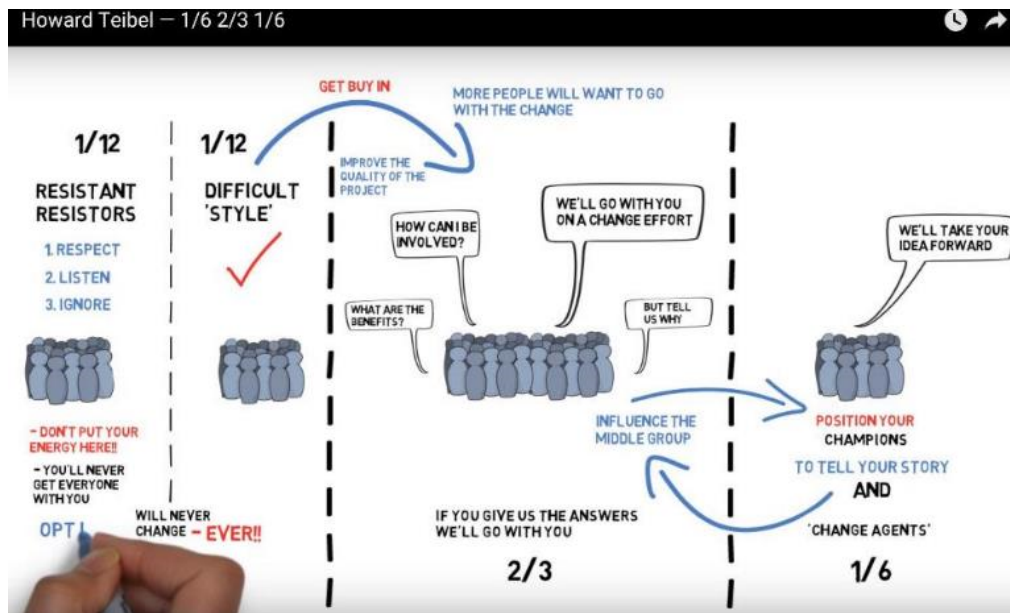




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# The Beginner's Creed

I am a beginner.  
 I am entering a new game about which I know nothing.  
 I do not yet know how to move in this game.  
 I see many other people playing in this game now.  
 This game has gone on for many years prior to my arrival.  
 I am a new recruit arriving here for the first time.  
 I see value to me in learning to navigate in this domain.

There is much for me to learn:

- The basic terminology
- The basic rules
- The basic moves of action
- The basic strategies

While I am learning these things I may feel various negative reactions:

- Overwhelmed at how much there is to learn
- Insecure that I do not know what to do
- Inadequate that I lack the capacity to do this
- Frustrated and discouraged that my progress is so slow
- Angry that I have been given insufficient guidance
- Anxious that I will never perform up to expectations on which my career depends
- Embarrassed that everyone can see my mistakes

But these moods are part of being a beginner. It does not serve my goal and ambition to dwell in them. Instead,


- If I make a mistake, I will ask what lesson does this teach.
- If I make a discovery, I will celebrate my aha! moment.
- If I feel alone, I will remember that I have many friends ready to help.
- If I am stuck, I will ask for help from my teachers.

Over time, I will make fewer mistakes.

- I will gain confidence in my abilities.
- I will need less guidance from my teachers and friends.
- I will gain familiarity with the game.
- I will be able to have intelligent conversations with others in the game.
- I will not cause breakdowns for promises that I lack the competence to keep.
- I have an ambition to become competent, perhaps even proficient or expert in this game. But for now,
- I am a beginner.

—By Peter J. Denning

viewpoints



020112.1144/2007202 Peter J. Denning

**The Profession of IT**  
**The Beginner's Creed**  
*We all need to learn to be expert beginners.*

Peter Denning, July 2017

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