

# Squiggly Careers PodSheet



## How to be a better problem solver

### The problem with problems....



Problems often feel unfamiliar or unexpected. In a squiggly career, they can create:

Ambiguity

Complexity

Knotty moments

The more tactics you have to solve problems, the more quickly you can respond to hurdles that might hold you back.

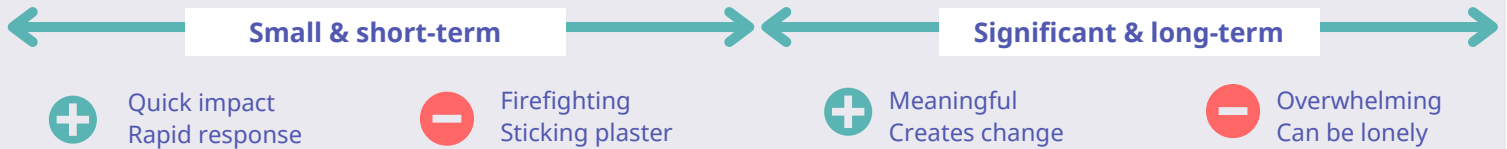
“

You can never solve a problem on the level on which it was created.

”

Albert Einstein

### What problems do you spend most time solving?



### Ideas for Action - pick an approach that is appropriate for your problem

- Practice Curious Questions**  
Your goal is to improve your ideas. Probe solutions that you've already thought of by asking questions, inviting challenges and generating new options.
- Aim for imperfection**  
Embrace the ambiguity and uncertainty that comes with it. You can acknowledge the unknowns and still move a solution forward. Seeking perfection hinders progress.
- Be a fly on the wall**  
Generating a different perspective on your problem by creating distance can unlock your thinking. Ask yourself; how would someone else on your team approach it?
- Treat is as trial and error**  
Get into a "beta-testing" mode by testing different solutions and collecting data on what works and what doesn't. See problems as work-in-progress.
- Seek cognitive diversity**  
Different perspectives on problems can create innovative solutions. Think about who could invite to contribute new thinking to your problem.
- Get fast feedback**  
The sooner you put your solution in front of someone, the quicker you get feedback and buy-in. "If a picture is worth a thousand words, a prototype is worth a thousand meetings." - IDEO

### Coach Yourself Questions

- ?** Which of the above actions come naturally to you?
- ?** What could you do differently next time you're faced with a problem?

### Recommended resources



[Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking](#)  
Matthew Syed



[Creative problem solving in the face of extreme limits](#)  
An inspiring TED talk from innovation strategist Navi Radjou



[Unlocking creativity at work](#)  
Squiggly Careers #51

Amazing if