Soft Skills series - Originality

Squiggly Careers

> *"Originality is not a fixed trait, it is a free choice."*
>
> **- Adam Grant**

> *"Action is the most powerful antidote to the corporate disease of analysis paralysis."*
>
> **- Joost Minnaar and Pim de Morree**

Insights to improve your originality

1. Prioritise learning

What original organisations and individuals have in common is that they believe success belongs to the fast learner, they challenge the status quo and continually adapt.

How can you unlearn and relearn at work?

2. Involve don't solve

Involving others to find solutions gets rid of bottlenecks and increases transparency and accountability between team members.

How can you give away some 'control' & involve others to reach better solutions for the team?

3. Ask for advice (selectively)

Make simple decisions solo. If you have a more complex decision to make, seek advice from 2 people.

Who can provide you with good advice and perspective when you're making decisions?

4. Taking the pressure off

Adam Grant describes originality as 'introducing and advancing an idea that's relatively unusual within a particular domain and that has the potential to improve it.'

What idea could you build on and improve within your industry?

5. Focus on 4 factors

There are 4 main factors that increase originality:

taking initiative, being curious, taking considered risk and experimentation.

How can you spend more time on these factors at work?

6. Address achievement bias

Being over-concerned with achievement can get in the way of experimentation and reduce original ideas.

When might achievement bias lead to you sticking with the status quo?

Ideas for action

Improve your idea selection process

People often generate ideas & then come up with a criteria to assess them. This reduces creativity when you need it most.

Instead, start criteria first, then generate ideas and review. This leads to people building on ideas and staying open actively.

How original can you be? Connect the dots

Look at either your job, your team, or your organisation, be specific and ask what is a system, structure, or process you should challenge and who could you involve?

Who/What & where could benefit from your originality?

Recommended resources
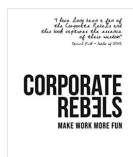
Corporate Rebels: Make work more fun
by Joost Minnaar and Pim de Morree

Originals: How Non-conformists Change the World
by Adam Grant

amazingif.com