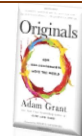




ORIGINALS

by Adam Grant



Overview

This book discusses creative Original thinkers and their ideas. The author pulls from both anecdotal, as well as scientific, evidence, to discuss the “how” behind these Originals and their inspiring genius.

Chapter 1. Creative Destruction

Originality is, at its core, an act of “creative destruction”. We must destroy our old assumptions to pave the way for something new. There is a balance which must be struck between doing what’s comfortable, and doing something Original. Unfortunately, most people have so much desire to have a *semblance* of “success”, that they take whatever path is placed in front of them.

“The intense desire to succeed leads us to strive for guaranteed success.”

It is, at its core, a fear of failure which makes us conform. Even Martin Luther King Jr. was gripped by a fear of speaking, but once he was thrust into that role he embraced it wholeheartedly.

When we try to be unconventional, most people will do surface level “original” acts such as wearing red shoes or donning a bowtie, but at their core will change nothing substantial. Yet to be Original does not mean we must forgo all comfort and security; playing it safe in one aspect of your life can allow you the freedom for Originality in another. In fact, it may actually be easier to take extreme risks in one area of life when you have safety in other aspects.

While entrepreneurs are typically thought of as “bearers of risk”, entrepreneurs are actually quite good at evaluating risk. Psychologists have found that entrepreneurs are actually *not* greater risk-takers than

others. The entrepreneurs who *do* take inordinate amounts of risks will most likely fail. Entrepreneurs feel the same fear and as the rest of us, but take action anyway.

“They know in their hearts that failing would yield less regret than failing to try.”

Chapter 2. Blind Inventors and One-Eyed Investors

There is always a plethora of new unique ideas for Originals to choose from; most people can come up with creative thoughts. The trick for Originals is not idea *creation*, but rather “*idea selection*”. Idea selection is about determining which of our many ideas are going to be the successful ideas. Yet we tend to be biased towards all of our own ideas, and have trouble knowing which ideas will actually resonate with our audience.

“We’re typically too close to our own tastes – and too far from the audience’s taste – to evaluate it accurately.

We’re giddy from the thrill of the eureka moment.”

To improve Originality, we should surround ourselves with an abundance of creative ideas, and hone our skills in *selecting*. We must sometimes fearlessly go down blind alleys and get colder (not warmer) towards Originality. Sometimes, our most desperate moments are when we tend to think outside the box and become Original.

*“Our companies, communities, & countries don’t necessarily suffer from a shortage of novel ideas. They’re constrained by a shortage of people who excel at choosing the **right** ideas.”*



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[Originals](#) (Page 1 of 4)