Learning to Have Flashes of Genius

This talk will disprove this, explain how flashes of genius actually happen and provide ways anyone can increase their odds of having one.
Allen Gannett

CEO, TrackMaven
THE CREATIVE CURVE

ALLEN GANNETT

HOW TO DEVELOP THE RIGHT IDEA, AT THE RIGHT TIME
“YOU CAN'T HAVE INSIGHTS ABOUT THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT.”

- Dr. Edward Bowden
THE 20% PRINCIPLE

Creative Geniuses spend 20% of their waking hours consuming in order to have the raw ingredients for creativity.
BUT...
AVERAGE AMERICAN WATCHES 3 HOURS OF TELEVISION PER DAY

Source: US Department of Labor
CREATIVITY
NOVEL AND VALUABLE
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NOVEL AND VALUABLE
HITS!
1960s

#1 Name
2016

- 833rd on the popularity list
- Only 342 baby girls in the **entire country**
Popularity over time

Source: Social Security Administration and BabyCenter.com
THE RISE AND FALL
THE RISE
宽
NEGATIVE OR POSITIVE?
THE ANSWER: NOTHING
THE MERE EXPOSURE EFFECT

Fig. 5. Average attitude toward photographs as a function of frequency of exposure.
THE MERE EXPOSURE EFFECT

The more you are exposed to something, the more you like it.
WE CRAVE THE FAMILIAR
WHY?
HOW DO WE CREATE THINGS THAT ARE FAMILIAR?
CONSUMPTION

Enables the Familiar
BUT....
WHY DO THINGS FALL FROM FAVOR?
PEINTURE

Luigi Boille
PREFERENCE

Fig. 1. Favorability ratings of paintings as a function of frequency of exposure.
SEEK NOVELTY
WHY?
CONTRADICTION
FAMILIARITY

For Safety

NOVELTY

For Potential Reward
THE RESULT?
THE CREATIVE CURVE
THE CREATIVE CURVE
THE CREATIVE CURVE

Preference

Familiarity

Fringe Interest
Sweet Spot
THE CREATIVE CURVE

Preference

Familiarity

Fringe Interest
Sweet Spot
Point of Cliché
THE CREATIVE CURVE

Familiarity

Preference

Fringe Interest
Sweet Spot
Point of Cliché
Follow-on Failure
THE CREATIVE CURVE

Familiarity

Preference

Fringe Interest  Sweet Spot  Point of Cliché  Follow-on Failure  Out of Date
So how do you create things in the sweet spot?
RIGHT AMOUNT OF FAMILIARITY & NOVELTY
BEN FRANKLIN
STEP 1
STEP 2
IMITATION IS A KEY INGREDIENT TO CREATIVITY
THE FRANKLIN METHOD

The careful observation and recreation of the structure of successful creative work.
WHY DOES THIS WORK?
I LOVE MATH

IT MAKES PEOPLE CRY
I LOVE TYPOS

THEY MAKE MARKETERS CRY
“What makes it funny is the 10 percent twist...it's a lot easier to remix an existing meme than it is to create a new one.”
IMITATION ALLOWS YOU TO LEARN THE BASELINE
FOCUS ON THE NOVEL TWIST
BUT HOW DO WE OPERATIONALIZE IT?
BEST JOB IN AMERICA
FOUR STEP ITERATIVE PROCESS
CONCEPTUALIZATION
THE RESULT?
VANILLA ICE CREAM WITH CHERRIES AND FUDGE FLAKES
REDUCTION
sign up for our E-mail Newsletter
(aka Chunkmail)
TWO QUESTIONS

1. How likely are you to buy this flavor?
2. How unique is this flavor?
TWO QUESTIONS

1. Familiarity
2. Novelty
IF YOU JUST FOCUS ON FAMILIAR...
IF YOU JUST FOCUS ON THE NOVEL...
BALANCE
CURATION
CONSTRAINTS

Nutrition Constraints

Manufacturing Constraints

Shelf Constraints
THE RESULT?
LISTENING TO YOUR AUDIENCE IS ESSENTIAL.
YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE FANCY.
JUST DO IT.
SUMMARY

- **Flashes of Genius** are a normal biological process with a surprising result

- You can have more of them through **consumption** and **The 20% Principle**

- Creativity comes from the **sweet spot of novelty and familiarity**

- **Imitation** and **The Franklin Method** allow you to learn a familiar baseline and focus on the novel twist.
THANK YOU!
WAY TO CONNECT

- Blog/Newsletter: Allen.XYZ
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