

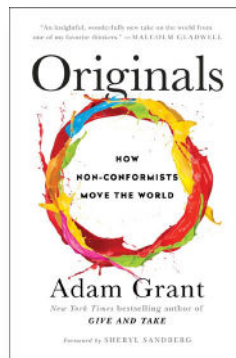


ORIGINALS

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THE BOOK

**Originals:
How Non-Conformists Move the World**

by Adam Grant



INTRODUCTION

Why are some people so full of ideas and capable of presenting concepts that change the world?

This question is explored in *Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World*, the #1 New York Times bestseller by Adam Grant.

While it is mostly focused on entrepreneurs, this book includes learnings that are applicable to teachers and parents. It talks about rules vs values, the importance of being open to ideas from anywhere and why feedback should be encouraged from even the most junior people at a workplace or school campus.

This publication highlights the powerful changes that take place when people challenge the status quo and look for new ways of doing things. It explains why some people are more original thinkers, and delves into how someone with a new idea can champion it and get help to bring their vision to life.

You'll find this book intriguing if you're interested in the incredible potential of a new idea and you want to nurture originality in the people who look up to you.



5 BEST QUOTES

"Being original doesn't require being first. It just means being different and better."

"Procrastination may be the enemy of productivity, but it can be a resource for creativity."

"To generate a handful of masterworks, Mozart composed more than 600 pieces before his death at thirty-five, Beethoven produced 650 in his lifetime, and Bach wrote over a thousand."

"We often under communicate our ideas. They're already so familiar to us that we underestimate how much exposure an audience needs to comprehend and buy into them."

"Conviction in our ideas is dangerous not only because it leaves us vulnerable to false positives, but also because it stops us from generating the requisite variety to reach our creative potential."



9 BIG IDEAS

Originals is packed with ideas about originality and inspiring change. Here are the main points about devising and presenting a new concept to the people around you.

1. QUESTION THE DEFAULT

Why are things the way they are? Is that the best way they can be? People who are 'originals' look at what everybody else accepts as normal and finds a new way to do things. They don't take 'no' for an answer just because of how things have always been. This conviction that there is a better way has led to the creation of some of the biggest companies in the world. An example is the global eyeglass brand Warby Parker. The founders of this company created a way to supply affordable reading glasses to buyers across the USA, despite being told it couldn't be done.

2. TRIPLE YOUR IDEAS

Not all Originals hit the jackpot with their first idea. Often their second, third and fourth ideas don't rate a mention either. As the book explains, "The best way to boost your originality is to produce more ideas. This gives you a better chance of success, according to the law of averages. So start thinking and don't be afraid to fail.

3. LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Many fashion designers create their best collections after being immersed in different cultures and work practices. Learning things outside of your own field can open your mind to new possibilities. If you love writing and reading, perhaps try a STEM subject. Or vice-versa; if you love science, try art to change your perspectives. Trying new things can trigger original thinking.

4. PROCRASTINATION CAN HELP

Have you ever had work to do but put it off until the last possible minute? You are probably thinking about it a lot, just not taking action. Did you know that activist Martin Luther King Jr. only finished his famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the last minute? Despite this, it has gone down in history as one of the best proclamations ever delivered. Sometimes, procrastinating is a good thing. It gives your ideas time to 'incubate' and allows you time to ponder what you really want to achieve.

5. SEEK FEEDBACK FROM YOUR PEERS.

If you want to be an Original whose ideas resonate with the whole world, they can't be completely your own. Adam Grant writes about inventors who successfully sold their ideas to investors without getting feedback from their peers. These peers would have seen the potential but also the pitfalls. While managers can be too critical and people without the right information can be too positive, it is your peers who will share honest and relevant thoughts about your project.



9 BIG IDEAS

6. BALANCE YOUR RISK

Interestingly, many of the world's greatest entrepreneurs are risk-averse. They want to make sure their ideas will succeed before they go all in. For example, the Warby Parker startup team didn't quit their day jobs until they knew their plan was solid enough to launch to market. They hedged their bets and spent a lot of time researching and preparing their ideas. You don't have to gamble it all to be successful!

7. CRITICISE YOURSELF

Imagine giving a presentation as you pitch a product, only to talk about its greatest flaws. This can actually work in your favour. You're highlighting that you know your product isn't perfect and acknowledging your weaknesses. This lets investors get a clear idea of the risks involved with the project and they'll be reassured that you have a holistic view of it yourself. So be upfront about the 'objections' to your idea and it may help validate it.

8. REPEAT YOURSELF AND ADD SOMETHING FAMILIAR

Just as advertisers share their messages multiple times before making a sale, you may have to pitch your original idea more than once for it to start making sense to other people. And here's something else really interesting: The film The Lion King is loosely based on Shakespeare's play 'Hamlet'. It was the first ever Disney blockbuster that wasn't based on a popular fairytale but the team behind the idea had to connect it with something familiar before they could get it approved by the company's senior executives. "Make an original concept more appealing by connecting it with other ideas."

9. BE A 'TEMPERED RADICAL'

You're an original and you have a game-changing idea that you just know is going to change the world... but the world may not be ready for it. A 'tempered radical' introduces things slowly. For example, the woman behind the 'Right to Vote' movement in the USA joined forces with a conservative group that was working to reduce alcohol abuse. She framed her message within the idea that women being able to vote would protect them against violent partners. This group helped boost her support base without her being seen as too disruptive to the status quo. Eventually, her crusade helped change the world forever.

**4 ACTION STEPS**

Here are some action steps leaders, teachers and parents can take to encourage original thinking:

RUN AN INNOVATION TOURNAMENT

Invite everyone to nominate a problem that needs solving and their ideas to improve the situation. Give people time to come up with a proposal for their solution. Hold a vote and take action to bring the winning ideas to life.

ACCEPT IDEAS FROM EVERYONE

Some people think it is only up to senior leaders to come up with ideas. When you allow for a cross-flow of ideas, original solutions can emerge. Similarly, allow less senior people to offer feedback. Their perspective shouldn't be ignored just because of their lack of experience.

DON'T ALWAYS RELY ON DISCIPLINE AND RULES

Studies have found that children who don't have strict rules tend to be more creative thinkers. "Rules set limits that teach children to enforce a strict view of the world. Values encourage children to internalise principles for themselves."

ASK CHILDREN WHAT THEIR ROLE MODELS WOULD DO

Every Disney hero has a coming-of-age journey that often includes an act of rebellion. Similarly, the Harry Potter series is all about rebelling against what is 'wrong'. Use your child's role models from life and from fiction to inspire them to look at their problems with 'original' eyes.

**1 KEY TAKEAWAY**

When 'Originals' flip the status quo on its head, amazing things can happen. However, many of us never push forward with our ideas because we withdraw when criticised or fail to gather the support we need. If you are an original thinker or you want to encourage original thinkers, the key takeaway from this book is that it is always ok to question the situation you are in and look for ways to do things differently. From there, you do need to take a measured approach to ensure your ideas have value and explain the concept to the people around you. Think big but be open to feedback... share your ideas but be prepared for them to be challenged... and your original idea could just change the world.



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Read the full book

Originals

by Adam Grant

Grant on how non-conformists move the world, and how you can too.

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