

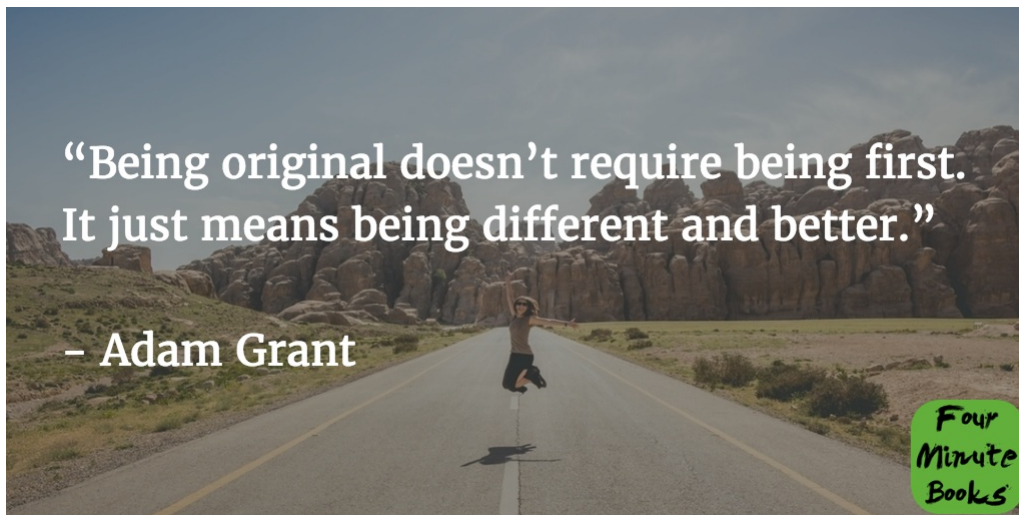
Originals Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/originals-summary/

1-Sentence-Summary: *Originals* re-defines what being creative means by using many specific examples of how persistence, procrastination, transparency, critical thinking and perspective can be brought together to change the world.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



This book hit the shelves less than half a year ago and became an instant bestseller. I hadn't heard of Adam Grant before, but this book sounded like it was in the same vein as *Linchpin*. Lo and behold, Seth himself has praised the book – so I had to check it out.

What you'll get is a book that feels like sitting down with a really smart friend, who tells you countless stories of how creative people tackled seemingly impossible problems and solved them. From Picasso to Beethoven and from bloggers to movie makers, no industry or field is left aside, further proof that creativity matters everywhere.

Now, without further ado, here are 3 lessons from *Originals* to help you be more creative:

1. Producing great ideas is a matter of quantity.
2. Procrastinate on purpose to trigger the Zeigarnik effect.
3. Repeat yourself and find common reference points to make your crazy ideas more familiar.

Wanna be original? Let's look at creativity through a new pair of glasses!

Lesson 1: Quantity leads to quality when it comes to producing great ideas.

When I look back and I see a stack of 17 books and I see 4,800 blog posts and speeches I've given – none of which were good enough – but all of which I shipped, it becomes pretty clear to me that I'm better off shipping than I am making it perfect. – Seth Godin

This quote comes straight from [a podcast episode by Jeff Goins](#) I listened to this week and perfectly sums up the first lesson. Being an original means fantasizing about a better future, having a vision and changing the status quo. But more importantly, it means taking actual steps towards making it happen.

Most successful creatives don't have better ideas, they just ship more of them.

How many Picasso paintings can you name? I couldn't even come up with one (after checking I recognized Blue Nude and The Three Musicians). If you're good, you can name three or four. In order for you to be able to name that many today, Picasso had to paint 1,800 of them. And that's just paintings. You can add 2,800 ceramics, 1,200 sculptures and 12,000 (yes, twelve thousand) drawings to that and you'll finally know why the man is world-famous.

Even the best artists have no clue which of their pieces will be huge successes, and which will be flops. If anything, there's a high chance that the opposite of what you, the creator, expect happens. Beethoven disagreed with his critics in 33% of all cases. It's not your job to judge your work. It's your job to ship it and let the world decide.

The more you ship, the higher your chances of having an impact.

Lesson 2: Use procrastination strategically and it'll help you fill in the blanks.

Shipping a lot is important. But that doesn't mean you should publish half-assed creations and almost-done pieces of art before they're ready. So when you're stuck and can't seem to move forward, how about some strategic procrastination?

Get this: Martin Luther King Jr. didn't even start writing his famous "I have a dream" speech for the March on Washington until the night before he gave it. Even more surprisingly, the line "I have a dream" wasn't even in it! It was only when someone from the audience told him to "tell them about the dream" that he decided to forget his script and wing it – and that's when he came up with it.

Waiting until the last minute to finish things and leaving them untouched for a while can be valid strategies because they've got something going for them: the Zeigarnik effect.

Once you start a task, your brain will keep it around in your subconscious until it's finished – even long after you've already given up on it. This is what's responsible for sudden strokes of genius and brilliant shower ideas. It can go on for some time too. Da Vinci started painting the Mona Lisa in 1503, but then abandoned the project, finishing it 16 years later in 1519.

Who's a master procrastinator now?

Lesson 3: You can make your crazy ideas less threatening with the mere exposure effect and by repeating yourself.

Sometimes though, you have to step off the crazy creative train for a while and convince others that your ideas are solid. Especially when you need funding or someone to give you green light for a project. In those cases, it helps to use two techniques to help others slowly get used to your earthshaking vision:

1. **The mere exposure effect.**
2. **Common points of reference.**

The *mere exposure effect* is simple: We get used to the things we're exposed to again and again. Our reception and perspective on things changes over time. Just like you'll get used to seeing yourself on video or in photographs after a while, others will get used to you talking about how average is for losers or other novel and unfamiliar topics. So if you want something to stick, repeat yourself.

Common points of reference is a strategy in which you tie your new and unusual idea to a somewhat similar, but well-established concept. For example, when Michael Eisner and Maureen Donley originally presented their idea for The Lion King, producers thought the story was too dark for a Disney movie. In a second attempt they mentioned how its storyline was similar to Shakespeare's King Lear and Hamlet, thus winning over the team, because it could now see the validity of the script among fans.

The movie went on to become the highest-grossing film of 1994 (and the first movie yours truly saw in the movie theater :)).

My personal take-aways

Love thiiiiiiiis. There are so many examples in this book, it's ridiculous. Those alone are well worth your money, but the way Adam Grant uses them to give practical advice for your own creative pursuits makes them even better. One of the best books of the year for sure! A fun place to start learning more is to take Adam's quiz about creativity, specifically designed for the launch of Originals.

[Read full summary on Blinkist >>](#)

[Get it on Amazon >>](#)

[Learn more about the author >>](#)

What else can you learn from the blinks?

- Why your browser choice at work says a lot about your creativity (and how well you'll do at the job)
- What makes admitting your flaws in a pitch a good strategy to get the deal
- How to eliminate peer pressure and fake opinions
- Why a naval officer chose a bunch of frequently punished juniors for his team
- What horizontal hostility is and how to avoid it

Who would I recommend the Originals summary to?

The 18 year old infrequent fashion blogger, with new posts out every sometimes, the 33 year old architect, who sometimes stays up all night to figure out a spacing problem with no luck, and anyone who was shocked the first time they saw The Lion King.