



# HOW TO LEVEL UP

**Some attitudes that'll help**

By Leta Montopoli

# INTRODUCTION - A BIT ABOUT ME



INTRODUCTION - WHY AM I TALKING ABOUT THIS?

ATTITUDES & BEHAVIOURS THAT HELP ME GROW  
&  
ONES I OBSERVE IN OTHERS THAT SEEM GOOD

LET'S DIVE IN...

# BE CURIOUS

Learning for the sake of  
learning

Curiosity is a powerful &  
transformative attitude.

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# *The business case for Curiosity*

– Francesca Gino

# WHAT CURIOSITY LOOKS LIKE



Ask Questions

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# WHAT CURIOSITY LOOKS LIKE



Be open to  
learning from  
anyone

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# WHAT CURIOSITY LOOKS LIKE

Focus on

learning goals

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WHAT CURIOSITY  
LOOKS LIKE

Contemplate if  
there is a  
better way

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# WHAT CURIOSITY LOOKS LIKE

Learn about the  
tools you use

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# WHAT CURIOSITY LOOKS LIKE



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## Experimenting

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# BE BRAVE

Chase your fears

When you get that  
nervous/excited feeling in  
your stomach, that's a  
sign you gotta continue.

Follow your fear.

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# WHAT BRAVERY LOOKS LIKE



Volunteer for  
things that  
scare you

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# WHAT BRAVERY LOOKS LIKE

Teach others,  
even if you  
aren't an  
“expert”

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# WHAT BRAVERY LOOKS LIKE

Ask basic and  
dumb questions

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# WHAT BRAVERY LOOKS LIKE



Read things you  
don't understand

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# BE DISSATISFIED

Have high expectations

Discontentment can inspire  
creativity motivate us to  
improve things.

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# WHAT DISSATISFACTION LOOKS LIKE



Hunting

Inefficiencies

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# WHAT DISSATISFACTION LOOKS LIKE

Have pet  
projects

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# WHAT DISSATISFACTION LOOKS LIKE



Make things  
faster

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# REAL LIFE EXAMPLE:



```
192 - backend:
192 + .backend_template: &backend_job
193   <<: *docker_job
194   services:
195     - postgres:9.4
...   @@ -212,7 +212,22 @@ backend:
212     - /^selenium\/.*/
213     - /^perft\/.*/
214
215 -
215 + backend-1:
216 +   <<: *backend_job
217 + backend-2:
218 +   <<: *backend_job
219 + backend-3:
220 +   <<: *backend_job
221 + backend-4:
222 +   <<: *backend_job
223 + backend-5:
224 +   <<: *backend_job
225 + backend-6:
226 +   <<: *backend_job
227 + backend-7:
228 +   <<: *backend_job
229 + backend-8:
230 +   <<: *backend_job
```

# BE REFLECTIVE

Daily, quarterly, yearly  
pauses for thought.

Reinforce your technical  
learnings, and get to know  
yourself better.

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# BE REFLECTIVE

Studies have shown that being reflective can help us learn through experience.

(And it might also increase our confidence)

# WHAT BEING REFLECTIVE LOOKS LIKE



Journal everyday

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# WHAT BEING REFLECTIVE LOOKS LIKE

Learn from your successes  
and your failures

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# WHAT NOW?

- Reflect on this talk!
- What resonated with you from this talk?
- Do you embody any of these attitudes at work?
- What are you curious about at work?
- What are you scared of at work?
- Do you agree with these attitudes?

# RESOURCES

- “A philosophy of software design” by John Ousterhout
- “The learning benefits of teaching: A retrieval practice hypothesis” by Aloysius Wei Lun Koh Sze Chi Lee Stephen Wee Hun Lim
- “Making Experience Count: The Role Of Reflection In Individual Learning” by Giada Di Stefano Francesca Gino Gary Pisano Bradley Staats.
- “The Business Case for Curiosity” – Francesca Gino, Harvard Business Review

# THANKS!

Feel free to get in touch.

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# BE CURIOUS

*“The business case for curiosity” by  
Francesca Gino*

- **Ask questions**
- Focus more on learning goals
- Be open to learning from anyone
- Contemplate if there is a better way
- Learn about the tools you use
- Experiment
- Revisit things that confused you



# BE BRAVE

- Volunteer for things that scare you
- Read things you don't understand
- Ask basic & “dumb” questions
- Dive deep into the internals
- Teach others, even if you're not an “expert”





# BE DISSATISFIED

- “You’re not lazy enough”
  - Automate things that are boring
- Have pet projects
- Re-write things
- Make things faster



# BE REFLECTIVE

- Journal everyday
  - What did i learn
  - What was tricky
  - What did I encounter that might be useful to remember in the future
- Learn from your successes
- Learn from your failures
- Studies show reflecting helps us learn through experience (*and suggests it might also help our confidence*)