

Insights from *The Practice* by Seth Godin

Creative work is the generous act of making things better by doing something that might not work.

Daily choice: be **creative** OR give into fear and unintentionally become a **hack**, a **hustler**, or a **cog**.

- A hack is afraid to try anything new, so they copy what works without making improvements.
- A hustler cares more about hitting their short-term targets than providing value. A hustler has the courage to try something that might not work but does so for selfish reasons.
- A cog wants to be generous but is only comfortable following instructions. A cog works inside a system and does not bother to improve it. As the world changes, systems need upgrading and cogs get left behind or replaced.

When you choose the creative path by being generous and courageous in your work, you develop a unique voice, do original work, and make meaningful change. **But be warned:** when you take the creative path, you will feel like an imposter.

Impostor Syndrome

As you try something new in the hope of making things better, you will inevitably feel like you do not know what you are doing, get the sense that people are judging you, and think, "I'm a fraud..."

But before you give in to the imposter narrative and give up, know that every leader who stands up for a cause, every artist who shows their work to the world, and every entrepreneur who tries to make their first sale, feels like an imposter. Seth Godin says, **"The imposter is proof that we're innovating, leading and creating."**

Prevent impostor syndrome from killing your creative motivation by committing an hour a day to a creative practice.

The Practice

Your creative practice might involve writing, coding, drawing, recording podcasts, coaching others, or cooking. Regardless of what you do during your practice, the goal is universal – stop focusing on results and learn to love the process. The more you embrace the process, the more you will **trust yourself** to take small risks and produce creative work despite feeling like an imposter.

"The practice is not the means to the output, the practice is the output, because the practice is all we can control." – Seth Godin

You might be wondering, "If I don't focus on results, how will I know I'm improving?"

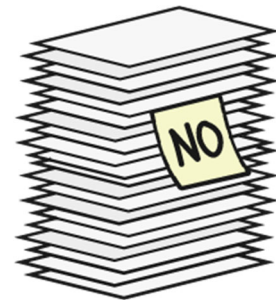
Measure your progress using two metrics: **how big is my discard pile?** And **how much work have I shipped in the last year?**

Grow Your Discard Pile

"Good ideas come from bad ideas, but only if there are enough of them." – Seth Godin

If you're not willing to add to your discard pile, you will never grow your "success" pile.

Your discard pile might be lines of code that didn't work as expected, product ideas that failed to be profitable, jokes no one laughed at, graphic designs no one shared on social media, or persuasive speeches that failed to move people.



Ship More, On Schedule

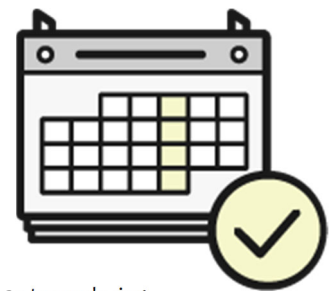
"We don't ship the work because we're creative. We're creative because we ship the work." – Seth Godin

Ship creative work on schedule, no matter how you feel. Make shipping work a rule, not a choice. Tell people, "I deliver _____ every _____. That's just what I do."

- I deliver a video to my Productivity Game premium members every Sunday. That's just what I do.
- Seth Godin delivers a blog post to his audience every day. That's just what he does.

There will be days you don't feel like shipping or don't believe you can ship good work. However, after you make shipping on a recurring schedule an unemotional rule, you'll magically find the creative energy you need to ship good work.

Every ship date is a chance to improve upon your last work. By improving on your prior work, you naturally build skill and refine your taste (your ability to predict what works will have an impact). Start shipping with low stakes (ship to your mom or to a creative friend). Only take creative risks you can tolerate. Over time, with more skill and better taste, you will find the courage to ship to more and more people.



By learning to love the process, increasing your discard pile, and shipping more often, you are well on your way to producing original work and making things better.

"Better is possible. But not if we continue to settle, continue to hide, and continue to scurry along the same paths. We have more to do. We need your contribution. But it can't happen and won't happen if we can't figure out how to trust ourselves enough to do the work."
– Seth Godin