

When you open the pages of a history book or walk towards a museum, it won't take long for you to meet men and women who are considered as geniuses. People with extraordinary talents helped shape the history of art, literature, and science. But how were these people so successful in creative areas and how can we emulate their success?

In this summary, we'll explore the scientific and social foundations of success. Some of history's geniuses such as Leonardo da Vinci and Charles Darwin will be considered and examined whether their success was due to unique inspiration, proper timing or merely good luck. Also, the various friends and teachers of the most successful people will be explored and we will discover the hidden phenomenon behind many successful products and creative ideas: The creative curve.

## Purposeful practice is a good source of creativity rather than intelligence.

How creative would you say you are? To learn this, you can start by thinking about the many ways you can use a hairdryer as possible. For instance, one idea might be using it as a leaf blower. This exercise is a test of your different thinking ability - the ability to find multiple solutions to a problem. Different thoughts are strongly related to creativity. In other words, the more you have to use this hair dryer, the more creative potential you have.

Scientists start to understand the relationship between creativity and intelligence by looking at people's divergent thinking abilities

In 2013, an Austrian psychologist studying creativity and intelligence found that participants' score wasn't predictive of their divergent thinking abilities when IQ scores went above 86. More clearly, there was no difference between a person with a genius-level IQ of 150 and a person with an average IQ of 100 in terms of finding solutions to a problem. In other words, your overall intelligence does not affect your potential for creativity beyond a relatively low threshold.

About 80% of the world's population has an IQ above the threshold of 86. That shows us, surprisingly; roughly three billion people are around us with the same creative potential as those we are taught to idolize.

So how can more of us unlock this potential?

Research indicates that everything is in practice. However, it should ensure that you develop your skills and challenge yourself, not just any type of practice.

According to Professor K. Anders Ericsson of Florida State University, there need to be concrete goals and continual feedback in order to be an expert in any field. While studying professional violinists, Ericsson found that the most successful violinists came into prominence by being more purposeful instead of their hours of practice. The most expert performers know that they needed a feedback mechanism, listening and criticizing regularly by their teacher. Also, they wanted practices which were not suitable for their level and they worked until they became competent. In this way, they always had clear goals to work toward.

So if you want to expose your creative potential, don't simply practice the same skills again and again. Do your task to develop continuous abilities and get regular feedback.

## The keys for being a genius: Perfect timing and the right historical context.

Why do we consider some people geniuses? For instance, although Charles Darwin is often considered a genius for the discovery of natural selection, you'll see that he wasn't the only one who developed the theory of natural selection when you dive deeper into the history. Despite what we have heard before, that honor also goes to one of Darwin's contemporaries, Alfred Wallace. Unfortunately, he was forgotten while Darwin is celebrated for his genius still.

As a result of this, we can think that are those we suppose geniuses really so unique and special? There were probably other factors that give them their status.

When it comes to who society suppose a genius, one thing plays a big role: Timing.

In fact, Wallace was working on the very same theory and after Darwin heard that, he immediately presented his ideas to the Linnean Society which is an important scientific institution. So, he appeared as he was the primary force behind the theory of evolution. As a result, the world remembers Charles Darwin more than Wallace because of Darwin's urgency. What about Wallace? He preferred traveling around the world for several more years before

publishing his theory instead of taking credit for his idea as Darwin did. When he finally returned home, Darwin's 1859 book *The Origin of Species* was already published, and Darwin was in the scientific history books forever.

Timing also creates geniuses in a broader sense because geniuses are inextricably linked to their historical context.

Here is an example: Andy Warhol, one of the creative geniuses of the twentieth century. If he had created his masterpieces during the Italian Renaissance, would he still be considered as a genius? He would probably be labeled as a heretic without the chance of future generations to appreciate them, and his works would be more likely to disappear. Similarly, Leonardo da Vinci, the genius of the Renaissance, would become hopelessly dated if his priceless paintings were completed in the era of pop art. The reason is that his artistic expression was already discovered hundreds of years ago. Therefore, it should be remembered that geniuses are the product of their time rather than universally intelligent ones.

## Our inconsistent desire for familiarity and novelty is determined by the creative curve.

What makes us like something and keep away from others? The answer to this difficult question comes from the fortunes of a clothing brand. In 2009, the popular tattoo artist Don Ed Hardy sold the rights to his designs to a fashion company and soon gained his reputation as Ed Hardy's apparel. By the end of the year, the brands sold 700 million dollars in clothes and accessories. Everybody everywhere was wearing Ed Hardy.

However, Ed Hardy clothing had become a shameful stereotype and sales had tanked by the end of 2009. Why did it go so wrong?

The wealth of the Ed Hardy clothing brand is a perfect example of what the author sees as the creative curve which describes a paradoxical preference for familiarity and novelty.

Research shows that the more we are familiar with something, the more we tend to like it.

As an example, research was conducted at the University of Michigan in which a number of Chinese characters were shown to participants by explaining that each character represented

either a positive or a negative adjective. Then, participants were exposed to each of these characters more or less number of times. As a result, the participants had a tendency to perceive the characters which showed more as more positive and which showed less as more negative.

To conclude, the more familiar we are with something, that thing has more positive associations with us. The reason for the popularity of Hardy's clothing brand throughout 2009 is explained with this result. As people increasingly saw it, they developed positive relationships with it to increase sales.

But why did people stop buying so quickly they bought Ed Hardy's clothes? This can be explained by the inverse of the creative curve: Our desire for novelty.

In addition to our desire for familiarity, the researchers have discovered that we have a desire for novelty. One study found that participants listened to a song eight times and that they started to like less each time they heard. This phenomenon explains the rise and fall of the Ed Hardy clothing brand. When people began to see them more often, they loved clothes more, but they spread out quickly with the desire for novelty everywhere.

## You need to understand the creative curve to maximize your cultural consumption.

In 1982, there was a small but popular video rental store with film enthusiasts in Arizona. However, the long queues that formed every night weren't down to its stellar selection of movies. The popularity of the store came from the film recommendations which were wanted by movie buffs from the store's 18-year-old clerk, Ted Sarandos. Fast forward 30 years and Ted Sarandos is now the chief content officer at Netflix and responsible for shows such as Stranger Things and Orange is the New Black.

The fact that people are so interested in Ted's ideas is in fact, his deep knowledge of the creative curve, which he owes as well Ted's success.

Ted was a part-time college student at the video store and decided to spend time watching each film in a well-stocked store. After several months of intense watching, Ted was a walking

suggestion machine that could give customers excellent recommendations based on what they liked.

As a result of his enormous consumption of films, Ted developed cultural awareness: Knowing which films would be familiar to their customers, which films were good, and which were clichés. Ted was talented enough to know where a film would fit into the creative curve at the tender age of 18. Today, Ted uses his knowledge of the creative curve to decide what kind of movies and TV shows are to be made for Netflix. Even, he accepts the creative curve himself, and states that the kind of content for shows should have “one foot in familiarity and one foot in something really fresh, unknown, and novel.”

And not only movie buffs use mass consumption to improve their knowledge of the creative curve.

An interview conducted with professionals from the creative disciplines including painters, songwriters, and chefs by the author. They all reported that they spend around one-fifth of their day, roughly 3 or 4 hours, to engage in huge consumption of material related to their specific creative area. For instance, painters were continually participating in art exhibitions, chefs were trying new restaurants, and songwriters were listening to both old and new music constantly.

So, make sure you spend about 20% of your time consuming the materials of your work to achieve the peak of your creative game. After all, you can become Ted Sarandos of the industry you're interested in.

## **Authors become publishing phenomena after they enter the sweet spot on the creative curve.**

When you look around enough, you'll soon find people with the dream of writing a novel although most of them always avoid putting the pen on the paper. The reason is that they have no belief about becoming a successful author or managing this process smartly. Also, they don't think there is a way with words they can move on.

However, if writing a successful novel more related to with where the book falls on the creative curve instead of having writing ability or being smart, what would happen? If this is true, then we might not have access to that spot on the bestseller list.

Beverly Jenkins is a highly successful author whose success is largely due to her books' combination of familiarity and innovation. In other words, her books fall fully into the creative curve's sweet place.

While Jenkins was a young girl, she loved to read everything she could get her hands on in the local library. However, when she became an adult, she returned home from her ordinary administrative job and she left herself in a historical romance novel. Soon, she realized a problem with her favorite genre: All the characters in these romances were white, in fact; in none of the popular romance books she read, the lovers were not written as African-American. Although she had no previous writing experience, she quickly decided to become a writer to fill this special gap in the market. The rest is history as they say. Nowadays, she is known as the creator of black historical romance, a new kind of literature, and her books have sold more than 1.5 million copies in the world.

Jenkins' books took a good place on the creative curve so it isn't surprising that they become so popular.

First of all, they include all the familiar factors of romance novels like the fact that there is always a happy ending and the lovers always have a crisis point in their relationship before reconciling. Nevertheless, Jenkins' books bring a refreshing novel to their readers in keeping with the rules of the creative curve. Her stories had a different perspective which was a lack in the romance novels before the focus of African-American protagonists.

Next time, while you're thinking whether you can actually write that book, focus more about whether your idea hits the creative curve's sweet spot instead of thinking writing talent. You might be the next publishing sensation.

**The right type of social network should help you to achieve great success.**

When we think of a creative genius, we dream of an inspiring individual who often works with inspiration. They may be involved in a creative project in a remote cabin or in a futuristic office, but one thing is certain even in our imagination: Geniuses usually work alone.

Popular culture imposes the idea of the isolated genius to us. Look at the character of Tony Stark, the hero of the Iron Man films. He is a solitary genius and builds robotic suits but still, he works alone.

But when we take a closer look at reality, our ideas about creative genius are rapidly disintegrating.

You need a community to make a creative genius. This is often a neglected but important social component.

In 1992, a study by researchers at the University of California examined the social networks of thousands of innovators and scientists. The findings showed that the quality of these social networks could predict the longevity and efficiency of the careers of innovators and predict how far they would stand out in their respective areas. In addition, as a result of researching successful artists, it was found that there was a direct relationship between the quality of their reputation and their relationship with other successful artists. Finally, in 1985, the research conducted with various famous performers in the world, it was found that people acquired their abilities with both ruthless and experienced teacher instead of winning the skills alone.

This research proves what would happen if someone visits the offices of the man who is often posited as the real-life Tony Stark: Elon Musk, the founder of the technology companies Tesla and SpaceX. The only creative genius we assumed, Musk has thousands of employees who can create futuristic cars, rockets, and spaceships.

Therefore, if you want to be a world-class innovator, you need to take several talented friends, teachers or employees with you.

# The Creative Curve: How to Develop the Right Idea at the Right Time by Allen Gannett Book Review

We were quickly selected to conceal the notion of talent, and we're willing to label as a few as geniuses, but the true nature of these concepts is less mysterious and more formulating than traditional wisdom suggests. The community, wonderful timing, a heavy familiarity dose and a series of innovations contribute to our familiarity as a creative genius.

Successful creatives need prominent promoters.

There are some necessities you need to do to be considered as a genius by society. Firstly, you need to work hard and produce good work. Also, you need to have social recognition which means that society should believe you and your work. So you need to have a particular friend who is a prominent promoter and that friend will be with you on your journey to success and introduces you to your target audience. On the other hand, that friend should have the respect of others in that field and have a credible creative force because the defense of you needs to be convincing and reassuring.

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