

How to bust the career myths that hold you back

Myths get in the way of your career growth

A myth is 'a traditional story' or 'widely held but false belief' e.g. climbing the ladder is the best way to succeed at work.

The issue is that when the context changes (e.g. careers become squiggly) and these myths remain, they can stop people exploring their potential and increasing their opportunities.

3 principles of myth-busting

- 1. Origin:** Ask don't assume
- 2. Opposites:** Explore opposites to open up thinking
- 3. Outliers:** Find outliers that tell a different story.

5 common squiggly career myths and 5 ideas for action to overcome them

1. Asking for help is a sign of weakness



Asking for help is a sign of strength and will accelerate your development.

Idea for action

Make the ask easy

Simplify the ask and ask often to reduce the fear of someone saying no.

Be specific about whether you need support, solutions or a sounding board.

2. Talking about my talents is awkward



Sharing your strengths means others can spot opportunities for you to use them more.

Idea for action

Share don't sell

How could you share what you're good at with someone else?

Consider 121 strength mentoring and running a one-off lunch and learn for a group.

3. If it doesn't exist yet...I can't do it



Adopt a create don't wait mindset. Take the opportunity to design your own development.

Idea for action

Pitch Prototype Pilot

Pitch on a page, show it to others who can build on it & support.

Can you prototype & bring your idea to life in some way? Pilot, give it a go as an experiment.

4. I need to tick all the boxes



Be defined by what you've got. Don't let yourself be limited by a job description.

Idea for action

Own the gap

Talk about your gap(s) transparently and show how you can turn your gaps into opportunities for growth. Knowing and showing that you are ready to learn is important to share.

5. Going back means going backwards



Going back to something you've done before just creates another direction to develop in.

Idea for action

Work your weak ties

Re-connect with people that you've learnt from, were inspired by in previous roles.

You never know where weak ties might take you.

Coach yourself questions

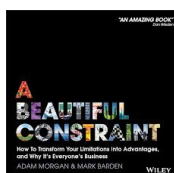
Which career myths are holding you back?



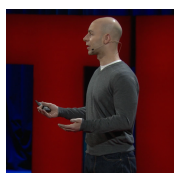
Which myths are holding your team or organisation back?



Recommended resources



A beautiful constraint
by Adam Morgan
and Mark Baden



The surprising habits of original thinkers Ted talk by Adam Grant to inspire you to think differently



How to make your strengths show up and stand out
Squiggly Careers
Episode #122