



Squiggly Career Calendar

2023

*12 Topics
To Support
Your Career
Development*



Our mission at Amazing If is to make Squiggly Careers better for everyone and our values are useful, action, work in progress and energy.

The purpose of the Squiggly Career Calendar is to support you to design career development into your everyday.

If you have any feedback on this year's calendar and how we can make it even better for next year please get in touch.

You can email us at helenandsarah@amazingif.com

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Helen Sarah".

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Making action easy

If career development is just another thing you have to remember to do, we increase the risk of it never getting done.

This year, we've designed our Squiggly Career Calendar to make taking action easy.

For each month, you'll find a recommended action. When you click on 'add to diary', the action will appear as a 15 minute meeting, every Monday that month at 9am.



You can move the meeting around to a time that works best for you, but we know that if it goes in the diary, it's much more likely to happen!

If you would like to add the year of actions to your diary in one go, click on the symbol here.





JANUARY



FEEDBACK

Idea for Action: Frequency Finder

Feedback is an important way you can *gain insight into your strengths* and information about your impact.

However, fear and formality can often get in the way. Finding easy ways to increase the frequency of your feedback will give you more data for your development.

This month, experiment with our Frequency Finders to increase the amount of feedback you give and gain.

Give more frequent feedback:

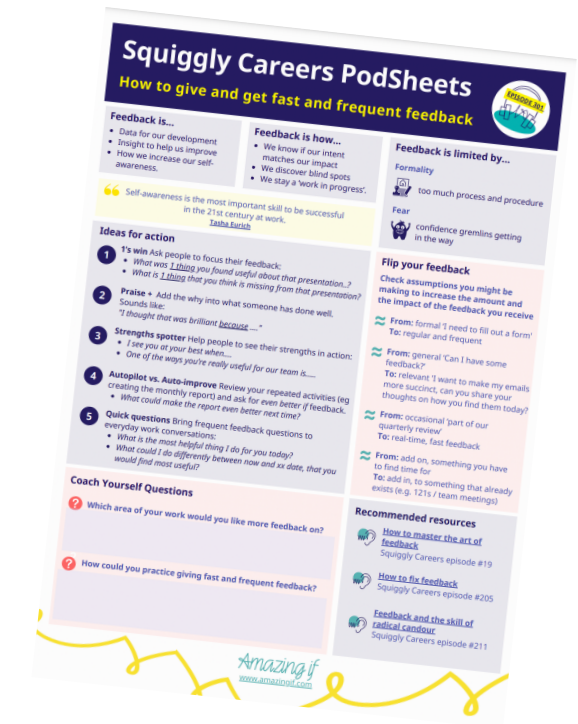
Set an intention to give feedback to 1 person a week. Use 'what worked well' and 'even better if' as a frame for your feedback.

Gain more frequent feedback:

For 1 month, ask 1 person a week for strengths-based feedback. This sounds like "*when do you see my at my best*"?



“
If we *shield ourselves* from feedback
we *stop growing*.
Brené Brown



FEBRUARY
WORK / LIFE FIT

Idea for Action: **Puzzle Plotting**


Work / Life Fit feels more realistic than the ideal of **Work / Life Balance.**


We achieve work/life fit when we take stock of all the different things we need to do in and outside of work and regularly relook at how they fit together.


It's a more flexible way of making your career and life commitments work alongside each other.

Add our ideas for action to your diary to help you to find your fit.



 **Action 1: Plot your puzzle pieces**
Look ahead to next week. Write a list of the top 5 things you need to prioritise.

 **Action 2: Preempt problems**
Acknowledge any obstacles which might get in your way by writing down potential problems.

 **Action 3: Prepare actions and asks**
Identify what you need to do so your week works (e.g. time blocking) and who you might need to ask for help.

“

There is no such thing as work life balance.
Everything *worth fighting for unbalances* your life.

Alain de Botton



Listen



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BUILDING

MARCH

BELIEF



Idea for Action: **Weekly Well Dones**

Self-belief is a struggle for everyone at different points in their career, but *with practice we can stop our doubts* getting in the way of our development.

By regularly reflecting on your successes you can start to recognise and appreciate all the things you do well each week.

Start your week with your successes in mind by reflecting on 3 things that went well for you last week. For example:

LAST WEEK I...

- ✓ Gave someone feedback
- ✓ Presented in a meeting
- ✓ Managed to prioritise exercise

Keep a record of your Weekly Well Dones to give you a boost to your belief to look back on.



“

Always remember you are **braver** than you believe, **stronger** than you seem, and **smarter than you think**.

Christopher Robin



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POSSIBILITIES

SO

APRIL

Idea for Action: Curious Career Conversations

Squiggly Careers give us more opportunity to develop in different directions.

Getting a window into someone else's world of work can help you identify possibilities that could be a good fit for your future.

This month, set yourself a target of having 1 curious career conversation a week. Use our curious questions to get the conversation started.



*What does a **typical day** in your work-life look like?*

*What **skills are useful** in your role?*

*What **feels challenging** at the moment?*

*What could I **read / watch / listen** to find out more about what you do?*



“

The reason I don't have a plan is that *if I have a plan I'm limited* to today's options.

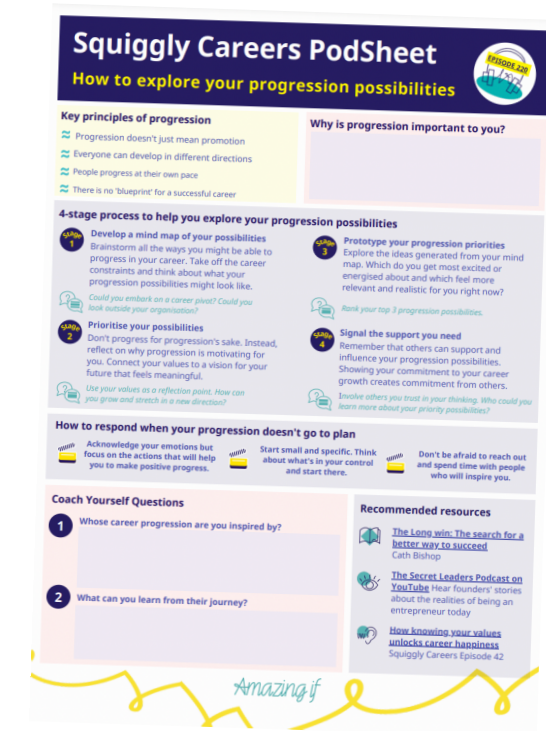
Sheryl Sandberg



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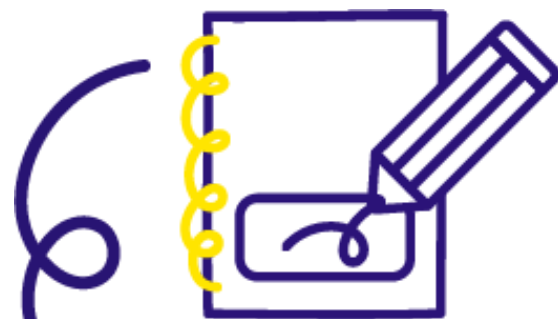




Idea for Action: Micro-moments

Finding time to learn can often feel like a big barrier when our to-do lists are already too long.

Creating micro-learning moments can help you to be intentional about your learning without adding additional pressure into your week.



**Add action
to diary**

Experiment with our 4 ideas for micro-learning moments this month to see which works best for you.

MICRO-LEARNING MOMENTS

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
WEEK 1	<u>Pick a letter of the alphabet and use it to focus on an action in our A-Z of Squiggly Careers</u>				
WEEK 2	<u>Watch one of the top 10 TED Talks and share your insights with your team</u>				
WEEK 3	<u>Reflect on how you might be getting in the way of your growth by identifying your inner saboteur</u>				
WEEK 4	<u>Spend 15 minutes reflecting on some of our Coach Yourself Questions</u>				

“

The *learn-it-all* does better than the *know-it-all*.
Satya Nadella



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Learn

Squiggly Careers PodSheet
How to be a learn-it-all

Learn-it-all vs. know-it-all
The ability to be a learn-it-all is crucial to our success in squiggly careers. It allows us to be adaptable to the inevitable changes in the world of work. Today's leaders are seeking individuals that can learn, unlearn and relearn.

An Infinite Learning Curve

Learn	Unlearn	Relearn
<p>Learn Make learning part of your everyday development.</p> <p>Learning is never 'done'</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Carry out regular learning experiments. What could you test and learn from? Can you enlist other people in trying things out for the first time?If time is a barrier for learning, try creating collective learning moments. TED x Talks is a great way to learn together in team meetings (watch a TED talk and discuss your thoughts together).	<p>Unlearn "What got you here, won't get you there" - Marshall Goldsmith</p> <p>Challenge what you know</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Connect with people who have opposite experiences to you. This will enable you to see differently.Ask yourself provoking questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Imagine it's 2038, what 3 significant changes have happened in your industry?"• Which of your strengths would be most useful if your organisation doubled in size?"	<p>Relearn We need to relook at what we know so it's still relevant as we grow.</p> <p>Relearning increases relevance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Look for opportunities to stretch your strengths outside of your day-to-day role.Get some fresh-eye feedback. Ask people what they think you do well and how they feel you could be even better at...

Coach Yourself Questions

- What is your biggest learning opportunity?
- How can you overcome your biggest learning blocker?

Recommended resources

- [How to be a learn-it-all](#) Helen and Sarah's Harvard Business Review article is full of practical tips.
- [The power of believing that you can improve](#) Carol Dweck's Ted Talk on the idea that we can grow our brain's capacity to learn & solve problems.
- [How to learn at work](#) Squiggly Careers episode #201

Amazing if

JUNE

CONNECTIONS



Idea for Action: Relationship Range

Increasing the range of relationships we invest in *leads to more opportunities* for learning and growth.

A useful place to start is to focus your strong and weak ties:

STRONG TIES

People we have a close relationship with who are helpful for support and to build our belief.

WEAK TIES

People who feel further away but are important for new insights and knowledge.

This month, create more connection by investing in your strong and weak ties.



STRENGTHEN A STRONG TIE

Say thank to someone who has made a meaningful difference to your development. Be specific about how they have supported you.

WORK A WEAK TIE

Share something you have been reading, watching or listening to that you think one of your weak ties might benefit from.

“

Giving *connects two people*, the giver and the receiver, and this connection gives birth to a *new sense of belonging*.

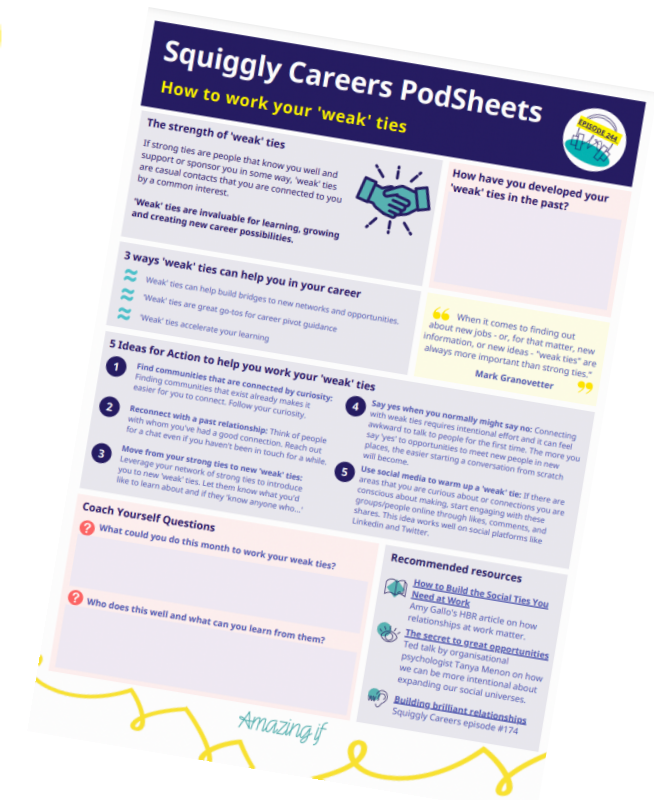
Deepak Chopra



Listen



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Idea for Action: **Listen:Talk Ratio**

Listening is an important skill for learning and building better relationships.

However, it's also one of the skills people most overrate their ability in. Very often, when we think we're listening we're really focusing on what we want to say next or letting our mind wander.

This month, focus on building your listening ability by reflecting and responding to your listen:talk ratio.

YOUR LISTEN:TALK RATIO

-  Reflect on your *3 most important conversations* this week.
-  What was your listen:talk ratio?
-  Aim for 60:40 as a minimum.



“

By listening, you *acknowledge and embrace the world* that is going on outside your head, which helps you *sort out what's going on* inside your head.

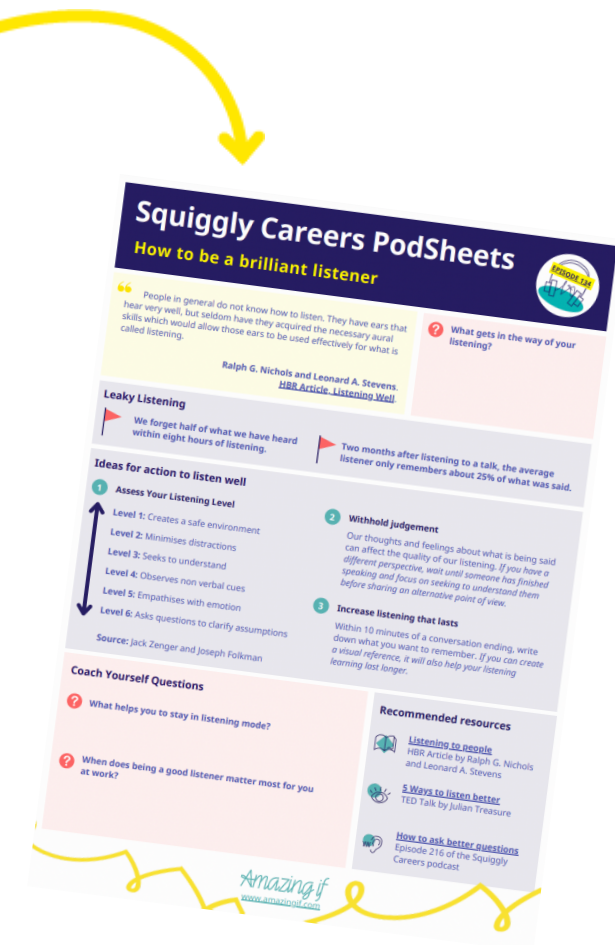
Kate Murphy



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Q TIME

AUGUST



Idea for Action: Time Well Spent

We are all working with the same 168 hours each week, *but it often feels like we don't have enough time to do all of the things we need to get done.*

Taking control of how you use the time that you have will help you to increase your impact and feel less frustrated about how you end your week at work.

This month, add our 'Time Well Spent' ideas to your diary.



→ **IDEA 1: MONK MODE**

Create a 90 minute window in your week to work with no distractions. Think about where you'll work, what you'll work on and how you'll make sure you are not interrupted.

→ **IDEA 2: GOAL-DEN HOUR**

Identify the time in your day when your energy and attention level is the highest. For 1 week this month, block out your 'GOALden' hour to work on the things that matter most to you.

“

You need to see that *life isn't a dress rehearsal* — that this is it, that it's your job to *show up for this moment*.

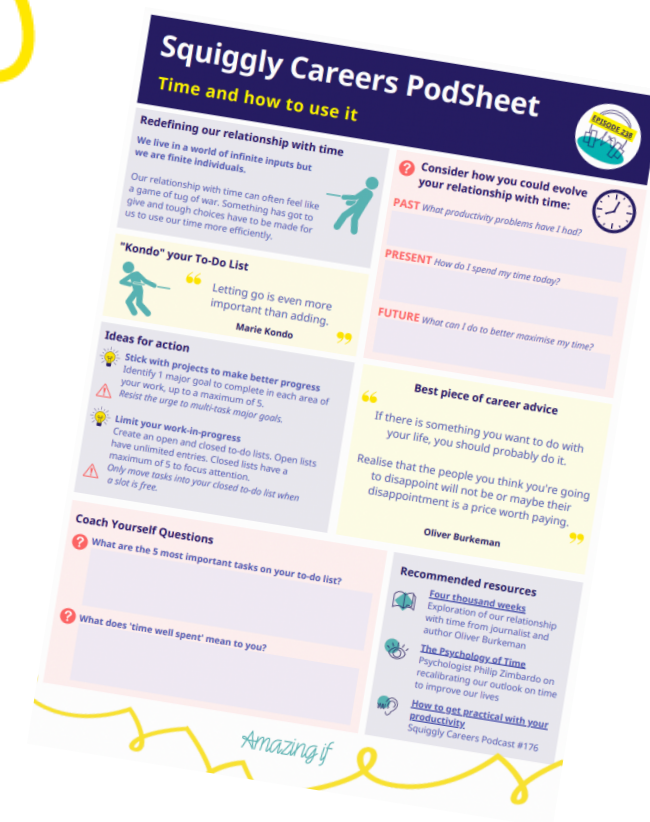
Oliver Burkeman



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ENERGY

SEPTEMBER



Idea for Action: Energy Audit

Responding to all the *change and challenge* we experience in squiggly careers takes lots of energy.

We need to be conscious of the people, places and projects that give us energy so we can spend more time on the things that fuel us.

This month, complete a weekly Energy Audit to increase your awareness about what work gives you the biggest boost.

→ Energy Audit

Every Monday, take 10 minutes to reflect on last week and identify the people, places and projects that gave you the most energy.

At the end of the month, use this insight to think about how you can design your week to increase your energy at work.



“

Manage your energy, not your time. The core problem with working longer hours is that **time is a finite resource.**

Energy is a different story.

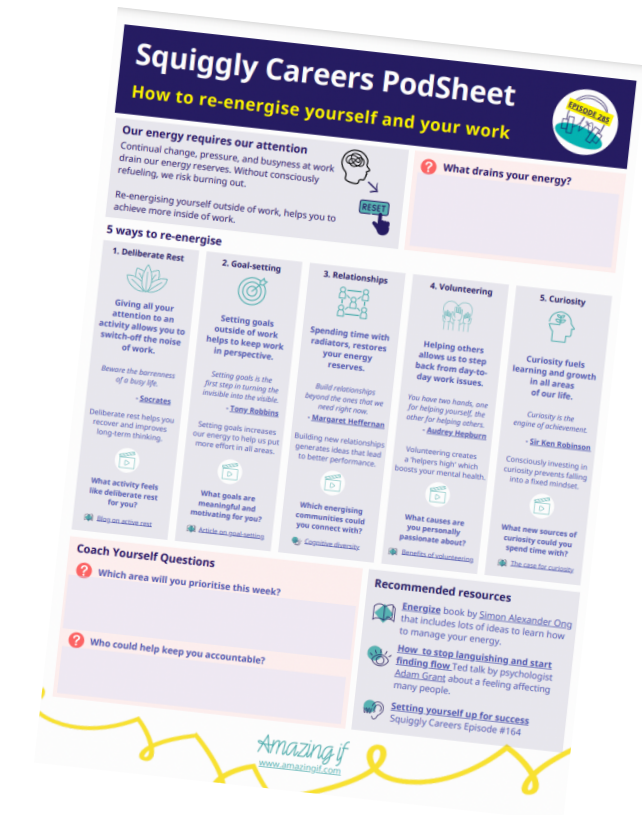
Tony Schwartz & Catherine McCarthy



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OCTOBER

PRIORITISATION



Idea for Action: **Manage Your Monkeys**

'Monkeys' are a way of thinking about all of the things you need to do.

The more Monkeys you carry, the harder it is to move forward. When you learn to manage your monkeys you are better able to keep the commitments you've made and feel more in control of your work.

This month, try our ideas for action to better manage your monkeys:



IDEA 1: MAP YOUR MONKEY'S

Write a list of all the things you need to get done. Alongside each 'monkey' write down whether you took it from someone else or created it for yourself. This helps you to understand more about where monkeys are coming from.

IDEA 2: MONKEY TOP TRUMPS

Start your week with your top 3 monkeys in mind. Don't work on the other monkeys until you are confident you've moved your top 3 forward.

“

The key is not to prioritise what's on your schedule,
but to *schedule your priorities.*

Stephen Covey



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SELF-AWARENESS
NOVEMBER







Idea for Action: 5 Minute Me-Map

Mindmaps help us quickly capture information and generate insight.

They stimulate our brain and unlock creative thinking, making them a great tool for career development exercises.



Each week this month, set a timer for 5 minutes and create a mindmap to capture your thoughts on one of these questions:

-  What habits are *holding you back*?
-  How are you *staying curious* in your career?
-  What are you *proud of so far* this year (at home and at work)?
-  What does good / better / best look like for your impact at work?

“

Self-awareness is *the most important skill to be successful* in the 21st century at work.

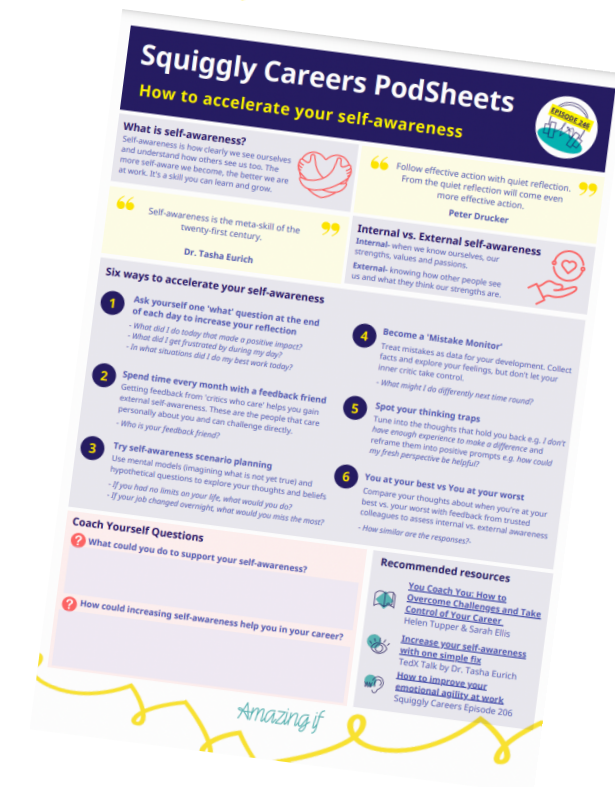
Tasha Eurich



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Squiggly Careers PodSheets
How to accelerate your self-awareness

What is self-awareness?
 Self-awareness is how clearly we see ourselves and understand how others see us too. The more self-aware we become, the better we are at work. It's a skill you can learn and grow.

Internal vs. External self-awareness
 Internal: when we know ourselves, our strengths, values and passions.
 External: knowing how other people see us and what they think our strengths are.

Six ways to accelerate your self-awareness

1. Ask yourself one "what" question at the end of each day to increase your reflection
 - What did I do today that made a positive impact?
 - What did I get frustrated by during my day?
 - In what situations did I do my best work today?
2. Spend time every month with a feedback friend
 Getting feedback from "critics who care" helps you gain perspective about you and can challenge directly.
 Who is your feedback friend?
3. Try self-awareness scenario planning
 Hypothetical questions to explore your thoughts and beliefs
 - If you had no limits on your life, what would you do?
 - If your job changed overnight, what would you do the most?
4. Become a "Mistake Monitor"
 Treat mistakes as data for your development. Collect facts and explore your feelings. But don't let your inner critic take control.
 What might I do differently next time round?
5. Spot your thinking traps
 Tune into the thoughts that hold you back e.g. I don't have enough experience to make a difference and my fresh perspective is helpful!
6. You at your best vs You at your worst
 Compare your thoughts about when you're at your coldest to when you're at your best to assess internal vs. external awareness.
 How similar are the responses?

Coach Yourself Questions

1. What could you do to support your self-awareness?
2. How could increasing self-awareness help you in your career?

Recommended resources

- You Coach You: How to Overcome Challenges and Take Control of Your Career - Helen Tupper & Sarah Ellis
- Increase your self-awareness with one simple fix - Tasha Eurich
- How to improve your emotional agility at work - Squiggly Careers Episode 206

Amazing if

DECEMBER



PACE AND
PERSPECTIVE



Idea for Action: Speed Setters & Zoom Getters

Being in control of our pace and having a clear perspective helps us to be happier in our work.

This month, try out our ideas for action to set your pace and get perspective:

SPEED SETTERS

To Speed Up > Deadline Dashboards

Create a visual summary of your main deadlines and give them a red / amber / green status. Reassess and update this daily / weekly to create momentum.

To Slow Down > Slow Flow

Start your day with an activity that requires focus and can't be rushed. Eg. Read a book chapter / meditate / make a 'slow' breakfast from scratch.

ZOOM GETTERS

To Zoom Out > Go Beyond

Read or listen to something that gives you broader insight than your day-to-day work or world eg. Read The Economist / Listen to New Scientist Podcast / Watch TED Talks.

To Zoom In > Detail Your Day

Write down the details of how you spent your day. Describe who you were with, what you enjoyed, who you spent time with and how they made you feel.



“

What you see and what you hear depends
a great deal on *where you are standing*.
It also depends on *what sort of person you are*.

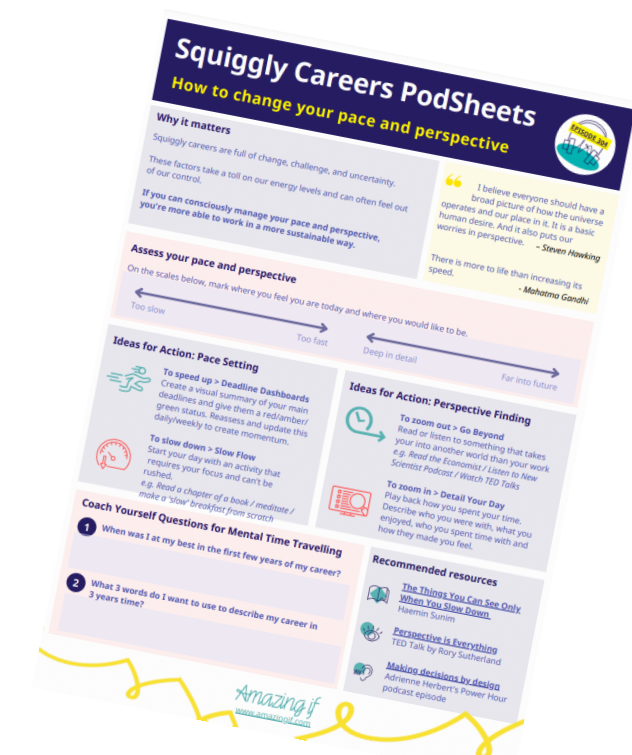
C.S. Lewis



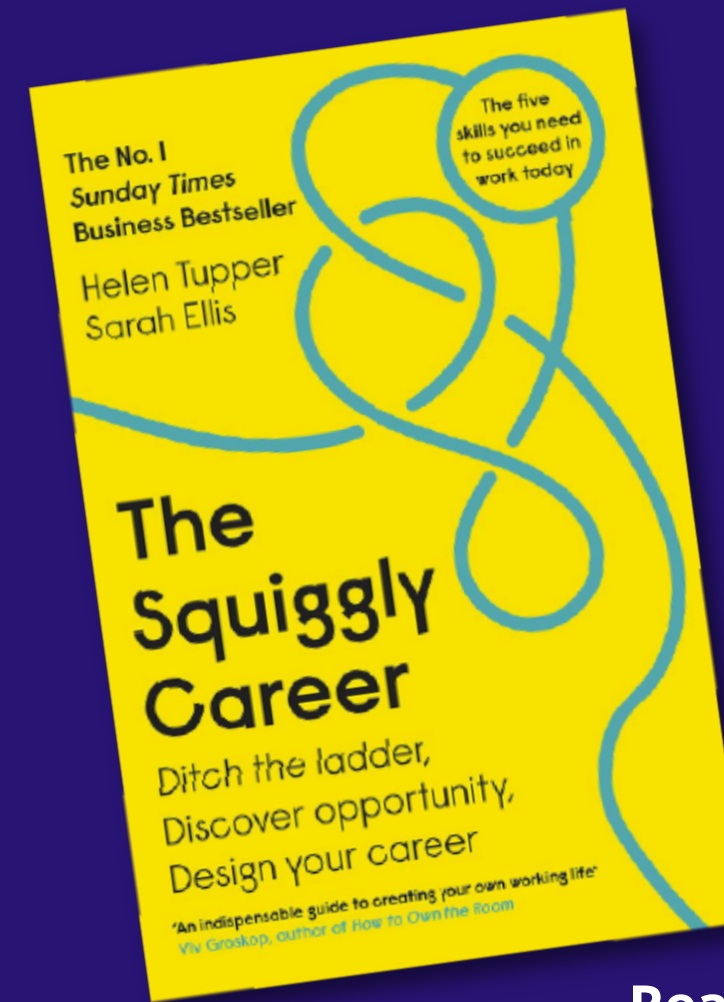
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