

How to "run your own race"

Confidence is the squiggly skill that gets in most people's way and can hold us back in our careers. "Run your own race" helps keep the comparison gremlins in their cage. It's not about trying to be like anyone else - it's about focusing on what matters to you and letting that guide your development.

When you do that, your development becomes more meaningful - led by your values, not someone else's version of success.

Ideas for action



1. Values before validation

Instead of looking to others for reinforcement or comparing your career to theirs, focus inward and recognise your own motivations and values:

- 👉 Ask yourself: *What am I actually motivated by? What three things matter most to me?*
- 👉 *Make decisions with your values in mind to avoid the allure of 'shiny objects' - you'll be happier over the long term.*
- 👉 *Focus on getting more of what matters to you rather than what looks impressive to others*

2. Collaborate don't compete

Rather than comparing and competing with people and their career success, look for the opportunity to collaborate and learn from them instead.

- 👉 *"Turn comparison into curiosity - ask yourself: What can I learn from this person? How do they approach things differently? What skills or mindset could I adopt?"*
- 👉 *Support or advocate for people doing great work. There is space for everyone to succeed and what you give you get back.*

3. Focus on being better, not the best

Running your own race gives you the freedom to develop at your own pace. You can make incremental improvements in individual ways. When you are your own benchmark, you define your own metrics for success.

- 👉 *Use WWW (What Went Well) and EBI (Even Better If) to reflect and gather feedback.*
- 👉 *Ask: "What can I learn? What can I do differently? Who's doing it well? What can I experiment with?"*
- 👉 *Score yourself out of 10 on something you want to learn/improve. Then ask: What would move me from an 8 to a 9?*

Coach yourself questions

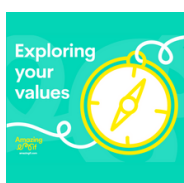
What are my three core values and how can I get more of them in my work?



Where am I letting comparison creep into my career?



Recommended resources



Download our free values tool for five exercises to help you explore your values.



Sign up for our 5 day Skills Sprint x AI to learn how to use AI tools to support our squiggly skills, including confidence



Sarah and Helen share 3 ideas for how you can cage your confidence gremlins - the beliefs that hold us back - in episode **#387** of the Squiggly Careers podcast.