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DAILY CREATIVE · ACTION GUIDE · EPISODE 132

Could You Do It *Again?*

It's not what you know but what you do that matters.

THE BIG IDEA

Own the process behind the *result.*

You are responsible not only for the work you produce but for understanding how that work came to be. In a world where an impressive result arrives in seconds, a result you can't explain is one of the most dangerous things you can own. It may look like success, but it is a lottery ticket, not a capability, and clients hire you because they trust you can do it again.

Dong Nguyen, a young programmer in Hanoi, built Flappy Bird in a few days, and it took off in early 2014, reportedly earning around $50,000 a day. When people asked why it worked, he said he couldn't predict its success. His follow-up, Swing Copters, never came close. You can't walk a line you never traced.

THREE QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU SHIP

1 **Repeat it**
Could you create something of equal quality from a blank page if someone asked tomorrow?

2 **Explain it**
Could you explain the critical decisions, including what you considered, what you cut, and why you changed direction?

3 **Stamp it**
Would you put your name on this if no one ever knew which tools were involved?

The stamp test: if you ship it, could you stand behind it?

SIX PRACTICES FOR THIS WEEK

Make your process *visible.*

01

Run the pre-ship check

Before you ship anything this week, ask whether you could do it again, explain how it was made, and put your name on it if no one knew the tools.

02

Keep a decision trail

After each meaningful project, spend five minutes writing a short paragraph: key decisions, where you got stuck, what broke through and why, and what you'd change next time.

03

Try the blank page test

Pick one finished piece and try to create something of equal quality from a blank page. Note exactly where you get stuck, because that gap is your learning.

04

Name your meaningful choices

List the two or three decisions that shaped your latest piece of work, including the directions you considered and cut. If you can't name any, something else made them.

05

Delegate tasks, not understanding

When you hand work to a tool or a teammate, write down what you need to understand about it before it carries your name.

06

Ask for the walkthrough

In your next review, replace "is it done?" with "walk me through how you got there," and ask with curiosity, not suspicion.

REFLECT

Questions for *you.*

1. Think of the last work you were proud of. Could you explain exactly how you got there?

2. Where have you accepted a good result without understanding why it worked?

3. Which decisions on your current project would you struggle to defend if someone asked?

4. What conditions bring out your best work, and how would you know?

FOR LEADERS

Bring these to your team.

1. When we review work, do we ask whether it's done or how it came together?
2. Which recent win could we not repeat, and what would we need to understand?
3. Where might we be delegating understanding along with the task?
4. How can we ask about process with curiosity so no one feels caught?

YOUR ONE STEP

One step I will take this week:

Who I will tell:

BEFORE YOU GO

Build work you can do *again*.

It's not what you know but what you do that matters.

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