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DAILY CREATIVE · ACTION GUIDE · EPISODE 133

Taste Is The New *Talent*.

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

THE BIG IDEA

When options are infinite, verdict is the *work.*

Options are now nearly free. A machine can give you fifty headlines or two hundred logo concepts before your coffee cools, so the value of creative work has moved from making the thing to knowing which one is right. That ability is verdict, built from taste and intuition. If you don't develop it, someone or something else will supply one for you.

In 1993, the team at Pixar spent months absorbing notes from Disney's Jeffrey Katzenberg, who kept asking for something edgier. Draft by draft, Woody turned sarcastic and started bullying the other toys, and when the reel was shown on November 19th, Disney shut down production on Toy Story. The team got two weeks, went back to what they loved, and made the highest-grossing film of 1995 in the United States.

FOUR WAYS TO SHARPEN YOUR VERDICT

1 **Know your aim**
Write one sentence naming what the work must accomplish and for whom, so your taste has a boundary.

2 **Know why**
Keep a verdict file that records what moves you or makes you cringe, and the specific reason why.

3 **Point of view**
Write down what good looks like before the options arrive, so you argue with them instead of shopping.

4 **Decide anyway**
Make the call before the data or the tool weighs in, then track how often your gut was right.

Do I believe in this, and will it work?

SIX PRACTICES FOR THIS WEEK

Build a verdict you *trust.*

01

Write your aim sentence

Before your next project, write one sentence naming what the work must accomplish and for whom. Tape it where you can see it, and test every choice against it.

02

Start a verdict file

Each time something stops you in your tracks or makes you cringe, write one sentence about why. Note what it is, why it lands, and why it doesn't.

03

Dissect three favorites

Once a month, pick three pieces of work in your field that you love and list the specific choices that make them great. Skip "it's beautiful."

04

Feed your taste widely

Audit what you consume this week. If the algorithm serves most of it, deliberately add something outside your comfort zone, and ask why you like it or don't.

05

Sketch before you ask

Before requesting options from AI or your team, write down what good looks like and sketch your own ugly rough take. Then ask of every option, what would I change and why?

06

Log your gut verdict

Write your gut call before you look at the data, the feedback, or the AI's recommendation. Then compare, and keep track of how often you were right.

REFLECT

Questions for *you.*

1. Where have I handed my verdict to a boss, client, trend, or tool lately?
2. What is one piece of work I love, and what specific choices make it great?
3. What does my current project have to accomplish, and for whom?
4. Where am I waiting for certainty before I commit to a decision?

FOR LEADERS

Bring these to your team.

1. When did I last ask for your opinion before sharing mine on a project?
2. Where might my notes be sanding off your instincts instead of sharpening the work?
3. What do we believe is good here, and will it actually work?
4. Which recent decision did we hand to a tool or an opinion instead of our own judgment?

YOUR ONE STEP

One step I will take this week:

Who I will tell:

BEFORE YOU GO

Make the call, then own *it*.

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

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