



The Anti-Creativity Checklist

For people who want nothing to do with innovation,
flights of imagination, or out of the box thinking



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14 things to remember to do for guaranteed results

1. Play it safe

- Listen to your inner voice.
 - * “Why should I stick my neck out?”
 - * “I’m not going out on a limb.”
 - * “What if people think it’s stupid.”
 - * “It’s safer to let someone else champion that.”

2. Know your limitations

- Don’t be afraid to pigeonhole yourself.
 - * “Don’t ask me,”
 - * “I’m not an artist.”
 - * “I’m not creative.”
 - * “I’m not an innovator.”
 - * “I’m not a big idea guy.”
 - * “How should I know?”

3. Remind yourself: It’s just a job

- “I don’t get paid to come up with ideas.”
- “I’m keeping my mouth shut.”
- “There’s nothing in it for me.”
- “When’s lunch?”

4. Show you’re the smartest guy in the room.

- Make skepticism your middle name.
 - * “Here’s why that idea won’t work.”
 - * “You’ll never be able to execute on that.”
 - * “Even if you’re right, you’ll never get buy-in.”
 - * “Our organization’s not set up for that.”

5. Be the tough guy. Demand to see the data.

- “What does the market research say?”

- “There’s no evidence it’s going to work.”
 - “That didn’t come out of a focus group.”
 - “Show me the spreadsheet.”
6. Respect history. Always give the past the benefit of the doubt.
- “We’ve always done it this way.”
 - “If it’s such a good ideas, why hasn’t anyone thought of it yet.”
 - “The industry will never accept it.”
 - “That wasn’t part of the original plan.”
7. Stop the madness before it can get started. Crush early stage ideas with your business savvy.
- “You haven’t made the business case.”
 - “How will you solve the technical problem?”
 - “How will you solve the HR problem?”
 - “How will you solve the design problem?”
 - “You will never be able to build a pricing model for that.”
 - “I don’t buy your assumptions.”
 - “There’s no immediate ROI.”
8. Been there, done that. Use experience as a weapon.
- “We tried that a few years ago and it didn’t work.”
 - “You haven’t been around long enough to understand how things work.”
 - “Let’s not reinvent the wheel.”
 - “When you’ve been around as long as I have, you realize there’s nothing really new under the sun.”
9. Keep your eyes closed, and your mind too.
- “The world isn’t changing. The media just wants us to think so.”
 - “I refuse to get caught up in all these technology fads.”
 - “Don’t tell me how to run my business.”
 - “What’s all this silly talk about social networking?”
10. Assume there is no problem.
- “It was a tough year, but we can blame the economy.”
 - “We think next quarter will see a rebound.”
 - “We’re doing okay.”
 - “Our next product release will kick-start our turnaround.”
11. Underestimate your customers.
- “They’re not ready for that.”
 - “That’s not what they’re asking for.”
 - “They aren’t used to that.”
12. Give sound advice to the people who work for you.
- “Just keep your head down and do your job.”
 - “I got where I am by not rocking the boat.”
 - “Leave the ideas to the idea people.”
 - “Choose your battles. This isn’t one of them.”
13. Be suspicious:
- Of the “creative’s” in your organization.
 - Of the “liberal arts majors” in your organization.
 - Of the “poets” in your organization.
 - Of the “wackos” in your organization.

- * “Those guys don’t understand business.”
- * “I can’t believe we’re keeping them on the payroll.”
- * “We invited *them* to this meeting?”

14. When all else fails, act like a grown-up.

- “I don’t have time for this.”
- “Did you have an appointment?”
- “Let’s focus on to next quarter results.”
- “Let’s get back to work.”