

Twitter Thread by Justin Mikolay ■



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I summarized everything I've ever written about writing and creativity.

Behold: a big idea summary for readers and thinkers, artists and creators. (thread)

It's not about you...

- It's about ideas
- It's about the message
- It's about how you send it

Creating is like...

- Having your ego surgically removed one day
- Replaced the next
- And then removed the day after, in a continuous cycle

Don't waste your audience's time...

- Create a worthy product before you show it
- Ask yourself whether you can make it any better
- Enjoy what the work itself is teaching you

Don't write words, play with ideas...

- Concentrate on themes
- Consider how they're organized
- Recognize images people use to express them

We don't will ourselves to like a subject, we're simply aware of it at first...

- The closer we observe the more we learn
- The more we learn the more interested we become
- The more interested we become the closer we observe, in a virtuous circle

The only way to create something new is to go through a painful, deliberate creative process...

- Organize your thoughts
- Reflect them back to yourself in written form

■Resolve and structure ideas in a logical order

Repeat stages 1-3

Note: the strategy that works in one stage of the creative process causes failure in the next

■Make new parts (create)

■Remove favorite parts (delete)

■Publish and get feedback (stop deleting and share)

Repeat stages 1-3

Keep your creative process simple:

■Build on the ideas of others

■Put something new into the world

Repeat stages 1-2

Need creative assistance?

■Print Orwell's "Politics and the English Language"

■Cut out one sentence and tape it to your desk

■"Let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way around"

■Look at it every time you're stuck and need to find the right thought

To create something compelling...

■Put bigger ideas in a smaller package

To create something attractive...

■Make the ideas simple and universal at the same time

Focus on process more than output...

■Refine what you create to the asymptote

■Throw the output back into the process

■Create things. Create more things from those things (the more products you refine, the more products you combine, in a cycle).

No one cares about the last thing or the thing before that...

■The main thing is the next thing

■Simply make outputs faster than you deplete inputs

A product is not refined from crude oil to super premium in one step...

■Your first draft is the product of extraction (rich sources).

■Your published draft is the products of editing (refined products).

■Your masterpiece is the products of refined products (premium products).

Convert content into a format you love...

- Force choices
- Structure ideas
- Reward quality
- Constrain yourself
- Mandate discovery
- Strip away distractions

Don't think about what you're creating...

- Think about leaving a message
- And then *discover* what you're creating
- By resolving underlying ideas into a self-evident structure

Amateurs think about entertaining an audience...

- Professionals think about moving an audience from one point of view to another

Remember, reading, thinking, and writing are three *processes* within a larger creative process...

- Reading is the process of filling yourself with ideas
- Thinking is the process of clarifying and ordering ideas
- Writing is the process of reflecting ideas back to yourself

Write what you mean...

- Don't overreach
- Don't make a grab for insight
- Don't write something memorable
- Don't write because you like the way it sounds
- Don't search for a phrase at the expense of an idea

Apply these principles of communication...

- Convey your intended ideas, and none more
- Speak only when you have something to say
- Speak such that you cannot be misunderstood
- Leave your audience with an unmistakable single headline

If the quality of the things you write is compelling, the value of the things you write is compounding...

- Share ideas in the spirit of helping others
- Apply them in a continuous cycle of learning

Find the rest here...

And follow me if you want more big idea summaries!

<https://t.co/DaIND5p1Cj>