



4 YEARS AT GOOGLE · 3 LESSONS I STILL USE

The work lessons nobody puts in the *job description*.

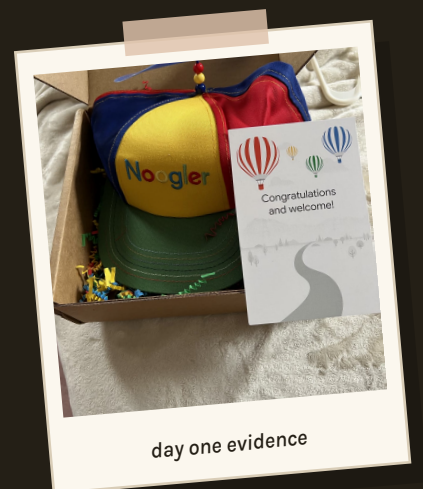
A practical reflection guide on imposter syndrome, initiative and curiosity.

IMPOSTER SYNDROME

INITIATIVE

CURIOSITY

The technical skills mattered.
These three changed how I work.



THE CONTEXT

I arrived experienced. I still felt like I knew *absolutely nothing*.

BEFORE GOOGLE

7

years of experience

DAY ONE



0

was how qualified I felt



“Experience did not stop the doubt. It gave me evidence that I could keep learning.”

READ THIS FIRST

This is not a blueprint for getting into Google. It is a toolkit for the next time you feel behind, wait to be chosen, or confuse confidence with intelligence.

LESSON 01 · IMPOSTER SYNDROME

The feeling is real. It is *not a verdict.*

A new environment can reset your internal benchmark. That makes the discomfort useful information, but poor evidence about whether you belong.

01

WHAT I FEEL

I am behind.
Everyone else
knows more.

02

WHAT I KNOW

I have learned hard
things before.

03

NEXT USEFUL MOVE

Name one gap and
close it.

The difference was not who felt it. It was who kept learning anyway.

TRY THIS

Write the loudest doubtful thought. Then write the strongest piece of evidence that thought ignores.

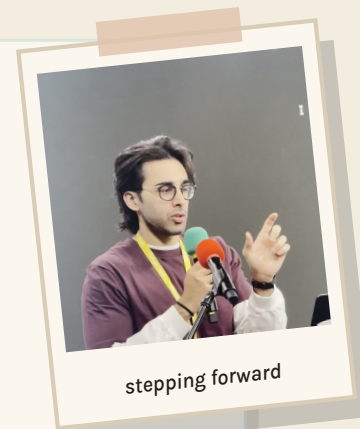
LESSON 02 · INITIATIVE

I got as much out of Google as my *initiative let me take.*



THE 15-MINUTE INITIATIVE AUDIT

- 1 What opportunity am I waiting to be offered?
- 2 Who has the context I need?
- 3 What is the smallest useful proposal I can own?



A MESSAGE YOU CAN ACTUALLY SEND

“I noticed _____. I think _____. Would it be useful if I _____ by _____?”

LESSON 03 · CURIOSITY

Curiosity was the clearest *signal of intelligence*.

The smartest people I met listened first, then asked the question that moved the room.

01

What am I missing?

02

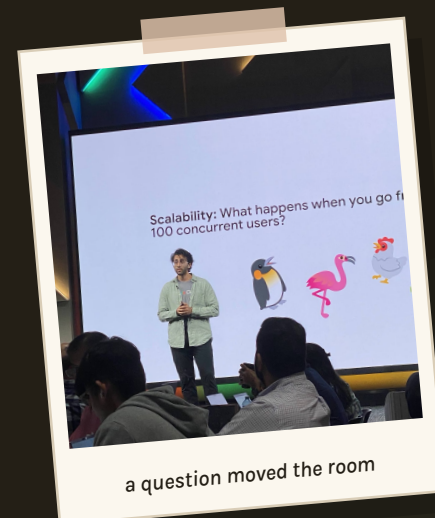
What would change this?

03

Who knows more?

THE NEXT-MEETING EXPERIMENT

Before offering your opinion, ask one question that could change it.



a question moved the room

TURN THE LESSONS INTO AN EXPERIMENT

Your next *seven days*.

WHEN DOUBT GETS LOUD

The evidence I will return to is...

THE OPPORTUNITY

I will stop waiting to be chosen for...

THE QUESTION

The useful thing I need to ask is...

The technical skills mattered. These three changed how I work.

WHAT THE RESEARCH ADDS

My story is one data point. These studies give the *mechanisms a backbone.*

The findings support parts of the framework. They do not prove that the same move works for every person, role or workplace.

IMPOSTER FEELINGS ARE NOT RARE

01

A systematic review covered 62 studies and 14,161 people. Reported prevalence ranged from 9% to 82%, largely because measures and cutoffs differed. The range is the caution, not a headline to flatten.

PROACTIVITY TRACKED CAREER OUTCOMES

02

In a study of 496 employees, proactive personality was associated with salary, promotions and career satisfaction after several controls. Association is not proof that one proactive act causes a promotion.

CURIOSITY HELPED NEWCOMERS ADAPT

03

A longitudinal study of 123 newcomers across 12 organizations linked specific curiosity with information seeking and diversive curiosity with positive framing, performance and taking charge.

THE ROOM STILL MATTERS

04

Across 51 work teams, psychological safety was associated with learning behavior, which connected psychological safety to team performance. Curiosity is easier when questions are not punished.

READ THE EVIDENCE YOURSELF

Sources, not *borrowed certainty*.

These are field studies and a systematic review. Most findings are associations, not guarantees. The exercises in this guide are my practical translation of that evidence.

01

Bravata, D.M., et al. (2020)

Prevalence, Predictors, and Treatment of Impostor Syndrome: a Systematic Review. Journal of General Internal Medicine, 35, 1252-1275.

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Proactive Personality and Career Success. Journal of Applied Psychology, 84(3), 416-427.

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Harrison, S.H., Sluss, D.M., & Ashforth, B.E. (2011)

Curiosity Adapted the Cat: The Role of Trait Curiosity in Newcomer Adaptation. Journal of Applied Psychology, 96(1), 211-220.

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