

things i learned by teaching

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ha!



**insights don't have
to be original.**

**they just have
to work.**

ok, now let me qualify that

**whether the total is
7 or 36, there's only
so many stories we
can tell*.**

*While the final number is disputed, William Foster-Harris posited that there were only 3 in *The Basic Patterns of Plot* (1959). Author Christopher Booker, *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*, added 4 more to that list. Prior to those, however, Georges Polti (continuing the work of playwright Carlo Gozzi) created *The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations* in 1895.

Ultimately, all authors and variations on this theory state that the human condition is relatively universal, and that it's not the stories but how they are told and the perspective from where they are narrated from that makes them unique.

**so why should there
be thousands of
reasons to explain
why we are the way
we are?**

let's take a quick diversion into what i mean by
that

a **good insight** should be
a **clear + simple** vision
inside **why the problem**
exists at the most
fundamental level to
provide us with a **clear +**
simple consumer
understanding.

There's other ways to consider it, like something that challenges the status quo, tells us something relatively new about what it means to be human, identifying the foundation or reason for a cultural shift, etc.

Any which way you define it, a purely functional insight that does the job should not only explain why the brand challenge can be solved through understanding a consumer issue, barrier or desire at a very basic level.

a very good insight
is all of that while
solving the
challenge in addition
to explaining it.

a **great insight** is all
of that while also
being **interesting**,
true and **actually**
useful, or **‘valuable’**.

Again, there's lots of other ways to define a great insight, which is one of the reasons I think 'the Insight' is a bit of an intangible mystery. Those last three elements are courtesy of Freakonomics quiz show, [‘Tell Me Something I Don't Know’](#), and I've held them close since I googled 'What's a great insight?' in 2016.

does it have to be original?

If we are to continue to use the Freakonomics framework, 'Interesting' is also defined as 'New', but more specifically 'something you didn't already know'.

It doesn't have to be new to the world. It just has to be new to you.
And then you need to apply it in a new way.

the ikea effect* is really
just a way of
understanding **effort**
justification + the
endowment effect, two
forms of cognitive bias.

*[Basically we see, feel or add more value in the things that we play a role in creating](#), rather than an objective assessment of its material worth, because of the effort.

Yes, you love that Ikea cabinet because even though you seriously considered divorce in the process of buying and assembling it, you made it yourself. Sort of.

and that's why it can be applied to
sewing a dress
rather than **buying it,**
staying with your lame partner
because **it's definitely gotten better,**
or
listing your **house for \$50K**
over market value.

a \$15 side table can be an analogy for bad relationship, why not?

the originality comes from its application.

After all, if there are only 36 stories to tell and stories are how we understand what it is to be human, then it's all in how you tell them.

Right?

so free yourself from the
pressure to find a **mind-
blowingly original
insight.**

A black speech bubble containing the text "ha!" in white, lowercase letters.

be original in
where you look,
what you apply it to and
how you write it instead.

after all, **an insight is just a**
story about being human.

there's only so many of those.

Thank you for reading all this way.

Just know I appreciate the act and the
person behind it.

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