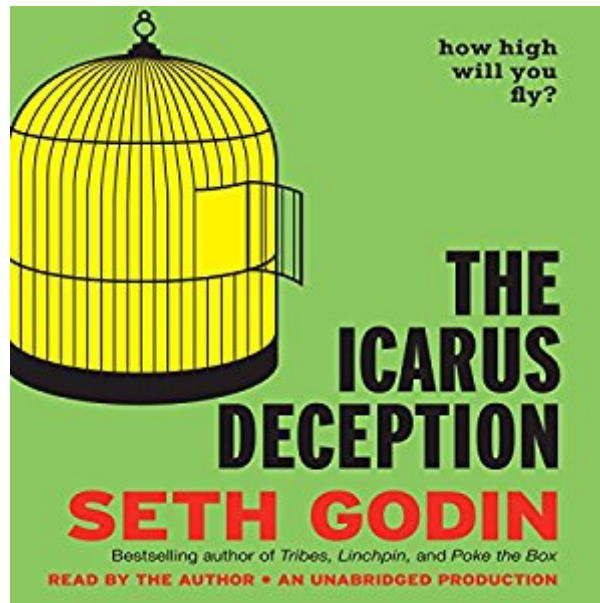




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The Icarus Deception: How High Will You Fly?



Synopsis

What are you afraid of? The old rules: Play it safe. Stay in your comfort zone. Find an institution, a job, a set of rules to stick to. Keep your head down. Don't fly too close to the sun. The new truth: It's better to be sorry than safe. You need to fly higher than ever. In his bravest and most challenging book yet, Seth Godin shows how we can thrive in an economy that rewards art, not compliance. He explains why true innovators focus on trust, remarkability, leadership, and stories that spread. And he makes a passionate argument for why you should be treating your work as art. Art is not a gene or a specific talent. It's an attitude, available to anyone who has a vision that others don't, and the guts to do something about it. Steve Jobs was an artist. So were Henry Ford and Martin Luther King, Jr. To work like an artist means investing in the things that scale: creativity, emotional labor, and grit. The path of the artist isn't for the faint of heart - but Godin shows why it's your only chance to stand up, stand out, and make a difference. The time to seize new ground and work without a map is now. So what are you going to do?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Overall I'd recommend this book. His basic message is to create things you feel compelled to create, because that's your best shot at success in this new economy. With the advent of the Internet, distribution is now basically free. In the traditional economy, everything was tangible and thus scarce. Customers demanded these goods, so value was created when you could bring these goods to the customers. That created lots of gatekeepers who would decide how to allocate their scarce resources: retailers charge slot fees, publishing houses pick authors, etc. However, now

distribution is free: billions of people are (mostly) free to connect with any of the others billions of people. It's an unprecedented and amazing time for us, given how important connections are to us. But because distribution is free, there's a lot more noise out there. Curation is still important. How do you cut through all the noise and add value to other people? The answer is that you do things that are valuable and are worthy of cutting through the noise. And the author asserts you do that in two ways: making a commitment to art, and getting good at that art. Art, as defined by the author, is work that is new, real, and important.

It's using your gifts to make a difference in other people's lives. It's operating without a map, exploring the edge of what's possible. And, it's inherently risky. You might fail. You'll probably fail. There have always been "safe paths", but those necessarily required you to follow a plan that's not yours. And people usually have to give up part of themselves to follow it. Instead, now today, we live in a world where you can create your own path. You can find and serve your customers wherever they are. But you need to find your unique offering, because if you just copy someone else, then customers will just go to that someone else. There are millions of bloggers out there, but certain bloggers stand out in part because of their unique voice. We connect with them, we like their style and personality. But I'm not going to connect with every great blogger because some will just rub me wrong.

That's OK, because someone I connect with will rub someone else the wrong way. When you can't please everyone, that's OK in the new economy. In fact, that is a differentiator. One action item from this book is to recognize situations where I'm feeling internal fear/stalling/insecurity when creating, recognizing procrastination and subtle instinct to seek approval. Another is to remember that shame is a choice you can't feel ashamed without your permission, only if you agree it's bad. The major critique I have for this book is it's way too long. This thing could've been 25% the size and still gotten the major points across. It meanders this way and that way. I'm sure he could've made more concise without compromising himself.

I give this book 3 stars to split the difference between the 1 star it deserves as a book, and the 5 it deserves as a marketing lesson. Like most reviewers so far, I bought this book because I'm a fan of SG. However, while I do believe he is preaching his message with the sincere intention to serve us, his readers, I must disagree with the raving reviews. As I read the same message he's given us

before, remixed with nuggets from his vast reading, I feel déjà vu. The book is like a handful of fortune cookies from SG's all-you-can-eat Chinese buffet. The Icarus Deception is grab-bag of his market insight and signature motivational style, already well-expressed on his blog and in his other books. The references to SG's broad reading (even Ulysses gets a nod) was probably thrown in to mix things up, but all it does for this reader is mix up things. The cajoling to seize your destiny, and live as an artist of life, is not without charm. But SG can do better. He is better than this book. His readers certainly deserve better. Mr. Godin, your readers deserve all of that enormous brain of yours, not just the clever marketing gland (which I can only assume is just above the lizard brain). A good book on life and work as an artist is the "The Elephant and the Flea" by Charles Handy.

After reading the book I know that the author won't read this lines, and if he does he won't care, so I feel I can freely tell the truth. Again, a writing by Seth Godin changed my mindset with his inspiring and provoking ideas. Some weeks after finishing, I can see the results - and my clients and family can as well. Because changing my mindset meant changing my life. That is the result of reading Godin's books, on me at least. So, if you want to change your life start reading Seth Godin, and why not start with this book?

Seth Godin effectively provides unabashed reasoning for realizing and achieving your art. The you-can positivity throughout The Icarus Deception isn't necessarily unique, but Godin manages to provide candid ideas for managing self-doubt throughout the process. My only concern throughout the book had to do with minimizing the other aspects that prevent people from realizing their dreams. The book provides a notion that we're all human resource drones playing a robotic role in a capitalist society. While Godin is correct to a certain degree, the overarching reason is that we're supporting families or trying to achieve financial security. He solely focused on our incessant need for material possessions. It's more complex than Godin's somewhat misguided assumptions. Nevertheless, as I strive to bring my vision to fruition after experiencing failure, Godin's words managed to place several cracks in my wall of fear that's constantly paralyzing my efforts. With that in mind, it's a worthwhile read for anyone who has the constant urge but lack the will to risk achieving their art.

This book is so good. Love it! Can't get enough of Seth Godin. There will be a time where I'll be running out of Seth Godin books, but I can't help but read through them so fast. Thank again. Jorge Harrington

Seth Godin is a clever writer with an interesting premise. The content would have made a great article or blog post, but the material comes across as too thin for a book. I also found myself quarreling with his embrace of "hubris," which in its classical definition is distorted personal pride that leads inevitably to one's downfall--and which tends to harm others. Godin seems to equate it with daring and courage. His excessive very current topical references ensure a short shelf life. In five years or less, no one will know who Justin Bieber was, for example. The book was worth an hour of my time--but no more.

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