

# CRITICISM

by Seth Godin

So, why haven't you and your team launched as many Purple Cows as you'd like?

Fear.

Not just the fear of failure. Fear of failure is actually overrated as an excuse. Why?

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So, why haven't you and your team launched as many Purple Cows as you'd like?

Fear.

Not just the fear of failure. Fear of failure is actually overrated as an excuse. Why? Because if you work for someone, then more often than not the actual cost of the failure is absorbed by the organization, not you. If your product launch fails, they're not going to fire you. The company will make a bit less money and will move on.

What people are afraid of isn't failure. It's blame. Criticism.

We don't choose to be remarkable because we're worried about criticism. We hesitate to create innovative movies, launch new human-resource initiatives, design a menu that makes diners take notice, or give an audacious sermon because we're worried, deep down, that someone will hate it and call us on it.

"That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard! What a waste of money. Who's responsible for this?"

Sometimes, the criticism doesn't even have to be that obvious. The fear of hearing, "I'm surprised you launched this without doing more research" is enough to get many people to overresearch, to study something to death. Hey, at least you didn't get criticized.

Fear of criticism is a powerful deterrent because the criticism doesn't actually have to occur for the fear to set in. Watch a few people get criticized for being innovative and it's pretty easy to persuade yourself that the very same thing will happen to you if you're not careful.

