

The 6 Types of Working Genius

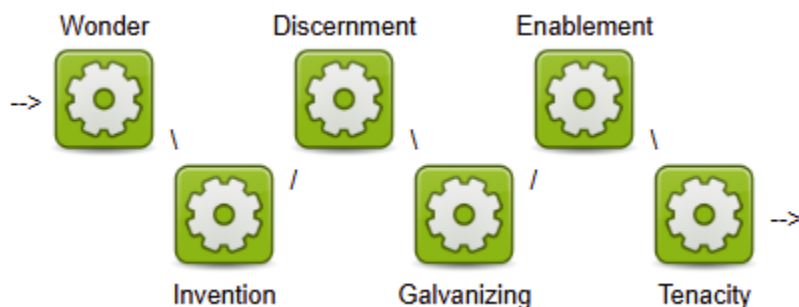
From *The 6 Types of Working Genius* by Patrick Lencioni (2022)

Defining Work

Work is a broad term that applies to nearly every part of our lives. It goes beyond a job or career. Work is simply getting things done. The majority of our waking hours involve work in some form. Ideally, work should be both dignifying and satisfying—in the experience itself and in the results it produces.

Each of us is energized by different kinds of work. The key is understanding which kind suits us best. Without awareness of our natural gifts, the best we can hope for is to stumble into work we love by chance. The Working Genius provides a framework to intentionally identify those gifts.

Model And Assessment



The Genius of Wonder is the ability to ponder, question, and challenge the status quo. It involves asking the kinds of questions that provoke clarity, answers, and action.

The Genius of Invention centers on generating new ideas and solutions. People with this genius are drawn to origination, creativity, and ingenuity, even with limited direction or context.

The Genius of Discernment reflects instinct, intuition, and sound judgment. These individuals can evaluate ideas and situations quickly, often without extensive data or formal expertise.

The Genius of Galvanizing involves rallying and motivating others to take action. People with this genius inspire commitment and can persuade others to rethink or adjust their plans.

The Genius of Enablement focuses on providing practical support. These individuals anticipate needs and offer assistance willingly and without unnecessary conditions.

The Genius of Tenacity is driven by completion. People with this genius gain energy from pushing through obstacles, seeing tangible progress, and bringing work to closure.

Genius versus Competency versus Frustration

No one possesses all six Working Geniuses. Each of us has areas where we thrive, areas where we can function adequately, and areas that consistently drain us.

Category 1: Working Genius

Each person has two true geniuses. These activities bring joy, energy, and engagement. We are naturally motivated to do them and tend to perform at a high level.

Category 2: Working Competency

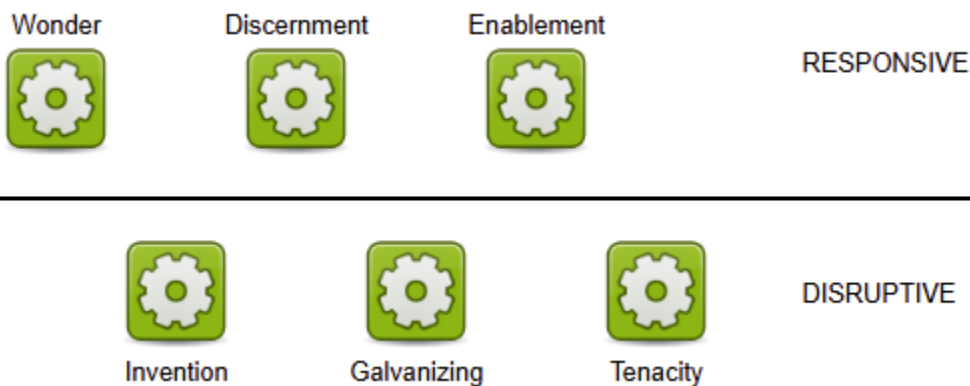
Two areas fall in the middle. We can perform them reasonably well, sometimes even very well, but they do not energize us. Over time, too much work in these areas leads to fatigue—especially if we are disconnected from our geniuses.

Category 3: Working Frustration

Two types of work consistently drain us. These activities sap energy and enjoyment. While we may manage them temporarily, prolonged exposure typically leads to poor performance and burnout.

Responsive versus Disruptive Geniuses







Responsive geniuses react to needs, ideas, or situations presented by others. Disruptive geniuses initiate, challenge, and drive change.



Some individuals have two responsive or two disruptive geniuses, while others have one of each. A healthy mix creates balance within a team. Disruptive geniuses spark movement and progress; responsive geniuses evaluate, refine, and support.

It is common to overvalue disruptive geniuses because they appear proactive. However, responsive geniuses are equally essential. Sustainable progress depends on the tension and synergy between both.

Three Stages of Work

<p>Wonder</p>  <p>Invention</p> 	<p>Stage 1: Ideation Wonder and Invention</p> <p>This is the part of work associated with identifying needs and proposing solutions. Innovation is connected with this stage.</p>
<p>Discernment</p>  <p>Galvanizing</p> 	<p>Stage 2: Activation Discernment and Galvanizing</p> <p>This part of work is about evaluating the merits of ideas and solutions and then rallying people around them. Many organizations are unaware of this stage.</p>
<p>Enablement</p>  <p>Tenacity</p> 	<p>Stage 3: Implementation Enablement and Tenacity</p> <p>This part of work is about getting things done - answering the call to action and pushing through to the final stages of completion.</p>

The most important part of understanding these three stages is recognizing the Activation stage exists. The people doing ideation get frustrated when their ideas don't come to fruition. The people doing implementation are frustrated with the lack of success. The people doing activation ensure ideas are vetted, modified, and improved while educating and inspiring the team for success.

Team-Based Work Examples

Wonder

The first stage of work calls for someone to ask a big question, ponder the possibility of greater potential, raise a red flag, or simply speculate about the state of things.

Example 1: "Is there a better way?"

Example 2: "Is this the best company we can be?"

Example 3: "Does anyone else feel like something is wrong with the way we deal with customers?"

Example 4: "Do we need a vacation?"

Invention

The next stage involves answering that question by creating a solution, coming up with a plan, proposing a new idea, or devising a novel approach.

Example 1: "I have an idea!"

Example 2: "How does this plan sound?"

Example 3: "What if we helped customers like this?"

Example 4: "Let's go somewhere within driving distance, like Napa Valley!"

Discernment

The third stage is all about responding to and evaluating the idea that comes from Invention. It involves assessing the proposal, providing feedback about the solution, or tweaking the approach.

Example 1: "My gut tells me that would be a good idea."

Example 2: "I have a strong feeling that something's not quite right about those values."

Example 3: "I think we need to tweak your product idea a little more before it's ready."

Example 4: "Monterey Bay has better weather this time of year if we want to spend time outside."

Galvanizing

Once that plan or solution has been vetted and is judged to be worthwhile, the next step calls for someone to rally people around it, enlist them to help implement it, or inspire them to embrace it.

Example 1: "Hey everyone, listen to her idea!"

Example 2: "Let's all rally around these values."

Example 3: "Who's ready to help us make the customer service program work?"

Example 4: "Okay everyone, clear your schedules because we're going to Monterey."

Enablement

Next, someone has to answer that call to action, to make themselves available, to agree to do what is needed to get the solution off the ground and move forward.

Example 1: "I'm on board to help with that idea."

Example 2: "Count me in with those values."

Example 3: "I'd love to help with customers; let me know when you need me."

Example 4: "I'll drive to Monterey, and I can take six people in my car."

Tenacity

Finally, someone has to complete the project, finish the program, push through obstacles to ensure that the work is done to specification.

Example 1: "Let's keep pushing because this new idea isn't a reality yet."

Example 2: "Okay, let's wrap this up and lock in on the values so we can send them to the board for approval by tonight's deadline."

Example 3: "Move over, I'll finish the customer database for you."

Example 4: "I know a guy who works at that hotel. I'll call him right now about booking a block of rooms and securing a discount."

Genius Gaps

Lack of Wonder

- Failure to ponder, take a step back
- Pressing issues take over

Lack of Invention

- It's obvious old ways aren't working
- No new approaches are tried out

Lack of Discernment

- Discernment not easy to observe or identify or prove
- Team over-reliance on data and models instead of simple judgement

Lack of Galvanizing

- No one is rallying the troops.
- "We have so many great ideas, but no one around here seems excited by them."

Lack of Enablement

- An obvious problem, but enablement is often overlooked as a genius
- Frustration that no one is pitching in or answering calls for help

Lack of Tenacity

- Projects don't get finished without tenacity. No one is jumping through hurdles
- Every team needs people who simply enjoy seeing things completed.

Use the "Elevation" way of looking at the geniuses, i.e. ideas begin in the clouds and descend until the work is finished on the ground. Strive for sequential order of the six geniuses for smooth flying.