THE ORIGINALS DIAGNOSTIC

## Is Your Venture Designed for Originality?

Introduction

Thank you for being with us through the Original series. We hope the exploration of how originality shows up through belief, failure, resilience, and systems has been insightful and inspired you to think about your own business.

We've argued throughout the series that originality isn't about flair, and it isn't about noise. And it certainly isn't about a logo or a launch campaign.

Originality is structural. It lives in how problems are framed and how incentives are aligned for everyone. COACH and Wheelers weren't short of ideas. They weren't short of belief. They weren't short of supporters.

But belief without structural support is fragile. And originality without reinforcement gets squeezed by speed, funding cycles, politics, and fear.

So, this final part of the series turns the lens away from us and towards you. In a helpful and thoughtful way, of course!
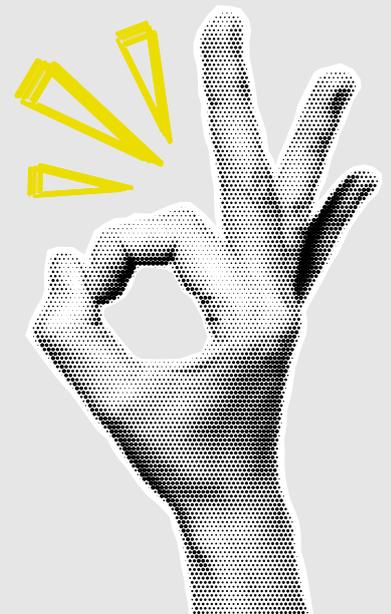
Welcome to the Originals Diagnostic.

A reflective reckoner of your own business. Is it designed to support originality, or does it quietly punish it?

Reflecting on our own lessons with failed ventures, the Originals Diagnostic isn't about scoring creativity. It's about assessing your architecture.

Because your originality doesn't fail in brainstorming sessions. It fails in meetings where short-term certainty overrides long-term belief. It fails in incentives that reward safety, in cultures where learning is cosmetic, and in systems that measure conformity.

The Originals Diagnostic is designed to surface the gaps, not to judge, but to reveal. Please be honest when you complete it, because the real value is in the gaps.

For each statement, score yourself from 1 to 5 and then establish where you land in our Originality scoring table.

- **1 = Not True**
- **3 = Partially True or Inconsistent**
- **5 = Consistently True and Visible**

Be honest. The value is in the gaps.

1. Problem Framing

We are solving the right problem, not just the one that's been accepted.

- We can clearly articulate what we believe others in our category get wrong.

- Our venture reframes the problem in a way customers recognise as meaningful.

- We revisit our problem definition as the market evolves.

Score:

_____

2. Point of View

We have a clear belief we are willing to stand behind.

- Our strategy reflects a distinct point of view, not consensus thinking.

- Decisions align with that belief, even when it's uncomfortable.

- We can explain why we chose this path, not just what we're doing.

Score:

_____

3. Design for Behaviour

Our system is designed around how people actually behave.

- We prioritise participation, habit, and experience before optimisation.

- We've removed everyday friction that stops people from engaging.

- Success is defined by sustained use, not one-off wins.

Score:

_____

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4. Safety to Learn

It is safe to try, test, and be wrong here.

- Early ideas are treated as learning, not verdicts.
- Failure is examined, not personalised.
- People can challenge assumptions without reputational risk.

Score:
_____

5. Systems Over Ideas

Our advantage lies in the system, not a single idea.

- Value comes from how parts connect, not isolated features.
- The venture would still work if one component were to change.
- Competitors could copy the surface, but not the structure.

Score:
_____

6. Incentives & Signals

We reward the behaviours we say we value.

- Incentives align with long-term value, not short-term optics.
- Learning and judgment are recognised, not just outcomes.
- What gets praised internally matches what leadership claims to value.

Score:
_____

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7. Ecosystem Thinking

We design for everyone affected, not just the end user.

- We consider partners, communities, and adjacent stakeholders.
- Value is shared, not extracted.
- Our model strengthens the system around us.

Score:

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8. Adaptability

We can reshape without losing ourselves.

- We can change direction without abandoning our core belief.
- Strategy evolves through evidence, not panic.
- Learning loops are fast and visible.

Score:

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9. Scalability of Belief

Our originality scales with growth.

- Our belief still holds as we add customers, partners, or markets.
- Growth strengthens our point of view instead of diluting it.
- We know what must remain true as we scale.

Score:

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10. Deliberate Difference

We know where originality matters and where it doesn't.

- We spend our originality where it creates the most value.

- We don't reinvent things that don't need reinventing.

- The difference is intentional, not decorative.

Interpreting your score

40–50: Originality is designed into your venture. Focus on protecting it as you scale.

25–39: You have strong beliefs, but systems may not fully support them yet. This is where most ventures sit.

Below 25: Originality likely exists in ideas, not infrastructure. Growth may quietly push you toward sameness.

Reflections

One closing reflection for founders.

Originality isn't something you defend once you have it.

It's something you design for, revisit, and protect as conditions change.

Score:

_____

Total:

_____

Be Bold.
Be Brave.
Be Original.

Originality isn't about flair, noise or standing out for the sake of it.
It's a deliberate business decision, made when there's no obvious right answer.

It's about backing belief before proof, designing for real human behaviour, and building a business and brand that can adapt when markets shift.

Build.

Brands ready to begin a new build. Services that integrate originality into the foundations for growth.

Ideal for: New businesses powering their start or scale-up. Established businesses ready to reposition and innovate.

Services include: Original Brand Diagnostics, Brand Strategy, Tone of Voice, Brand Identity, Website Design, Brand Guidelines and Launch Campaigns.

Create.

Bring your brand to life, consistently, credibly and with purpose.

Ideal for: Brands that need creative across channels. Teams that want consistency without compromise. Businesses ready to express their originality at scale.

Services include: Original Creative Thinking, Campaigns, Video content, art direction, web and social design, Dedicated design time allocation, Editable, on-brand templates.

Grow.

Turn clarity and creativity into sustained progress, embedding originality.

Ideal for: Brands with strong foundations. Teams that want consistent, on-demand marketing. Businesses focused on sustainable, scalable growth.

Services include: Marketing and social plans aligned to business goals. Regular in-person content creation sessions, Copywriting, Social media creative, management and reporting. Paid social setup and light-touch management.

Let's talk.

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