

6 ways to smooth your ride with risk

Big initiatives are epic ideas with a compass.
And fuel for the long haul.
On the road to market you'll have to share the ride with risk. Buckled up, of course.

I saw risk from the driver's seat recently as I drove toward a group of college kids whipping a Frisbee in the street. Slowing, to let them return to the curb, I could see their system of slipping gracefully around my car, laughing and calling to each other without stopping, asphalt to curb to grass and back again, slow matrix moves in a frenzied game.

Dismayed at first (ok, maybe a little annoyed) by their dangerous sport, I very quickly began to notice the fluid way they looked out for oncoming traffic and howled with each evasive move and athletic lunge. Oh, then I got it. The whole point was **to be** in traffic, ever so slightly in harm's way. Young people testing the limits, having fun. I got it.

You get it, too. You're probably testing your idea in the street right now.
And there's risk - sitting right next to you.

6 Ways To Smooth Your Ride With Risk

Invite threats to play the game.

Instead of seeing me as an obstacle, the Frisbee friends folded my car into their game, raising their performance bar and supercharging their experience.

If you name the risks, expect them, plan and prepare for them, you won't be shocked when they arrive. Accept risk as that feisty yet integral player on your team who shakes up the status quo and agitates for improvement.

Make risk a business partner.

Rather than quickly containing risk, bring it into the boardroom. Strategize with it, air it out, and learn from it. Let it introduce alternatives and challenge old news.

Expect the "normal tension" of risk.

All discovery is a few shades of danger. It satisfies your primal seeking. Knowing that possibility thinking produces "*normal creative friction*" mentally positions you to take advantage of it. Think of it as learning by leaning over the edge.

Make risk more appetizing.

Serve creativity at the big table. Add new ideas to the menu. Help the Very Serious Adults break out of their habitual points of view. Watch for chance. Chemists and artists and builders are trained for serendipity. Post-Its notes, like penicillin and Viagra and Velcro, were accidents. Some blockbusters begin as mistakes.

Admit and reframe your fears.

Avoiding harm is one of your earliest life lessons – like a hot stove, broken glass, playing in the street. Your survival instincts may cloud true innovation. Ask yourself if the risk you're staring down is a deal breaker or just calling you out of your comfort zone.

Know when to get out of the street.

Don't push it – the whole point is to engage calculated risk, not to be undone by it. Trusting your option to retreat is what makes the best risks possible.

Here's to your work done well,

Dottie

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P.S. If you're stuck in a 'risk rut' TransitionWork can help you crawl out!