Twitter Thread by Tiago Forte



Tiago Forte
@fortelabs

1/ Here's the case for making "Curate" the first step in my methodology for personal knowledge management, known as CODE. Instead of "Capture"

C – Curate
O – Organize
D – Distill
E – Express

> I\u2019m thinking of changing the C in CODE to Curate instead of Capture
>
> Capture focuses on the mechanical action, which is trivial now
>
> Curate focuses on the Curation Mindset of intentionally choosing what to consume, which is harder than ever
>
> — Tiago Forte (@fortelabs) January 18, 2021

2/ The word "Capture" comes from the first step of GTD, which described it as "the Capture Habit"

This was a novel idea at the time, that you could pluck bits of information out of your mind and the external world and save it in a place you trust and control

3/ When it comes to open loops (unfinished tasks), it's very important to capture them:

1) from your internal mind (where they cause stress)
2) immediately (before you forget them)
3) thoroughly (because even a single one slipping through the cracks can be catastrophic)

4/ But none of these apply to capturing non-actionable information. Most of it 1) comes from the outside world, 2) will come around again if it's any good, and 3) you have to be VERY selective about what you keep to avoid getting drowned in it

5/ And most clearly of all, you don't want the act of capturing content to be habitual and automatic. Habits are best for actions that require no active thought, and may actually suffer if you think about them too much

6/ Capturing content, in contrast, should be as intentional and strategic as possible. It should be mindful, not mindless. This adds friction, but that's a good thing: you don't want anything going into your first OR second brain unfiltered

7/ "Capturing" also emphasizes the mechanical action – taking out a notepad or app, opening it, writing out the open loop, hitting save...

It suggests that if you don't capture something, it will escape, and that will be a bad thing

8/ But with content, capturing can be completely or partially automated (with Readwise, IFTTT, Zapier, native integrations) or easily postponed for later (save to Instapaper, Pocket)

And if you don't get to it later, that's a good thing. The good stuff always comes back around

9/ "Curation" has a very different connotation. It's more about the mindset of being very picky, using your intuition and taste to choose only the best, and having high standards for what is allowed to take up your attention

10/ To curate is to choose an item not in isolation, but as part of a broader collection, theme, or purpose. Like a museum curator choosing artwork for an exhibition, or a magazine editor choosing photos for a spread

11/ Curation also implies that the curator is adding a lot of value, not just gathering together any old stuff. Which is also true in content consumption: what you choose to consume is itself a creative and strategic act, from which everything else flows

12/ "Content curation" has been a niche trend for bloggers, influencers, social media accounts, & marketplaces. But now all of us have to curate info for ourselves. We can't trust that algorithmic feeds will serve our interests. Even social media posts from friends are suspect

13/ Instead of The Capture Habit, I propose The Curation Mindset – a general attitude toward the world that assumes there is a lot of noise and misinformation out there, and we have to purposefully find the signal in the noise

14/ This applies to personal knowledge management of course, but also far beyond. It's bringing mindfulness and intentionality to our info consumption habits, which we are learning can shape our most deeply held beliefs and attitudes