Twitter Thread by Adam Boxer

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Short thread on communication, teaching and selling ideas:

When I finished school I went to study in Israel in a "Yeshiva" - these are like HE academies where you just study Jew stuff: philosophy, bible, history, law. And, lots of talmud. 1/

The Talmud is really hard at the best of times. It's very confusing, varies in style from page to page, the content itself is very demanding and it's in a weird Aramaic-Hebrew hybrid. 2/

Everyone in the Yeshiva studied the same tractate (like a book of the talmud) but there were lots of different classes, with each rabbi having a very different style and approach. 3/

One rabbi took a highly abstract and conceptual approach. He used very complicated ideas and words and did a lot of monologuing. Everybody used to rave about how amazing his classes were. So, one day, I decided to go. 4/

I confess that I didn't understand a damn thing. It all just felt very...like...nothingness. Like things were being overcomplicated and overdramatised and ideas and lenses were being added that didn't really add much at all. It was just confusing. 5/

Afterwards I asked my friends "um so how was that" almost all of them said some variation of "absolutely brilliant. I didn't really understand it - but it was brilliant"

Emmmm not for me, mate. 6/

Instead I went to a different rabbi, who was famed for the clarity of his ideas. He used to synthesise all the different opinions, lay them out clearly, explained precisely where each authority differed from the next. It was SO unsexy, but we learnt loads. 7/

There were no moments where I was like "OMGIZZLE MIND BLOWN I'M INSPIRED" it was just "yeah, cool that makes sense. nice one." And that was perfect. 8/

Feck I'm 9 tweets in and haven't got to the point. Basically, I see a lot of stuff out there in ed teaching and CPD that is just wool. It doesn't actually clarify ideas, doesn't have concrete examples, lacks detail BUT - and this is the key - makes you feel smart. 9/

This is salesman work. Where you give people a product that doesn't actually move them on, but makes them feel like something awesome has just happened. Tomorrow, nothing has changed. 10/

Be wary of big words. Be wary of the cult of charisma. Be wary of things and ideas that aren't communicated in a way that makes them readily intelligible. And be wary of that feeling of "MIND BLOWN", often it just results in nothingness. /end