

Pick Yourself

Authority?

You want the authority to create, to be noticed and to make a difference? You're waiting for permission to stand up and speak up and ship?

Sorry. There's no authority left.

Oprah has left the building. She can't choose you to be on her show because her show is gone. YouTube wants you to have your own show now, but they're not going to call you.

Dick Clark has left the building. He's not going to be able to get you a record deal or a TV gig because his show is long gone. iTunes and a hundred other outlets want you to have your own gig now, but they're not going to call you either.

Neither is Rodney Dangerfield or the head of programming at Comedy Central. Louis CK has famously proven that he doesn't need to the tyranny of the booker—he picked himself.

Our cultural instinct to wait to get picked. To seek out the permission, authority and safety that comes from a publisher or talk show host or even a blogger saying, "I pick you."

Once you reject that impulse and realize that no one is going to select you—that Prince Charming has chosen another house—then you can actually get to work.

The myth that the CEO is going to discover you and nurture you and ask you to join her for lunch is just that, a Hollywood myth.

Once you understand that there are problems just waiting to be solved, once you realize that you have all the tools and all the permission you need, then opportunities to contribute abound. Not the opportunity to have your resume picked from the pile, but the opportunity to lead.

When we take responsibility and eagerly give credit, doors open. When we grab a microphone and speak up, we're a step closer to doing the work we're able to do.

Most of all, when you buckle down, confront the lizard and ship your best work, you're becoming the artist that you are capable of becoming.

No one is going to pick you. Pick yourself.

