

How to “Flirt with Failure”: advice from our speakers

Speakers:

- **Jeremy Davis**, Assistant Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility, Moody’s
- **Kristen Gold**, Assistant Director, Americas Corporate Responsibility, EY; Founder, ARISE
- **Roger Wong**, Global Corporate Social Responsibility Lead, Marsh
- **Lee Fabiaschi**, Program Associate, Global Corporate Citizenship, PIMCO

These tips are shared in no particular order

- Don’t ever let your own internal spark go out.
- You can anticipate future opportunities and challenges by seeing around corners; use this as an opportunity to act as a strategic partner for your colleagues and teams.
- Find opportunities to plant the seeds that will grow your ideas into reality. One tactic to do this: ask questions of people.
- Failure is always on the table when you’re working to turn an idea into a responsibility.
- Set up “controlled failures.” Nose-diving can sometimes get you to the best possible outcome; it catalyzes forward momentum.
- Get comfortable with the idea of failed outcomes as a way to see other opportunities. “Scenario plan” for your own future.
- Failure breeds anxiety. It’s freeing to let it go.
- When you’re starting something, recognize that the ups and downs are condensed; the highs are higher, and the lows are lower.
- Be ready to confront the “little voice” in the back of your head that might tell you that you can’t do things, or you’re not good enough. You can learn what you really do need to know along the way.
- Taking on something new is like streaking through the quad—sober. The perpetual uncertainty is all-consuming.
- It’s cliché but true: doing something new or learning something new only gets easier as you go along.
- You don’t have to jump with both feet first. You can stick your toe in the water first.
- Progress isn’t always black and white.
- Take time to understand your environment and its complexities. Lean into that complexity.
- Ground yourself in reality. Recognize that everyone has a point of view no matter what. What do the facts tell you?
- Take the process itself as an opportunity to learn what works and what doesn’t.
- Keep an open mind. You can explore multiple paths at once while you isolate the truly promising options.
- To thrive in complexity, recognize that complexity means there are many possible solutions.
- Magnify your wins—both big and small.
- Building relationships with people helps you see problems before they arise.
- Keep your sights on the bigger picture.
- Acknowledging that change is tough can help you—and others—cope with it.
- When going through periods of change—and having challenging conversations about it—consider the value of transparency.