

## Forget Imposter Syndrome, It's Expert Syndrome that Should Scare You

Published on: Sep 28, 2017 By: Suzanne Lucas

We've all [heard of Impostor Syndrome](#)--where you don't feel like you're good enough for the level of responsibility you have. But, an article from Laura Bergells, [Impostor Syndrome is not the problem. Expert Syndrome is](#) caught my eye. Bergells writes:

It turns out, Expert Syndrome isn't even real. It seems I made the term up in a fit of pique. Expert Syndrome doesn't even have a Wikipedia entry. Instead, it's called the [Dunning-Kruger Effect](#).

That's not phrase parity. I'm gonna continue to call it Expert Syndrome, by cracky.

Because no offense to Dunning or Kruger, but people instantly know what I mean when I say Expert Syndrome. You see it everywhere.

If someone with Expert Syndrome browses an article about a topic, they feel they've earned a Ph.D. on the subject. If they do an hour's worth of mediocre work, they update their resume with their accomplishments -- then alert the media. [They might be tone-deaf, but they believe they can win American Idol](#).

This is a serious problem in our society. So many people out there are claiming to be experts when they aren't anywhere near to expert status.

How Do You Spot Someone with Expert Syndrome?

- They have an answer for everything. A real expert knows her limits and will say so. Someone with Expert syndrome will [never admit that it is outside her realm of knowledge](#)--often because she simply doesn't know what she doesn't know.
- Research=Googling. Anyone whose expertise comes from doing "research" on the internet isn't a real expert. Real experts have experience in their field and read or do real primary research.
- They don't ever need to check. If you ask an expert a complicated question, she might reply, "I think it's X, [but let me double check](#)." If you ask someone with expert syndrome a complicated question, she'll say "It's X." If you present information to the contrary, she will reject it.

- **They (often) acknowledge there isn't total consensus. It is a rare thing when there is only one way to do something. Someone who insists it is black and white is likely someone with Expert Syndrome.**

**One of the problems, Bergells points out, is that people with Expert Syndrome are often good at interviewing. They have an answer for everything and are confident about their knowledge. Someone with imposter syndrome might be cautious or guarded with her answers. But, who would you really have working for you? If you answered the person with imposter syndrome, you're right.**

**Make sure you don't fall for someone with Expert Syndrome, and furthermore, make sure you don't come down with it. Before you proclaim your expertise in an area, ask yourself "How do I know this? Am I really qualified?"**