

LATERAL THINKING

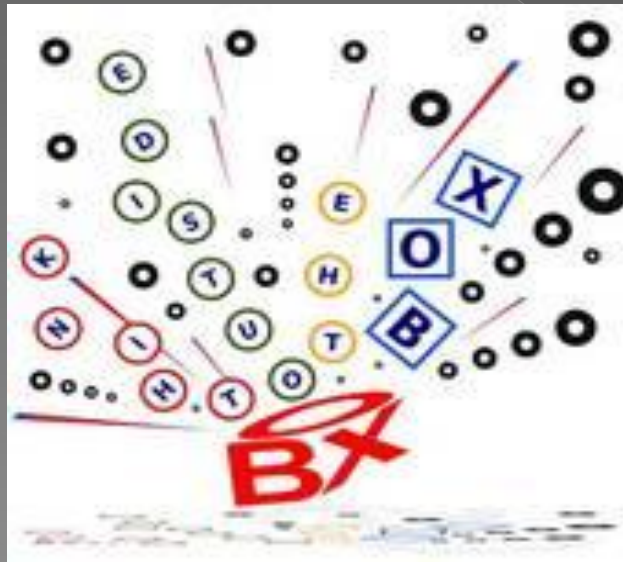
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There was once a reclusive who never left his home. The only time anyone ever visited was when his food and supplies were delivered, but they never came inside. Then one stormy night when the storm was blowing hard, he had a nervous breakdown. He went upstairs and turned off all the lights and went to bed. The next morning he had caused the deaths of several of hundreds of people. How?

Lateral thinking is
thinking out of the
box



Challenge your assumptions.....



Jambo jet

- ◉ Jambo jet is a low cost air carrier in Kenya
- ◉ It has been responsible for many innovations in low cost air travel
- ◉ There are no free drinks on Jambo jet flight
If you want a drink you have to buy it.
- ◉ According to a recent survey, there are two major business benefit from this policy. One is income generated. What is the other?

◎ Be creative



Lateral Thinking

- ◎ *Lateral thinking* is a term coined by Edward de Bono, a Maltese psychologist, physician, and writer
- ◎ de Bono defines *Lateral Thinking* as methods of thinking concerned with changing concepts and perception.

What is Lateral Thinking?

- ◉ Lateral thinking is about reasoning that is not immediately obvious
- ◉ Ideas may not be obtainable by using only traditional step-by-step logic.
- ◉ Techniques that apply lateral thinking to problems are characterized by the shifting of thinking patterns away from entrenched or predictable thinking to new or unexpected ideas.

Basics behind lateral thinking

- ◉ We are hard wired to be uncreative
- ◉ We need formal tools to break out of patterned thinking
- ◉ Everyone can learn how to be more creative
- ◉ Lateral thinking gives you power to create ideas on demand

Lateral Thinking - Theory

The brain is not intended for creative thinking



The brains power is in forming patterns
and sticking to these patterns

SO

To become creative you need to block
normal channels and “cut across patterns
in a self-organizing information system”

Explaining lateral thinking

- The brain is like mud- grooves are formed where water/ thoughts run
- There is need to form new avenues

Vertical vs. lateral thinking

vertical	lateral
1. Take a position	1. Take a position
2. Develop arguments which are <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Related to 1• Derived from 1	2. Put forward different views which are; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• not derived from each other• not all correct• not all co-existing
3. Areas of focus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Truth• Logic• What is	3. Areas of focus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possibilities• Alternatives• What might be

Lateral thinking is for
changing concepts and
perceptions



- Lateral thinking is concerned with breaking out of old ideas.
- Leads to changes in attitude and approach
- Use information not for its own sake but for its effect

● Lateral thinking is a habit of the mind, an attitude of the mind



QUOTE

Problems cannot be solved
by thinking within the
framework in which they
were created- Eisten

Quote

'You cannot dig a hole in a different place by digging the same hole deeper' – De Bono

When is lateral thinking employed?

- Challenge established ideas and assumptions e.g. customer is king
- look beyond known facts e.g. the earth is round

- overcome limitations imposed by traditional ways of thinking.
- Learn to solve problems
- realise the vision in innovative ways.

Why lateral thinking?

- Thinking as a life skill
- Saves time spent in meetings by 30%- 40%
- New discoveries have been made e.g.. Doctor's discovery of treatment for stomach ulcers, supermarket,

The four aspects of lateral thinking

- The recognition of dominant polarizing ideas.
- The search for different ways of looking at things.
- A relaxation of the rigid control of vertical thinking.
- The use of chance.

QUOTE

'Discovery consists of looking at the same thing like everyone else and thinking something different'-Albert Szent

Need for Lateral Thinking

‘ONLY THE PARANOID WILL
SURVIVE’ - Andy Grove-chairman
Intel

Paranoid about improving goods and services
that you offer clients because if you don't
someone else will

Who needs lateral thinking?

- ◉ Those who need a disciplined process for innovation
- ◉ Idea generation
- ◉ Concept development
- ◉ Fast changing trends
- ◉ Creative problem solving
- ◉ Fierce competition
- ◉ Work out miracles on a daily basis

Lateral-Thinking Techniques

1. Alternatives / Concept Extraction: – Break old concepts to breed new ideas.
E.g. how do we stop the city from flooding when it rains?

Solution

- ◉ We could create earthen mounds along the river banks.
- ◉ We could put up a concrete damn to hold the water back.
- ◉ Changing the surface of the landscape near the drainage system
- ◉ Dig auxiliary channels that drain the excess water safely away from the city.
- ◉ Make the main drainage system deeper and wider so that its capacity to hold water is expanded.

2.Focus: Sharpen and/or change your focus if you want to improve your creativity.

You may want to focus on areas no one else has

Question

Your reception area in the office contains some magazines, a television, a couple of child's toys, and an aquarium for people to look at while they wait. Think of ideas for ways to make the wait more enjoyable or productive.

Some Ideas

- Put out books of crossword puzzles, brain teasers, and sudoku.
- Make available several laptops with free wireless access.
- Convert one wall of the waiting room into a white board with a sign inviting people to doodle or draw on it.

3. Provocation: Turn a provocative statement into an useful idea.

Provocation, or PO. Provocations are **deliberately unreasonable** ideas that would be immediately vetoed by those who do not understand the process.

One can use exaggeration of a problem
e.g. when there is a shortage of workmanship-
each employee has four hands

Provocative techniques

1. Distortion- make a situation to an extreme e.g. in quality control where production rejects are high. view everything produced as a reject it could lead to redesigning of the production line

2. **Exposure:** consider things unrelated to the problem e.g. a plastic duck could be related to organizational problems. How?

3. Cross fertilization: ask experts in other areas how they might solve it using their own methods

4. Problem switching: move from one problem to another then back again

4. **Challenge:** Break free from the limits of accepted ways of operating to find the best ways of operating.
- It is based on the assumption that there may be a different way to do something even if there is no apparent problem with the current way of doing it.

What are some of the things that are working well for your organization and they are taken for granted?

- Presence of security guards at every entry point

Challenge it.... Can you do without them? How?

5. Arbitrary Entry: Use unconnected input to open new thought patterns.

uses a randomly chosen **word, picture, sound, or other stimulus** to open new lines of thinking.

Random entry word

- The problem is how to reduce absenteeism
- The word butterfly is randomly obtained
- The properties of a butterfly are listed

6. *Harvesting*: Select the best early ideas and shape them, developing them into useable approaches.

7. Treatment of Ideas:

Develop ideas and shape them to fit perfectly in an organization or situation.

Is Lateral thinking useful in business?

- ◉ Constructively challenge the status quo to enable new ideas to appear.
- ◉ Learn the concept behind a good idea then use it to build new good ideas.
- ◉ Solve problems in new ways that you initially would not think of.
- ◉ Use alternative solutions to liberate and harness your creative energy.
- ◉ Turn problems into opportunities.

Thank you

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