

Thinking Managers

Edward de Bono of www.thinkingmanagers.com provides readers with a crash-course on how to be creative.

Making Creativity a Habit

There are four main parts to idea creativity:

1. Motivation for creativity.

There has to be a desire and a willingness to be creative. Since creativity is a skill that can be learned, applying it requires a conscious decision. In many cases it can be hard work, so the individual(s) involved need to have the appropriate motivation to be successful.

2. Underlying creative habits.

The habits of creativity come naturally to some whereas others need to practice them. There is a big difference between a mind that searches immediately for 'truth' and a mind that looks for 'possibility'.

3. Development of skills in creative techniques.

Essential to this is an understanding of the brain as a self-organising patterning system that makes asymmetric patterns. It is this that the formal tools of lateral thinking are based on.

4. Value sensitivity.

A small hint of value might be found which then has to be followed up and developed. With value sensitivity, the thinker can spot the emergence of a new concept with different values.

Another important aspect of creativity is focus, but it is common to all forms of thinking. If you cannot pinpoint the focus or do not have the ability to change it, no thinking will be very effective.

Interject a conversation with: 'That is interesting...' to act as a signal to yourself and to others that you are about to embark on a line of thought that is different, out of the ordinary or perhaps important in some way.

Again, this is a useful creative habit and part of the process of creativity which looks to go beyond 'what is' or 'the truth' to explore 'what may be', or 'possibility'.

Perceptual creativity is involved with looking at things in different ways and finding values. It means opening up connections and associations.

Conceptual creativity is involved with putting things together to deliver value. This represents design thinking – life and human progress depend upon it.

About the author:

Edward de Bono is the world's leading authority in the field of creative thinking and the teaching of thinking as a skill.

