# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY



amice

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How today's workplace strategies can bridge the culture and approaches of old organizations with the "new" employees?

The answer might come via the "chaordic" leadership approach, a combination of the words chaos and order, meaning a state in between that adapts the principles and properties of both.

Communication 02. Teamwork 03. **Problem-Solvin** []4 **Critical Thinkin** 05. Flexibility 06. Multi-Disciplina 07. Creativity **08**. Innovation **09**. **Being Initiative** 10. Curiosity Self-Confidence 12. Self-Discipline 13. Questioning Enthusiasm 15. **Active Listening** 

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# **1. Description of** Communication

#### What is Communication?

The origin of the word "communication" is "communicare" or "communis" which means "to impart", "to participate", "to share" or "to make common."

There are many definitions of communication. According to John Adair, "communication is essentially the ability of one person to make contact with another and make himself or herself understood". William Newman and Charles Summer define communication as "an exchange of ideas, facts, opinions or emotions of two or more persons".

Communication is a skill that you can learn. It's like riding a bicycle or typing. If you're willing to work at it, you can rapidly improve the quality of every part of your life.

- Brian Tracy

#### What is it about?

Communication is more than just exchanging information. It's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. We need to be able to convey our message, and also to listen and make the other person feel understood.

Effective communicator should master a number of skills, including:

- Public speaking
- Storytelling
- Non-verbal communication
- Active listening
- Questioning

#### Communication is one of the most important

Why is it important?

is the best tool to achieve it. tools in order to maintain and develop longterm relations with co-workers, partners and "You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can't customers. It is important to know when and get them across, your ideas won't get you anyhow to communicate in order to achieve the where." desired results. - Lee lacocca

Effective communication is a key characteristic of an effective leader. Leaders are those

#### Which are the benefits of being an effective communicator?

Being able to communicate effectively has a positive influence on both personal and professional life. Some benefits of effective communication include:

#### Trust

It would be difficult to build it without good communication. Encouraging discussion, com-Increased iob satisfaction municating sincerely, honestly and regularly Good communication means less confusion. helps build credibility. Trust encourages loyalless uncertainty, higher morale, and in generty, enhances teamwork and collaboration, imal a better working environment that leads to proves engagement and productivity. feeling better at the workplace, and as a result better performance and stronger loyalty.

#### **Mitigated conflict**

Effective communication helps reduce misunderstandings and tension. Although conflict is almost unavoidable and sometimes even healthy as it helps to raise and address problems, we need effective communication in order to manage it.

that inspire and empower, and communication

#### **Productive teamwork**

When co-workers are encouraged to get to know each other and feel empowered to express their ideas in an accepting environment, they are much more likely to function well as a team.

# 2. Toolkit



#### Step by step guide

# 1.

# Understand and evaluate your communication skills.

The checklist below can help you in this task. If you are a leader of a team or organisation, consider evaluating its communication as well.



#### Once you decide which communication skills need improvement, prioritise.

Start with the skill that you feel is the least developed and/or that you feel is the most important in your current situation.



#### Ask for feedback.

Self-assessment is great but we may have some blind spots. To get another perspective, ask your friends or mentors about your communication strengths and weaknesses.

# 4.

#### Take action!

Here are a few ideas on how to develop communication skills:

#### a. Storytelling.

Good stories are engaging and memorable, and help convey a message better than anything else. In business communication, they are used to pitch business ideas, present products and services, increase employee engagement, etc. When you tell a story, make sure it respects the values of your business, is adapted so that it connects to your audience, and has a good structure with an introduction, core and conclusion.

#### b. Public speaking.

Are you scared of it? Most people are! While it may be difficult to completely get rid of the fear, it is definitely possible to reduce it. Be prepared - know your material very well. Be realistic - what is the worst that could happen? What is the best thing that could happen? Before going on stage, try calming techniques (belly breathing, singing, feeling the ground under your feet) or turn your fear into excitement!

#### c. Non-verbal communication.

Often our non-verbal communication speaks louder than the words! Pay attention to non-verbal signals – eye contact, body position and posture, gestures, tone of voice. Open body position (no crossed arms) conveys that you are open to listening. Self-confidence is communicated by standing firmly in one place, keeping the shoulders back and weight balanced on both feet. Be careful if somebody's words do not match non-verbal cues, but consider the context and look at signals as a whole - one gesture may mean nothing. By paying a close attention to other people's unspoken communication, you can improve your own.

#### d. Active listening.

Often argued to be the most important and most under-developed communication skill, attentive listening helps collect the information you need, establish trust, and reduce misunderstandings. When listening try to be fully present, do not interrupt, ask clarifying questions, use body language that shows you are paying attention. To learn more about Active listening, check out the chapter on this skill.

#### e. Questioning.

If you want to encourage a discussion and go beyond "yes" and "no" answers, it is important to ask the right kind of questions. Starting questions with "who," "what," "where," "when," "how," or "why" lead to answers that people need to think about, and provide more information. Learn more about the importance of questioning, different types of questions and other tips in the chapter on this skill.

# 5.

#### Communicate often.

It's like a muscle – the more you use it, the stronger it gets, and vice versa. If natural communication opportunities are not sufficient, deliberately seek or create them. Tell stories to your children or friends, volunteer to speak at events, practice listening skills in various settings.

6.

#### Encouragement and motivation are important!

If you are working on your own skills, remember why you are doing it and find ways to reward yourself. For team upskilling, make sure people have motivation and incentives to learn. Cultivate a learning culture, offer customised learning paths, recognise and reward the efforts to learn, and/ or make education a reward in itself - education and training opportunities can be presented as incentives.



#### Measure impact.

To measure the success of your efforts to improve communication, decide what tool you will use and define your indicators. For example, if your aim is to enhance your communication skills in order to improve internal team communication, job satisfaction, productivity, you could use employee satisfaction surveys - measuring their satisfaction with e.g. 6 or 12 month intervals. Have your efforts to become a better listener or storyteller produce desired results? Alternatively, repeat the self-assessment that you've done before starting on your skills improvement journey, and compare the results.



# Patagonia – successful communication of business values

#### The case

This case study teaches us how to use communication for business success.

#### The challenge

Patagonia mission statement says "Make the best product, cause no unnecessary harm, and use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis." Sustainability may be one of your values and business practices, how can you communicate it and enhance your business results? One of the main reasons of Patagonia's success is that they live up to their values, e.g. <u>on</u> <u>Black Friday 2016 they donated 100% of their store and online sales</u> (10 million USD) to local environmental programmes.

#### The result

The action was well communicated through company's own channels, as well as many online articles, thus increasing exposure, customer loyalty and a high number of new environmentally conscious customers.



# Walt Disney – storytelling to create special customer relationships

#### The case

This case study teaches us the power of storytelling and exploiting a company's strengths to build customer relationships.

#### The challenge

Story has always been at the heart of everything Disney did. They realised that a good relationship with the customers was a way to success, and that evoking emotions could achieve the desired relationship. Different from most other businesses, they always started with a story/ movie and then created other products around it.

#### The result

The Walt Disney Company says "we at Disney can maintain our position as a trusted brand that offers high-quality family entertainment with a specific set of values, as long as we are flexible, consider new ways to meet the ever-changing needs of consumers, and most importantly — keep the art of magical storytelling at the heart of everything we do". Could your company use storytelling and create related products in a way similar to Disney, or will storytelling enhance your existing products/ services?



#### 1. Craft the story of your business

What's the story of your business? What do you tell your employees, customers, partners or investors? Try using the 5-part structure to create a short but memorable story:

- Opening (e.g. "3 years ago...")
- Rising action (e.g. "But one day...")
- Climax (e.g. "Until finally...")
- Falling action/ transformation (e.g. "Because of that...")
- Ending/ conclusion (e.g. "And that is why...")

#### 2. Adapt your message

Think about a specific audience you will be speaking to, and tailor your presentation. Focus on what's important to your audience and you. Make them want to listen! The following questions will help adapt your message:

- Who is your audience?
- Why should they care about what you want to tell them?
- What do they already know about the topic?
- How do they like to receive information?
- What is your desired outcome?

# FEF API NG

#### 3. Play some games to improve the communication skills of your team:

https://futurumcareers.com/ten-simple-gamesto-improve-your-communication-skills

# Tips & tricks

#### How to improve communication of a team

- Leader sets the tone how they communicate affects everybody in the team or organisation. Ask for your team members opinions and ideas and listen attentively, encourage and respect feedback, be visible and available. Show an example on how to communicate company's vision and values both inside and outside the team.
- Offer learning opportunities to improve and practice communication skills. In addition to more formal learning, encourage everyone to speak during the meetings, consider mentoring to pass the experience of senior staff to new members.

#### How to enhance your own communication skills

- Think about your audience when you are deciding on a communication channel and your message. What is your relationship? How do they like to communicate? Would they prefer an email or a meeting?
- **Observe the way you speak to people.** Clear, thoughtful and respectful communication can make a difference in your business.
- Pay attention to non-verbal signs body <u>here</u>. language, including your own. Only a very small part of our communication is repre-

#### How to enjoy public speaking

- Open your mind to the possibility of loving public speaking! If you believe that you hate public speaking, ask yourself if there is a possibility of doubting that belief.
  Pay attention to body language – stand straight, maintain eye contact, smile
  Practice speaking clearly and at a medium pace – not too fast, not too slow
- Think of it as telling a good story to a group of people. Telling stories is what many of us enjoy!
- When you get to speak in public, approach it with the spirit of gratitude! Be grateful for the opportunity to help or inspire your audience.
  Speak from your heart! If you are passionate about it, you will like sharing it with others.
  Embrace your yulnerability and speak your
- Think about how to start and end your speech intrigue your audience

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that works for your team. The daily meeting can also happen in a form of a video call, but when possible include face-to-face events to really get to know each other and develop deeper connections.

sented by verbal information exchange. The rest is body language, voice tone, energy level.

 Invest in yourself - put effort in practicing communication skills - listening, storytelling, pitching - and ask for feedback from your partners and colleagues.

Check out the signs of a good communicator: <u>here</u>.

- Learn proper breathing diaphragmatic/ belly breathing makes voice sound better, and also reduces anxiety
- Embrace your vulnerability and speak your truth it's worth it! Being vulnerable takes courage and makes people listen.
- Be yourself!





#### Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the communication dimension of your team.

	Rating	
Dimension	Strong	Adequate Needs improvement
Communication skills		
I have evaluated my communication skills, understand my strengths and weaknesses and know how to work on them.		
l often practice and enjoy public speaking.		
I understand the power of storytelling and use it in public presenta- tions and in communication with my team.		
I know when and how to ask questions.		
I understand and practice active listening.		
I pay attention to the non-verbal signals of other people and know how to interpret them.		
I am well aware of my own body language and use it to reinforce my message.		
Team spirit and communication		
I encourage my team members to share their ideas and feedback.		
There is open communication among my team members.		
Team members take time to listen to others and show empathy.		
Team members trust and respect each other.		
We have regular and sufficient meetings and teambuilding activities.		
Development opportunities		
We have identified and actively pursue learning opportunities to im- prove the communication skills of the team.		
Our team has established mentoring practices and/or other ways to		

Improvement of communication skills is periodically evaluated and rewarded.

help new members of the team develop their communication skills.



#### Resources for further reading

#### Online tools

- How good are your communication skills? Take a quiz
- Virtual Speech VR courses
- Practice your presentations with the free public speaking app

#### Useful links

- <u>7 signs you could be a great public speaker</u>
- <u>7 Ways to Communicate Better with Your Coworkers</u>

#### Videos

- The 110 techniques of communication and public speaking. David JP Phillips, TEDxZagreb, February <u>1, 2019</u>
- How to speak so that people want to listen. Julian Treasure, TED, 2014

#### Articles

- <u>Communication Is the Key</u>
- <u>Essential tips for Business Storytelling</u>
- <u>Good Leadership Is About Communicating "Why"</u>

#### Books

- Crucial Conversations Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High Kerry Patterson ٠
- ٠ Skills and Social Intelligence - Ian Tuhovsky
- Building a StoryBrand: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen Donald Miller ٠

21 Days of Effective Communication: Everyday Habits and Exercises to Improve Your Communication





#### Why is it important?

On individual level you will be required to work For an organisation, teamwork is an effective alongside others in every industry at every levmethod to innovate and upgrade operationel in your career. Doing so in an empathetic, al strategies. A team is a group of people that efficient and responsible manner can help you gathers together to achieve a common goal. accomplish career goals, grow your resume The power of one person is small, but if you are and contribute positively to your organization. integrated into the team, you can maximize the It can also help you build rapport with others. personal value and achieve excellence. Knowing the value of teamwork in your company can help you to effectively manage various policy issues, from learning development to workplace culture.

# 1. Description of Teamwork

#### What is Teamwork?

A team is a collection of people working together with a shared purpose. Successful teams have a clearly defined purpose and are usually led by an effective leader. This could be you or another person in your company who is capable of leading a team.

Teamwork is the art of getting your team to work together effectively. Only when all members of your team are pulling in the same direction you can unlock their potential. Good teamwork starts with a shared understanding of the importance of the task. Great things in business are never done by one person. They're done by a team of people.

- Steve Jobs

Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

- Henry Ford

A challenging business climate needs to be engaged by effective teamwork. It provides an opportunity to come together and establish a common ground for the fulfilment of specific objectives. Empathy, appreciation and encouragement are some of the critical ingredients of effective teamwork.

On individual level, teamwork skills are the qualities and abilities that allow you to work well with others during conversations, projects, meetings or other collaborations. Having teamwork skills is dependent on your ability to communicate well, actively listen and be responsible and honest.

#### Which are the benefits of teamwork?

**Teambuilding is the first step towards effective teamwork.** continue to take pride in independent accomplishments while also celebrating the contributions of co-workers.

This step in itself already generates interesting benefits such as: building trust and mitigating conflicts; reduce stress; improve attitudes; encourage communication and increase collaboration. All these are the basics for effective teamwork.

#### Teamwork creates synergy.

The common result of a good team is bigger than the sum of each individual's result.

#### Teamwork improves morale by promoting a sense of ownership.

It allows employees to take greater responsibility for decision making and also allows team members to control more of the work process. The extra responsibility can lead to a more rewarding work environment and lower turnover. Working on a team also gives employees a greater sense of belonging and recognition, which helps them take more pride in their work, and their company.

#### Teamwork builds trust and enhances relationships.

In workplaces where teamwork isn't consistent, establishing groups helps to build stronger relationships between employees and lets individuals learn to work through a disagreement. Establishing teams, even when they aren't necessary, creates an environment where workers

#### Teamwork increases the flexibility of the organisation.

Teamwork can help companies to be more flexible. By bringing employees from different parts of a project together into one team, problems or bottlenecks can sometimes be ironed out more easily.

#### Teamwork fosters creativity and innovation.

Some companies use teams and teamwork to create a work environment which excels at creativity. These companies sometimes base their corporate structure almost entirely around teamwork, where staff are hired into general work areas and then chosen to work on projects that best match their skills and interests. Leaders are appointed, and there is no chain of command or leadership hierarchy.

# 2. Toolkit



#### Step by step quide

In your role as manager or team leader, you are recommended to take the following steps:

# Teambuilding.

Once the team members have been identified, the next step towards effective teamwork is building the team. Teambuilding is the process of encouraging members of a group to work well together, for example by having them take part in activities or games. Teambuilding is not focused on individuals. It reveals talents and feelings of individuals and provides an understanding of their relevance to team productivity. The main goal of team-building is to improve productivity and motivation. The benefits of teambuilding programs are so significant that many organisations have incorporated teambuilding strategies into their standard training curriculum. Effective teambuilding means more engaged employees, which is good for company culture and boosting the bottom line. Your team learns how to work together towards team goals.

#### Get the right people on board.

First, you need to think, what are the skills and competences you need in your team. Selecting the right team members does not automatically mean selecting the most qualified person, but selecting the optimal mix between the best person (based on qualification and experience) and best fit of the person for the team (in terms of complementarity and added value). Individual traits and characteristics are to be taken into account as well. As said, it is not about bringing the most qualified person on board but making the sum of an individuals work properly.

A team needs members with different strengths, abilities and even weaknesses. Successful teams benefit from the different thinking/acting, relation and action oriented characteristics and attitudes of its members.

#### Define the goals.

Even if the goals or objectives for the team have been set, you should have an open discussion on what these mean and how these more general ones are broken into more specific objectives with the related targets. All the members need to have a common understanding of what the overall strategic goal of the team is and what the operational goals are. Make sure the goals are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-based.

#### Assign roles and responsibilities.

Once the team has been selected and teambuilding has taken place it is time to start working towards the team's goals. Bearing in mind the team members' personal characteristics, skills and competences.

On individual level you can also develop your own teamwork abilities and improve them, this is important as you need teamwork skills as an individual to become an effective team leader or manager. You can take the following steps:

#### Get honest feedback.

It can be difficult to identify your own areas of improvement. Finding a trusted friend, colleague or mentor that can offer you honest feedback about your teamwork strengths and weaknesses can help you improve them.

#### Set personal goals.

Using both your own observations and feedback from others to form achievable. relevant and time-constrained goals can help you improve one teamwork skill at a time.

# working with others.

#### Monitor & evaluate.

Based upon the operation goals, you as a team will have set specific targets (time, KPIs, etc) which will allow you to measure progress towards the objectives. Make sure that the processes, procedures and tools are properly defined and implemented, and more importantly that all team members understand the importance of using them.



#### Practice.

It takes time and practice to see improvements in your skill set. Pay close attention to your teamwork interactions throughout the day both in and out of work. Take mindful steps to practice the specific qualities you are trying to build.

#### Mimic others with strong teamwork skills.

When you see examples of great teamwork, take note and identify why the interaction stood out to you. Apply those gualities in your own interactions when

### Case studies

# <u>Go Ape Step Up Their Team</u> <u>Building Game</u>

#### The case

Go Ape is the UK's number one forest adventure found in 31 of the UK's most breath taking locations. Days out at Go Ape are about living life more adventurously, having fun, and spending time with friends.

#### The challenge

The company needed to engage more effectively with the rising number of corporate enquiries they were receiving.

#### The result

The company in cooperation with consultant BlueSky decided to implement Team Building days at 10 of their sites. The activities were rolled out to the sales, marketing, and operational teams as part of the onboarding process. These teams enjoyed taking part in the team building programme and the operational teams equally enjoy delivering these to their clients. The games were simple, but extremely effective in getting teams to really think, and get them working together instantly to problem solve. Go Ape plans to roll this programme out to more of their sites across the UK and indicates that the return on investment has been very quick.

# DATEV eG has improved teamwork, communication and performance by putting individuals at the centre of its approach

#### The case

DATEV is a software company and IT service provider for tax consultants, accountants and lawyers, and was established as a co-operative in 1966 and now has over 40,000 members. Since 2005, a growing number of employees have received their own Margerison-McCann Team Management Profile, it is considered by HR and management as important tool in helping improve teamwork, communication and performance.

#### The challenge

It is vital to the culture of DATEV that this is always on a voluntary basis. However, some employees are sometimes sceptical when faced with the proposal of a Team Management workshop and receiving their own Team Management Profile. They expect psychological tests or vague, unclear.

#### The result

The HR team starts by explaining the concepts and theory and the positive approach and questions about work preferences. It also highlights that the Team Management Profile acts as a friendly mirror: you look into it and find out that you're OK as you are. The teams are then asked to solve the Marshmallow Challenge. This involves building a tower using twenty strands of spaghetti, string and adhesive tape and placing a marshmallow on the top. As a result of the exercise the teams are often surprised to see how clearly their individual preferences are revealed. As soon as employees have read their Profiles, they are astonished at how accurately they describe their work preferences and understand how it was possible for conflicts to arise in the team in the past. This approach not only generated an improvement in the teamwork but also generated a more positive attitude towards the profile and make a longer term impact as employees were mere open to use the profile as part of their daily teamwork.



#### **Team roles**

<u>Watch this video</u> on Belbin's Team Roles, and try to identify those roles in your team.

Answer the following questions:

- Does your team have thinkers, relation/people oriented or action oriented members?
- Which team roles are important when starting my project?
- Which team roles become more important when getting close to the achievement and realisation of the objectives of my project?

#### The mission

In this activity, team members have to imagine that they are working for the secret service and have a very important job to do. They are in charge of keeping secret some very important information that is contained within a very fragile container. They must design a method to transport the secret information out of the building and to safety.

The only way to save the information is to **drop the information out of the window to safety.** BUT remember that the secret information is kept safely in a very fragile container, and... the container must not break or crack as the information will leak out.



- The container is an egg
- The egg will be dropped from an upstairs window
- The egg cannot crack or break or the secret information will leak out!
- Teams have some materials to help them:
  - newspaper
  - string

Activity information

- plastic bags
- sellotape
- paper clips
- paper

Divide the participants into small groups of three to five people and give them the resources. They have 15 minutes to use the resources to develop and create an idea that will be able to drop the egg from the window onto the ground without breaking the egg. Once the time is up, they will have to test the ideas by dropping the egg out of an upstairs window and seeing if it survived, or if it splats on the floor!

# Tips & tricks

#### Teambuilding combines learning and fun

The most successful, memorable teambuilding events are ones that don't feel like a day at the office. Spending time together, sharing an experience or working towards a common goal allows bonding to happen more organically and far more effectively. It turns out that happiness and learning are tied yory clearly together. Trying pay

It turns out that happiness and learning are tied very closely together. Trying new things with your staff can generate positive vibes among employees, which in turn

#### Teamwork is fostered and nurtured

Teamwork isn't something that we can forcefully impose upon our workers. Instead, good teamwork will naturally occur when there is a healthy workplace culture, where employees are treated as individuals and open communication is celebrated. Adapt to your environment, follow the latest trends and don't stick to management principles that were effective 100 years ago. You need to invest in your personnel in order to create the most satisfying, effective and functional team, which you need to collaborate and function at their maximum level, which leads to optimal results regarding your business performance. Find below a few tips on how to ensure a teamwork climate in the workplace;

- 1. Encourage Informal Social Events
- 2. Clarify Roles within the team
- 3. Specify Goals
- 4. Reward Excellent Teamwork
- 5. Don't Micro-manage

- 6. Establish Effective Communications
- 7. Celebrate Individuality
- 8. Get Feedback From Everyone
- 9. Hire Wisely
- 10. Organise team-building events





#### Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess your teamwork skills and your team leadership

Teamwork skils (individual)	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
I'm reliable by doing what I promise to do			
When I have an idea that will help our team, I speak up and share it			
I cheer for other members of my team and find ways to be helpful			
I show respect for my group's leader or coach			
I'm honest and tactful when someone asks for my opinion			
When I make a mistake, I stay optimistic and try to learn from it			
I'm friendly and courteous with competing people and teams			
I listen carefully to others' ideas, even if I don't agree with them			
I have a positive attitude and stay focused on doing my best			
I practice, so I'm prepared to contribute to the group's goals			
I share the spotlight instead of always trying to be the star			

I'm flexible if the group wants to make a change or try doing something

in a new way

Gives yourself 3 points for every time you indicated often, 2 points for sometimes and 1 point for rarely 36-28 points: You're definitely a positive team player. Way to support and encourage your group! **27-20 points:** Your cooperative skills are starting to shine through. Keep up the good work. 19-12 points: You've made it through teamwork tryouts. Add some skills to boost your score.

Team leadership	Strongly Agree 5	Somewhat Agree 4	Neither Agree nor Disagree 3	Somewhat Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
Delegating work to others comes easy to me					
Communicating clearly with others is easy to me					
I enjoy engaging with other people on an interper- sonal level					
I am proactive in offering constructive criticism					
I place a high value on treating others fairly					
Seeking advice from others is something I do often					
Change energizes me					
Problem-solving is one of my strengths					
I am comfortable with being a role model					
Working as part of a team energizes me					
I am comfortable coaching and mentoring others					
Directing the work of others is comfortable for me					
I have the ability to set and accomplish goals					
I enjoy implementing new methods and strategies					

n leadership		

I am proactive in providing praise to others

I am comfortable admitting and correcting my own mistakes

I have strong conflict management skills

Diversity and inclusion are important to me

I enjoy really listening to what others have to say

When I see problems, I immediately look for possible solutions

Please note this is a self-assessment based on your own perception of how much you agree with these statements. It is not a true indicator of aptitude, nor does it necessarily reflect how others see you. What does your score mean?

**50+:** If your grand total score is 50 or above, this indicates you see yourself as having many of the skills and tendencies necessary to succeed in a leadership role. It may also indicate a leadership role (formal or informal) appeals to you.

**49-:** If your grand total score 49 or lower, you do not currently perceive yourself as having strengths in key areas skills and abilities associated with success in a leadership role.. This may mean that a leadership role is not particularly appealing to you, or it may simply serve to help you identify areas where improvement may be needed before seeking out a leadership position. Use this assessment to help you identify your leadership strengths (items with the highest numeric scores) and opportunities for growth (items with the lowest numeric scores). From there, create an action plan. Answer the following questions:

- 1. What are your greatest leadership strengths?
- 2. What are your opportunities for growth as a leader?
- 3. How can you capitalize on your strengths?
- 4. What can you do to improve in areas where you have opportunities for growth?

#### Resources for further reading

#### Teambuilding activities

- <u>https://www.workamajig.com/blog/team-building-activities</u>
- <u>https://snacknation.com/blog/team-building-activities-for-work/</u>
- <u>https://www.projectmanager.com/training/team-building-activities</u>

#### Videos

- Good teamwork & bad teamwork
- Teamwork can make a Dreamwork
- 5 Tips For Effective Teamwork
- How to turn a group of strangers into a team

#### Articles

- http://www.forbes.com/sites/brianscudamore/2016/03/09/why-team-building-is-the-most-important-investment-youll-make/#4f5f6d437f02
- <u>https://www.mnsu.edu/diversity/institute/35-36\_why\_teambuilding.pdf</u>
- <u>http://www.innovativeteambuilding.co.uk/benefits-of-teambuilding/</u>
- <u>http://greatresultsteambuilding.net/why-teambuilding/</u>
- <u>https://www.wrike.com/blog/team-building-games/</u>
- <u>http://www.innovativeteambuilding.co.uk/free-team-building-activities/</u>

#### Books

- The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable. Author: Patrick Lencioni
- The Culture Code: The Secrets of Highly Successful Groups. Author: Daniel Coyle.
- Revolutionize Teamwork: How to Create and Lead Accountable Teams. Author: Eric Coryell
- ٠ thor: Phil Simon
- You Are The Team: 6 Simple Ways Teammates Can Go From Good To Great. Author: Michael G. Rogers

trongly Agree 5	Somewhat Agree 4	Neither Agree nor Disagree 3	Somewhat Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1

Reimagining Collaboration: Slack, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, and the Post-COVID World of Work. Au-

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# **1. Description of Problem-Solving**

#### What is Problem-Solving?

**Problem-solving** involves diagnosing the possible causes of a problem and developing an action plan that solves that problem. People use problemsolving skills all the time, both in their personal and professional lives. Effective problemsolving in the workplace often requires following a stepby-step process and using a designated problem-solving framework.

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.

If I had only one hour to save the world, I would spend fifty-five minutes defining the problem, and only five minutes finding the solution.

- Albert Einstein

#### What is it about?

Problem solving is at the core of human evolution. It is the methods we use to understand what is happening in our environment, identify things we want to change and then figure out the things that need to be done to create the desired outcome. Problem solving is the source of all new inventions, social and cultural evolution, and the basis for market-based economies. It is the basis for continuous improvement, communication and learning.

#### Why is it important?

Problem-solving is important both to individuals and organizations because it enables us to exert control over our environment:

- **1. Fixing things that are broken:** Personal and ing environment. business environments are full of things, activities, interactions and processes that are 4.Seizing opportunity: Problem solving is also broken or not operating in the way they are about innovating, creating new things and desired to work. Problem-solving gives us changing the environment to be more desira mechanism for identifying these things, able. Problem-solving enables us to identify figuring out why they are broken and deterand exploit opportunities in the environment and mining a course of action to fix them. exert (some level of) control over the future.
- 2. Addressing risk: Problem-solving can be applied to the anticipated future events and used to enable action in the present to influence the likelihood of the event occurring and/or alter the impact if the event does occur.

#### Which are the benefits of being a problem-solver?

Your ability to solve problems effectively comes from experience facing and overcoming obstacles. Each time you solve a problem you get a little better leader:

#### You learn to anticipate problems

Effective team leaders anticipate problems, knowing that problems are inevitable. Although it is important always to keep a positive attitude, planning for the worst will place you in a position to solve the problems that you encounter.

#### You learn to accept the truth

There are different ways that people respond to problems. Some refuse to accept the problem, others accept the problem and just put up with it. Effective leaders are those that accept the problem and try to make things better. To be an effective leader you have to face up to the reality of a situation.

#### You see the Big Picture

It is essential that team leaders must always keep the big picture in mind. As a team leader, you cannot afford to be overwhelmed by emotion nor get so bogged down by details that you lose sight of what is important.

**3. Improving performance:** Problem-solving helps us understand relationships and implement the changes and improvements needed to compete and survive in a continually chang-

#### You handle One Thing at a Time

Tackle your problems, one problem at a time. Do not get overwhelmed by the sheer volume of your problems and then try and dabble at problem-solving. If you are facing a lot of problems, fully solve the one you are working on before moving to the next.

#### You do not give up a major goal when you are down

Effective leaders make major decisions during a positive swing in their leadership and not during dark times. Never give up while you are going through the valley.

#### 21stCenturySkills

#### Develop empathy.

Active listening is the first step in developing empathy. To genuinely understand someone, you must put yourself in their shoes and try to comprehend their situation.



#### Don't pose as someone else.

Forgetting key information or opinions isn't the answer. Your research and reasoned analysis should allow you to articulate which strategy is preferable and why.



2. Toolkit

#### Step by step guide

Finding solutions to problems is an essential element of any leader's role. As a result, being a self-assured problem solver is critical to your success. It necessitates a high level of emotional intelligence as well as the ability to deal with unfavorable reactions. Here are some pointers for honing your problem-solving abilities:



# Be adaptable and curious.

The ability to adapt to new situations is a great asset while solving problems. Because these skills are rare in other professionals, it's vital to develop them.

#### Expect the worst.

A problem has implications, and there are various solutions, each with a unique conclusion. Don't dismiss or deny their existence. Choose the choice with the most relevant implications for the scenario.

#### Examine the vehicle's interior.

Instead of criticizing others, examine your involvement in the situation. Stop contributing to the situation by understanding and controlling your own emotions and behaviors.

#### Improve communication skills.

As previously said, being truthful does not imply being nasty or inconsiderate to others' feelings. To effectively interact with others, one must continually adjust and improve communication abilities.

#### Choose if you want to find solutions or problems.

An event's termination may be referred to as a solution to a problem produced by it. Even if you cure a problem, it may reoccur. Solving a problem means correcting or seeking to eradicate its source.



# Pan-African Banking Institution Drives Digital Transformation with Leadership Development, 35 African countries

# <u>Inspiring Latinas to Become</u> Leaders, MANA de San Diego

#### The case

A few years ago, MANA de San Diego decided to do more to help Latinas advance in their careers and serve their communities as latinas are underrepresented in business, civic, and government leadership.

#### The challenge

These women are often the first in their families to pursue upward mobility. They may lack role models and mentors to help them prepare for and navigate their careers. They often put family first and play a supporting role in the background. MANA wanted to empower Latinas to set ambitious goals, communicate more purposefully, achieve more professionally, and become business and community leaders.

#### The result

With the problem-solving process they followed they created a unique leadership program that is transformational. Latinas come away with the confidence and skills to achieve more ambitious professional goals. Beyond individual successes, MANA focuses on driving social and economic well-being, as empowered Latinas become community leaders.

#### The case

One of the largest banking groups in Africa had expanded its footprint through acquisitions. Shifting industry dynamics meant that the group had to move swiftly to integrate businesses and adopt key technologies, and to meet growing customer demands for digital banking services. Acceleration of growth would require building the best banking platform in Africa.

#### The challenge

While the bank had a Leadership Academy that provided development to managers, traditional approaches to leadership development would no longer meet the organization's needs. The Leadership Academy needed an updated approach that was business-focused, with the ability to provide managers with an agile mindset and upskill them to drive innovation and digital transformation.

#### The result

With the problem-solving process they followed they came out with out-ofthe-box solutions and finally the training effort improved participants' leadership abilities, gave them a deeper understanding of the bank's strategy, and empowered them to execute on the company's digital transformation strategy. 34

Practice

#### **Problem solving group activities & games**

Problem-solving activity/game	Best for	What is it?	Further information
Virtual Code Break	Remote teams	Using a smart video conferencing solution, virtual teams compete against each other to complete challenges, answer trivia questions, and solve brain-busters!	
Letting Go Game	Small teams	Is a game of meditation and mindfulness training for helping teammates thrive under pressure and reduce stress in the problem-solving process. The tasks of the Letting Go Game boost resiliency, attentiveness, and collaboration.	
Stranded	In-person teams	Stranded is the perfect scenario-based problem-solving group activity. The doors of the office are locked and obviously your team can't just knock them down or break the windows.	<u>Stranded</u>
What Would You Do?	Distributed teams	Is the hypothetical question game that gets your team talking and brainstorming about what they'd do in a variety of fun, intriguing, and sometimes, whacky scenarios	
Crack the case	Remote teams	Crack The Case is a classic WhoDonelt game that forces employees to depend on their collective wit to stop a deadly murderer dead in his tracks! Remote employees and office commuters can join forces to end this crime spree.	

# **Tips & tricks**

thinking, and train your brain to do more.

- **1.** Dance: <u>Dancing has a positive impact</u> on **7.** Brainstorm: Cooperate with one another neural processing and may help to build new to complete the project. In order to betcerebral routes to bypass dopamine-depletter visualize the problem, use Mind Maps, ed brain bottlenecks, according to research a visual picture of the issue and alternative published in the journal Neuron. Performing solutions. Mind Maps help focus the mind, more improvisational dance styles like hipstimulate brain activity and enhance crehop or tap may help you develop divergent ative thinking. They also produce new ideas thinking (the ability to come up with various for solutions. In mind mapping, your probsolutions to a problem). lem should be the central concept. Consider adding "major branches" that include all of the possible causes of the issue. Make use like Rubik's Cube are great for exercising of "sub-branches" to learn more.
- **2.** Play logic games: Logic puzzles and games your brain. When playing chess, Sudoku, zles and other games to hone your prob-
- or other brain-boosting activities, the win- 8. Create "Phycological Distance": It's important to create it in order to achieve this goal. backward, not forward. Practice logic puz-According to the Construal Level Theory (CLT), it's "anything that we don't experience lem-solving skills and strengthen your brain. as occurring now, here and to ourselves." You can do this by considering the situation 3. Exercise to Music: Patients in cardiac rehafrom another person's point of view or by bilitation were examined on their verbal fludismissing it as implausible. Increasing the ency after working out to music or without it. mental distance between ourselves and our The results showed that those who worked problem increases the number of inventive out while listening to music improved sigsolutions, according to research. Scientists nificantly more than those who worked out have found this. Increasing our capacity to in silence on verbal fluency tests. solve problems occurs when we think more abstractly, which allows us to make unex-**4. Keep an "Idea Journal"** with you at all times pected connections between seemingly unso you can jot down essential thoughts, write related topics.
- down personal experiences, do sketches, and explore new ideas.
- **9. Play Soccer:** A link has been found between our brain's "executive functions" and sports 5. Practice Yoga: Studies demonstrate that success. When we're engaged in an activicombining bodily awareness, breathing, and meditation during yoga practice improves ing, anticipating, scheming, reacting, and cognitive performance. performing. The amount of mental energy 6. Follow the Cheerios Effect: It is the name required to accomplish all of these tasks at given by physicists to what happens when once is huge. When we plan, reason, watch the final few cheerios in a bowl cling to each our actions, and solve problems at the same other constantly. Because of surface tentime in our professional lives, this can be sion, it happens. Takeaway: If you're feeling compared to this. The conclusion is that if stressed out while trying to solve a problem, you play fast-moving sports such as soccer, lean on individuals who are close to you for you are retraining your brain to think, prosupport. Put your faith in other people, especess and react faster to situations.
- cially those in very different sectors of work. Make a chain of connections.



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#### Checklist before I get started

Start with the Action Checklist (2) in order to follow a structured problem-solving process.

#### Action checklist

#### 1. Define and understand the problem

When notified of a problem, look into what went wrong. Use routine statistics data, progress meetings, recommendation schemes, reports and feedback to pinpoint the issue.

#### 2. Assess the scale of the problem

Determine the problem's urgency. Is it urgent, or can it wait weeks, months, or even years? Consider whether a quick fix ('fix-it') or an optimum solution ('do-it') is required. This will decide the problem's scope and remedy.

#### **3. Gather relevant information**

Gather the critical facts by asking the right questions of the right people, namely the what, why, how, where, who, and when?

- What is the problem?
- What is not a problem?
- Where is the problem located?
- Where is the problem not located?
- Why is the problem occurring?
- When is the problem in evidence?
- When is the problem not in evidence?
- Who is affected by it?
- Who is not affected by it?
- What is different about those affected?
- What things are affected by the problem?
- What things are not affected? e.g., machine capacity.

#### 4. Identify the root causes

Asking the right questions will help to identify the cause:

- When did the problem first occur?
- What changed?
- What changes might be relevant?

#### 5. Test the hypothesis

Work out a hypothesis to test exactly what you're looking for and how you'll know whether you're right. Review the data you gathered in steps 1-4 to see if the reason matches up well with how, where, when, and who the issue affects.

#### **6. Involve others**

Don't think you have to solve every issue. Determine who is responsible and delegate as needed. This may entail hiring expertise or enlisting help. Hold a brainstorming session to explore all options.

#### Action checklist

#### 7. Consider the proposed solution(s)

Don't be fooled by quick fixes. There may be several solutions, some more suited than others. It's time to move on from problem analysis to decision-making. Consider the outcomes of your problem-solving decisions.

- Will the proposed solution just push the problem further down the line?
- What could go wrong?
- What impact, if any, will the proposed solution have on other areas?

And how serious would the consequences be? Even if 'best' just means 'better than the others', keep in mind that there may not be an optimal option.

#### 8. Test the proposed solution

The idea must be tested. This can be done mentally or physically.

- Mentally test the theory by creating various scenarios and comparing the results.
- Or, if possible, test the solution in a real-world scenario.
- When you are pleased with the solution's performance, create a plan with a timetable of actions, who is responsible for what, and when.

#### 9. Champion your decision

Your recommended solution will likely necessitate resources to implement within the company. Choose a manner of presenting facts that others can understand e.g. SWOT analysis. Promote your concept confidently to make it happen.

#### 10. Monitor the results

A problem is only solved when the solution is successfully implemented. Keep an eye on the findings and reassess the situation to avoid future issues. Keep testing and reviewing its performance to ensure it remains the best option.

#### Resources for further reading

#### **Online tools**

- https://snacknation.com/blog/problem-solving-activities-for-teams/
- https://the-happy-manager.com/article/problem-solving-activity/

#### Useful links

- <u>https://asq.org/quality-resources/problem-solving</u>
- https://instagantt.com/project-management/what-is-problem-solving-definition-and-examples

#### Videos

- Making the Connection, Jack ReVelle, ASQ Fellow and author
- Making Ideas Visible: The key to 21st Century Problem Solving

#### Articles

- One Good Idea: Some Sage Advice
- Diagnostic Quality Problem Solving: A Conceptual Framework And Six Strategies
- Weathering The Storm
- The Right Questions
- Solving the Problem

#### Books

- Root Cause Analysis: The Core of Problem Solving and Corrective Action •
- The Quality Toolbox
- Introduction To 8D Problem Solving: Including Practical Applications and Examples



# 1. Description of Critical Thinking

#### What is Critical thinking?

Critical thinking is the disciplined mental activity of evaluating arguments or propositions and making judgments that can guide the development of beliefs and taking action<sup>1</sup>.

It is based on the ability to judge the credibility of sources, to evaluate arguments, and distinguish among facts and opinions. The Critical Thinking process happens on the base of information and data obtained from various sources. Then, the individual can interpret and synthetize information to take informed decisions and draw conclusions.

Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted: nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.

- Francis Bacon

#### What is it about?

The process of critical thinking is characterized by universal values, such as precision, clarity, accuracy, consistence, relevance, rightness, depth, extent and impartiality.

Opinion formation is based on a careful and systematic analysis of other people's opinions and views. The analysis' result is a basis for developing one's own opinions, instead of uncritical acceptance of other people's beliefs and judgements.

As the complexity of the world seems to increase at an accelerating rate, there is a greater tendency to become passive absorber of information. Critical thinking will help you to actively making personal choices about what to accept and what to reject<sup>2</sup>.

#### Why is it important?

Critical thinking develops skills of logical tions which analyze data coming from the envithinking, active acquisition of knowledge, rearonment in a critical way can successfully apply the proactive approach. soning, and interpretation possibilities. Another important element of building the critical "We discuss the case, the situation and we forthinking is solid learning of rhetoric, logic, and mulate the problems and together as a multi-dislinguistics elements. ciplinary team we come up with the decision."

Individuals, but also organizations can respond to a change in two ways. The response can be reactive - as a reaction for a specific change, or proactive - preceding a change. Organiza-

#### Which are the benefits of critical thinking?

Developing your Critical Thinking skills is highly Critical Thinking Increases your analytical beneficial for any field of work. After all, every Skills area needs people that can solve problems ef-The analytical skills improve the process of fectively by systematically gathering informaassessing the credibility of a source, choice tion about an issue, generating further ideas inor recognized methods to apply, estimating volving a variety of perspectives and evaluating the risk and applying assessment of precauthe information using logic.

You can experience advantages such as these by developing critical thinking skills<sup>4</sup>.

**Critical Thinking strengthens your Leadership Skill** 

- Critical Thinking enables leaders at every level to understand the impact of their decisions.
- Critical Thinking is exactly what is needed for a leader to lead properly and by example, ensuring the alignment between personal values and organizational goals increasing the accountability for results throughout the organization.

- Organizations are aware of numerous potential threats; they are able to define the Critical Thinking makes you Open to Change biggest challenges of economic and social Change is an integral part of our lives and nature. Permanent critical analysis of the incontemporary organizations; it is permaternal and external environment allows for nent and regards to all subjects. conceptualization and current situation assessment.
- Critical thinking involves analyzing problems and finding ideas. Critical thinking allows you to see possibilities in problems. Analyzing data coming from the environment in a critical way, can apply the proactive approach.

- Counselling psychologist, NGO in refugee and immigration – Romania<sup>3</sup>

- tion needs.
- The skills simplify problems solving and making conclusions, as well as deduction, induction and assessing the rightness.

**Critical Thinking Improves Learning Skill** 

Critical Thinking encourages you to get familiar with wide range of views about a particular issue. So, you learn about new information, new ideas and personalities with whom you share the same goals.

**Critical Thinking enhances the Co-creation skills** 

W. Huitt, "Critical Thinking: An overview," in Revision of papaer presented at the Critical Thinking Conference, Gordon College, Barnedville, GA, 1998.

M. N. Browne and S. Keeley, "Asking the right questions: A guide to critical thinking," Prentice Hall, Mahwah, NJ, 1997.

S. G. o. T. a. I. (SoG-TIM), "Entrepreneurial and Co-creation skills handbook," Erasmus + program, 2016.

T.b.s. community, "9benefits of Critical Thinking Explained", https://www.theblacksheep.community/benefits-of-critical-thinking/, 2021

#### Ask yourself WHAT.

Starting with the question WHAT will help you to introduce the topic, defying it with your terms and it allows you to identify possible issues.



**Questions**. This will provide context or

ry section.

#### Use the WHY Question.

Trying to answer the WHY question pushes your analytical skills even further. It gets you to find reasons, explanations or causes. Think about all possible questions connected to "why".

# 6. Use the WHAT IF Question.

"What if" questions direct you to the evaluation of information you've gathered - to consider possible implications or results of a particular (even future) action.

# 2. Toolkit

#### Step by step guide<sup>5</sup>





#### Identify a topic.

The topic/ issue you want to explore. Write key words in the middle of a sheet of paper or a

K. Thng, "Critical Thinking 5 With Case Study," https://www.slideshare.net/KarynThng/critical-thinking-slides.



#### Use the WHAT NEXT Question.

"What next question" leads you to consider and plan for more specific actions that might be necessary.

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# WHEN and WHERE

scene-setting material, which is also useful for an introducto-



#### Use the HOW Question.

HOW requires consideration of the way something operates or works (e.g. processes and procedures). This takes you from descriptive to a more analytical thinking.



#### Use the SO WHAT Question.

"So what" is the key question for an evaluation. It gets you thinking about values, meaning and significance. It helps you think through, justify your own position, and discuss its implications.



#### Case studies<sup>6</sup>

# Samsung: Harnessing the Power of the Creative Elite

#### The case

This case study shows how a conglomerate company use critical thinking to ensure they are primed to incorporate the best practices and yield maximum KPIs.

#### The challenge

The company must remain on the cutting edge of new scientific approaches and expand their core abilities to maintain project ROI.

#### The result

Their innovation management strategy entails deploying and experienced creative elite to take the lead with new projects. This group make use of open innovation and corporate tech scouting approaches to create a clear picture of where innovation efforts should be focused. Once the clear picture is gained, Samsung approaches relevant scientific, technological or corporate bodies that can deliver the expertise and resources needed to make it happens.

6 S. Medley, "Five Outstanding Examples of Innovation in Business," <u>https://www.qmar-kets.net/blog/titans-of-transformation-5-outstanding-examples-of-innovation-in-business/</u>, 2019

# Theatres using Critical Thinking approach for targeting customers with differentiated ticket prices

#### The case

This case study examines the ways in which seven theaters from around the United States used critical thinking approach to increase revenues and maintaining affordable prices. They are capitalizing on high-demand shows while keeping programs accessible to all audiences. In order to achieve this balance, theatres vary prices according to several criteria.

#### The challenge

Theatres offer subscription for several shows in a season. However, subscriptions only cover part of the costs and they have been on the decline since the beginning of the century.

#### The result

The fall in subscriptions means that theaters must meet an increasing amount of their revenue and audience requirements through single-ticket sales. The groups surveyed use a variety of methods to market single tickets. Some adjust prices according to seat location, anticipated popularity of show, or day and time of performance. Some offer targeted discounts in order to fill seats, maximize revenue, or attract a certain demographic. At the same time as they adjust prices, theaters must be alert to the ways in which discounted tickets affect brand perception.





#### Critical Thinking Approaches<sup>7</sup>

At every level of your leadership role, you have access to a variety of approaches that can help you come up with fresh ideas and find solutions to difficulties or barriers. Those that we believe would be most helpful to you have been highlighted, along with the situations in which we believe they would be most helpful. This is by no means a comprehensive list; there are a plethora of alternatives. Whichever one you choose should be based on which situation you find yourself in, or on the problem or query you have.

Critical Thinking Approach	Purpose
Analytical Thinking	Best for gathering and breaking down of information into small bites that help make sense of it.
Ask Basic Questions	Seek simple solutions first. Sometimes an explanation becomes so complex that the original question gets lost. To avoid this, use and continually go back to the basic questions you asked when you set out to solve the problem, e.g. Here are a few key basic question you can ask when approaching any problem: What do you already know? How do you know that? What are you trying to prove, dis- prove, demonstrated, critique, etc.? What are you overlooking?
Question basic assump- tions	When thinking through a problem, always question your basic assumption and critically evaluate your beliefs.
Be aware of your mental process	This process allows you to avoid mental shortcut and to highlight cognitive biases and mental prejudices. Improving the objectiveness of your decisions and solutions
Try reversing things	This is a great solution when you feel stuck into a problem. It may seem obvious that X causes Y. What if Y causes X?
Evaluate the existing evi- dences	When you are trying to solve a problem, it is always helpful to look at other work that has been done in the same area. There is no reason to start solving a problem from scratch when someone has already laid the groundwork.
Remember to think for yourself	In order to solve complex problems it is useful to listen just our thoughts and forget others' opinions. Don't be overconfident but recognize that thinking for yourself is essential for solving tough problems
No one is thinking critically 100% of the time	You cannot think critically all the time, and that is okay. Critical thinking is a tool that you should deploy when you need to make important decisions or solve difficult problems, but you do not need to think critically about every-thing.

#### **1.** 7 ways to improve your critical thinking skill

#### 2. Getting at the root of problem

Try these seven exercises to In order to find the best solu- If you need to understand an enhance your critical thinking tion for a problem, the first step argument, assess the pros and approach. You should never is to explore the issue from evstop questioning your knowl- ery angle. Discover in deep this verse opinions and informaedge, although you should al- technique and apply it to your ways be critic and be able to life (and organisation) to get nale interface tool. to the root of the problem.

#### **3.** Discover the Rationale interface

cons, evaluate and weight dition. You could use the Ratio-

# Tips & tricks

#### As a manager or business owner in order to foster critical thinking, you need to

#### Put your ego aside

• Having an idea, an opinion is not wrong. The • Take your time to evaluate different perspective. You must verify information using important thing is to be open to new perspectives and being careful not to be hasty several sources and make many questions, in forming opinions. Be able to listen and asin order to clarify each opinion. Remember, sess the topic from different angles is what there are no stupid questions for a Critical makes you a great leader. Thinker.

#### How to enhance Critical Thinking of your organisation<sup>8</sup>

- Decide what you think and why you think Do not be afraid to ask, ask inspiring quesit. Write down "I think... because" sentences tions and address them to everyone, from so that you are able to clarify your ideas, to colleagues to friends and family and even generate interest for new topics and to exchildren. Their answers might inspire you pand your horizons. and give access to new knowledge.
- Never stop learning. Surround yourself with Take your time to distinguish different interesting reads, take time for hobbies and perspectives, make a list of pros and cons / likes and dislikes for each perspective. In leisure. Open up your mind and do different most cases, there may be arguments that things so that you have the opportunity to see different viewpoints and complexities. you may like and arguments that you may not agree with within each perspective.
- Be curious. Try and look at things like if it were the first time you see them. Think back on how you explored things when you were a child.
- Seek other views and more evidences. Has your opinion about some topic changed? Did you disagree about how you thought about this topic in the past? Why? What led you think otherwise? The purpose of these questions is to find other ways of thinking about this topic.

C. I. Geek, "7 Ways to Improve Your Critical Thinking," https://collegeinfogeek.com/improve-critical-thinking-skills/.

#### Do not jump to conclusion

• Be flexible in your thinking, in order not to exclude any idea, even the craziest ones. Every idea has its own pros and cons to take into account.

S. F. University, "Being a critical thinker: Basic approaches to critical thinking," <u>https://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/</u>



branches-depts/slc/learning/thinking/critical-thinking.



#### Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist<sup>9</sup> to assess the Critical Thinking dimension of your team project's workplace.

	Rating	
Dimension	Strong	Adequate Needs improvement
Diversity of Styles		
I always rigorously evaluate all important evidence offered		
I actively Provide new data or information for consideration		
I examine evidence and questions accuracy and relevance		
I am able to recognize and describe bias		
I clearly analyze information for accuracy, relevance, and validity		
Distinguish, compare, or contrast diverse points of view and/or alter	native con	clusions
I thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyze my own as- sumptions		
I thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyze others' as- sumptions		
I carefully evaluate the relevance of contexts when presenting a position		
l address diverse perspectives from a variety of sources to qualify analysis		
I check if any analogies or metaphors are used effectively		
I check if other positions' analysis is accurate and respectful		
Articulate personal insights about complex issues or problems		
I usually Identify and discuss conclusions		
I usually identify and discuss implications and consequences of con- clusions		
I always provide convincing replies to objections and rival positions		
Critical Thinking in my Team		
My employees/coworkers have the ability of critical thinking		
My organization promote ways to develop the Critical Thinking Skills		
I have already discovered the organization's areas where Critical Thinking is lacking		
The Co-creation mechanisms of my organization already applied the Critical Thinking Approach		
My organization encourage open innovation and permanent internal and external dialogue		

O. M. University, "Critical Thinking @ UM Assessment Checklist," https://irep.olemiss.edu/wp-content/uploads/ 9 sites/98/2020/08/Critical-Thinking-at-UM-Assessment-Checklist.pdf.



#### Resources for further reading

#### **Online tools**

- <u>https://www.mindmeister.com/blog/5-tech-tools-to-encourage-critical-thinking/</u>
- <u>https://blog.futurefocusedlearning.net/critical-thinking-tools-blooms-taxonomy</u>
- https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED\_95.htm

#### Useful links

- <u>http://www.criticalthinking.org//</u>
- <u>https://tc2.ca/</u>
- https://www.teachthought.com/critical-thinking/25-resources-for-teaching-critical-thinking/

#### Videos

- <u>5 tips to improve your critical thinking skill</u>
- How to teach critical thinking
- Logic and Critical thinking

#### Articles

- <u>https://www.gre.ac.uk/articles/ils/critical-thinking</u>
- <u>https://www.peoplematters.in/site/interstitial?return\_to=%2Farticle%2Fcampus-recruitment%2F-</u> what-is-critical-thinking-its-importance-in-your-success-14793

#### Books

- Calling Bullshit
- ٠
- The art of thinking clearly

Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong about the World--And Why Things Are Better Than You Think



# **1. Description of** Flexibility

The word "flexibility" technically means the ability to bend without breaking, Flexibility is willingness and ability to take on new responsibilities. It's not simply a "can do" mindset; it's also a "will do" attitude. To be really flexible, you should adjust your priorities to meet the needs of your organization.

When it comes to how work is done, flexibility is a technique that stresses being able and ready to adapt to changing conditions. Flexibility in higher education benefits both the trainers and their students

**Briefly, Flexibility is a Thinking Skill** that focuses on a people's capacity to adapt to new conditions, improvise, and change techniques in order to meet a variety of obstacles.

measure of intelligence is the ability to change.

- Albert Einstein

#### What is it about?

Flexibility is a personality quality that defines a person's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and conceive about issues and tasks in innovative and creative ways. When circumstances or unexpected occurrences force a person to shift their posture, viewpoint, or commitment, this attribute is employed.

Today, scientists, employers, and public figures believe that "flexible abilities" are required for the execution of various professional tasks, particularly in the field of "person-to-person" communication.

#### Here are a few reasons why workplace flexibility is important:

- Flexibility in higher education is beneficial since it helps students feel more appreciated while also creating trust and a more creative work environment.
- Students who feel valued at classes are more likely to study to their full capacity.

#### Which are the benefits of of being flexible?

For a number of reasons, flexibility is essential in your daily life. Being adaptable might prevent Over time, teaching and businesses change. both students and teachers from becoming Flexibility might help teachers and students overwhelmed or suffocated by change. In adgrow with the learning experience. For examdition, rather than being a passive participant, ple, if your print publication decides to go digiyou will have a greater opportunity to influence tal, flexibility can let you adapt your journalism their own growth and personal life. style while still working for the publisher.

Here are some of the benefits:

#### Ability to adapt to change

Another advantage of flexibility is that it allows Being flexible in your life helps you to cope with vou to live a more joyful life. Flexibility may help change without suffering negative consequencyou feel less stressed and open yourself to new es. If your firm asks you to perform midnight experiences, which could be one of the secrets shifts after you've been working 9-5, for examto a happy life or a prosperous profession. ple, flexibility permits you to make the transition effortlessly.

#### Taking care of the unexpected

An unexpected situation might often require flexibility. For example, if you are unwell, you may need to leave school early. In this circumstance, you must reply calmly to the issue. For example, you could be able to work from home so that you can handle all of your tasks at once.

- It promotes student autonomy by allowing them to pick their own schedules, projects, and study location.
- Students are motivated and morale is boosted by flexibility since it provides them with intriguing incentives.
- Offering a flexible schedule assists students to achieve a better study-life balance and relieves stress.

#### **Keeping your job**

#### **Happiness in life**

2.



# 2. Toolkit



#### Step by step guide

In today's settings, where uncertainty and change are common, flexibility skill has become an increasingly valued quality.

You can cope with unanticipated obstacles swiftly, calmly, and efficiently if you are adaptable. Flexibility, on the other hand, isn't only about adapting to events as they come. It also entails significant changes in the way we think, work, and act.

You can become more flexible by following these seven steps:









#### Case studies

## <u>Kraft Foods</u>

#### The case

A food and beverage manufacturing company, Kraft and its subsidiaries employ nearly 109,000 people in over 150 countries. In the U.S Kraft employs 62,000 people in 100 plants; 59% of these employees are hourly workers.

#### The challenge

Employee dissatisfaction, particularly among hourly workers in manufacturing plants.

#### The result

A flexible work options program called "Fast Adapts" for hourly employees and production supervisors who work in 24/7 manufacturing facilities. The 2003 employee satisfaction survey revealed improved employee satisfaction with work-life integration.

# <u>Texas Instruments</u>

#### The case

Texas Instruments is a Dallas-based technology company that has manufacturing, design or sales operations in more than 25 countries, with a global workforce of pproximately 35,000 employees, including 19,400 in the Americas. T.I. is ranked 166th on the list of biggest U.S. companies by Fortune magazine in 2005, with \$12.6 billion in revenues for FY 2004.

#### The challenge

Employee desire for flexibility as revealed in needs assessments.

#### The result

An "ad-hoc" flexible work policy that allows employees to work flexible work schedules, compressed work weeks, and telecommute occasionally. TI reports that it has seen improvements in retention of employees, lower stress and more effective workers as well as greater "bench strength" as a result of its flexible work policy. As team members help cover for each other in times of flexibility, they develop broader and more diverse skills. Flexible work arrangements have allowed the company to better coordinate with overseas operations and business partners.

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#### **Flexibility Techniques**

Flexibility entails maintaining a strong sense of identity and purpose while maintaining an open, team-centered mindset. Here are seven methods for achieving this:

Flexibility Technique	Purpose
Help millennials problem-solve.	When millennials are refusing to do a task or complete a request, steer clear of assumptions. Dig deeper with the millennial person to uncover the root cause of the behavior. If the millennial is refusing to do a writing task, for example, it could be that he doesn't know how to start or has trouble with fine motor skills. Demonstrate your flexibility by working with the millenni- als to find a solution.
Teach flexibility explicitly.	For many millennials, including millennials on the autism spectrum, the bene- fits of flexibility aren't immediately clear. Shine a bright light on the how and why of flexibility by teaching it out loud during your everyday lessons. When you model flexibility explicitly during daily classroom routines, millennials will see how it applies to their real lives-and how it helps keep problems from be- coming insurmountable.
Teach self- advocacy skills.	Show millennials that it's okay to advocate for what they need. Try some gentle prompting to help a millennial uncover and vocalize their needs.
Use a high ratio of praise to corrections.	Aim for 4 praises for every 1 correction. This is a key component of a flexi- ble, supportive community culture: millennials supported through positive words and actions perform better than millennials who experience a steady stream of consequences and corrections.
Reassure millennials who love routines.	Respect millennials' routine instead of asking them to change it.
Give them a heads-up before a change happens.	Most millennials experience high levels of stress during a change in their rou- tine of their daily life environment-and stressed millennials will find it really tough to be flexible. You can help by priming millennials ahead of time for the change. Let them know exactly what's going to happen, and frame it as a great opportunity to "show how flexibility works"
Build collaborative partnerships with millennials and millennial business leaders.	Treat millennials as active partners in their leadership path and listen to what they have to say. Brainstorm options for millennials stuck on a task. Giving millennials a bigger voice in their leadership adventure.
Know yourself.	Reflect on when you tend to become more rigid. Do certain behaviors act as triggers for you. Understanding your own behavior patterns to improve.

# Tips & tricks

#### As a manager or Business owner in order to foster Flexibility you need to

#### **Overcome Resistance to Change**

- Expecting your team members to adapt to When people are given the freedom to be creative, they'll likely find it easier to adapt to new changing circumstances automatically can be a ways of working, to find solutions to problems, "big ask." and to make better decisions when unexpected • So, the next time a big change is on the horizon, issues crop up.
- encourage your people to be more flexible by clearly explaining why the change is necessary. Spell out its benefits to them and to the organization, and take care not to gloss over any details.

#### Foster a Sense of Security

- To be flexible, people need to be able to "think on their feet" and act boldly in ways that are new and unfamiliar.
- Give your people the self-confidence to do this by creating an environment in which they feel supported and trusted, and where they can test out new ideas without fear of failure or punishment. And encourage them to share their findings with the rest of the team.

#### Lead With Purpose

• When people are clear on the goals that they need to reach, and what they need to do to achieve them, shorter-term challenges will have a less disruptive impact. So, be sure to clearly communicate your team's purpose and its shared objectives, and revisit them regularly so that everyone stays on track.

#### How to enhance your Flexibility

- Focus on your strengths, do not think your ideas are not good and sabotage yourself.
- Never stop learning, surround yourself with in- **Do not be afraid to ask**, ask inspiring questions teresting reads, take time for hobbies and leiand address them to everyone, from colleagues to friends and family and even children. Their sure. Opening up your mind and doing different things will help you to see different viewpoints answers might inspire you and give access to and complexities. new knowledge.
- Be curious, try and look at things like if it were **Respect your biorhythm**, find out which part of the day or week is best for you to reflect, brainthe first time you see time. Think back on how you explored things when you were a child. storm and think about new ideas. Put a slot in your agenda for this and make it part of your • Share and cooperate with others around you, routine.

#### Encourage Creativity

Encourage creativity in your team by leading by example. Suggest new ideas yourself, and invite other people to offer feedback and suggestions. Not only will this encourage a sense of adventure, but it will also drive team collaboration and engagement.

#### Empathize

- Flexibility isn't just about responding to events quickly. It also involves responding to the different needs of your team members. When there's an urgent problem, you'll likely find that some people jump at the challenge, while others appear to cave under the pressure.
- Don't "write off" these people. Remember just how much you're asking of them. Tap into your emotional intelligence by showing them that you understand and empathize with them about the challenges that they face. Ask if there's anything you can do to help them. Could you provide additional training, for example, or pair them up with a more confident colleague?

this will open up new knowledge, ideas and solutions you did not consider before.





#### Checklist before I get started

Before you start to improve your flexibility skill, you may complete this pre-assessment worksheet to identify areas of concern and brainstorm goals to build your flexibility skills. Read each statement.

Calculate the total score (Strong: 5, Adequate: 3, Needs improvement: 1)

Dimension		
		Adequate Needs improvement
I recognize problems and make changes to fix them.		
I'm okay if things change unexpectedly.		
Switching between tasks is easy for me.		
I accept others' ideas even if they're different from my own.		
I can easily adjust to different rules and different expectations.		
I don't mind if things go wrong or if I have to try a different way to solve a problem.	,	

I'm okay if I can't control things or when others make choices for me.

#### **Total Score Explanations**

Score between 0-10: My flexibility and other executive functioning skills are likely causing challenges in all areas of my life. There are likely significant benefits if I can learn new skills.

Score between 11-20: My flexibility and other executive functioning skills are likely causing challenges in at least one area of my life. There are likely some benefits to learning new skills.

Score between 21+: My flexibility skills are well-developed. If I'm still having challenges, I may have other executive functioning skills to focus on.



#### Resources for further reading

#### **Online tools**

- Salto Toolkit: Understanding My Journey
- Brain training program and web application: Lumosity
- Brain trainer mobile application: Elevateapp
- Cognitive Skills, Mood and Emotions

#### **Useful links**

- Blog Post: 13 Benefits of a Flexible Workplace For Employees, Company & Planet
- Science Direct Search Section for Cognitive flexibility
- Indeed Blog Post: How to Be Flexible at Work (With Tips and Examples)

#### Videos

- 10 Soft Skills, Module 7, Adaptability and Flexibility
- Work Flexibility
- The 5 principles of highly effective teachers: Pierre Pirard at TEDxGhent
- Educating Different Kinds of Minds, Temple Grandin, TEDxCSU
- Essential Soft Skills for Teachers

#### Articles

- Partnership As A Mechanism For Developing Students Flexible Skills
- Caring
- Mind Tools Blog Post: Overcoming Resistance to Change
- Skilled Migrants: Methodological approach for a common framework of Soft Skills at work report

#### Books

- Gigged: The End of the Job and the Future of Work by Sarah Kessler
- Rob Biederman, Pat Petitti, and Peter Maglathlin
- the Life You Want by Diane Mulcahy
- The Remote Revolution: How the Location-Independent Workforce Changes the Way We Hire, Connect, and Succeed John Elston
- The Third Option: Why a Woman Doesn't Have to Choose between a Career and Family, but Can Actually Have Both and Succeed by Shannon Miles
- Virtual Culture: The Way We Work Doesn't Work Anymore, a Manifesto by Bryan Miles

Tool: Neuroscience Games That Challenge and Strengthen the Parts of Your Brain That Manage Your

SHS Web of Conference Paper: Opportunities of the university in fostering flexible skills of students International Scientific Conference "Personality in Norm and in Pathology Conference Paper: Social Journal of Education and Training Studies Paper: From Substance to Skill: Student Perspective on

EU Project Output: Cross-Country Survey On Soft Skills Required By Companies To Medium/High

Reimagining Work: Strategies to Disrupt Talent, Lead Change, and Win with a Flexible Workforce by

The Future is Freelance : Discovering the Power and Possibilities of Flexible Working by Kirsty Hulse The Gig Economy: The Complete Guide to Getting Better Work, Taking More Time Off, and Financing



# 1. Description of Multi-disciplinary thinking

Those who can thrive in this changing global environment will have a broad interest and knowledge outside of their specific disciplines.

> Nanyang Technological University President, Subra Suresh

#### What is Multi-disciplinary thinking?

Multidisciplinarity is where two or more academic disciplines collaborate for a specific purpose, for instance, when computer scientists, psychologists and sociologists cooperate in the design of human/computer interfaces. Although a multidisciplinary approach uses the skills and knowledge from more than one academic discipline, the use of knowledge from different disciplines remains distinct, even though the differences between the disciplines can be quite subtle.

Humanity's primary turning point has always been multidisciplinary holistic thinking solutions, especially during unusual times. There are several solutions based on the notion of multidisciplinary holistic thinking methods that are relevant to what we perceive as 'quality of life,' whether in education, health, social welfare, security, or other areas.

Humans, on the other hand, have been far too preoccupied with sub-specialized technology and science in the previous half-century. This sort of highly professional, single-minded attitude caused people to focus on what might make them more comfortable rather than what could help them find inventive solutions. If we look at the multidisciplinary thinking definitions, The <u>UNESCO (2020b)</u> defines the multidisciplinary approach (which is the same as the cross-disciplinary approach), as studying one topic from the viewpoint of more than one discipline and solving a problem using a different disciplinary approach.

#### What is it about?

Multidisciplinary thinking is an essential facet of the education and business sector in the 21st century, especially as the face of work and demand for skill sets changes. Workforces of the future will demand agile thinkers who can understand the complexities of real-world scenarios and synthesise new knowledge – this is the future that we need to prepare millennials for.

Higher education is constantly changing and looking for innovative educational solutions in order to increase the level of the millennials' knowledge and skills. As an important part of this set of policies, a new process is emerging for the ideation, planning and implementation of multidisciplinary case studies for millennials with the aim of developing their knowledge, meaning learning, skills and abilities that are necessary for a more complete picture of the problems.

#### Why is it important?

Multidisciplinary thinking encourages millennials to establish connections across various disciplines or subjects offered in a project, idea, classes or in the companies. This integration of different fields of knowledge allows learners to tackle big questions and solve real-world problems that cannot be examined through just one topic of study or business.

# Which are the benefits of being a multi-disciplinary thinker?

The benefits of multidisciplinary thinking in education are clear. By melding together subjects, students connect the brightest minds. Having people across disciplines work together creates a harmonious, integrated approach to learning.

#### Holistic understanding

One of the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach in education is you get a more holistic understanding of the world. Rather than looking at individual departments and their subject matters separately, a multidisciplinary approach integrates parts of each department into the study programs of the other.

#### **Different perspectives**

Have you ever been trying to solve a puzzle by yourself and have one section that totally defeats you? You stare at it for hours, but can't figure it out for the life of you. Then, one day, a friend saunters by and picks up that pivotal piece and places it perfectly. Ah, the magic of different perspectives! A multidisciplinary approach is kind of like that. With different professors integrating subject matters, you get Dr. X's perspective on organic chemistry one day, and Dr. Y's the next. It opens the doors to different ideas and ways of understanding.

#### **Real world approach**

Multidisciplinary learning isn't just an educational philosophy—it's a tangible way of understanding the world. When you graduate, you'll be working with people from across disciplines IRL, so why should school be different? Being able to compile and collaborate with people from across the spectrum will help you function in the professional world.

#### **Collaboration skills**

Hopefully, any education route you take emphasizes the importance of collaboration. However, one of the most important advantages of a multidisciplinary curriculum is the idea of coming together to create a better whole. Being able to communicate effectively with people across disciplines is integral to multidisciplinary learning. You learn the same vocabulary, you understand their values, and you know what motivates them. These skills will help you make connections, solve big problems, and work synergistically with your peers.

# 2. Toolkit



#### Step by step guide

Allen Repko (2009), Director of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program for the School of Urban and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington, has identified four cognitive abilities that illustrate some of the benefits of interdisciplinary thinking. Interdisciplinary thinking is also known as multidisciplinary thinking. Here are the adapted steps for multidisciplinary thinking.





#### **Perspective-taking**.

This relates to the ability to understand many points of view on a given issue, as well as an understanding of the differences across disciplines, particularly their approaches to solving problems and their standards of evidence.

#### **Development of** structural knowledge.

Declarative knowledge (i.e., factual information) and procedural knowledge (i.e., process-based information) are two types of knowledge that are required to address complicated issues.



#### **Integration of** conflicting insights from alternative disciplines.

When concepts from a variety of disciplines are combined to investigate a problem, new insights and predictions frequently emerge. Rather than defaulting to a single disciplinary explanation, the intellectual challenge is to find ways to account for them, which necessitates critical and innovative thought.



#### Multidisciplinary Understanding.

This requires looking at a problem from a variety of angles and seeing how one potential method affects the others.



## <u>Case Studies of</u> <u>Multidisciplinary Approaches</u> <u>to Integrating Mathematics,</u> <u>Science, & Technology</u> <u>Education</u>

#### The case

Oklahoma County School District: The Principles of Technology (PT) curriculum was the focus for the Oklahoma CSD project. The faculty team worked together to present a coordinated curriculum where each teacher took responsibility for the specific section of the curriculum that aligned with their particular field of study.

#### The challenge

It was somewhat of a surprise to the teacher team that there were some students who resisted the multidisciplinary approach to the learning process. It was obvious that a number of students wished to be accountable to only one teacher. This resistance was manifested by the reluctance of some students to transfer knowledge from one subject area to another. The staff identified this hesitation to be based on limitations of students, specifically related to student reading ability and computational skills. Efforts are currently being formulated to address these concerns as the project team plans for future integration activities.

#### The result

The most successful aspect was the creative use of the teaching staff. By allowing each of the teachers to rotate to the individual classrooms the students were introduced to a coordinated integrative curriculum without the obtrusive restructuring of existing class schedules. Although the coordination efforts were viewed by the instructional staff as a very positive product, it was also perceived as a significant logistical problem which periodically caused confusion for both teachers and students. In addition to the teacher rotation, the creation of the student learning teams was also a very positive experience for most students in this project. Students were able to perceive the importance of working together to solve a common problem as well as exposure to occupational strategies of modern businesses and industries.




## **Multi-disciplinary thinking Techniques**

Multidisciplinary students stand out to employers because of the rich view of the world that they develop, the wide range of perspectives they will have encountered during their studies, and the combination of subject areas they have studied that could offer more flexible career choices.

Multi-disciplinary thinking Technique	Purpose
Critical thinking	Critical thinking skills are used and developed as millennials look across dis- ciplinary boundaries to consider other viewpoints and also begin to com- pare and contrast concepts across subject areas.
Self-management	Choosing which subjects to work or being a leader – and why – can be challenging, and requires millennials to think carefully about how to identify their priorities and manage their working choices.
Adaptability	Different subjects may need to be viewed through different lenses which means an individual needs to be able to switch to the appropriate lens at the appropriate time for whichever subject they are looking at. It requires careful self-management to be able to do this.
Analysis and problem solving	By studying and working across different subject boundaries and by study- ing a wider range of subjects, millennials develop deeper skills of evaluation as they learn a number of different logical and methodical approaches and are able to select the best one to use for particular circumstances.
Communication and literacy	Millennials' written and verbal communication skills are well developed amongst multi-subject millennials as they learn to revert to the appropriate communication style for a particular subject area.
Application of information technology	Using technology across a range of subjects means that millennials can be more practised in displaying and presenting information in a range of ways.
Flexibility	The ability to adapt to different contexts and environments is a strong skill gained from multi-subject study as you will be switching from one subject to another.
Synthesis of ideas	Millennials begin to consolidate learning by combining ideas from many perspectives and consider an alternative way of acquiring knowledge.

# Tips & tricks

## As a manager or Business owner in order to foster Multidisciplinary thinking you need to

Business owners need these details if they want Having a team of people with various skills, experiences and backgrounds is critical when to foster the multidisciplinary thinking in their companies want to foster a great, inclusive culteams: ture. The so-called "multidisciplinary team" has powers that go beyond just culture; they can based on shared principles also amplify innovation in the workplace. Different people with different profiles, points of view and knowledge are the fuel that can take nominators as well as individual skills a company above and beyond as diversity is al-• When working together, they tend to learn ways enriching.

## How to enhance your your Multidisciplinary thinking

The main goal of higher education and working • Interdisciplinary learning is understandsectors are to develop knowledge about a certain discipline that can engender in millennials the capacity to analyse information and apply it to real life cases. To improve millennials' understanding and make the learning and improving process more productive and enjoyable, they need to experience the connection between different subjects of the respective curriculum.

The International Bureau of Education (IBE-UN-ESCO) specifies three major types of contemporary approach to enhance: multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary.

• Multidisciplinary learning is studying or working on a topic from the viewpoint of more than one discipline and solving a problem using a different disciplinary approach.

- A multidisciplinary team conducts its work
- Members of the team will have common de-
- from their peers, who all have a unique set of skills to offer to the group
- In a multidisciplinary team, co-creation and collaboration are extremely important so that all the different skill sets become complementary to each other
- ing theories that cut across disciplines and highlight the process and meaning rather than combining different discipline contents.
- **Transdisciplinary learning** is removing the boundaries between the core disciplines, integrating them to construct new contexts of real-world themes and introducing a sub-major stream course.





## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the Multi-disciplinary thinking dimension of your team project's workplace.

## Action checklist

Specify clearly why an interdisciplinary approach is needed, which type of interdisciplinary approach is envisaged and which disciplines should be involved. (Where this has been based on a formal analysis of the problem domain, describe the process briefly.)

Describe how the disciplines involved will be integrated and how this relates to the type of multidisciplinarity involved; demonstrate how the quality of integration will be assured.

Describe the leadership role and management strategy to deliver the desired outcomes.

Summarise the multidisciplinary skills of the researchers involved.

Where relevant, develop a clear plan for the involvement of end users and stakeholders in the project, including contingency plans for recognised pitfalls. Indicate clearly the benefits to stakeholders and the roles of stakeholders in contributing to the project.

Plan a budget and justify with the additional resources if it is needed.

Describe how multidisciplinarity will be reflected in the project outputs and outcomes.



## Resources for further reading

### **Online tools**

- Quiz Tool: Skill IT for Youth
- Blog Post: A four-stage model for multidisciplinary learning
- Paper: Interdisciplinary Learning: A cognitive-epistemological foundation

### Useful links

- Paper: Design Thinking Methods and Tools for Innovation in Multidisciplinary Teams
- Critical Thinking Resources: Multidisciplinary Resources ٠
- Paper: Creativity and Innovation through Multidisciplinary and Multisectoral Cooperation
- Blog Post: What is interdisciplinary learning?

### Videos

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- Benefits of Multidisciplinary Thinking, Simonas Bansevičius, TEDxYouth@VIS
- What is the importance of cross-disciplinary thinking? by Ben Michaelis, Author
- Multidisciplinary Creativity, Shama Rahman, TEDxCibeles
- Educating for the Future: The Power of Interdisciplinary Spaces, Theresa Lim, TEDxYouth@SHC

### Articles

- on Global Poverty. A Global Integrative Multidisciplinary Review
- itation

### Books

- How the Mind Works
- Conceptual Foundations for Multidisciplinary Thinking
- Interdisciplinary Research
- The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature
- Multidisciplinary Approaches to Educational Research

Multi-disciplinary perspective for science and technology, Laura Margheri, TEDxBolognaWomen

 American Journal of Economics Paper: The Extent of COVID-19 Pandemic Socio-Economic Impact Phd Thesis: Multidisciplinary Thinking to Increase Sustainability in Engineering: A Case Study in San-





# **1. Description of Creativity**

## What is Creativity?

"Creativity is a phenomenon whereby something somehow new and somehow valuable is formed. The created item may be intangible (such as an idea, a scientific theory, a musical composition, or a joke) or a physical object (such as an invention, a printed literary work, or a painting)" - Wikipedia

The act of bringing new and innovative concepts to life is what we call creativity. Ability to see things from fresh perspectives, discover patterns, and draw connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena are all characteristics of creativity. To be creative, one must first think before acting. You are imaginative but not creative if you have ideas but do not put them into action.

"Creativity is the process of bringing something new into being. Creativity requires passion and commitment. It brings to our awareness what was previously hidden and points to new life. The experience is one of heightened consciousness: ecstasy."

- Rollo May, The Courage to Create

Creativity is more than just being different. Anybody can plan weird; that's easy. What's hard is to be as simple as Bach. Making the simple, awesomely simple, that's creativity.

- Charles Mingus

## What is it about?

While many people feel that creativity comes naturally to some people, this is not necessarily true. Individuals differ from one another in terms of their levels of creativity. It may come naturally to some, but anyone can improve their skills at it with the correct resources and methods. Creativity is more than just using your imagination; it's about actually doing something.

Any idea or theory you have will be the subject of extensive investigation by you. If this is a brand-new approach, you should test it out to see if it works. If it's an object, you'll have to create it. The ability to think creatively is a method of thinking. Moreover, it is vital to ask whether creativity can be used effectively in the workplace. Yes, but to get there, someone must be ready to take risks and work through discomfort.

## Why is it important?

It's become a "must have" to be creative in the Employees become less frightened of failure when workplace. Due to today's worldwide compethey concentrate on the larger picture. CEOs value tition, innovation is more important than ever. originality above anything else when hiring new The obvious question is: what good does it employees. There is a strong correlation between do a company or organization to be creative? creativity and ROI (Return on Investment), Fresh new ideas and innovation are kept alive and creative people are also self-starters and in your company via creativity. Streamlining problem solvers. efficiency and productivity go beyond just "Companies who are creative are more successful" creating new products or services.

You'll be able to get more significant results if you use creative thinking in your daily work. Everyone in the office can benefit from being creative, regardless of their position.

## Which are the benefits of being creative?

Developing your creative thinking skills is highly beneficial for any field of work. After all, every area needs people that can come up with the best solutions to the everyday problems that arise and creativity is critical to do that.

You can experience advantages such as these by developing creative thinking skills:

## **Creativity Builds Better Teamwork**

- Creativity inspires employees to work with asymmetry. each other. The creative process encourages Enjoy the challenge of struggling through collaboration. Businesses need to encourage chaos toward resolution. the mindset of continuous learning encouraging employees to seek new information, Creativity drives our readiness to take chances knowledge and new ways to do things. grows.
- Many unique ideas come from just one person but they are molded by a team to become fully formed.

### **Creativity Improves the Ability to Attract and** Creativity assists us in critically examining and **Retain Employees** evaluating our own thoughts.

• When creativity is encouraged, employees • Seek feedback and suggestions. Set aside are more content with their jobs and are comone's own ego. Ideas should be tested. mitted to remaining loyal to the company.

## **Creativity Increases Problem-Solving**

 With the ability to think creatively and outside of the box, employees are more likely Catalysis brings pleasure, fulfillment, and a to come up with unique and innovative solusense of accomplishment to the activity ittions to obstacles they encounter. This eaself. gerness to solve problems can lead to new ways to accomplish tasks and adds to a more efficiently run business.

- Tucker Marion, Associate Professor, Northeastern University D'Amore-McKim School of Business

## Creativity Increases your impact as a leader

- Drive your peers into new experiences.
- Help them make connections that seem unconnected.
- Show the importance of taking a break from daily tasks.
- Put your colleagues in line with their creativity.

Creativity tolerates complexity, chaos, and

Accept that failure is an inevitable part of the creative process. The ability to learn from one's errors. Work on the brink of one's abilities.

## Creativity provides us with the incentive to do things for our own sake, rather than for grades or money.

### 21stCenturySkills

# 2. Toolkit



## Step by step guide





First, you learn. During this stage you focus on 1) learning specific material directly related to your task and 2) learning general material by becoming fascinated with a wide range of concepts.

## Thoroughly work over the materials in your mind.

During this stage, you examine what you have learned by looking at the facts from different angles and experimenting with fitting various ideas together.

# 3.

## Be bored.

You have to allow yourself to be bored if you want to be more creative! If you're bored, you daydream which stimulates the brain's imagination network. And research suggests that when you're daydreaming, it sparks creative thinking and can lead to a whole set of new, creative ideas (and new, creative ways of thinking).

## Step away from the problem.

Next, you put the problem completely out of your mind and go do something else that excites you and energizes you. Changing something at an unpredictable moment and working on projects will help you to think differently. This will activate the salience network of your brain, making it easier to create new, unpredictable links between your knowledge banks and the environment.



## Go for a walk and let your idea return to you.

One of the best things you can do to improve your creativity and inspire new ways of thinking is to go for a walk (especially outdoors). Creative performance has been found to improve by up to 60%, possibly because spending time outdoors will stimulate all three of the brain's imagination networks. At some point, but only after you have stopped thinking about it, your idea will come back to you with a flash of insight and renewed energy.

## Shape and develop your idea based on feedback.

For any idea to succeed, you must release it out into the world, submit it to criticism, and adapt it as needed.

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## Try something beyond the comfort zone of creativity.

Try writing a poem if you are a designer. If you're a writer, find a new instrument to learn. The idea is, there are many different ways to be creative, and it will encourage your brain to make new connections and inspire a new kind of creativity when you do something new. Then, in other aspects of your life, the new kind of creativity will make you be more innovative. Switching tasks has been proven to increase creativity, and it's an even greater advantage when you turn between intrinsically innovative tasks.



<u>Smurfit Kappa Quickly Pivots</u> to Virtual Leadership Training and Enhances Skills of Next-<u>Gen Leaders – Ireland and 35</u> more countries

### The case

This case study shows how a global company used creativity in overcoming covid-19 for developing the future leaders within the organization.

### The challenge

The company had scheduled the annual summit of the new leaders for the end of 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic marked the beginning of radical changes for in-person events the likes of which had never been seen before. As organizations worldwide cancelled events, and millions of people prepared for self-quarantine, Smurfit Kappa recognized the need to pivot quickly.

### The result

With the creative solutions were adopted, they maximized the learning opportunities for Smurfit Kappa's emerging leaders during an uncertain time when face-to-face training wasn't an option, but strong leadership skills were more critical than ever.



### The case

This case study shows how a global organization used creativity in leadership development that would be the first step in level-setting how all of their managers would lead and found a solution "that was not just virtual, but inclusive, selfpaced, and one that would make a lasting impact".

### The challenge

After a series of acquisitions, BeyondTrust recognized many people within the organization were put into leadership positions without much prior development - a concept they refer to as "accidental leaders." The organization wanted to build and reinforce a culture of learning as well as instill the foundational competencies required to lead others.

### The result

The creative solutions adopted (graduates cooperated with the c-level executives), further pushed their global cross-functional mission and made the entire experience more interesting. The individualized approach has made all the difference and nurtured accountability in their leaders.

<u> Frontline Leader Impact –</u> <u>Global company (q countries</u>



## **Creativity Techniques**

At every level of your leadership role, you have access to a variety of innovative approaches that can help you come up with fresh ideas and find solutions to difficulties or barriers. Those that we believe would be most helpful to you have been highlighted, along with the situations in which we believe they would be most helpful. This is by no means a comprehensive list; there are a plethora of alternatives. Whichever one you choose should be based on which situation you find yourself in, or on the problem or query you have.

Creativity Technique	Purpose
Lateral thinking	Best for creativity "on demand" for defining and solving problems and finding new ways to do things.
Brainstorming	Best for situations in which you need to generate new ideas or new solu- tions to problems.
Brainwriting	Similar to brainstorming, however better for situations which require more solutions in less time.
Six thinking hats	Best for moments where you need to evaluate the pros and cons, but remain as objective as possible.
Five Ws and H	Best for situations in which you need understand the given problem more precisely in order to be able to define it better and to find a solution
The Insights Game	Best for improving your ability to see the big picture, process more com- plex problems and challenge your beliefs.
Random words	Best for encouraging your imagination to create different perspectives and new angles on your idea or the problem you are facing.
Storyboarding	Best for planning advertising campaigns, commercials, a proposal or oth- er business presentations intended to convince or compel action.
Mind Mapping	Best and effective technique of structuring information and note-taking.
Brain shifter	Brain shifter is similar to mind mapping, but you should act as if you were someone else. Is used to create new ideas that you never thought about before.

Launch an idea competi-

## 1. Inspire Your Team with Hu- 2. Set up a team experiment mility

stored.

## Follow the lead of famously tion in your office. Try asking

humble IKEA founder, Ingvar non-marketing team mem-Kamprad. Get out there and bers to come up with new chat to your team at every lev- taglines or customer support el of the company, particularly staff for ideas on how they the levels you wouldn't usually think the homepage could be interact with. You never know improved. Your next growth what ideas they might have hack could be right on your creativity by micromanaging. doorstep.

## 3. Establish Creative Parameters

To prevent decision fatigue and promote creativity, try using a transparent task management tool. With Meister-Task you can keep team members in the loop with project parameters, without crushing

# **Tips & tricks**

## As a manager or Business owner in order to foster creativity you need to

## Never, ever say No

• Using the word "no" at a brainstorming ses- • A variety of perspectives, insights and learnsion or when an employee approaches you with an idea conveys a negative message. process. Determine how to reroute the notion so that The manner in which your team collaborates it becomes a "yes". It is all too simple to disis more significant than the ideas generated. miss an idea because you believe it will not Pixar President, Ed Catmull discusses the work; nevertheless, silencing the creative importance of assembling the correct team thinkers in your company will inhibit creand how it is better to focus on how the entire ativity and employees will be less inclined to team is functioning collectively together continue to come up with novel and innovarather than the individual abilities inside the tive solutions. team. Catmull emphasizes the importance of "having the right people and the appropriate chemistry" over "getting the correct idea."

## How to enhance your creativity

- Focus on your strengths, do not think your Do not be afraid to ask, ask inspiring guesideas are not good and sabotage yourself. tions and address them to everyone, from colleagues to friends and family and even children. Their answers might inspire you interesting reads, take time for hobbies and and give access to new knowledge.
- **Never stop learning**, surround yourself with leisure. Opening up your mind and doing different things will help you to see different • viewpoints and complexities.
- Be curious, try and look at things like if it were the first time you see time. Think back on how you explored things when you were a child.
- Share and cooperate with others around you, this will open up new knowledge, ideas and solutions you did not consider before.

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## Make Your Team more Diverse

**Respect your biorhythm**, find out which part of the day or week is best for you to reflect, brainstorm and think about new ideas. Put a slot in your agenda for this and make it part of your routine.





cation and creative interaction.

## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the creativity dimension of your team project's workplace.

	Rating	
Dimension	Strong	Adequate Needs improvement
Diversity of Styles		
I am aware of the creative value of diverse thinking styles and try to incorporate this diversity into the team.		
I actively seek out or hire people with diverse backgrounds and think- ing styles.		
Our group recognizes the conflict that creative abrasion can cause, but also recognizes its value.		
Your Work Group		
The majority never ignores the minority opinions in my work group.		
I have added someone to my work group specifically because he/she brings a fresh perspective.		
Our work environment supports those who think differently from the majority.		
The thinking styles, skills, and experiences of my work group's mem- bers are diverse and balanced.		
I actively look for group members whose thinking styles differ from my own.		
The Psychological Environment		
There are opportunities for people to take on assignments that involve risk and stretch their potential.		
Rewards and/or recognition are given for creative ideas.		
As long as they show they have learned from the experience, group members are not penalized for experimentation and risk taking.		
The Physical Space		
Our workspace includes stimulating objects such as journals, art, and other items that are not directly related to our business.		
I have made changes to our physical workspace to improve communi-		

## Dimension

I provide group members with a wide variety of traditi ditional communication tools (e-mail, whiteboards, cra etc.).

Group members are encouraged to design their works their individuality.

## **Bringing in Outsiders or Alternative Perspectives**

Our group makes visits to people outside the division in order to find different perspectives and ideas.

I have arranged for speakers from other industries to work with my group.

Our group has benchmarked the functions and characteristics of our products, services, or internal processes against an industry other than our own.

## Resources for further reading

### **Online tools**

- <u>http://www.urenio.org/tools/en/creativity.pdf</u>
- <u>https://daringtolivefully.com/creativity-tools</u>
- ٠ https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/creative-games/

## Useful links

- <u>https://sumry.me/list/search/why%20is%20creative%20thinking%20important</u>
- <u>https://visitjeromeidaho.com/2019/03/why-is-creativity-important-in-the-workplace/</u>
- <u>https://www.creativityatwork.com/what-is-creativity/</u>
- <u>https://people.math.harvard.edu/~knill/creativity/snowflake.html</u>

### Videos

- <u>Creative Leadership: Time for change</u>
- <u>6 examples of creativity at work</u>
- <u>Creativity tools</u>

### Articles

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- https://hbr.org/2021/10/4-ways-to-spark-creativity-when-youre-feeling-stressed
- in-the-future-of-work/?sh=22eb9e3482ac

### Books

- Thinking Fast Slow
- Making Ideas Happen: Overcoming the Obstacles Between Vision & Reality Scott Belsky •
- How We Got to Now: Six Innovations That Made the Modern World Steven Johnson
- Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative Austin Kleon

	Rating		
	Strong	Adequate in	Needs provement
ional and nontra- ayons and paper,			
spaces to reflect			
n or organization			
come talk to, or			

<u>https://www.forbes.com/sites/jasonwingard/2020/05/29/why-companies-need-creative-leaders-</u>





## What is it about?

Innovation often takes place through the devel-"Innovation is the multi-stage process whereby organizations transform ideas into new/imopment of more- effective products, processproved products, service or processes, in order es, services, technologies, art works or business to advance, compete and differentiate themmodels that innovators make available to marselves successfully in their marketplace" kets, governments, and society.

## Why is it important?

The importance of innovation in entrepreneurthey are directly involved in the community and ship is another key value for the longevity of therefore, contribute to their financial and ecoa business. Entrepreneurs and businesses benomic gain. These small businesses know exactgan with a need. They saw the need within the ly what the community needs and fulfill them. community and they came up with a solution. All things start small. Seizing the opportunity to innovate to make Innovation is important not just in entreprelives more comfortable. And these solutions neurship. As individuals, we are innovators by kept evolving to make it better, easier and adapting well to our needs and creating our more useful.

Entrepreneurs must keep themselves abreast with the current trends and demands. Small businesses see the importance of innovation in entrepreneurship. They were able to compete with large industries and see their value in the economy. Small businesses are important as

## Which are the benefits?

There are several benefits of innovation, main-Some of the key practical benefits of innovaly continuous innovation. Without innovation, tion are: there would not be progress, without progress improved productivity there is no sustainability.

"Innovation enables problem-solving and provides creative insight that allows you to look at things from a different perspective, regardless of whether you are developing a new product, refreshing strategy or finding an original way to stay ahead of the competition."

- Advantages of innovation

# **1. Description of** Innovation

As we grow, we learn something new every day. During the time we face new approaches, new challenges, new technologies ... and new experiences. We tend to make our life easier and more comfortable; we feel that previous approaches are slow, and we want everything fast. That is the engine for innovation.

Innovation is the practical implementation of ideas that result in the introduction of new goods or services or improvement in offering goods or services.

- Wikipedia

## What is Innovation?

Innovation is the specific function of entrepreneurship, whether in an existing business, a public service institution, or a new venture started by a lone individual in the family kitchen. It is the means by which the entrepreneur either creates new wealth-producing resources or endows existing resources with enhanced potential for creating wealth.

- Peter Drucker (Wiki)

The words innovation and invention overlap semantically but are really quite distinct.

- Invention can refer to a type of musical composition, a falsehood, a discovery, or any product of the imagination. The sense of invention most likely to be confused with innovation is "a device, contrivance, or process originated after study and experiment," usually something which has not previously been in existence.
- Innovation, for its part, can refer to something new or to a change made to an existing product, idea, or field. One might say that the first telephone was an invention, the first cellular telephone either an invention or an innovation. and the first smartphone an innovation. -**Merriam Webster definition**

Innovation is related to, but not the same as, invention: innovation is more apt to involve the practical implementation of an invention (i.e. new / improved ability) to make a meaningful impact in a market or society, and not all innovations require a new invention. But we have to bear in mind also another part of innovation called disruption: "Disruption" describes a process whereby a smaller company with fewer resources is able to successfully challenge established incumbent businesses." from Harvard Business Review article: What Is Disruptive Innovation?

- Wikipedia

own solutions. Entrepreneurs are the same. The innovation in entrepreneurship helped the country by changing with the times and producing new products and services from ones that already existed. And, being innovative has helped us become successful in all our endeavors.

- The importance of innovation

- reduced costs
- increased competitiveness
- improved brand recognition and value
- new partnerships and relationships
- increased turnover and improved profitability

## Focus on the solution and try to think of its influence 10x bigger (much bigger) than the existing methods have.

For example, something will take only 10% of previous time. Or it will allow us to bear 10x bigger objects, with the same size. Or it will be able to generate 10x bigger revenue. If you can easily visualize 10x try 100x or more. The goal is to unattach yourself from fixed ideas.

## Work out the solution.

Draw a full picture first. Do not focus on details. The goal is to have a rough solution. So, ignore any problems in the way, except showstoppers. If there is a showstopper, ask yourself what would be a crazy thing to do here? This is again mentioned to help you not to be attached to one journey.



For any kind of innovation there are several steps to follow to get innovative results.

Step by step

guide

That means complete understanding of what problems you are trying to solve. Be careful, making sure to understand the difference between innovation and invention. (Explained in the definition, but basically innovation can be applied to inventions). For any kind of understanding you need to do your research, whether it is a technology research, process research or market research.

2. Toolkit



There are many ways to innovate. Either you try to come up with new solutions, with implementing inventions or you just change the process. Also, a lot of times the innovation is a pure combination of existing products/services/methods.

According to the Harvard Business Review article: Stop sabotaging your ability to innovate, you should do as follows:

## Consult your future self.

People are hardwired to avoid The trouble with failure, berisky choices by magnifying the negative consequences that might ensue. An especially po- that impede learning: denial, tent magnifier is what's called future regret: We imagine the Innovators are especially prone self-recrimination we'll feel if to those feelings because they our venture turns out badly. The desire to avoid that feeling encourages conservatism-but start by dissecting your failure. you can counteract it. Instead Exactly what went wrong, and of focusing on the pain that why? Which premises were would accompany a failed ef- false? Which ones held true? fort, imagine how you'll feel years hence if you play it safe and shelve your idea.

Try to save as many resources as possible, but at the same time iterate solutions often and as much as needed. Brainstorm, execute and again.

**Employ agile methods.** 

## **Dissect your failure.**

yond the obvious, is that it generates negative emotions anger, despair, and self-blame. identify so closely with their projects. To avoid that pitfall,



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## Case study

## Cronut Mixing croissant with donut

One technique for innovating a solution to an identified problem is to actually attempt an experiment with many possible solutions. This technique was famously used by Thomas Edison's laboratory to find a version of the incandescent light bulb economically viable for home use, which involved searching through thousands of possible filament designs before settling on carbonized bamboo. The related technique of A/B testing is often used to help optimize the design of web sites and mobile apps. This is used by major sites such as Amazon, Facebook, Google, and Netflix. Procter & Gamble uses computer-simulated products and online user panels to conduct larger numbers of experiments to guide the design, packaging, and shelf placement of consumer products, and Capital One uses this technique to drive credit card marketing offers.

- Wikipedia

### McKinsey article: The eight essentials of innovation says:

COMPARTY A

"Successful innovators achieve significant multiples for every dollar invested in innovation by accessing the skills and talents of others. In this way, they speed up innovation and uncover new ways to create value for their customers and ecosystem partners.

Smart collaboration with external partners, though, goes beyond merely sourcing new ideas and insights; it can involve sharing costs and finding faster routes to market. Famously, the components of Apple's first iPod were developed almost entirely outside the company; by efficiently managing these external partnerships, Apple was able to move from initial concept to marketable product in only nine months."

KOD

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According to the Harvard Business Review article Why the lean startup changes everything, the lean method is a new way to organize a startup and it favors experimentation over elaborate planning, customers' feedback over intuition and iterative design over traditional "big design up front" development. The lean method has three key principles:

First, rather than engaging in months of planning and research, entrepreneurs accept that all they have on day one is a series of untested hypotheses-basically, good guesses. So instead of writing an intricate business plan, founders summarize their hypotheses in a framework called a business model canvas. Essentially, this is a diagram of how a company creates value for itself and its customers. (See the exhibit "Sketch Out Your Hypotheses." in the article)

Second, lean start-ups use a "get out of the building" approach called customer development to test their hypotheses. They go out and ask potential users, purchasers, and partners for feedback on all elements of the business model, including product features, pricing, distribution

channels, and affordable customer acquisition strategies. The emphasis is on nimbleness and speed: New ventures rapidly assemble minimum viable products and immediately elicit customer feedback. Then, using customers' input to revise their assumptions, they start the cycle over again, testing redesigned offerings and making further small adjustments (iterations) or more substantive ones (pivots) to ideas that aren't working. (See the exhibit "Listen to Customers." in the article)

Third, lean start-ups practice something called agile development, which originated in the software industry. Agile development works handin-hand with customer development. Unlike typical yearlong product development cycles that presuppose knowledge of customers' problems and product needs, agile development eliminates wasted time and resources by developing the product iteratively and incrementally. It's the process by which start-ups create the minimum viable products they test. (See the exhibit "Quick, Responsive Development." in the article)

# **Tips & tricks**

## There is only one good piece of advice to give.

## FAIL ! AS MANY TIMES AS NEEDED.

A lot of people are afraid of failure. It makes Openness to new experiences and ideas inspires you to ask "What if?" questions and connect the dots between unrelated cause you to jump from one idea to the next or bombard you with irrelevant details. If you've bogged down in your main endeavour, it can lure you away with the siren call of novelty. To ensure that your creativity remains a useful fuel rather than a dangerous distraction, you can: Recognise the moment of great peril controlling your curiosity is essential when you are shifting from reflection to action; Set limits to your involvement, recognizing a tendency to let your creativity distract you is the first step to harnessing it; or you can enlist a counterweight, finding a partner who can offset your creative exuberance."

no sense. It is ok to fail. Being as agile as possible allows you to fail many times. Keep the expenses low and be happy for failures, concepts or domains. But an excess can Then try it again a little bit differently. From Harvard Business Review article: Stop sabotaging your ability to innovate "Creativity relies on curiosity and openness. Curiosity drives your questioning and sensemaking-the search for patterns, causality, and opportunities, and your efforts to bridge the gap between what you know and what you don't. But unbounded curiosity can lead you astray in two ways. You may get drawn down a rabbit hole and lose sight of your original purpose. Or you may become mired in reflection, trying to plan for every contingency.





## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the Multi-disciplinary thinking dimension of your team project's workplace.

Is this innovation in this area necessary?

Do I really know the most recent innovation of the area I am going to innovate?

What will the innovation bring on the table?

Does innovation create more good than bad? (e.g. the whole process, production and usage of innovation is also bringing some kind of social and/or environmental impact?



## Resources for further reading

### **Online tools**

- MindMeister: Create Your Mind Maps Online On Any Device
- Viima Make More Innovation Happen
- Idea & Innovation management software Accept Mission
- IdeaScale: Idea Management and Innovation Management Software

### Useful links

- 100+ sources that every innovation professional should know
- 5 Methods For Innovation You Should Try with Your Team
- 10 Types of Innovation: The Art of Discovering a Breakthrough Product
- Ten Types of Innovation: 30 new case studies for 2019

## Videos

- Charles Leadbeater: The era of open innovation
- The single biggest reason why start-ups succeed
- The prison of your mind | Sean Stephenson | TEDxIronwoodStatePrison

### Articles

- Drive Innovation with Better Decision-Making
- 5 Questions to Build Your Company's Capacity for Innovation
- Stop Sabotaging Your Ability to Innovate
- The Innovator's DNA
- Advantages of innovation | nibusinessinfo.co.uk

## Books

- World's Best Business Models
- Competing Against Luck: The Story of Innovation and Customer Choice
- (and What to Do About It)
- Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Lead and Others Don't
- The Lean Enterprise: How Corporations Can Innovate Like Startup

The Invincible Company: How to Constantly Reinvent Your Organization with Inspiration From the

• Exponential Organizations: New Organizations Are Ten Times Better, Faster, and Cheaper Than Yours





# **1. Description of Being** initiative

## What is Being initiative?

Being initiative is the ability to be resourceful and to introduce a new course of action. It requires tenacity, resilience, and determination. You should be able to show your capacity to think for yourself and act when necessary.

## What is it about?

Researchers Michael Frese and Doris Fay define initiative as "work behavior characterized by its self-starting nature, its proactive approach, and by being persistent in overcoming difficulties that arise in pursuit of a goal."

Being ilnitiative is an important aspect of developing your young professional talents and is a part of your self-management mindset. Taking initiative involves looking at the big picture and identifying the tasks that can be completed to move things forward.

When you show initiative, you do things without being told; you find out what you need to know; you keep going when things get tough; and you spot and take advantage of opportunities that others pass by. You act, instead of reacting, at work.

Initiative is doing the right thing without being told.

- Victor Hugo, French writer

## Why is it important?

The capacity to be resourceful and work without being told what to do is known as initiative. It needs persistence and determination. People who take initiative show that they are capable of thinking for themselves and acting when necessary. It involves using your mind and being motivated to succeed.

Initiative is a self-management skill, and self-management is one of key life and work skills for Young Professionals. When you are being initiative, you accomplish things without being asked, solve problems that others may not have noticed, and go above and beyond to keep learning and improving. If necessary, you conduct further research, ask questions, and seek assistance.

Being initiative makes you an attractive candidate for jobs and chances since it demonstrates your ability to think for yourself as well as your willingness to learn and improve in your current position.

## Which are the benefits of Being initiative?

If displayed appropriately and at the right time, Increased company efficiency. being initiative is equally beneficial for you and Looking from the employer's perspective, it's for the organization you work for. It's a wellthe initiative of individuals that make process known fact that one should take initiative to improvement, cost reduction and client reten-'get noticed', but what exactly stands behind tion happen. Everyone needs people who can these words? Below are the list of evident and see the opportunities for improvement, resolve less-than-obvious perks you can get from using problems in a non-standard way and suggest vour initiative: ideas that can potentially lead the company to a breakthrough. That's why creative approach You get visibility and recognition. and initiative are one of the top gualities com-As you might have learnt from the experience, panies look for when they hire graduates (here the most hard-working individual isn't always you can find the guide on landing your first job the one who gets promoted faster than othafter graduation).

ers. Hard work and dedication are not enough to build a career - it's important to make your contribution noticed and show your real value for the company. By showing initiative, you demonstrate genuine interest in fulfilling company needs which can lead to higher salary or promotion in the future (if you're looking for hands-on tips on how to get a bigger paycheck, see here).

### You learn new skills.

When your responsibility is basically the same will sound even more significant on paper. If all the time, it's hard to keep learning and growyou don't know how to include the projects you ing professionally. Moreover, getting stuck in a led on your resume, or feel that your resume is role with no professional development leads to not working, consider getting expert help. Our professional burnout and continuous workplace in-house resume writers can create a modern stress. Willingness to take on more responsibilresume for you - check our services and prices. ity or a new project that is completely new for Whether it comes to introducing new ideas you expands your comfort zone and allows you for higher productivity, leading an innovative to learn new hard and soft skills every day. If project or performing the duties of your boss you're looking to improve your communication during his absence, thoughtful initiative always skills, problem solving, independence and boost pays off. Your task is to do your homework, find self-esteem, initiative is the right way to do so. the right time and place to display your initiative and be persistent during its realization.

## You get extra responsibility.

To continue the previous point, getting extra responsibility allows you to be considered for a promotion. If you are successful performing your usual range of duties and are looking to do more, it means that you are ready for a management role and you can prove it on the practice. Therefore, if you want a promotion, look for an initiative waiting to be implemented or come up with your ideas.

## You boost the worth of your resume.

Any issues of displaying initiative, both effective and ineffective, deserve being mentioned on your resume. Acting on your own initiative assumes that you have leadership abilities, can work independently and identify opportunities. Moreover, it means that you are persistent enough to reach company goals. And if you support the description of projects you led with high-impact resume words, your contribution

# 2. Toolkit



## Step by step guide

## Have your training plan at hand.

The best initiative comes from understanding how it can benefit the organization - and your training and career, too. Moreover, the research shows that people who have long-term career plans are more willing to take initiative. If you know your professional goals, you are aware and which projects to complete to work your way up. You learn to tie your career needs to the with really helpful ideas rather has just crossed your mind. If you don't have a career plan yet, learn the pros and cons of creating it.

## Boost your confidence.

In fact, it's impossible to imagine a good initiative coming from a shy, hesitant person. When you present some brand new solution to management, you need to be confident in your words and your ideas. If you lack self-esteem, there are plenty of quick ways to increase it. First, create a list of your past professional accomplishments. Taking a look at how much you have achieved so far will motivate you for even bigger accomplishments. Second, set measurable goals and achieve them so you could see the progress and start perceiving yourself as a 'go-getter'. And third, visualize yourself as a person that exudes confidence and positive vibes.

# Ask questions.

Be curious.

People who can see opportunities

which are in the air share one com-

mon trait - they're curious. They're

always looking to know how the entire company works, and go above and beyond their direct responsibilities. When you learn how every department of your orga-

nization works, what makes your product or service a success and

what other employees complain

about most, you have a clear pic-

ture in your mind and can see what

can be improved and how.

To learn to see potential for improvement, you need to ask yourself the right questions. Use them to access the current situation in the company or your department, identify problems at an early stage or understand the needs of your clients. When you adopt the habit of seeking opportunities everywhere, you'll become an asset for any employer.

## Think like the business owner.

If you want to set yourself up for the initiative, watching things from the business owner perspective will help you work your way up. Most employees tend to do exactly what is required from them and what they get money for (unless they're ambitious and want to reach the top of the corporate ladder). However, to be truly beneficial for the business, you need to develop the mindset of the business owner. It assumes seeing your ordinary tasks and the tasks set for your department as the part of a complicated business process which eventually brings money to the business. As you focus on the overall company success, you get more responsible and thoughtful when displaying the initiative, and your suggestions get more helpful.

## Come up with well-prepared ideas.

Speaking up the good yet raw ideas is the surefire way to have them stolen by a prompt colleague who might develop them and get all the credit. It isn't the reward you wanted when you learnt to take initiative, is it? Moreover, as we've mentioned above, raw ideas aren't very helpful for your boss as they need further work to bring in ROI. Whenever you feel you've got a great initiative to come up with, do proper homework. Develop your ideas further, think of the amount of work and costs it might involve and the risks it may encounter. For instance, if you'd like to suggest that a sales team could get training to learn the modern selling practices, calculate whether the expected turnover will cover training expenses. When you enter your boss's office with a draft of a business case, you'll be taken more seriously.



## Help others.

On many teams, there's a person who lags behind in one area or a newly hired employee who lacks proper onboarding training. In this case, you can take the initiative and explain to them the issues they lack knowledge or experience with, thus increasing the results of work for the entire team and gaining a reputation of a subject matter expert. For instance, if your company implements brand new software or new corporate rules, you can serve as an agent of this change by training others and explaining most complex concepts.

Participate in corporate activities.

If you work for a mid- or largesized organization, there are always plenty of events around such as team building activities, conferences, training sessions, etc. Therefore, you can offer your candidacy to speak at these events or assist with preparations. Not only will it help you understand the work of other departments and gain new knowledge, but also you'll recommend yourself as a go-getter who is concerned with the life of the company (and your career as well). For instance, you can assist with preparation for the office corporate party.

## Have an eye on opportunities.

The ability to see opportunities literally everywhere is a skill, and you can master it. If you can see and use the potential for improvement and growth, you won't get unnoticed with any organization. There's a number of ways you can teach yourself to keep an eye on opportunity.

## **Participate** in brainstorming sessions.

Getting involved in workplace activities is necessary to get noticed. If brainstorming sessions are held, don't be afraid to speak up and share your ideas. Maybe, some of vour ideas will be supported and realized. Brainstorming sessions are typically used to find a creative solution for existing problems, but even if you don't invent that solution, being an active participant of likewise activities will help you build a reputation of a person your boss can solely count on.

## Case studies

## <u>The concept of being initiative</u> in engineering field

### The case

Being initiative and the role it plays in the engineering workforce.

## The challenge

Testing the hypothesis that being initiative is correlated with "partners assessments, need for achievement, action orientation, problem-focused and passive emotion-focused coping, career planning and executing plans"

## The result

The results from the case study confirmed the hypothesis that personal initiative is correlated with partners' assessments, need for achievement, action orientation, problem-focused and passive emotion-focused coping, career planning and executing plans. Other related findings from the study were that entrepreneurs tended to have a very high degree of personal initiative and that unemployed subjects with high degree of personal initiative tended to find jobs more quickly than those with a low degree of personal initiative.





## Practice

Being initiative Technique	Purpose
Lecturing	Lecturing is one of the methods that comes first, where the business lead- ers or teachers of millennials are in the center. It is a method where both of them actively describe topics and the millennials are passive listeners. With this method, lessons, workshop, seminar etc. proceed in the form of report, description and explanation.
Debate	Depending on the situation, debate is a tool that allows all millennials, or a specific portion of the workshops or events to participate in. In this method, members of the group discuss a topic by addressing the various points of view and discuss alternative opinions about being initiative.
Demonstration	In this method the business leaders or teachers of the millennials demonstrate an experiment, test, in front of the learners. And then assists millennials to do so too. Y Gen learn not only by just looking and watching, but also by tak- ing part and participating. This method is usually applied when teaching and communication skills.
Case Study	Case studies require millennials to actively participate while using an analyt- ical perspective to think about real and problematic events. The problematic event may be real or very close to real life.
Performance	In this method, the business leaders or teachers of millennials perform activ- ities such as experiments and demonstrations in front of them, millennials try to learn by looking and watching. This method is usually applied where there are limited facilities and in dealing with dangerous experimental situations.
Questions - Answers	The different types of Questions used (associative, differential, assessment, requesting information, motivating, and brainstorming) although millennials get into more active positions during the process; the method is moderator-centered.
Cooperative Learning	Cooperative Learning is; a kind of learning that is based on millennials working together for a common purpose. Millennials gain experiences such as becoming aware of unity.
Brainstorming	Brainstorming is a group work process that has been regulated to reach solu- tions for a problem without limitations or evaluation. The purpose of brain- storming is to make it easier for millennials to express themselves and to gen- erate ideas.
The STARRS Method	STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, and Result) provides business leaders and teachers of millennials the opportunity to 'Reflect' on their experience and 'Strengthen' it by thinking how they would do things better.



## If you are in school:

- the teacher might already have a topic in mind already or you can use this challenge or one of • Ask if you can support another our other challenges
- Set-up or volunteer for the school council
- Seek out a particular issue for your school, litter, cyber bullying, mental health and build a campaign to support it

skills

- a subject/skill or process you know will help the team
- project, put yourself out there

## If you are in other places

- Volunteer to lead an assembly, Organise a training session for Organise a trainings for a skill that will help your team
  - Organise a share the knowledge event, all of the team players talk about their roles and skills
  - to gain new friends and new Find new opportunities to play, a new league to enter, additional workshops you can undertake
    - Volunteer the team to support a community project, teach young or older people.

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# Tips & tricks

## As a manager or business owner in order to foster Being initiative you need to

- Seeking more responsibilities.
- Tackling challenges/solving problems.
- Training others/sharing knowledge.
- Helping your coworkers.
- Providing regular status updates.
- Building strong working relationships with coworkers.
- Doing things and projects that others avoid.
- Volunteering to work with different teams
   Anticipating and preventing problems. and departments.
- Stepping in when someone is unavailable or absent.
- Being innovative/improving systems, pro Maintaining high quality standards. cesses and procedures.
- Resolving interpersonal conflicts at work.
- Offering to mentor others.
- Volunteering for leadership roles.

- Referring to good potential employees.
- Helping in the interviewing and hiring pro-
- Brainstorming ideas to improve the company.
- Becoming a good team player.
- Supporting your supervisor or manager efficiently.
- Helping others to see their strengths and qualities.
- Dressing to succeed.
- Sharing the credit.
- Making good decisions and being decisive.
- Doing quality control for finished projects.

## How to enhance your Being initiative

It will need a little bit of courage and self-belief 3. Try to always be organized. to use your initiative talents, and you will need to Being initiative might be about pushing yourself to push yourself a little bit farther. Simply waking up think differently about how things operate and how and completing the things that other people haven't things are done. You'll be putting yourself forward gotten around to isn't the best method to demonfor new duties and forcing yourself to think differstrate initiative. To truly have initiative, you should ently about how things work and how things are go over and over. Here are four strategies to begin done. To take on new projects or expand your workdeveloping and enhance your initiative abilities. ble-check that your tasks are in order and that you 1. Don't hesitate to ask questions. have the time and ability to accomplish that little bit more or work in a different way.

Understanding how and why things operate the way they do, or why things are done the way they are, helps you to consider how they may be improved. Also, the more you know about a subject, the bet-

The key to initiative is action; you should ask quester you'll be able to predict what will happen next. tions, speak up more, and be organized and pre-Be interested and ask questions about procedures pared, but if you do all of that and still don't take and consider the big picture. You'll probably just be action, you've failed at the last hurdle of initiative. responsible for one piece of a process, but learning Seeing what needs to be done and then informing what happens before and after you perform your job can help you come up with new methods to make you appear like a whiner rather than a doer! In teamthe next person's work a little simpler. work circumstances, there will be one thing you are Never be afraid to think outside the box; seek out very excellent at and learn faster than others; why others with different responsibilities and interests not organize a training session for your team on your than you and ask them how they handle problems. main talent, share what you know, and encourage other team members to train on their finest skill as well. If you haven't yet entered the workforce, or-2. Don't be shy to speak up more. ganizing a training session where the goalkeeper or defenders discuss their talents and training might Make sure you're presenting fresh ideas. Wellhelp the entire team operate better together. thought-out ideas provided at a convenient moment

management in the middle of a conversation, but if you have a new suggestion for how your sports team might score more goals or defend better, there will undoubtedly be a moment to share it!

Take an interest in the issues you're working on, and discuss new articles you've read as well as fascinatsocial media, talk about previous campaigns that went well and stay up with new applications and channels that are being developed.

Speak out when you have a challenge and inspire others to do the same, take an interest in initiatives and stimulate conversation about how challenges might be handled.

## 4. Be ready to act!





## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the Being initiative dimension of your team project's workplace.

## Action checklist

Make a habit of asking "what if" instead of accepting the status-quo

Schedule creative brainstorm sessions by yourself or in groups

Challenge yourself to try new things every day for a week

Ask a lot of questions

If you are spending a lot of time doing boring tasks, ask yourself if it really needs to be done. If it does, find ways to make it more efficient. Consider outsourcing some of those tasks.

Do different self-awareness exercises every day for a month. Take personality tests. Journal. Ask your friends and family about your strengths and weaknesses.

Make a list of all the things you've been meaning to do for a while – whether it's something as small as cleaning the house, or something as big as writing a book – and start doing at least one thing from that list straight away.

Find a mentor.

Form a mastermind group.

Join a class to learn something new, even if it has nothing to do with your career.

Make a list of your biggest mistakes. Journal about the lessons you learned from those mistakes.

Speak up. Next time someone asks you for an opinion, or if you are in a meeting, don't hold back. Present your ideas, or say exactly what you think. You have to be comfortable with yourself and your beliefs, to get used to taking an initiative.

If you see something that needs to be done, go do it - even if it's not a part of your responsibility.

Admit your mistakes.

Set goals.

Participate. Make your presence known by taking part in any discussion or activity with enthusiasm.

Take advantage of new opportunities.

Discover your values. Do you know what you stand for? Your core values are an essential part of the life you want to create, so spend some time thinking about them.

Make a list of things around you that are not quite good enough, the ones that you know could be better. Pick one, and brainstorm how you'll make it better. Then, immediately implement the idea.

Make decisions. When something needs to be decided, don't just worry or think about it and prolong the situation. Do your homework, assess the situation, and then make an informed decision.

Follow the 80/20 rule. Focus your efforts on the things that will deliver high impact results.

Make a conscious effort to give your absolute best to every task at hand.

Be persistent. If you want something, and you know you are right to want it, then keep at it. Don't let the fear of rejection hold you back.

Influence is power. Experiment with different ways to improve your influencing skills.

Send a hand-written "Thank You" card to someone who has helped you.

## Action checklist

Approach one person who's good at something you want to improve in, and ask them for help. You could either ask them to be your mentor, or make a mutually beneficial offer where you provide them with something they need in return.

Praise someone publicly for something they did well. If your spouse did something nice for you, thank them or praise their effort in front of others. If your employee took an initiative, went out of their way to do something, or did a really great job, make a point of commenting on it in front of other colleagues.

Praise someone who's in a higher position than you. If your parents did something well, or if your boss did something very helpful, or gave you good guidance, tell them that, and thank them.

Lead by example. If you are trying to get someone else to do something, do it yourself first. Inspire action in others. Don't force it.

Help someone with zero expectation for any reward, or even a thank-you. Help them because it's the right thing to do.

Find an informal leadership position. Organise events in your local community; offer your help with school projects; start a group that brings like-minded people together. You don't need to wait for someone else to tell you that you are a leader. Leaders lead – whether they get paid for it or not.

Find one way that you can improve your communication skills, and practice it every day for a fortnight.

Find out how other people prefer to communicate. Wherever possible, use the medium of their choice.

Bring solutions, not problems. This is a cliché for a reason. No one likes naysayers and whiners. If you see an issue, by all means bring it up. But have something constructive to say as well.

Anticipate your manager's, partner's, children's, friends' needs. Do something for them that they need, without their having to ask you.

Regularly ask people in your life for their feedback on your strengths and weaknesses.

Be honest. Be yourself. Success without authenticity is meaningless.

Be your own best supporter. Learn to present your ideas and plans in a positive and effective manner to others.

Volunteer for difficult or weird assignments.

Smile at people. Greet them. Friendliness is the most effective way to create connection.

Minimize negative comments that come out of your mouth.

Give what you want to receive. This is similar to "do to others what you want done to you." If you want respect, give respect to others. If you want opportunities, give the opportunities in your power to people who would benefit from it.

Find a work environment that supports your authenticity. Don't try to fit in a place that is totally wrong for you.

Create a plan for where you want to be in five years time.

Actively break-off association with all negative influences in your life. Surround yourself with people who support, motivate or inspire you.

Regularly review your progress on your goals, and adjust your course as required.

Pick one skill that is important/necessary for you but you aren't very good at, and focus on improving it to a high level within 4-6 months.

Simplify your life.



## Resources for further reading

### **Online tools**

- Document about Concept of career guidance and developing career choices
- Manual about Inclusive Leadership for Trainers

### Useful links

- Blog Post about "How To Find And Retain Talent In The Millennial Era" •
- The Inclusive Leadership Handbook Theoretical framework •
- •
- Competence Self Assessment Tool For Youth Workers •

### Videos

- Let's Address Millennial Mental Wellbeing
- The Power of Taking Initiative and Being More Proactive How to Take the Initiative
- HR Technology 2021: A Comprehensive Guide To The Market
- Career Readiness Success at Work Taking the initiative at work

### Articles

- Paper: The First Step to Leadership in School Management: Taking Initiative ٠
- Do About Them
- HBR Blog Post: Millennials Are Actually Workaholics, According to Research
- •
- Workforce Entry

### Books

- Initiative: A Proven Method to Bring Your Passions to Life (and Work) ٠
- 1001 Ways to Take Initiative at Work ٠
- College Dropout: Why Millennials Are Taking the Initiative

EU Project "CATCH 21st Century Skills for changing the approach to university teaching"

• The Role of Millennials in The Emerging Story of Our Time | Dr. Seren Dalkiran | TEDxSquareMile

Phd Thesis: Millennial Integration: Challenges Millennials Face in the Workplace and What They Can

Insider Blog Post: A CEO shares his best advice for getting promoted quickly when you're in your 20s The Wall Street Journey Blog Post: Everyone Agrees: Millennials Have a Lot to Learn at Work • Communication Studies Thesis: They Work Hard for Their Money: A Narrative Analysis of Millennial





# 1. Description of Curiosity

The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size.

- Albert Einstein

## What is Curiosity?

Curiosity is a pleasant state of moti- This happens because curiosity can vation that involves a tendency to recognize and seek out new and stimulating information and experiences.

Curiosity differs from other positive emotions due to the strong desire to explore and persist in the activity that initially stimulated the interest of an individual. Although curiosity and pleasure tend to go hand in hand, sometimes there is a conflict between curiosity and other positive emotions.

lead to the search for new, uncertain and complex activities that are aversive. When curious, the rewards seem to come from the process of integrating various and complex information and experiences rather than simply from the positive effect associated with them.

## Why is it important?

### 1. New realities and possibilities open up

Being curious allows you to see new realities and possibilities that are not normally visible. They are all elements that are present in daily life but remain hidden behind the veil of routine. It therefore takes a curious mind, trained to ask questions to make sure to move that veil and discover new worlds with their new possibilities.

## 2. Makes the mind active and does not "wither"

Curious people spend their lives asking questions and looking for answers in their minds. They keep their mind moving and active. Although our brain is not a muscle under the histological aspect, it is strengthened through continuous exercise; it is curiosity that keeps the mind in shape, making it stronger day after day.

### 3. Prepares your mind for new ideas

When one is curious to know something, the mind expects and anticipates new ideas related to that something. Without curiosity, ideas

## What is it about?

ered part of this line of studies (source). From The word curiosity derives from the Latin *cura*. understood as concern: it literally means "to a scientific point of view, curiosity is "a state of mind that pushes you to seek out new and take care of something unknown". stimulating information and experiences". Curiosity is what characterizes a genius. There

cannot be an intellectual giant who is not a cu-The more curious people are, the more they are rious person. If we think of people like Leonardo able to: da Vinci, Nikola Tesla, Guglielmo Marconi or Rita recognize the novelties with respect to pre-Levi Montalcini, we can only see through their vious experiences and expectations; lives that they were all curious.

Eleanor Roosevelt considered it "the most useful gift".

Scientists began questioning curiosity in the 1800s. Initially, psychologists studied how children were attracted to novelty and how family background influenced this attitude.

Pavlov's studies on the behavior of animals in front of unknown objects can also be consid-

can run away, escape without even realizing it, since the mind is unprepared to recognize them. How many great ideas are you willing to lose without being helped by the desire for knowledge?

Curiosity is a fundamental element of our knowledge, but its biological function, and its mechanisms are still poorly understood. Psychology and neuroscience must work together to scientifically analyze curiosity.

## 4. It makes our lives exciting

The life of the curious is by no means boring. They do not have a life blinded and tainted by routine. They keep their mind like that of children, new things get their attention, there are always new toys to have fun with. The curious dispel boredom with an adventurous life.

Now that we have understood the strength of being curious, it is enough just to apply some small tips to develop curiosity.

- face the complexity of unknown situations with clarity;
- manage uncertainty, or the imponderability of the results of an action or situation:
- manage the conflict, or the existence of attitudes or interpretations different from one's own.

## The 5 dimensions of curiosity

After collecting data from a nationally representative sample of 508 adults, then 403 adults online and then another nationally representative sample of 3,000 adults, US psychologist Todd Kashdan analyzing the work and previous research of other psychologists, has discovered 5 dimensions of curiosity.

## **1. Sensitivity to deprivation**

The first dimension, derived from the work of Berlyne and Loewenstein, is the sensitivity to deprivation, the recognition of a gap in knowledge whose filling offers relief. This kind of curiosity isn't necessarily good, but people who experience it work tirelessly to solve problems.

## 2. Joyful exploration

The second dimension, influenced by Deci's research, is joyful exploration, being consumed by wonder at the fascinating characteristics of the world. This is a pleasant state; the people in it seem to have a zest for life.

## **3. Social curiosity**

The third dimension, deriving from Renner's research, is social curiosity: speaking, listening and observing others to learn what they think and do. Humans are inherently social animals, and the most effective and efficient way to determine if someone is friend or foe is to obtain information. Some may even snoop, eavesdrop, or gossip to do so.

### 4. Stress tolerance

The fourth dimension, which is based on the recent work of Paul Silvia, a psychologist at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, is stress tolerance: the willingness to accept and even exploit the anxiety associated with novelty. People lacking this ability see information gaps, experience wonder, and are interested in others, but they are unlikely to step forward and explore.

### 5. Thrill-seeking

The fifth dimension, inspired by Zuckerman, is the search for thrills: being willing to take physical, social and financial risks to acquire varied, complex and intense experiences. For people with this ability, the anxiety of dealing with novelty is something to be amplified, not to be reduced.



## Which are the benefits of being curious?

And it is true, but also something more.

In fact, curious people not only accumulate an Several researches have repeatedly shown how enormous wealth of knowledge, but also know an active mind is among the indicators of lastwhat to do with it at the right time. That is, ing health, a lower decline of mental faculties when faced with a problem they find a solution and a good quality of life (understood as having by combining in an original way the "pieces" positive feelings, such as optimism and happicollected over time from the most disparate ness). The scientific literature on the subject is sources. very vast, with a close collaboration between psychologists and neuroscientists. Here are two Looking around and asking questions about studies that concern two categories that often struggle with boredom.

what surrounds us is one of the fundamental ingredients of creativity. The ability to focus on something by grasping its different nuances is what makes our idea or our work unique. Above all, it is a mental attitude that rejects passivity and puts everything into question.

Curiosity is a challenge to oneself and to the world, allowing us to embrace the complexity in which we are immersed. It is also a remedy for one's mental well-being, as well as being one of the best antidotes against boredom.

## 1. Curiosity helps learning

Passionate interest in what is unknown is the engine of learning. In this regard, a study by the 3. Curiosity fuels open-mindedness University of California shows how curiosity facilitates the acquisition of new knowledge and How does a greater openness of mind develop? The answer is quite simple: with curiosity. its memorization. In fact, the brain is rewarded by the information it receives, quenching its To be curious, you need to have a sincere inthirst for knowledge.

**1. Motivation** plays an important role. The learning process is in fact influenced by the real reason that guides us in gathering information. Studving for a high grade, or recognition from teachers, for example, limits deep understanding of a topic. This would explain why some great geniuses, with rather mediocre report cards, have outclassed the top of the class who remained anonymous after finishing school.

## "Curiosity leads to knowledge", it is often said. 2. Curiosity fosters resilience and mental well-being

The first is aimed at a group of US students, where those who fell into the category of the curious were much more satisfied and involved in the path they were taking. They were able, therefore, to make sense of their days and they drew continuous motivations to continue their studies.

The second research, conducted by Chinese researchers, explores the behavior of those who work in companies. A portrait of the curious person emerges: proactive, healthier than average, more resistant to stress and mental fatigue.

terest in something and then ask questions. To oneself and to others, nourishing a critical sense that rejects a priori what is given as true and absolute.

It also takes courage, because we often silence our doubts so as not to expose ourselves and live without hassle. On the contrary, curious people are always looking for answers. They do not stop at a no and are ready to revise their opinions, expanding them with points of view they had not considered.

# 2. Toolkit



## Step by step guide



Albert Einstein did not think he was a special person, just a curious enthusiast. You won't find a great scientist, artist, creative, innovative entrepreneur who isn't hungry for answers and knowledge. The driving force behind their success is curiosity, which pushes them away from the ordinary.

Creative thinking needs curiosity, and here are some tips for cultivating it.

# 1.

## Read (a lot).

Reading books and magazines, trying to grasp their deeper meaning, opens up a world of possibilities. It is a very cheap, yet effective way to meet people, places and ideas that we do not know. While it is true that reading is important, it is also true that to stimulate curiosity you have to vary your readings (by changing literary genre, newspaper, topic, etc.). To do this, I recommend to visit a library, explore the shelves of all sections and be inspired.

"Those who do not read at 70 will have lived only one life: their own. The reader will have lived 5,000 years: there was when Cain killed Abel, when Renzo married Lucia, when Leopardi admired the infinite ... because reading is an immortality backwards."

- Umberto Eco

# 2.

## Observe and ask questions.

It has already been mentioned, but it is worth repeating. Questions are the soul of curiosity. They light up our brains and have the power to restructure our thoughts. To ask good questions, however, one must pay attention and be good observers. Only in this way will we go to the heart of the problem or situation we are evaluating.

"A wise man learns more from a foolish question than a fool can learn from a wise answer."

- Bruce Lee



## Change habits.

Routine is one of the curiosity killers. Habits are a fixed pattern that repeats itself over time, a kind of autopilot that we don't pay particular attention to. By doing the same things again, we end up taking them for granted, forgetting what it means to be amazed. To give the routine a little shake up, it often takes very little: change bars, practice a hobby, listen to a new radio station, take different routes to get to work and so on.

"Habit and routine have an incredible power to waste and destroy." 3.

## Travel.

By setting out on a journey, you have the opportunity to cross cities and landscapes never seen before, making experiences that break our daily routine. Even better if you manage to immerse yourself in a new environment for a fairly long period of time (at least a few days). Likewise, it is important to meet the locals and talk to them. About what? Everything and nothing. Often abroad they are very open and they are always happy to chat with a traveler.

"The only rule o back different."

# 5.

## Have fun.

Curiosity is an effective remedy for boredom, but boredom also has a right to exist. It can be a space to reflect, but also a clue that what we are doing is not for us. Since you now know the importance of questions, make it a very simple one: "Do I like what I'm doing?". Curiosity enriches your life if it indulges a sincere desire for something. Otherwise it becomes yet another task on the to-do list. Look for something that you like, that you enjoy, it doesn't matter what it is.

"The time you enjoy wasting is not wasted time and certain things that are not necessary can be essential."

"The only rule of travel is: do not return the way you left. Come

- Anne Carson

- Abraham Maslow



# They seek efficiency to the detriment of exploration

In the early 1900s, Henry Ford focused all his efforts on one goal: reducing production costs to create a car for the masses. By 1908, he had realised that vision with the introduction of the Model T. Demand grew so high that by 1921 the company was producing 56% of all passenger cars in the United States – a remarkable success made possible primarily by the firm's efficiency-centered model of work. But in the late 1920s, as the US economy rose to new heights, consumers started wanting greater variety in their cars. While Ford remained fixated on improving the Model T, competitors such as General Motors started producing an array of models and soon captured the main share of the market. Owing to its single-minded focus on efficiency. Ford stopped experimenting and innovating and fell behind.





## **Curiosity Techniques**

Research suggests that experiencing novelty is an important factor in both health and happiness. The opportunities for novelty exist practically everywhere, but to discover them and make the most of them we need to develop our "musculature of curiosity" through a more regular and intense use. Here are some simple ways to start expanding your curiosity capacity:

When	Instructions
Upon awakening	Look with "new eyes". Choose to see some things in your home, partner, or family that you may have overlooked before.
When you speak	Strive to remain open to everything that happens, without taking for granted, categorizing, judging or reacting. Ask more questions and listen carefully.
While driving	Instead of dealing with a commute, try to actively anticipate what the drivers around you are likely to do. Be careful what awaits you and what is on the horizon.
When you work	Look for opportunities to challenge and apply yourself in ways that pique your interest and produce great results. Ask questions like: what's interest- ing here? How can I make it more fun?
During training	Instead of following the movements, focus your attention on the complex- ities and sensations of your movement and on any sight, sound and smell that is in your range of action.

Start by dedicating five minutes each day to practicing curiosity. After a week, add a little more time to your workout: while you cook, eat, clean, bathe, pay your bills, sit on the porch and so on.

# Tips & tricks

## As a manager or Business owner in order to foster Curiosity you need to

## Empower employees at all levels through ownership

It's been shown that big companies in mature industries, even when they realize the value of curiosity, struggle with nurturing it within their employees. One way to counter this type of situation is by creating a non-traditional workplace structure focused around empowering workers of all levels. On the whole, you want all of your employees to feel like "mini CEOs." This type of empowerment allows for full ownership of a project and emboldens employees to fight for their ideas. By rewarding those who speak up and giving credit to leaders of all levels, personal growth through curiosity becomes a far more attainable idea. It also paves the way for new voices in the company to bring forth fresh ideas.

## Encourage outside hobbies

- When we're exposed to the same ideas and activities day in and day out, it is difficult to maintain a creative mindset. This is where hobbies outside of work play an important role in employee performance. A recent San Francisco State University study of workers found that those who engaged in "creative pursuits" -- anything from playing video games to writing short stories -had improved job performance and specifically out-performed their hobby-less coworkers when it came to creative problem-solving.
- However, with many jobs veering off of the traditional "9-to-5" schedule and with the line between "work life" and "home life" more blurry than ever before, it's important for businesses to take an active role in encouraging their employees' side passions. Whether during a designated sharing time at company meetings or by encouraging your team to take advantage of all of their vacation days, a continued conversation regard-

ing life outside of the office and support for such endeavors will allow your employees to be more curious in their work. Many companies found a balance by encouraging employees to bring their personal passions into the office with a series of informative show and tells: e.g. employees give presentations as varied as a tutorial on how to tie nautical knots to a (somewhat murky) recollection of variations in whiskey based on a recent trip to Ireland.

## Open Up the office

One of the keys to breeding an environment of curiosity is to provide employees with exposure to as many different ideas as possible through cross-team communication. One of the most popular ways to build this type of communication across the company is by physically opening up the office, allowing people to interact with parts of the organization they may not normally come into direct contact with. If opening up the physical space isn't possible, businesses can as Slack, which allow for workplace bonding and discussion across not only workplace boundaries but also physical distances, bringing offices from around the country (and the world) together like never before. In companies with several different offices, it's helpful to maintain all-hands-on-deck meetings or even to install visual live-streams into each office to contribute to that connection.





## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the Curiosity dimension to challenge your attitude and sharpen your curiosity.

	Rating		
Dimension	Strong	Adequate Needs improvement	
Diversity of Styles			
Do you have specific habits for getting curious when you notice you're not curious about something important?			
Do you, in every situation, endeavour to have an accurate map of the territory?			
Do you regularly acknowledge and accept the possible worlds/ realities/ possibilities that may exist?	,		
Do you regularly ask, "What are the causes of my beliefs? Why do I think this? What's the source?"	,		
Do you regularly ask, "What would I expect to see differently if x was or was not the case?"	:		
Do you regularly ask, when unexpected things happen, "Why didn't I expect x to happen?"	,		
When you sit down to think, or to look something up, do you regularly ask, "What am I chasing? Why am I doing this? Am I asking myself questions about this?"			
Do you frequently stop to consider what information will be most valuable to achieving your goals?			
Do you frequently ask, "What do I most want to accomplish?"			
Do you focus your curiosity on the information you need to achieve your goals? E.g. "What do I need to know in order to achieve that thing? What is most likely to help me learn this and figure it out?"			
Do you stop reading when a source becomes irrelevant?			
Do you actively seek out more useful information? E.g. "What are the best sources? Where is the best information?"			
Do you gravitate to inquiries that seem most promising of pro- ducing shifts in belief?			
Do you gravitate to inquiries that are least like the ones you've tried before?			
Do you ever call topics or ideas boring, shallow, crazy, beneath			

you, or confusing (or other words that close off thought)?

## Dimension

Do you notice when conflicting emotions cut off y

Do you, in every social interaction, ask what that person can teach you?

Do you, in every situation where you receive feedback, treat it as potentially valuable?

## Resources for further reading

### **Online tools**

- <u>https://eyes.nasa.gov/curiosity/</u>
- <u>https://curious.com/</u>

### Videos

- <u>CURIOSITY</u>
- <u>Curiosity Is a Superpower If You Have the Courage to Use It | Big Think</u>
- <u>Curiosity Is Your Super Power | Spencer Harrison & Jon Cohen | TEDxLosGatos</u>
- Curiosity Saves the Cat | Tara Connor | TEDxKids@SMU
- The Power of Curiosity •
- How to spark your curiosity, scientifically | Nadya Mason

### Articles

- <u>https://psychology.iresearchnet.com/social-psychology/personality/curiosity/</u>
- https://hbr.org/2018/09/the-business-case-for-curiosity •
- ty-in-the-workplace/?sh=28a8e65642e2
- <u>https://www.buildinganddecor.co.za/the-business-case-for-curiosity/</u>
- <u>https://www.psychologytoday.com/ie/blog/going-beyond-intelligence/201606/bedtime-check-</u> list-creative-curious-imaginative-kids

### Books

- Tools for Igniting Curiosity
- <u>Curious: The Desire to Know and Why Your Future Depends On It</u>
- The New Science of Curiosity
- Curious Advantage
- The Design and Engineering of Curiosity

	Rating		
	Strong	Adequate	Needs improvement
our curiosity?			

<u>https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2020/04/03/how-to-instill-curiosi-</u>





# 1. Description of Self-Confidence

## What is Selfconfidence?

Self Confidence is "the belief that you can do things well and that other people respect you" -Cambridge Dictionary - as well as "the confidence in one self and in one's power and ability" - Merriam-Webster

Confidence is a state of being; the individual is sure that a hypothesis or prediction is correct or that a chosen course of action is the best of more effective. The word confidence comes from a Latin word "fidere" that means "to trust", therefore, having self-confidence is having trust in one's self<sup>1</sup>. Because one believes in oneself, one doesn't try to convince others. Because one is content with oneself, one doesn't need others' approval. Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts him or her.

- Lao Tzu

## What is it about?

The concept of self-confidence is commonly used as self-assurance in one's personal judgement, ability, power, etc. It increases from experiences of having satisfactory completed particular activities. It is connected but different from self-esteem, which is an evaluation of one's own worth, whereas self-confidence is more specifically trust in one's ability to achieve some goal. Arrogance or hubris, in comparison, is the state of having unmerited confidence, to believe something or someone is capable or correct when it is not<sup>1</sup>.

In the workplace, self-confidence enables you to be proactive, assertive and focused. It means understanding the value you offer, effectively communicating and present yourself, which then results in getting noticed for the right reasons and increasing your income. You can learn and train self-confidence in order to achieve better results at your workplace and in life<sup>2</sup>.

## Why is it important?

You will not get far without confidence. Even with a great idea, a great product or knowledge to share with the world your value is almost sure to go unseen and your potential unmet without self-confidence. It is crucial to your success in all aspects of life; self-confidence may be one of the most important tools to have in your success toolbox.

A big part of your success comes from your perception of success. Self-confidence will help you to feel good about yourself and the things that you have accomplished. Having confidence will enable you to learn from failure and to feel success comes your way<sup>3</sup>.

## Which are the benefits of being Self-confident?

Self-confidence is important in every aspect of life. When it comes to work, companies are searching for people who believe in their abilities to reach goals and to get the job done. Running one's own business also requires high level of self-confidence.

You can experience advantages such as these by developing self-confidence<sup>3</sup>:

## Self-confidence allows you to make powerful decisions

- When making decision about difficult assignments, about your business or simply when stepping out of your comfort zone, you need to feel assured that you are making the right choice.
- Having self-confidence helps you in knowing that you are making good decisions, it allows you to trust your instincts and avoid self-doubt and fear.
  Having self-confidence helps you in knowing that you are the best person to get the job done and you believe in your ability to do it, others will believe in you too.

## Self-confidence makes you feel more successful

 Success is an attitude. Training the ability to have a positive outlook and see success will help you overcome obstacles, feel better about yourself and the things you will have accomplished.  An ancient Chinese proverb says, "Failure is the mother of success". You will face failures in different aspects of your life, not every goal will be achieved and not every decision you make will be a good one. Having self-confidence will help you to embrace these failures as part of the path toward success.

## Self-confidence will increase your impression on others

 People can perceive your confidence. Maybe, you will have to sell a product or a service or an idea to others. Why should someone else believe in you if you do not believe in yourself?

3 L. Jeffs, Why Do Entrepreneurs Need Confidence?, 2021.

Wikipedia, "Self-Confidence".

<sup>2</sup> Young goes SEND Program, "Session 6 Growing Self-confidence".

### 21stCenturySkills

## Think about the things that you are good at.

The first step to build your self-confidence is to recognize what you are good at and trying to build on those things. What are yours?



## Set some goals.

When creating the list, identify also the steps you need to take to achieve them. You should not pick big goals only. List even very simple ones like planning to go out for a walk. Aiming for something small, easy to accomplish and tick off from a list will help you to gain confidence in your ability to get stuff done.

## Get a Hobby.

It is important to find something that you are passionate about, whether it is a sport, photography or knitting. When you are interested or passionate about something, you will more likely to be motivated and to build skills guickly. Commit yourself to it and have fun.

## Persistence is key.

Being persistence makes all the difference. When learning something new, only a few will really persist and keep going after repeated failures. Confident people will look back at these and see them as learning experiences.

## If you feel stuck, search for help.

If negativity is taking the lead, try to talk with someone near you. It can help you to see your problems from another angle and to cheer yourself up.

# 2. Toolkit



## Step by step guide<sup>4</sup>





## Look at what you have already achieved.

Make a list of all the things you are proud of in your life. Keep that list very close and whenever you do something you are you lose confidence, pull out yourself of all the awesome stuff you have done.

Mindtools, How to build your 4 self-confidence.



## Talk yourself up.

Telling yourself that you are not good at something will not help you feel confident in yourself. Treat yourself the same way you would treat your best friend.



## Case study

## Unlocking self-confidence of young women to inspire and achieve equality and justice<sup>5</sup>

## The case

Unlocking self-confidence in young women is extremely important to achieve equality and justice. In some cases, it can be challenging due to the culture and social organization of a country, although it creates several positive outcomes.

## The challenge

Emilienne, 23, is a young university student from the Northern Province of Rwanda. She was lacking confidence and she wanted to withdraw from school.

### The result

During a 2-days intensive training, she discovered her values and strengths and set the goals to see herself as a leader. Moreover, she organized a meeting with her female classmates and successfully inspired them to participate more in class. She has taken on a bigger role in her family decisions. By building up her confidence, Emilienne has improved the quality of her education, her involvement in the family's decision-making and her engagement in her community. She will inspire many other women in the future.

5 <u>M. Madeira, «The (Business) case for Confidence: Why unlocking Women's Self-confi</u> dence should be a Major Development priority,», 2018.

## The influence of self-confidence among University Students<sup>6</sup>

## The case

Self-confidence towards the studied subject is very important in order for students to succeed in their field of study. There is some relationship between self-confidence and the students' achievement.

### The challenge

A study performed at the University of Malaysia Malacca (UTeM) tried to understand the students' attitudes towards the level of self-confidence and self-efficacy in mathematics during theirs class sessions at the Faculty of Engineering Technology (FTK).

### The result

After investigating 332 second-year students in several fields of studies at FTK, in the second semester the students received a questionnaire consisting of statements of their attitudes towards self-confidence in mathematics. The study highlights that most of students had a positive self-confidence in mathematics and it partially affects their results in studies.

6 K. Hamzah, I. Wain, R. Said, N. Miswan, N. Zainal e A. Ahmad, «Self-Confidence in Mathematics: A case study on Engineering Technology Students in FTK, UTeM,» International Education and Research, vol. 2, n. 11, pp. 10-13, 2014.



## Self-confidence Advices

In every moment of your life, you could feel your This is by no means a comprehensive list; there self-confidence got away from you. This list of is a plethora of alternatives. Whichever one you techniques will help you to gain it again. Those choose should be based on which situation you that we believe would be most helpful to you find yourself in, or on the problem or query you have been highlighted, along with the situations have<sup>7</sup>. in which we believe they would be most helpful.

Advice	Purpose
Kill Negative Thoughts	Learning to be aware of your self-talk, the thoughts you have about yourself and what you are doing. Negative thoughts are like bugs and you have to learn to recognize and replace them with positive ones.
Get to know Yourself	When going into battle, the wisest general learns to know the enemy very well. In the same way, it is impossible to fight and overcome a negative self-image without knowing it very deeply. Start to dig within yourself and you will come out with greater confidence.
Act Positive	More than simply think positive, you have to put yourself into action. It is the key to developing self-confidence. When you start acting positive, you change yourself, one action at a time.
Get Prepared	It is hard to be confident in yourself if you do not think you will do well at something. Beat that feeling by preparing yourself as much as possible.
Know your Principles and live them	What are the principles upon which your life is built? Not knowing them and your life will feel directionless. Try to find your principles and live them every day.
Change a small Habits	Not a big one, like quitting smoking. Just a small one, like writing things down or waking up 10 minutes earlier. Something small that you know you can do. Do it for a month. When you have accomplished it, you will feel like a million bucks.
Focus on Solutions	Focus on solutions. If you are a complainer, or focus on problems, change your fo- cus now. Focusing on solutions instead of problems is one of the best things you can do for your confidence and your career.
Do something you have been procrastinating on	What is on your to do list that has been sitting there forever? Do it first thing in the morning and get it out of the way. You will feel great about yourself.
Clear Your Desk	This might seem like a small, simple thing. If your desk starts to get messy, and the world around you is in chaos, clearing off your desk is a way of getting a little piece of your life under control.

of your life under control.

## 1. 3 tips to build your selfconfidence

et

## factors affecting your own vi- CurvyCon (a company selling your self-confidence.

## 2. Change perspective to change your life

Amy Adkins explains several CeCe Olisa, co-founder of the How do you want to be seen by sion of yourself and she gives curvy outfits), explains that it you few practical tips to boost is possible to change your life gant way? According to Stefan by change your perspective on Verra, everyone can change his the perceived obstacles. Have or her body language in three you ever tried to do so?

## 3. Learn how to be confident with your body

others? How to present yourself in a self-confident and not arrosimple steps that will have an enormous impact on the others.

# Tips & tricks

## As a manager or Business owner, in order to enhance your self-confidence you need to:

### Sometimes it is better to be silent and listen

Guess what? Being a good manager does not require Whether you compare how you look to your friends you to be on stage all day every day, and you do not on social media or you compare your salary to your need to have all the answers. You can be a great lispeer's income, comparisons are not healthy. When tener, so build on that strength. The best managers you notice you are drawing comparisons, remind ask open-ended questions, listen carefully and enlist yourself that doing so is not helpful. Everyone is runtheir teams to identify and implement solutions that <u>ning his or her own race and life is not a competition</u><sup>9</sup>. allow everyone to be successful<sup>8</sup>.

## How to enhance your self-confidence<sup>10</sup>

- Attend professional development training. specific skill further you rely on, like learning a new coding language if you work in IT, you can improve the way you perform in your job. This can result in increasing your confidence.
- Emulate confident peers. Consider the success-• Learn new skills. Similar to developing your curful people you know or find someone who aprent skills, learning entirely new skills or continupears confident in their role and observe their ing your education can have a lasting impact on behaviour. You can incorporate some strategies your overall confidence. When you learn a new you notice to help you develop your own confiskill, you can apply it to your job, and this can help increase your productivity, ability to stay Set goals for yourself. Setting short-term and organized and enable you to take on new tasks more confidently.
- Dress for success. Improve your work appearance to match what is required in the office. For instance, you might have a "business casual" dress code, but instead of wearing denim jeans, try a pair of casual slacks.
- Leave your comfort zone. This confidence-boosting strategy can be tough to apply but it can be one of the most effective ways to gain more con-

### Stop comparing yourself to others

## fidence. For instance, maybe you have always dreaded giving presentations in front of large audience. You could step outside of your comfort zone by volunteering to give the next presentation or co-host with a teammate.

long-term career goals can influence the way you perceive your strengths and success. Consider setting a goal for yourself to develop an overall capability or new skill. Further, measure your success by targeting small objectives to help you reach your result.



E. P. o. Forbes, «15 Tips To Build Confidence As An Introverted New Manager,» Forbes, 2021.

A. Morin, «6 Ways to Build Your Self-Confidence,» Very Well Mind, pp., 2021.

I. E. Team, «10 Ways To Boost Your Confidence in the Workplace,» Indeed, pp., 2021.



## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist<sup>11,12</sup> to assess the self-confidence dimension of your team project's workplace.

	Rating		
Dimension	Strong	Adequate Needs improvemen	
Knowledge & skills			
I am ready to learn new skills when it is required			
I am aware of the skills that I already know and I am pretty confident using them			
Every day I try my best to increase my competences			
Goals and Record			
My team is setting goals that we can achieve			
We always record every wins of the team, even the smallest ones			
Our work environment encourages people to try new things			
Our team never judge someone for a failure.			
In our work environment we analyze our failure in order to learn from them			
The values of the team			
Every member of our team knows the value of the team			
Our team defend and sustain these values every day			
The team's value are discussed and questioned to improve them			
Positive thinking			
Our work environment encourage positive thinking			
Our team try to avoid negative thinking and to focus on solutions in- stead of problems			
Our team sustain positive thinking (I can, I am able to) discourses			
Our work environment is optimistic			
Environment within the team members			
Our group of work is open to new contact and we share them easily.			
We encourage dialogues among the team members to compare different per- spectives			
Our team avoids to make comparison among its member, instead highlight every strengths of the members			

Our team encourages individuals to fight their fears to improve



## Resources for further reading

### **Online tools**

- <u>https://www.mindtools.com/selfconf.html</u>
- <u>https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.excelatlife.cbtdiary&hl=en</u>
- https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/build-confidence-andrew-johnson/id307751682
- <u>https://mindfitapp.com/</u>

### Useful links

- <u>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-confidence</u>
- <u>https://www.life-with-confidence.com/</u>
- about-self-esteem/#.WcPala2ZOGg

### Videos

- <u>Confidence for everybody</u>
- Boosting your self-confidence
- <u>Self-Confidence course</u>

### Articles

- https://zenhabits.net/25-killer-actions-to-boost-your-self-confidence/ ٠
- ٠ dence-as-an-introverted-new-manager/

### Books

- Confidence: Build Unbreakable, Unstoppable, Powerful Confidence: Boost Your Self-Confidence •
- Esteem & Family Relationships Self Help Guide
- stoppable!

<u>https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/self-esteem/</u>

https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeshumanresourcescouncil/2021/06/08/15-tips-to-build-confi-

Self Confidence: How To Overcome Shyness, Worry And Boost Your Self Esteem (Motivational Self

Self-Confidence: How to Develop Self Confidence and Overcome Anxiety, Fear, & Self-Doubt
 Self Confidence: 20 Powerful Ways to Increase Self-Confidence, Boost Self-Esteem, and Feel Un-

Young goes SEND Program, «Session 6 Growing Self-confidence». 11

<sup>12</sup> W. James, The Principles of Psychology, United States, 1890.


# 1. Description of Self-Discipline

## What is Self-Discipline?

"Self-discipline is about creating new habits of thought, action, and speech toward improving oneself and reaching institutional goals. This is an alternative to viewing discipline as a means to obtain more information."

### <u>- Wikipedia</u>

The meaning of self-discipline is then:

- force yourself to do or refrain from doing something
- self-control: obedience to yourself to keep appointments
- inciting or motivating yourself to something (the disciplined performance of a task or action) or being able to abstain from something

The key is taking responsibility and initiative, deciding what your life is about and prioritizing your life around the most important things.

- Stephen Covey

## What is it about?

Self-discipline is not an innate character trait. At most, a character trait, such as a strong will, can help build self-discipline. Self-discipline can, however, be taught, but one has to work on it oneself. People are often inclined to make things easy for themselves, but if you give in too often, you will usually get into trouble. Not being able to resist various temptations and having to bear the consequences of that is not always fun. Perseverance is also a form of self-discipline. For example, if you have too little of that, you may have problems studying. However, all this can be prevented by building up self-discipline.

What are the characteristics of self-discipline?

Self-discipline is a rigorous method characterized by:

- positive thinking, focusing on the benefits of one's goals;
- progression by step, by setting accessible objectives to increase as you go;
- make lists of tasks to be done;
- reward yourself when a goal is reached;

## Why is it important?

YSelf-discipline is useful. If you want to achieve something, you will have to have a certain discipline to perform certain actions. Suppose you are going to study or you want to achieve something in sports. Then you have to study, practice or train.

If you want to be successful, you must also have Discipline is also important in companies and discipline. A top athlete will have to show disorganisations. There must be order and struccipline to complete the training every day. Enture. Processes must be monitored. In some trepreneurs also need to have a certain amount professions it is even vital. Consider hygiene of discipline and perseverance if they are to be measures in the operating room. You can't successful. mess with that, right? The regulations must In short: you cannot do without a certain amount also be implemented in accordance with the of discipline. agreement.

• repeat until it becomes a habit;

The purpose of this personal development technique is to limit one's efforts to reach one's goal. It is not about punishing yourself for failure, but on the contrary, showing leniency and objectivity towards yourself. Self-discipline allows you to return to your initial motivation, in the event of difficulties or abandonment.

It is generally practiced alone, and sometimes with supports, such as a notebook for example in which the stages can be written, and the objectives set. It is then a matter of repeating day after day the actions and thoughts that allow one to progress gradually towards the project. Helping a partner can also be effective in increasing self-confidence, and solidarity.

# Which are the benefits of self-discipline?

Self discipline has many benefits:

- Creates Higher Efficiency in Achieving Projects and Goals
- Improves your Time Management
- Reduces Frustrations and Feelings of Failure
- Builds Self-Confidence

## Visualize your goal.

Create a clear picture in your head of the goals you want to achieve. A simple example: If you can't get out of bed at 8:00 AM, close your eyes for a moment and visualize how you start the day. Make it as real as possible. Feel your feet touch the ground, see how you search the closet for a clean shirt and taste the taste of coffee in your mouth. It is important to imagine which steps are needed to achieve your goal, and not just focus on the end result. Why is visualization effective? When you rehearse something in your head, the resistance to actually doing it decreases.

# 2. Toolkit

## Step by step guide



## Think about why you want more selfdiscipline

to achieve, and do you feel that

## Make a plan of action.

Okay, you've thought enough, and it's time for an action plan. It might be useful to create a table. This can be done on paper, but also on your laptop. In the leftmost column write the following points: action, start time, potential problems, strategy to overcome potential problems, and progression. Behind these boxes you fill in the information that goes with it.

## Prepare to take action.

Before you really take action, you can do some preliminary work. Decide when you want to start. Do you want to go to the gym again tomorrow? Then get your sports clothes ready and go to bed on time.

## Keep track of your progress

You can keep track of how things are going in the table you created earlier. Write down what went well in the past week and what didn't. Also ask yourself what you can learn from past experiences.

## Anticipate potential problems.

Achieving a goal often involves trial and error. Sometimes it works, other times it doesn't. What you can do is come up with a strategy to deal with this. First, think about what is going to be difficult for you. Maybe this is the weekly drink at work, or the snooze button on your alarm clock.





## Case studies

## The Marshmallow Test

did a study on school kids to test their self-control. Here is how the test was conducted:

- 2. Or he can wait for the researcher to come back after twenty minutes and get two

# **Dollars** Next Week

This study was conducted at the University of Pennsylvania by psychologists Angele



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## **Self-Discipline Advices**

Learning how to build self-discipline skills can allow you to cease bad habits, accomplish long-term and short-term goals, and change your life completely.

Think of it as investing in yourself. Here, we've outlined seven steps to build your self-discipline and work toward the better life you deserve. Well... if you work for it:

Technique	Purpose
Countdown, then take action	When you're feeling particularly unmotivated, count down from ten, then force yourself to do whatever it is you're doing. A quick countdown can help shift you into the right mental space to get motivated. Sometimes all we need is a little push to take that next step—that's how self-discipline begins.
Put your goals where you can see them every day	<ul> <li>Writing a goal down makes it all the more real. Hang it up somewhere you will see it often and inspire yourself — at your work desk, in your bedroom, in your car, etc. Write the goal in your yearly planner. Put it on your kitchen calendar.</li> <li>You can also set actual calendar reminders on your phone to go off once a week or so But be nice to yourself. Don't scare or shame yourself into your goals; rather, be happy positive, and encouraging.</li> <li>Increase self-discipline by adding motivational quotes from people you admire. Not sure you have the right goals? Spend some time going over your goals to make sure they align with the things you truly want for yourself.</li> </ul>
Remind yourself why you started	Keep your end-goal in mind without allowing yourself to forget where you started. Constantly remind yourself — especially when it gets hard — how and why you set this goal and what you will have achieved when you're done. Visualize yourself having taken complete control of your life and accomplishing whatever specific goal you've set. Set reminders on your phone to tell yourself how far you've come and how proud you are. Affirmations are also a great way to keep yourself focused on your why.
Set small goals first	Try not to overwhelm yourself by setting the bar too high. Build your confidence by setting and achieving a small goal before you go for a big one. For example, if your ultimate goal is to run five miles without stopping, set an initial goal of running a quarter mile without stopping. Be patient with yourself and try not to get frustrated with the process. Accomplish- ing those small goals first can give you the motivation you need to keep going.
Practice prioritizing	Decide which tasks are worth dedicating the most effort to, then organize your day to totally crush them. If you set a study plan, you're less likely to procrastinate on the less-than-savory tasks. Put things you don't necessarily love at the top of your priorities, and you'll be re- lieved they're done instead of putting them off another day.
Know your weaknesses	Then, proactively combat them. Determine how you might slip up and how you can prevent that from happening. If you know you need to run a 5K this Saturday but your friend is having a barbeque on Friday night, it might be best to skip it. If you know you need to get to work an hour earlier but you're a bit of a night owl invest in some Melatonin. You have the tools to fight back against your own de- mons. You just need to hunt them down.
Get friends to hold you accountable	You are less likely to cheat on your goals if someone you admire is watching. Have your hero (or just your BFF) set a goal alongside you. You can cheer each other on. And when the going gets tough, you can be there to give each other that extra push.

## Self-discipline quotes to keep you motivated

We all need a "pick me up" as we work on our self-discipline and achieving our goals. And so here are some great self-discipline quotes to help you stay motivated.

"Just because you're struggling with self-discipline doesn't mean you have to raise the white flag and declare your self-improvement efforts a complete failure. Instead, work to increase the chances that you'll stick to your healthier habits - even when you don't feel like it."

- Amy Morin

"The ability to discipline yourself to delay gratification in the short term in order to enjoy greater rewards in the long term is the indispensable prerequisite for success." "Success doesn't just happen. You have to be intentional about it, and that takes discipline." – John C. Maxwell

- Brian Tracy

"Beautiful gems can emerge from dirt. Struggle can teach you self-discipline and resilience." - Dipa Sanatani

"The pain of self-discipline will never be as great as the pain of regret."

- Anonymous

"Self-discipline is the magic power that makes you virtually unstoppable."

- Anonymous

"Without any self-sacrifice, how can there be a "Success begins with self-discipline." success?" - Sunday Adelaja

- Lailah Gifty Akita

"All successes begin with self-discipline. It starts with you."

- Dwayne Johnson

"We do today what they won't, so tomorrow we can accomplish what they can't."

- Dwayne Johnson

"Don't ever stop believing in your own personal transformation. It is still happening even on the days you may not realize it or feel like it."

- Lalah Delia

"Self-discipline is nothing but self-consciousness."

- Pearl Zhu



## Tips & tricks

As a business leader, you probably understand just how hard it can be to create an environment of discipline. On the one hand, you want to encourage your workers to be disciplined and to always take care of their tasks with the diligence they deserve. However, on the other hand, you don't want to come across as a draconian and demanding employer who is too strict to even breathe around.

## Lead from the front

- As the business owner, you are the head of the workplace, and so it is only proper that you lead in whatever you would like your workforce to do. Many people hesitate to be leaders in their own workplaces because they think the office will somehow organically sort itself out. However, employees don't want to be left to figure everything out on their own. They need some kind of leadership, whether they are a team of professional essay writers or software engineers, and it needs to be strong.
- Being a leader doesn't mean you should tell people what to do all the time or shout at them. Instead, you should encourage them to work and achieve the full potential that they could possibly achieve. It's about giving them guidance when they reach a stumbling block and they are not quite sure what the way forward is. As a leader, you are meant to resolve disputes among your employees while gently pulling them all in the same direction.

### Get rid of distractions

- Sometimes, the cause of indiscipline in the workplace is simply a lack of focus. People are getting distracted and it is hindering them from placing their focus on what matters. As a leader, you should endeavor to remove anything in the workplace that will prove to be a detrimental distraction to work.
- These distractions could be anything, really. It could have to do with technology, and the employees getting hooked on their devices, or it could have to do with the layout of the office.
- Take social media, for example. It can be a serious attention sucker, getting people distracted so that they end up doing none of

the meaningful work that they are actually meant to do.

Again, there is a balancing act here. Banning social media sites altogether may be a good idea in some extreme circumstances, but it isn't the only viable solution. Try to talk to your employees and find out what policies would work best with them to reduce distraction. If blocking social media sites helps, and they seem enthusiastic about the idea, then you can definitely try it. If not, then you can explore options together.

### Create a pleasant working environment

- Once you've removed the distractions from the working environment, the next step is to improve it so it becomes a place where people love to work in every day, rather than hate. You want your employees looking forward to arriving at work every day, and for them to feel energized when they get to the workplace.
- If whenever your employees walk into the office they feel like they would rather be someplace else, you can bet their productivity levels will be abysmally low. It will be very hard to foster discipline in such an environment. To change that, consider changing the environment in the office in a way that brightens it up.
- You could, for example, encourage more teamwork and collaboration in the office so people find work more fun. It may seem like something small, but it could have a significant positive impact on the way your office operates. Whatever changes you make, ensure you include the employees in the process so you can get accurate feedback on what's working and what's not..

## Consider the age demographics of your employees

- Most business leaders rarely consider this when they're thinking about their workforce. The kind of approach you would use to foster self-discipline in a young workforce is wildly different from what you might use on an older workforce. You need a custom approach that's tailored to the specific demographics of your workforce.
- You should consider the age and general personality of your workforce as you craft policies to foster discipline among them. Some employees respond better to a more relaxed approach full of gentle encouragement. Others need you to be firmer with your approach. The one thing you should avoid doing is applying a uniform approach to everyone.

## Have clarity in your rules

- If you want your rules to be followed by your workforce, then make them crystal clear.
   Figure out exactly what rules you want to be followed by your employees first. The fewer the rules the better. A few clear rules will always outperform millions of obscure ones.
- The best thing is to be able to fit your rules on a single page. You can then print them out, laminate them, and display them in an open place for everyone to see.

### Give everyone three strikes

 You need to put consequences in place for those who don't play by the rules. If there aren't any consequences, nobody is going to take the rules seriously. Have a "three strikes" rule, where an employee will be given a certain number of warnings before disciplinary action is taken. This makes it clear to your employees where their limits lie, and they will think twice before they flippantly flout the rules.

## Leave your employees alone

 This may sound counter to what we've been talking about so far, but it works if done well. The last thing your employees want is to have someone breathing down their necks the whole time they're at work. They will feel under pressure and won't do any meaningful work. Give everyone space and independence they need to work efficiently, and you'll be surprised at what they can achieve.

## Communicate with your employees

- Finally, don't forget that the most important aspect of your relationship with your employees is one with open communication. Employees should feel like they can tell you anything, and that their concerns will be listened to.
- Communication is very healthy in a business and should not be underestimated. It can actually make a difference to your bottom line. Make sure your employees are willing to listen to you, and that you're willing to listen to them as well.





## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess your Self Discipline and rock your day!

Dimension	Rating		
Getting ready	Strong	Medium	Low
Am I self-aware of my needs?			
Are my goals and objectives clear?			
Are all my activities in the calendar?			
Have I informed All people on the purpose, goals and expected results of our work together?			
Am I positive that I can make it?			
What can possibly go wrong?			
How couldI shift my plan if needed?			
Who shall I rely upon in case things change?			
Have I included brakes and time to socialize?			
Am I ready to empower others throughout the process?			

Have I got rid of distractions?



## Resources for further reading

## Online tools

- <u>Top Tracker</u>
- <u>Wunderlist</u>

## Videos

- Marcus Aurelius How To Build Self Discipline (Stoicism)
- SELF DISCIPLINE Best Motivational Speech Video (Featuring Will Smith)
- How Discipline Leads To Happiness
- <u>The secret to self control | Jonathan Bricker | TEDxRainier</u>
- How to Be More DISCIPLINED 6 Ways to Master Self Control •
- Jordan Peterson's Method for Self Discipline •

## Articles

- <u>https://www.hrfuture.net/talent-management/culture/8-ways-to-create-an-environment-of-self-</u> discipline-at-the-workplace/
- <u>https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/self-discipline.htm</u>
- success-ad088d7944bd
- https://www.forbes.com/sites/brentgleeson/2020/08/25/8-powerful-ways-to-cultivate-extreme-self-discipline/
- <u>https://www.nirandfar.com/self-discipline-articles/</u>
- <u>https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/305350</u> ٠
- https://marliescohen.com/16-tips-to-use-self-discipline-to-be-more-productive/

## Books

No Excuses!: The Power Of Self Discipline by Brian Tracy

• <u>https://medium.com/@sombathla/3-case-studies-that-shows-how-self-discipline-is-the-engine-for-</u>







# 1. Description of Questioning

# What is Questioning?

The simple definition of "questioning" is "the action of asking questions". At the same time, it can be defined as a competence that involves creative and critical thinking processes to link what is known and what is unknown in order to improve knowledge.

Questioning is a process that helps collect more information - whether our aim is to learn, to solve a problem, to make a decision or to understand each other. If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I know the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes.

- Albert Einstein

## What is it about?

Questioning can be used in different settings and can help to:

- Clarify something, and thus reduce a chance of misunderstandings,
- Express an interest in another person get to know them better, show empathy, create rapport, explore their ideas, feelings, beliefs,
- Improve the understanding of a problem, discover its root cause, and offer a better solution,
- Test knowledge, e.g. in an exam,
- Encourage thinking, explore other perspectives.

In addition to helping to collect information, a good question may have the power to generate curiosity, stimulate conversation, encourage creativity and provoke transformation.

Being able to ask purposeful, impactful, challenging and sensitive questions is a learnt skill.

## Why is it important?

The best leaders are not the ones that think they have all the answers, but those that understand the power of inquiry to find real answers and innovative solutions.

## Which are the benefits of questioning?

Questioning offers a number of benefits:

- It encourages conversation and helps collect information;
- It supports learning and idea generation;
- It shows respect to others as we ask for their opinions and ideas. In return, it generates respect to us;
- It helps uncover challenges and resolve them;
- It increases engagement good questions energise team members and help come up with their own ideas and solutions – which motivates to implement them;
- Right questions may lead to inspiration and "aha" moments;

 It improves teamwork as people recognise their collective knowledge and build trust and accountability.

If you have good questioning skills, you will know what kind of questions to ask and how to ask them in different situations. By asking better questions, you will come to better solutions, which will result in improved outcomes for your business.

### 21stCenturySkills

# 2. Toolkit



## Step by step guide





Prepare

Before going to a meeting or starting a conversation, think of a set of questions you would like to ask. Think how to formulate them well, so that they help achieve your goals.

## Learn and use different types of questions.

C.

The answers you get depend on the questions you ask:

- a. Closed questions also called polar questions those that can be answered by "yes", "no" or "maybe" are good for getting a quick answer, concluding a discussion or testing your understanding. "So, if I do xxx, zzz will happen?" A wrongly placed closed question can end a conversation.
- b. Open-ended questions are those that keep people talking. They often start with 5Ws and H or Rudyard d. Kipling's "six honest serving men" - "Who", "What", "Where", "When", "Why" and "How". If you ask your colleague "Why are you interested in this project", they cannot just answer "yes" or "no". There are all kinds of open questions that encourage a conver-

sation, creative discussion, allow to gather more information, e.g. "Give me an example of...", "Tell us about your journey", etc.

- low to collect the facts.



- to make sure you understand the answers and to encourage the conversation.



## Be careful with the "why" questions.

"Why" may make the other person feel awkward, threatened, provoked, asked to justify their actions, and put them in a defensive state. Try to rephrase the question so that the other person feels more comfortable, e.g. "Tell me more about...".

Factual questions are similar to closed-ended questions as they can be answered with a short phrase and don't lead to a longer conversation. For example, "What's his name?" or "What time does the meeting start?" As the name has it, this kind of questions al-

Leading questions - "Don't you agree ...?", "Don't you want keep working on this project you've invested so much in?" - are not really useful (unless you are trying to make somebody confess of a crime). They help to get the answer you want but make the other person feel they don't have

a choice. If you ask a leading question, try correcting it by adding a second or oposite option.

- e. Funnel questions involve asking for more and more details, starting with general questions that are often closed, and then adding more open-ended questions. Funnel technique is often used by detectives, but can also be applied to help a person feel more comfortable, as the conversation starts with simple questions and gradually progresses into details.
- Rhetorical questions are asked to engage the listener or getting people to agree with your point of view. "Isn't this a great office space? Wouldn't you love to have this view?"



Become conscious about how you formulate your questions. Start using more open questions and see how it affects a conversation. Notice your colleague's guestioning skills. Just by paying attention and putting some effort you will notice a difference.



## Saving a question

### The case

This case study shows that in business, questions that are saved/ left unasked may result in problems or even big losses.

### The challenge

Asking the right questions at the right time. A senior executive, instead of asking meaningful questions about a risky investment, asks a younger colleague in anger "What kind of idiot are you?!"

### The result

The answers depend on the questions you ask! The answer to the above question was "A highly paid one", and the project proceeded without expected results. If good questions were asked, different answers would have been received, saving the company a lot of money.



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## Tips & tricks

## How to become better at questioning

- Stay curious it will make you ask questions to check out what other people think, what ideas they may have.
- Keep the conversation open ask open Listen after you ask a question. Show that questions, encourage dialogue, avoid makyou are interested and listen attentively to ing conclusions based on assumptions. encourage the other person to share infor-
- Take your time be comfortable with silence, embrace it as an opportunity to pause • and formulate your thoughts.

### How to develop a questioning culture

- Lead by example ask a lot of questions Instead of or in addition to brainstorming, yourself, listen attentively and respond retry "question-storming" sessions: have your spectfully. team generate many questions about the problem you are facing. This process brings • Make it clear - make sure your team memyou to the right questions, which tend to bers know that "asking questions is a good lead to the right solutions.
- thing". Repeat it and reinforce the message as often as necessary.

# Practice

Create 1 question of each type related to the performance of your team. Notice how the type of question influences the answer.

1. Closed ques	tion					
2. Open quest	ion					
3. Leading que	estion					
4. Rhetorical c	question					
Jse 5W and H	technique to w	rite the question	ons that will he	lp you to create	a short article a	bou
a recent event	in your compa	ny. Has asking	these question	s helped you sha	ape a story?	
What	in your compa	ny. Has asking	these question	s helped you sha	ape a story?	
a recent event	in your compa	ny. Has asking	these question	s neiped you sha	ape a story?	
What Who	in your compa	ny. Has asking	these question	s neiped you sha	ape a story?	
What	in your compa	ny. Has asking	these question	s neiped you sha	ape a story?	
What Who Who	in your compa	ny. Has asking	these question	s neiped you sha	ape a story?	

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- Ask follow-up questions clarify, try to understand the reasons and the assumptions behind each idea, solution or decision.
- Focus on learning instead of judging. Ask questions to get to the details and root causes of the problems that may emerge in a conversation.





## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the questioning dimension of your team.

	Rating	
Dimension	Strong	Adequate Needs improvement
Questioning skills		
I regularly ask for my team member's opinions, ideas and feedback.		
Before going to a meeting, I take time to prepare my questions.		
I use different types of questions and understand which types are most appropriate in different situations.		
After asking and answering questions, I take time to reflect on the new ideas I've heard, what I've learnt and what further clarifying questions I could ask.		
I often ask questions that empower and increase engagement.		
I know when it is appropriate to ask the "Why" question and how to rephrase it when necessary.		
Questioning culture		
I recognize that questioning is important for learning and encourage it.		
My team members are willing to admit if they don't know something.		
Questions are not just allowed, they are encouraged.		
We emphasize the process of asking questions and searching for an- swers rather than finding the "right" answers.		
We have an open communication culture and an atmosphere where you can challenge everything.		
Questioning culture is one of the biggest strengths of our organisation.		
Development opportunities		
I pay attention to the quality of questions I ask and the results they produce, and keep working on improving my questioning skills.		
I help team members to develop the skills needed to ask good questions.		
My team members are encouraged to seek opportunities to develop		

My team members are encouraged to seek opportunities to develop questioning skills.

We accept and reward curiosity, risk taking, challenging the status quo.



## Resources for further reading

### Online tools

What's Your Inquiry Quotient? Take a quiz

### Useful links

- <u>The surprising power of questions</u>
- <u>Care</u>

### Videos

- Questioning Techniques. MindToolsVideos, June 2018
- The Power of Effective Questioning. Litmos Heroes, December 2014

### Articles

- How great leaders ask great questions
- <u>Good leadership is about asking good questions</u>

### Books

- Ask Powerful Questions: Create Conversations That Matter Will Wise ٠
- Coaching Questions: A Coach's Guide to Powerful Asking Skills Tony Stoltzfus •
- nect, and Lead Warren Berger

How to Win Anyone over with Rockstar Communication Skills: 4 Tips for Asking Questions like You

• The Book of Beautiful Questions: The Powerful Questions That Will Help You Decide, Create, Con-





# 1. Description of Enthusiasm

## What is Enthusiasm?

Enthusiasm can be defined as "a feeling of energetic interest in a particular subject or activity and an eagerness to be involved in it"

- Cambridge English Dictionary

The word enthusiasm originates from the Greek ἐνθουσιασμός from ἐν (en, "in") and θεός (theós, "god") and σὐσία (ousía, "essence"), meaning "inspired by god's essence" - Wikipedia

Socrates taught that the inspiration of poets is a form of enthusiasm.

There is a real magic in enthusiasm. It spells the difference between mediocrity and accomplishment.

- Norman Vincent Peale

## What is it about?

"Enthusiasm is a state of mind that inspires and arouses one to put action into the task at hand. Enthusiasm bears the same relationship to a human being that steam does to the locomotive - it is the vital moving force that impels action"

- Napoleon Hill

Enthusiasm is the energy, the fuel that helps us achieve the desired results.

Can enthusiasm be referred to as a skill? Yes! We tend to think that excitement and enthusiasm come as a result of doing something, because of an external stimulus. However, enthusiasm can be created from the inside. It can be a conscious choice to be excited, positive, enthusiastic. It's an ability that can be cultivated. Some people are more enthusiastic than others by nature, but the more we work on being an enthusiastic person, the more positive and joyful we become.

## Why is it important?

Being enthusiastic can have a positive effect on our health, relationships, work and general wellbeing. When we are enthusiastic, we are more confident, more focused, it's easier to cope with obstacles and challenges, we enjoy the things we do more, we are more likable and appreciated by our friends, colleagues and superiors.

## Which are the benefits of enthusiasm?

Enthusiasm offers a number of benefits:

## It is a great intrinsic motivator.

Unlike money, recognition and other external motivators, enthusiasm drives our actions just because we like what we do, find it meaningful or want to become better at it.

### It captures attention.

When you are enthusiastic, people want to be with you, listen to you, learn from you, or buy what you are trying to sell.

### It is contagious.

People have a tendency of mirroring - assuming the traits of those in their company. When you are enthusiastic, you inspire those around you!

Whatever goals or dreams we have in life, enthusiasm increases the odds of achieving them.

## It may help progress your career.

It is important to show enthusiasm when trying to get a job or get into a team – it shows you are interested and likely to be motivated and productive, as well as an inspiring team member.

It makes life and work more fun!

"Enthusiasm is the sparkle in your eyes, the swing in your gait. The grip of your hand, the irresistible surge of will and energy to execute your ideas"

- Henry Ford

### 21stCenturySkills

# 5.

## Make a plan on how you will harness the enthusiasm and start implementing it.

Whatever your first step is - positive things - decide and discovering the purpose of begin! You will get more powyour work, re-discovering your er, inspiration and motivation if passions, learning to notice you start acting.



## Have a break.

Even if you really like doing something and get excited about it, do not wear yourself down! Find a balance between action and pause. After a break, you will have more energy and inspiration to continue.

# 2. Toolkit



## Step by step guide



Find a purpose.

Why do you want to be more enthusiastic? What do you want to be more enthusiastic about?

## Connect with yourself.

Who are you? What do you like? What do you value? What do you really want? How can you be enthusiastic if you are just trying to meet the expectations of other people? Start by finding your inner voice and let it guide you. Believe in yourself!

## Accept responsibility.

Your inner state and attitude is up to you! You decide if you want to be enthusiastic, and you make it happen.

Get into flow.

Visualise yourself

acting with enthusiasm.

Put effort and imagine it as real

as possible. Feel the energy

and excitement. Practice it for

a few minutes every day.

Flow happens when our skills match the difficulty of a task. When in flow, we may get so absorbed in an activity that we forget time, space and everything else. It's a great feeling that increases engagement and results in high productivity. Set realistic goals and make them more ambitious gradually to keep the excitement.

Focus on the positive

You can always look at things

from different perspectives.

You don't have to ignore the

problems, just remember to

focus on the positive aspects.

aspects.



## **Practice being** enthusiastic.

rise, start every morning by one!



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## **Consciously bring** your attention to the present.

Worrying too much about the future or thinking about what went wrong yesterday makes it more difficult to see what's happening right now. Bring your attention to the present moment - take a few deep breaths or focus on a sound close to you, and find something to appreciate.

Simple things can make a dif- smiling and telling yourself ference - greet a friend with "Another good day!" Practice more excitement, notice the creates habits, and a habit of beauty of this particular sun- being enthusiastic is a good

## Case studies

## Enthusiasm about company's products translates into success

### The case

This case study shows that when you are enthusiastic about a product of your company, and share it with your customers, it can positively influence the success of the product.

### The challenge

What is the difference between a presentation of any car salesman and the one of Steve Jobs? Does telling how great your product is help boost sales or does it just sound like brainwashing?

### The result

When you are genuine and really believe that your product is amazing, people will get infected by your enthusiasm, like in these examples of Apple and other companies.

## Happiness at work

### The case

This case study shows that happiness at work really counts. Talented employees leave jobs that do not make them happy. High pay is not enough, people want to feel happy and enthusiastic about what they do every day. On the other hand, the most successful companies can often be proud of having happy employees.

## The challenge

In 2011 Eric Yuan left a highly paid job because he didn't feel happy, and he didn't see customers being happy about company's products either. He decided to create his own product that he could be proud of, and started Zoom. How does a company achieve having happy employees? How can it be measured?

### The result

In 2020, for a second year in a row Zoom was the top company with the happiest employees based on employee surveys. Ranking was based on worker responses to questions about their happiness at work on a day-to-day basis,

- Is your work environment positive or negative?
- Are you typically excited about going to work each day?
- Do you look forward to interacting with your coworkers?

In their comments, Zoom employees said "Our leaders lead by example", "They are passionate and dedicated to their various roles in the organization, which



### Make time for doing what you love.

Make a list of everything you love to do, and Next week keep a log and write 20 good things choose one activity. Can you find 15-30 minutes that happen to you each day. What can you be to do it every day or several times a week? If it grateful for? Reflect on how you felt during the makes you happy, and you do it regularly, the week and at the end of it, and how you interactexcitement will flow to other areas of your life ed with others. too.

## Cultivate positive attitude.



## Tips & tricks

## How to be more enthusiastic

- Find purpose in what you do how does Avoid assumptions, keep an open mind, consciously question and listen attentively. your work help others, makes them or the world better, safer or happier? Not everything is as it seems and it's fasci-
- Use your talents find what you are good at and how you can use it at work, or find Support your mental attitude - make sure a work that matches your talents. Doing you are not tired by getting enough sleep, what we enjoy doing makes us happy and exercise and eating healthy. it shows.
- Keep evolving and improving yourself and see how every day and every challenge is a new opportunity.
- Slow down and notice the details or synchronicities that had to happen to lead to your current situation or experience.

### How to develop and support enthusiasm in a team

- **Be proud** feeling proud of something you **Initiate** or offer to help your colleague with do or achieve and sharing it with others crea new project - being proactive exhibits your ates a lasting enthusiasm and encourages energy and dedication. people to follow your example.
- Focus on work/life balance make your team members feel that you care about their **Celebrate accomplishments** – it's important wellbeing by offering flexible work time, to notice, celebrate, award success - it crehealthcare or childcare options, or other inates excitement and increases engagement. centives that can improve their overall guality of life.
- **Surprise** offer your employee an afternoon off, a surprise bonus, or a small gift - nice gestures help create a positive atmosphere.

Surround yourself with people that are enthusiastic - avoid energy drainers - to get infected by the positive attitude and energy.

Use positive language in communication with your superiors, peers and clients.





## Checklist before I get started

Use this checklist to assess the enthusiasm dimension of your team.

	Rating	
Dimension	Strong	Adequate Needs improvemen
Being enthusiastic		
I love my job and feel excited about it.		
I tend to focus on the positive aspects of any situation.		
I have passions and hobbies that I get engaged in regularly.		
I stive for excellence and aim to exceed expectations by giving my best.		
I take care of myself by getting enough sleep, exercise and eating healthy.		
I consider myself an enthusiastic person.		
Team culture		
My team members feel energetic, inspired and passionate about their work.		
We feel proud about our team and our company's mission and vision.		
We have a positive work environment.		
Most of my team members are positive, happy people.		
We encourage work-life balance and strive to improve quality of life.		
We acknowledge and celebrate our accomplishments.		

### **Development opportunities**

We use enthusiasm surveys or other tools to regularly measure enthusiasm of the team members.

We take actions to increase the level of enthusiasm of the team.

The company offers opportunities for personal and professional growth.

We encourage and reward enthusiasm, proactiveness and dedication.



## Resources for further reading

### Online tools

• <u>Self-motivation quiz</u>

### Useful links

- How an Enthusiastic Approach to Life Can Drive Success in Your Work and Relationships
- 70 Examples of Passions You Can Pursue in Your Life and Career

### Videos

- 2018

### Articles

- Enthusiasm The Sixth Key to a Successful Future •
- How a 'growth mindset' can lead to success

### Books

- Team and Culture Jon Gordon
- Enthusiasm Makes the Difference Norman Vincent Peale

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 How to Manufacture Fascination and Engineer Enthusiasm. Jason Goldberg, TEDxRaleigh, 2016 Intentional Enthusiasm: How to accelerate personal greatness. Sonny Melendrez, TEDxSanAntonio,

• Row the Boat: A Never-Give-Up Approach to Lead with Enthusiasm and Optimism and Improve Your



**Active Listening** 

The biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply. - unknown

If we were supposed to talk more than list, we would have two tongues and one ear. - Mark Twain

## What is Active Listening?

Hearing (like taste, touch, vision) is one of our natural senses. We always hear something, it does not necessarily require special attention. Listening, however, requires focus and attention. Listening is intentional (indeed, like telling) and to a single 'message' (e.g. a story, music).

We could also state that we are born with hearing but that we develop listening by learning in (social) contexts. Our listening skills and competences (or the lack) are already developed during our early years (e.g. family). Some say that listening can even have a survival value; by listening to the experiences of others we are also learning. It 'pays' to listen.

It sometimes gets mixed up with "empathic listening" which is paying attention to another person with empathy i.e. emotional identification, compassion, feeling, insight. Indeed sometimes the line between active and empathic listening is very thin,

and in real-life conversations both can occur.

Empathic listening allows you to develop and enhance relationships with a stronger understanding of what is being conveyed, both intellectually and emotionally, it is a step further than active listening, as the aim is to put yourself in another's shoes.

## What is it about?

Active listening is all about really being able to listen to one another. It is:

- Neutral and non-judgmental
- Patient (periods of silence are not "filled")
- Verbal and nonverbal feedback to show signs of listening (e.g., smiling, eye contact, leaning in, mirroring)
- Ask questions
- Reflecting back what is said
- Asking for clarification
- Summarizing

## Why is it important?

Active listening is the basis of effective communication, making sure you actually hear and understand what is being said. It solves conflicts.

Can you remember a conversation with someone in which you could later hardly remember what it is they said to you? How did that happen? Were you perhaps too busy thinking about what you were about to say next, rather than actually listening?

Being a good communicator is not just about what you say and how you say it. It also involves being a good listener. When you know the other person is really listening to you, the level of attention makes you

## Which are the benefits of teamwork?

### **Build connections.**

Active listening helps others feel comfortable In negotiations, active listening gives you a sharing information with you. When you demonchance to analyse exactly what the other parstrate your ability to sincerely listen to what ty is saying in order to carefully consider and others have to say, people will be more interjudge them. This will help you to understand ested in communicating with you on a regular them better and reach a better deal. When neibasis. In a business setting, this can help open ther party is truly listening, these discussions up opportunities to collaborate with others, get can become formulaic with the same questions work done quickly or start new projects. being asked over and over. However, by listening actively and crafting open-ended questions **Build trust.** you can move the discussion on.

Active listening can help you to build trust, be-Avoid missing out on information. ing it with friends, family, peers, employees, clients or suppliers. If people know they can speak An active listener is more engaged with the perto vou without being interrupted, judged or inson they are communicating with and as such terjected, they will more likely confide in you. are normally more able to recall specific details In this way others will feel comfortable sharing or bits of information. It limits the chance of information with you which helps to develop missing out on crucial information. For instance trusted and long term relationships and comin the workplace it can reduce errors, as instrucpromises. tions are better retained and understood.

## Solve problems or disagreements.

Actively listening to others will help you detect In a business environment it can help to retain challenges and difficulties others are facing, or employees, clients and suppliers. A person who to identify problems within teams and organifeels heard and listened will have the tendency sations. Listening and repeating what the other to be more content and less likely to be looking person is saying not only helps you to formulate for opportunities elsewhere. For example, in the case of employees if they feel they matter and the problem better, in the case of a disagreement or dispute it can help you develop your their concerns and ideas are heard, productivity tends to increase. counter-arguments and find gaps in the arguments or logic exposed by the other person. This can create more space for compromise.

feel valued, safe, understood, and important. On the contrary, when the other person is not really listening, you feel ignored and diminished.

Listening is equally important in business communication. By listening effectively, you get more information, increase others' trust in you, you can reduce conflict, better understand how to motivate others, and inspire a higher level of commitment in the people you manage. Active listening is very important in negotiations as you have to explore and understand the position of another person.

## Negotiate better.

## Increase productivity/competitiveness.

# 2. Toolkit

# Step by step guide





## Stay focused. Keep natural eye contact, don't judge and be patient.

Keep regular eye contact with the person you are communicating with, this way you are forced to pay attention to the person in front of you. Not only will you be able to pick up on non-verbal cues better, there is also less risk of getting distracted.

# 6.

## When the other person finishes speaking, you can probe for more information on those aspects for which you need it.

Use open questions to understand the situation better, for instance you could ask them how a particular situation made them feel, or what they feel would be the best way to handle a situation.

# 2.

## Do really listen.

Don't think about similar experiences that you should tell next, and avoid adding on your own colour to the conversation.



## Allow for periods of silence,

and take advantage to reflect on what was said, and to focus on the non-verbal communication that takes place during moments of silence. Not only allow these moments to reflect on what was said, they also allow the person speaking to reflect on what they are about to say.

# 4.

## From time to time, repeat the other person's words or paraphrase it back to them.

Saying things like "what I am hearing is..." gives the other person an opportunity to ensure they are telling you everything they need to. It also shows that you care enough to ask a question to make sure you understand. Do not interrupt unless you need clarification on a particular point, however ask the question politely.



## Case studies

## Don't let personality traits get <u>in the way</u>

### The case

The company 1-800-GOT-JUNK?, which was started in 1989, had \$60 million in revenue and employed over 200 people at its head office. This was a promising position for the growing venture, but dissension soon broke out on the leadership team over how to grow. The VP of Finance kept warning to spend in a few key ways. He cautioned the management team about the growth, but no one ever really listened.

## The challenge

The VP was a quiet, introvert person, with a subservient manner of speaking. In contrast, the CEO and COO were both dominant and expressive. Looking back, they said: "Because he wasn't right in our face about it, pushing us, we let his words go in one ear and out the other." As a result, the VP's warnings went unheeded and the company expanded too fast and ran out of cash. They faced significant financial trouble, which made it harder to weather the economic downturn in 2009.

### The result

Luckily the company survived, and the COO was able to change his ways. The experience taught him to spot the disappointment in someone's face when they speak yet don't feel heard. "It's important to look for it, to know if I've been truly listening to them or simply placating them," he says. "And as a leadership team, we learned that we had to listen and pay attention to everyone, regardless of their communication style."



## The case

Based on operational performance and financial results, Copa Airlines is one of the world's best-performing airlines. But Copa leaders aren't resting on their laurels. Copa serves a large market, the Americas, where air travel is projected to grow faster than the global average.

### The challenge

Not only has the company grown rapidly for nearly 2 decades, but in recent years, its workforce has shifted to a younger demographic. Employee engagement at Copa is generally high. However, one of its 2 culture-based KPIs - Copa's Leadership Index - wasn't at optimal levels. Historically, Copa's leaders have focused on business goals. Now the airline's leaders would be asked to better connect with the people they lead, helping the airline continue its strong performance.

### The result

In cooperation with the consultancy an opportunity for a high return on training time by focusing on developing 2 vital skills: active listening and providing feedback was spotted. Those 2 skills would cover about 80% of the desired new leadership behaviors. A scalable solution was developed consisting in: a half-day workshop that trained leaders in the Situation - Behavior - Impact (SBI)<sup>™</sup> feedback method, which helps people provide useful feedback on positive and negative behaviors. Leaders also received training in active listening, learning to concentrate on what's being said, fully understand it, respond, and remember. This deeper listening involves understanding facts plus emotions and values, helping leaders better navigate critical conversations.

# <u>Helping Leaders Form Deep-</u> <u>er Connections by Building</u> Active Listening & Feedback



## How to know if you are a good listener?

Ask yourself a few questions (and respond to yourself in an honest way):

- Do you have a strong empathy and really try
   Do you watch their body language to really to understand a different viewpoint?
- Do you ask follow-up guestions?
- How do you react to criticism?
- Do you use your body language to support the speaker?
- get their message?
- Do you know where you have to improve as a listener?

## As active listening is difficult to practice alone, here are some exercises which can be done in small groups.

Exercise 1 In a group of 2 or 3 persons, each member takes turns to listen for 5 minutes to one of the other group members who will speak on a stretch for 5 minutes without being interrupted. No other person from the group can speak during this time.

> At the end of the listening time, the members who listened have to paraphrase whatever he/she listened to for the 5 minutes. After the listener finishes, the person who was speaking corrects, clarifies and confirms if what the listener is saying was right or not.

> Through this exercise, the reflective skills and paraphrasing skills of the listeners are improved.

- Exercise 2 As well as improving your listening, this exercise helps you to develop the skill of asking questions and requesting information to clarify your understanding.
  - 1. Choose a volunteer and take a pen and paper.
  - 2. Ask your partner to choose from a set of images, but not let you see the image they choose.
  - 3. Take five minutes to ask as many questions as you wish about the image. Your partner can answer them and describe the image.
  - 4. Draw the image, based on what you've heard.
  - 5. After five minutes, stop and compare what you've drawn with the actual image. What went right? What went wrong?

## **Tips & tricks**

- 1. If you expect a conversation, **REDUCE** 6. It often helps to **REPEAT** what you've **DISTRACTIONS** - choose a quiet space, heard so that you know you're paying turn off the sound of your mobile phone attention and they know it too. or other devices
- 2. Active listening means being FULLY **PRESENT**. It means offering the person communicating with you your full and undivided attention.
- 3. Demonstrate active listening by making stand what bad and good listening is. **EYE CONTACT** with the speaker.
- 4. Communicate your listening mode and empathy with BODY LANGUAGE, e.g. gently covering your mouth, smiling, paying attention. Watch the body lannicating - do they sound tired, enthusiastic or confused?
- out responding or adding to what they with others. have said.

7. Ask OPEN QUESTIONS to learn more and show you that you were really listening.

Try doing some listening exercises with your friends or colleagues, to better under-

Being self-aware about your listening skills is the first step to make them better. Even if it feels a little artificial in the beginning, with practice good listening will become natural. nodding your head to affirm that you are Once you start to act like a good listener. you will come to believe you are a good lisguage and voice of the person commu- tener and eventually you will become one.

**REMEMBER:** Active listening skills can only be taught and acquired by experimenting 5. DO NOT INTERRUPT the person com- them, so practice what you preach and use municating or change the subject with- active listening in all your engagements





## Checklist before I get started

In an attempt to make us better listeners (or active listeners) in that sense, Senova (2017) offers a very useful 'channelled' checklist when it comes to tuning into you active/empathic listening:

Channel	Check & ask yourself
<b>Channel 0</b> <b>Tuned out</b> (you are not present)	"Am I actually listening? Would I be able to answer a ques- tion if someone asked me one right now?"
<b>Channel 1</b> <b>Self</b> (judgemental, listening to self)	"Am I just waiting for them to stop talking so I can say my important bit? Am I practising what I'm about to say next, instead of listening intently to what is being said now?"
Channel 2 Agreement (familiar, listening for similarity)	"Am I listening for what is similar to what I already know, or am I focused on whether or not they agree with what I've just said? Am I looking for allies in this situation?"
<b>Channel 3</b> <b>Critical</b> (factual, listening for evidence)	"Am I listening for proof that what they are saying is right? Am I looking for evidence to back up their story / work?"
<b>Channel 4</b> <b>Empathic</b> (connected, listening from the speaker's / teller's perspective)	"Am I listening from a place that has no other motive but to connect with their perspective? Do I understand what it feels like to have that perspective?"
<b>Channel 5</b> <b>Generative</b> (insight, listening from possibility)	"Am I using my empathy and insight into their context and motivation to help achieve the best outcome? Have I taken a position of possibility, to ensure that we are able to generate a meaningful alternative?"



## Resources for further reading

## Videos

- How to actively listen to others
- <u>5 ways to listen better</u> ٠
- Communication Skills: Empathetic Listening
- How To Improve Your Listening Skills

### Articles

- Listening as a lifelong learning skill- what, why, and how
- <u>https://www.edutopia.org/article/value-active-listening</u>
- <u>https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do</u>
- <u>https://positivepsychology.com/active-listening/</u>
- <u>https://fs.blog/2017/07/active-listening/</u>

### Books

- rensen.
- Leonardo
- The Lost Art of Listening. Author: Michael P. Nichols (available also as audio book).
- This Human. Author: Melis Senova.



• I Hear You: The Surprisingly Simple Skill Behind Extraordinary Relationships, Author: Michael S. So-Active Listening Techniques: 30 Practical Tools to Hone Your Communication Skills. Author: Nixaly















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