

# Does thinking outside the box really work?

Business



When the term “outside the box” comes to mind, most think of creativity and trying to come up with a good idea. This phrase is used when asking someone to think outside of their comfort zone. Who would have known that there is some “psychological truth” (Kim, Polman, Sanchez-Burks, 2012) to this metaphor? Scientists were curious about whether or not there is a connection between mind and body in a process called embodied cognition. They believed that “bodily experiences could help in generating new ideas and solutions to problems” (Kim et al.

, 2012). Recently, to test the hypothesis, a study was conducted at New York University with 102 undergraduate students. This study was to test whether “bodily experiences could help in generating new ideas and solutions to problems” (Kim et al., 2012). Each student was asked to come up with a word that related to the three clues given. Half of the students were asked to do this sitting on the inside of a 125-cubic-foot box, while the rest were allowed to sit outside the box.

The study found that the students sitting outside of the box “were significantly more creative” (Kim et al., 2012). In this experiment, the control was the group of students asked to think of words while inside the box. These students were used to compare to the experimental group, those thinking outside of the box. The independent variable was where the students were asked to sit, either sitting inside the box or outside of the box.

The amount of correct answers the students gave was dependent of where the students were sitting (Kim et al., 2012) I definitely agree with the findings of the experiment. Not being confined to a certain space could easily

help someone come up with more creative ideas. But, there could also be an alternate explanation for the discovery could be found. It could only be that the subjects came up with more correct answers because they were outside in general.

Fresh air in the lungs, sun beating down on the skin, wind blowing in the face, all of these could be an explanation to why the subjects were able to think more clearly. Overall, it seems that the findings in the experiment are very reasonable; maybe teachers should have class outside every once in a while to help their students get creative and think of new ideas! Sources Cited Kim, S., Polman, E., Sanchez-Burks, J., (2012, February 25).

When truisms are true, The New York Times, pp. 1-2