

6 obstacles to creative thinking and how to overcome them

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Have you ever felt blocked and uncreative or feel like you can't solve even a simple problem?

You have amazing creative talent and skills, you just have to learn how to unlock your abilities. There are six major obstacles to creative thinking that could be preventing you from learning how to improve your problem solving skills for business success.

If you fail to recognize any of them, they could be holding you back.

1. Lack Of Direction From Yourself or Others

The first obstacle to creative thinking is the lack of clear goals and objectives, written down, accompanied by detailed, written plans of action.

When you become crystal clear about what you want, and how you are going to achieve it, your creative mind springs to life. You immediately begin to sparkle with ideas and insights that help you to move forward and improve your creative skills.

2. Being Afraid of Failure

The second major obstacle to creative thinking is the fear of failure or loss.

It is the fear of being wrong, of making a mistake, or of losing money or time.

As it happens, it is not the *experience* of failure that holds you back. You have failed countless times in life and it hasn't done you any permanent damage.

It is the *possibility* of failure, the anticipation of failure that paralyzes action and becomes the primary reason for failure and ineffective problem solving.

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3. Being Afraid of Rejection

The third major obstacle to creative thinking is the fear of criticism, or the fear of ridicule, scorn or rejection.

It is the fear of sounding dumb or looking foolish. This is triggered by the desire to be liked and approved of by others, even people you don't know or care about. As a result, you decide that, " If you want to get along, you have to go along."

It is amazing how many people live lives of underachievement and mediocrity because they are afraid to attempt to sell themselves or their ideas for success.

They are afraid to ask someone to buy or try their product or service. As a result of these fears of rejection and criticism, they play it safe and settle for far less than they are truly capable of earning.

4. Never Changing or Adapting to the Situation

A major obstacle to creative thinking is called " homeostasis." This is a deep subconscious desire to remain consistent with what you have done or said in the past.

It is the fear of doing or saying something new or different from what you did before. This homeostatic impulse holds people back from becoming all they are capable of becoming and from achieving success.

In homeostasis, there seems to be an irresistible unconscious pressure that brings you back to doing what you have always done.

Unfortunately, this tendency leads you into your own “comfort zone.” Your comfort zone, over time, becomes a groove, and then a rut. You become stuck. All progress stops. In no time, you begin to use your marvelous powers of rationalization to justify not changing.

As Jim Rohn says, “*The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.*”

Homeostasis is a major killer of human potential, which will hinder you from achieving success.

5. Not Thinking Proactively

The fifth obstacle to creative thinking for success is passivity. If you do not continually stimulate your mind with new ideas and information, it loses its vitality and energy, very much like a muscle that is not exercised.

Instead of thinking proactively and creatively, your thinking becomes passive and automatic.

A major cause of passive thinking is *routine*. Most people get up at the same time each morning, follow the same routine at their jobs, socialize with the same people in the evenings, and watch the same television programs.

As a result of not continually challenging their minds, they become dull and complacent. If someone suggests or proposes a new idea or way of doing things, they usually react with negativity and discouragement. They very soon begin to feel threatened by any suggestion of change from the way things have been done in the past.

6. You Rationalize and Never Improve

The sixth obstacle to creative thinking is rationalizing. We know that human beings are *rational* creatures, but what does that mean?

Being rational means that we continually use our minds to explain the world to ourselves, so we can understand it better and feel more secure. In other words, whatever you decide to do, or not do, you very quickly come up with a good reason for your decision.

By constantly rationalizing your decisions, you cannot learn to improve performance.

There are two main reasons why creativity is important in achieving success. First, problem-solving and making decisions are the key functions of the entrepreneur.

As much as 50% to 60% of your time in business and in life is spent solving problems. The better you become at thinking up creative ways to solve the inevitable and unavoidable problems of daily life and work, and making effective decisions, the more successful you will be.

Second, each of us wants to make more money. We all want to be more successful and enjoy greater status, esteem, and recognition. Your problem-solving ability is a key determinant of how much of these you accomplish.

If you're struggling with how to get your business off the ground and thriving,

Brian Tracy is Chairman and CEO of Brian Tracy International, a company specializing in the training and development of individuals and organizations. , including , a New York Times Best Selling book. In addition, he has written and produced more than 500 audio and video learning programs, including the worldwide, best-selling , which has been translated into more than 28 languages.