

# Lateral thinking essay



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1. Introduction As human beings, people have different ways of thinking. The way they think will influence their decisions.

Nowadays, some people try to improve their potential to think uniquely. This type of thinking can be called Lateral thinking. This concept is very useful for people who are working in business organisation especially when they make a decision. This report will illustrate more about lateral thinking, the method to improve lateral thinking, and how to use this concept in corporate world.

2. Lateral Thinking There are three basic ways of thinking, which are logical thinking, common sense, and puzzles & science.

Logical thinking is where people do not overlook to the reason why they consider thing as correct. For example, a car will not run without fuel and most people know it without comprehend this problem. The second basic method is common sense. In this method where people find solution for their problems based on their experience.

The third method is Puzzles and science where people try to find solution for certain problem. (Mero 1990, pp. 11-36) Mero has overlooked a new method of thinking which called Lateral Thinking was first introduced by Edward de Bono. He stated that lateral thinking is the way of thinking which approach different principles and ideas (Lateral thinking 2006). An example to describe Lateral thinking: “ You cannot dig a hole in a different place by digging the same hole deeper.

” (de Bono 1992, p. 52) From this example, Edward de Bono emphasized that people should look at things from different alternatives and perception.

Thinking of different alternatives will help people to eliminate conventional

way of thinking and find new solution to their problems. (de Bono 1992, p. 53) 3.

Lateral Thinking in relation with creativity and Innovation Altering concepts and perception lead people to think laterally. This changing process involves creativity to generate new ideas. According to De Bono (1992, p. 55) assert “ The term “ lateral thinking” is very precise. Lateral thinking is based on behavior of self-organizing information system.

” Even though the basic pattern of lateral thinking is focusing on searching of perception and concepts, its still considers the shifting of its process. In other words, creative thinking is a process of finding new concepts and ideas to solve a problem. (de Bono 1992, p. 5) Characteristics of creative thinkers are innovative and creative, imaginative in problem solving, arranged mind, positive thinking, and hard working (Tanner 1992).

The first characteristic is creative and innovative which means creative thinkers dislike of being stagnant and they will do creative act to make changes. Their creative way of thinking may contribute to the benefit of themselves and their community. Second characteristic is imaginative in the way of searching alternatives for problem solving, “ They do not grab at the first idea to solve a problem but take the time to search for alternatives”. Third characteristic is arranged mind. At this point, creative thinkers will adopt the situation and try to get the idea from that situation.

Fourth characteristics of creative thinkers is positive thinking, it means they see things even problems in positive way. The last characteristics is hard working which means creative thinkers always focus and concentrate their

mind and put effort on their goal. (Tanner 1992) 4. Access to Understand Lateral Thinking There are several accesses to understand lateral thinking which are “ reading materials, seminars and lectures, group and individual practice.

(Bono 1971, p 158-163) Reading materials is the first access to understand lateral thinking, where people can find the information from book. However, there will be misunderstanding of this subject when people only read and try to understand from books. The second access is attending seminars and lectures which only cover the background of lateral thinking theory because seminars and lectures only concentrate to one technique (de Bono 1971, p. 158).

The last accesses that people can use are group and individual practice. According to De Bono (1971, p. 58), group practice will give pictures about lateral thinking methods. Moreover, people can learn lateral thinking by individual practice.

“ The purpose of individual practice in lateral thinking is to acquire skill and confidence in this type of thinking. ” (De Bono 1971, p. 158) 5. Methods to Improve Lateral Thinking Nowadays, people have to improve their skill to think laterally.

There are many methods to develop lateral thinking that were introduced by Edward de Bono. Particularly, this report will only concentrated on six thinking hats method and the creative pause method (Bono 1992). . 1 Six thinking hats method Six thinking hats method is “ a model that can be used for exploring different perspective towards a complex situation or challenge.

” (Bono 1985) The purpose of this method is to help individuals directly accept the difference point of view of one thing. Edward de Bono uses different colors to explain this method. For example, white represents objective facts, red represents justification, black represents logical negative views, yellow represents looks for benefit, green represents new ideas and blue represents organizer. Trained employees who attend this training wear one hat to put them selves in other person’s position. From this process, employees can learn to see one subject from different point of view. The advantages of this system can develop communication skill among the employees within organisation and help decision making.

(de Bono 1979 and de Bono1985) 5. 2 The Creative pause method This method is the easiest way for people to train their lateral thinking skill. However, in order to make this method effective people should give special attempt and high commitment to learn the method. de Bono 1992) “ The creative pause is an interruption in the smooth flow of routine in order to pay deliberate attention at some point. ” (De Bono 1992, p.

86) When using this method, people will focus to some objects or problems and many questions will come into their minds which respond intention the situation that occur. For example, “ Why we eat in the restaurant? ”, “ Why we do not eat at home? ”, “ How about if we do not eat anything tonight”.

(de Bono 1992, p. 86) Motivation plays an important role in learning the method, when people have the right motivation it will give them benefits, and that is being able to think creatively. In addition, hope also gives a significant impact since there is a new possibility for a solution.

(de Bono 1992, p. 87) As mentioned above, this method is the easiest way to learn lateral thinking; therefore it does not require any special system. De Bono (1992, p. 88) stated, “ the main point of the pause is to give attention to something and to place that point in your mind as being worthy of attention.

” To think creatively, people should think slowly in order to concentrate on particular point. For example, when drawing it is important to take time in order to get a good inspiration to be applied on the painting. (de Bono 1992, p. 88) People should understand the difference between creative pause and selecting important parts of the problem. Essentially, creative pause only concentrate in creating new idea about the problem.

(de Bono 1992, p. 89) 6. Application of lateral thinking in Business

Organisation Today, many large business organisations are trying to look at creative thinking method which founded by Edward De Bono. This method becomes famous in UK and many companies send their representatives to take advantage of this method. Several companies that have been applying lateral thinking within the organization are IBM, Federal Express and British Airways.

Those companies are implementing the theory of lateral thinking by establishing program of thinking creatively and systematically using six thinking hats method which already explained above. (Evans 1994) Another company that has applied Lateral thinking is NDS (Norse Dairy System) which based in Columbus, Ohio. They were applying lateral thinking method by creatively made various types of ice-cream cones in 2003. NDS was the

first ice-cream cones supplier that created cones in flavors, iced oatmeal cookies, and chocolate vanilla cookies covered with chocolate.

That kind of innovation in the ice-cream industry was created by thinking outside the box because at that time, there was no other competitor who had the same innovation. (Be a Trend Setter 2003, pp. 6-7) Implementation of Lateral thinking in business organisation has made many companies succeed and become more effective and efficient. More over, the most important of applying this method is making modern corporate world more innovative and creative (Evans 1994). 7. Conclusion In conclusion, lateral thinking is very important for problem solving in modern world because with lateral thinking people can observe one thing in different perspectives and try to find new solution for the problem.

The founder of lateral thinking, Edward de Bono, has made significant changing in corporate world which lead many organisations to be successful by implementing lateral thinking.