

Why You Need to Think Outside the Box



Maybe you've been in your current job for a number of years, or you've been on a long-term project. That flare and excitement you had when you started has slowly dissipated. You're still engaged and the work you do has value, but for some reason you've lost the motivation to go the extra mile and you don't feel challenged. Maybe the days, weeks and months all seem to run together and you feel like a hamster on a wheel. No one can fault you for your seeming indifferent in the workplace.

If this sounds familiar the simple question you have to ask yourself is what can do differently to get yourself out of the rut?

Even though the answer might not be obvious, a good place to start is by thinking outside the box. Clearly repeating the same habits and routines isn't working so it's time to do something different. So what exactly does thinking outside the box mean? Quite simply that you're open to some alternative solutions to reach a desired outcome. Below we discuss some different ways to gain fresh insight and why doing so can be beneficial to your career.

Don't Be Afraid to Go Against the Grain

If humans always stuck to the regimen of how things are "supposed" to be done, the word innovation wouldn't exist. History has proven time and again that our greatest breakthroughs in technology, thought and social change were sparked from people who questioned the status quo. Even more, some of the influential

business people of our time are individuals that everyone thought was crazy.

If you find yourself feeling stuck, don't be afraid to take a leap of faith and do something completely different. If that means going back to school and starting an entirely different career, then great. If it means taking a few months off entirely, then go for it. Only you can truly decide what course of action is best for you. The important thing to remember is that while whatever you decide to do might seem scary, you'll be stronger and better off for it in the end.

Broader Perspective

It's easy to exist in a bubble. It's safe there and where you feel most comfortable. The problem with staying in a bubble however, is that you lose out on different perspectives and fresh ideas. If you're willing to expose yourself to alternative ideas and ways of thinking, you gain tremendous insight and just might find a solution to whatever the problem is from a place you least expected.

When you make a conscious effort to welcome new ideas and consider different possibilities, you'll likely be pleasantly surprised by how quickly your situation improves.

Environment is Everything

Take a moment and think about the environment you work in. Are you stuck in a cubicle cut off from the world? Or does your space encourage creativity and collaboration? When you're at work are you able to focus on the task at hand yet still have the freedom to share your ideas and explore new ways of doing things?

These are all important questions to ask when considering how the physical space around you affects your productivity. If you take the time to honestly evaluate where you work, you might just find that a simple change of scenery is all you need to get back on track.

Be Willing to Adapt

The saying that the only constant in the world is change is especially true when it comes to your career. As technology advances, training becomes better and new

ideas emerge that you're going to have to adapt to. Even when you don't agree with the direction something is headed, your ability to embrace change and learn makes a huge difference in determining your success. Even though it might be easy to just keep going about your business as you always have, if you're willing to learn and ask questions you'll set yourself apart from the competition.

You're Going to Stand Out

Anybody can be just another face in the crowd that follows directions. Again, there is virtually no risk involved here and it's a comfortable place to be. However, if you're willing to ask difficult questions, share your ideas and aren't afraid of failure, you position yourself as someone that is capable of finding solutions to complex problems and that alone is invaluable.

Thinking outside the box can mean different things to different people. While it's important to make sure your decisions are grounded in an element of reason and logic, being afraid of what might happen if you take a chance is a crippling thought that is only going to hold you back. If you feel like you're not where you want to be or the current way of doing things isn't working, make an effort to look at your situation through a different lens. If you keep an open mind, welcome new ideas and are willing to adapt, you're well on your way becoming happier and [more productive](#).

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