

Chapter 2: Flow of Ideas

- It has long been considered practically an axiom that highly creative people get their ideas not through ordinary rational processes like the rest of us, but by some kind of mysterious bolt from the blue.
- New ideas are the primary catalyst for growth in any industrial organization, whether they involve coming up with new products and marketing strategies or developing entirely new technologies.
- It is inaccurate to speak of creativity as a trait that some people have and others do not have. Everyone is creative to some degree. The human mind is taught from birth to accomplish certain tasks in specific ways. Creativity is simply the degree to which one can think of different and more effective approaches.
- Each person actually has two modes of thought. One, freely associative, is the idea generator; the other, which works in a step-by-step logical fashion, acted as a filter. For several reasons, most notably the fear of ridicule by others, the filter has become so dominant in most people that it blocks the release of novel ideas.
- Ideas are vital factors in business survival today. In any type of organization, creativity must come from the top. Top management must set the example.
- **What makes a person creative?**
 - **Problem sensitivity:**

This is the ability to recognize that a problem exists, or be able to cut through misunderstanding, misconception, lack of facts, obscuring handicaps and recognize the real problem.

The easiest way to improve your problem sensitivity is simple to keep in mind that every business operation, every human relation technique, every man-made article can be improved further.
 - **Idea fluency**

Here are a few tools to help you for gathering ideas fluently.

 - **Making notes:** Always carry a notebook or notepad in your pocket. Use it extensively and continuously. Once you get a stray idea, immediately write it down.

- **Picking your time to be creative:** Each of us has a time during the day or night when he is most capable of creative or imaginative thinking.
- **Set a deadline:** Do not procrastinate on problems
- **Give yourself a quota:** Create a target for yourself that you are going to come up with ten or twenty new ideas.
- **Originality**

Finding new ways to vary existing conditions, finding new ways to adapt existing ideas to new conditions, or creating a new modification of something that will fit in existing condition are the needs of the day.

The secret is in the systematic use of questions, for “Systematically challenging the obvious”:

 - “Why is it made this way?”
 - “Why do we follow this procedure?”
 - “Is this object really necessary?”
 - “How can we improve the way we do this?”
- **Creative flexibility**

The quality of creative flexibility is largely that of being willing to consider a wide variety of approaches to a problem.
- **Remove mental blocks:**
 - Taking a shower
 - Engaging in any high intensity activity or exercise.
 - Change the channel
 - Change the environment
- **Lateral thinking:**

Lateral thinking is solving problems through an indirect and creative approach, using reasoning that is not immediately obvious and involving ideas that may not be obtainable by using only traditional step-by-step logic.
- **Affinity Diagram**

It is an activity of organizing large amounts of data in groups according to some form of natural affinity.

The affinity diagram is a business tool used to organize ideas and data.

- **Solve the problems on hand**

- Define the problem.
- Get the facts.
- Go after ideas.
- If you have labored over a problem and have not found a solution, you might get frustrated. The best thing to do then is to sleep on the problem.
- Evaluate your ideas.
- Plenty of cold-blooded judicial thinking has to be exercised and some decisions should be made about implementation of the ideas.

- **Ways to Keep Ideas Flowing in Your Workplaces**

1. Ask for ideas. Make sure everyone on your team knows that they are supposed to think.
2. Ask the new employees immediately for their ideas. Do not let them walk around thinking to themselves, "There must be a reason they do it this way" and not telling anyone!
3. Create an idea or inspiration room specifically designed to encourage people to brainstorm and debate ideas in a fun, relaxed atmosphere.
4. Put up a "What if..." board in your workplace, where employees can pose outrageous "what if" kind of questions.
5. Have a "What if..." section in every meeting.

- **What helps creativity flow?**

- Giving people more autonomy
- Open and honest communication
- A fun, inspiring meeting room
- Simplified rules and processes
- Recognizing that not changing, not trying anything new is often the biggest risk

- **What Blocks Creativity?**

Developed by P.M.Bendre

- Micromanaging projects and people
- A lack of open and honest communication
- A stuffy, stifling meeting room
- Too much red tape
- A risk-adverse attitude and culture

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