

Mike's Ways to Deploy Creative Thinking in the Moment

1. **Tactile Activity** – Legos or K'nex or building blocks – keep some at your desk. The act of making something with your hands can spark creative thoughts
✦ [Using your 'other' hand benefits your brain](#)
2. **Doodling With Purpose** – On a sheet of paper draw a random shape. Keep adding to it. Give the thing a name. Rotate the doodle 180 degrees and give it another name. Repeat. In this way you are forcing your brain to see things differently
✦ [3 Ways Doodling Will Help Your Focus and Creativity](#)
3. **Word Play** By making portmanteau words or scrambling words. You can either use Scrabble letter tiles if you have some or simply take any two words that come to mind and find ways of combining them directly - a portmanteau word (such as Motor and Hotel becoming Motel) – or scrambling the parts completely to come up with either a real or a ridiculous word.
✦ [How to generate original creative ideas with random word stimulation](#)
4. **Do Something Boring or Tedious** Tidy a desk or a drawer, wash and dry some dishes, sweep or vacuum the floor – research shows that if we do something boring our brains want to get busy with something else – it's why we sometimes have surprising ideas at such times.
✦ [How Being Bored Out of Your Mind Makes You More Creative](#)
5. **Stare Off Into Space** ... on purpose – Master the art of focusing off in the distance and emptying your mind. Be careful this can be addictive and may be frowned on by the boss. But it can allow the mind freedom to wander to unexpected places.
✦ [Why Do We Zone Out?](#)
✦ [Do You Daydream? You May Be Smarter and More Creative Than Your Peers](#)
6. **Listen or Watch With Purpose** to EVERYTHING and notice patterns – The simple act of hyper observation forces the brain to concentrate and notice things it normally glosses over.
✦ [How to Boost Your Observation Skills and Learn to Pay Attention](#)
7. **Make Lists of Opposites** of the thing you want to resolve – another way to force the brain to consider difference. For example, if you're fixated on finding a name for something describe it in a word or two and then list as many opposites to that idea as you can.
✦ [Work with opposites](#)
8. **Play Music You Don't Love** – Make a playlist on your device of the music you have played the least. You liked it enough to load it there, but by playing less familiar music you're forcing your brain into a place that is less known and therefore more likely to encourage creative thinking.
✦ [How to Use Music to Boost Your Creativity](#)

9. **Use All Five Senses** to describe any object on your desk – be prepared this may get you some funny looks from co-workers. But, really, examine an everyday object by using all five senses (preferably something that is clean if you're going to taste it)
★ [Using Your 5 Senses To Jump-Start The Creative Process](#)
10. **Flip Through a Creativity Notebook** – To be able to do this you'll have to keep such a notebook (see the other list called 15 Creativity Exercises For When You Have More Time for how to start and keep one going)