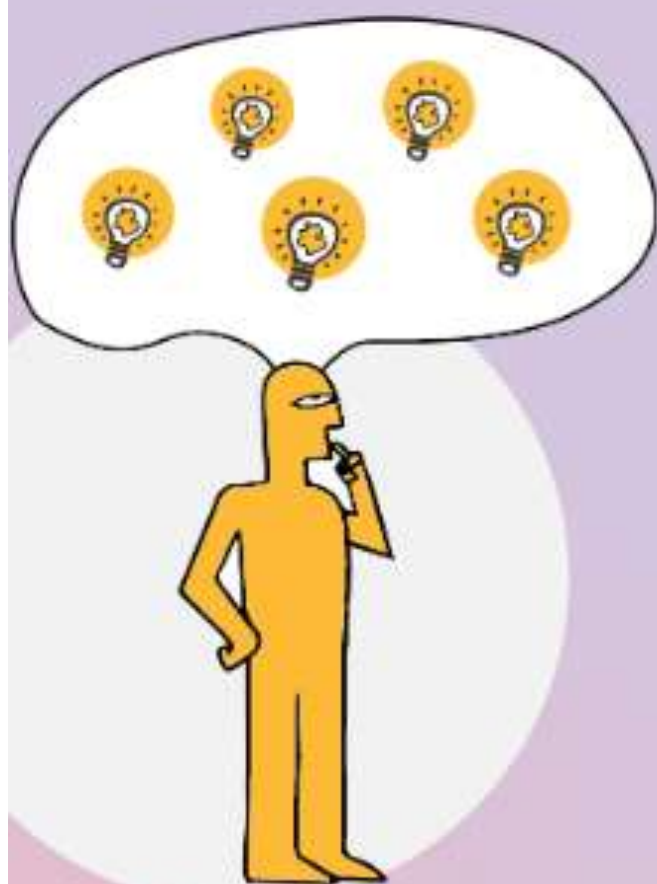Think Solutions

A Shared Exploration

# Who is a Solution Thinker?



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# Who is a Solution Thinker & what makes such people stand out?

*When we asked different people this question, here is what they had to say –*

> ** " Solution thinkers are able to achieve the highest possible goals without lowering set benchmarks.**
>
> This is because they commit themselves to the success of any project & meet goals. So even if roadblocks come up, they are able to figure out answers. They also believe in their team members and their collective ability to creatively find solutions.
>
> *– A senior manager in a leading projects & engineering company*

> ** " Even if they are operating under many constraints, solution thinkers are able to 'design' alternatives to get to the goal.**
>
> So issues like lack of resources, insufficient time, etc. never stops them. Instead they try and think of alternative ways to get to the goal, as they are unwilling to compromise to achieve the end-goal.
>
> *– A project manager in software company*

When faced with a tough goal or deadline, do you lower your benchmarks or expectations of yourself or compromise? OR do you find smarter answers to get to that goal?

**"** When there are problems that need attention or when things go wrong, they step forward to take initiative in solving them.

When things go wrong, they don't get into a blame game. Instead, they try to see what they can do to make things right.

When there are issues (even if it is not directly related to them), they take initiative to help in finding solutions to move forward in concrete ways. I've seen this happen when there are problems in our colony – such as water shortage or waste management.

*– A 45 year old resident of an housing colony*

**"** When faced with challenging circumstances, they have the ability to adapt to the situation and transform it.

This is because they are able to clarify the need in a situation and design solutions that either transform the situation or transform themselves to adapt to the situation. They are able to re-look at the problem differently and look for the solutioning opportunity within it, that helps them resolve whatever challenges.

*– a 35 year old working professional*

How can you adapt to online classes and new ways of learning in the changed circumstances due to the pandemic, so that your academics & learning are not compromised?

Self reflection checklist

# Are you 'thinking solutions'?
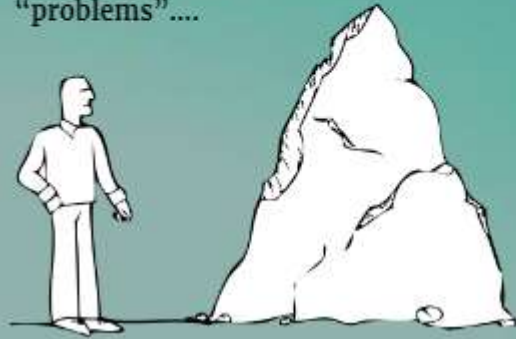
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Application worksheet

# Applying solution thinking in various challenges you see around.

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# Everyday all of us see various challenges around us where we have a chance to apply solution thinking...

## What are some of the day to day challenges you are facing in your home or college life?

Note an example...

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**Try applying solution thinking here**

Examples like...

Bad health and physique resulting in fatigue, low productivity.

Trying to manage multiple commitments like college assignments, drama club, sports practice.

Are there any larger career related challenges or technical challenges you are seeing around you?

Note an example...

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Try applying solution thinking here

Examples like...

When trying to apply for a job, the demand for new recruits is low due to recession. How would you stand out from other applicants?

Drop out rates in your college are very high. Can you help find a solution to this problem for your institution?

Are there any complex Global challenges that you want to work towards in your future career?

Note an example...

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

As a solution thinker, how would you start working towards it?

Examples like...

The challenge of growing unemployment due to automation and other such trends.

Various species of animals are getting endangered due to loss of habitat and genetic variation.

Application worksheet

# Applying solution thinking in various challenges you see around.
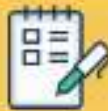
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# Everyday all of us see various challenges around us where we have a chance to apply solution thinking...

What are some of the day to day challenges you are facing in your home or college life?

📝 Note an example...

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

💡 **Try applying solution thinking here**

Examples like...

Bad health and physique resulting in fatigue, low productivity.

Trying to manage multiple commitments like college assignments, drama club, sports practice.

# You know you are NOT "Thinking Solutions" when ...

## When you are faced with a problem or difficult situation...

- ✓ You ignore the difficulties & continue to bear the pain
- ✓ You deny that any issue even exists
- ✓ You do nothing, hoping the problem will go away

## When you find something challenging or face any obstacle...

- ✓ You decide you don't need to face it – you rebel
- ✓ You back-off or withdraw – it's not your problem anymore
- ✓ You try to distract yourself or find some way to run away

## When are unhappy about something or facing a difficulty...

- ✓ You constantly complain, but don't act
- ✓ You know it is not your fault & find someone to blame
- ✓ You are waiting for someone else to find an answer

**While going through the articles below, pay special attention to the following:**

- For Sergeant Simphiwe Mgwetana, it is compassion towards the youth in his community that drives him to look beyond incarceration or punishment to keep them from committing crimes. He has managed to use solution thinking to meet his goals of reducing crime and ensuring that the youngsters become better citizens who build the community around them.
- Like many of us, Ashutoh Giri could have just cringed at the unsanitary conditions of public toilets in India, instead he decided to tackle the problem head on and use technology to combat sanitation. He created a business opportunity as a solution to an age-old problem.


Typically, in the money-lending business, a person can borrow money based on howcapable s/he is in repaying loan. However, this cuts off people who have "nothing" because of their current state.

Dr. Muhammad Yunus, a social entrepreneur, wondered how poverty can be eradicated if such people don't have access to any financial services like loans.

He asked...

- Can we take the bank to the people instead of people coming to the bank?
- Can we lend a person on the basis of trust?
- Can we use the community to assess the trust of the person?

The solution that he built changed the paradigm of banking. He built a model called "micro-finance "where small loans would be given to people with less than 1$ a day income, who would invest the amount into small entrepreneurial ventures like food

stall, cloth mending shop, etc. to generate more income. Today this is known as 'Grameen Bank' which has branches in developed nations too.

Solution thinking is not complicated, just about anyone can do it. Below, you will find examples of ordinary citizens thinking creatively to solve the most common problems around them.

Solution thinking urges people to find innovative answers to some of the toughest challenges facing our world. Right from research to execution, a solution-oriented mindset is looking to break old models. In the stories below, you can see how solution thinking can bring about new ideas to positively impact your community, society and even the environment.