

Tips for Incorporating Creative Thinking

Creative thinking, like critical thinking, is a skill that you can practice and improve. It may feel a little uncomfortable at first and you may see it as “wasting time” on “illogical strategies,” but you will be surprised at what you can learn. Take what you learn and come up with even more new, innovative ideas.

Be open to creative thoughts. Sometimes creative thoughts “sound crazy” and it’s easy to dismiss them without considering them. But staying open to considering those “crazy thoughts” usually pays off. Be open to unformed or early ideas—those can lead to new ideas and solutions too!

Recognize the frailty of new ideas. A new idea is frail and needs to be nurtured and developed before being exposed to harsh criticism. It is a good practice to share the idea with your planning team and work through developing it as a team. For this to be successful, the team needs to ensure that the new idea will not be ridiculed. The idea and the person sharing that idea should be treated with respect. It’s okay to disagree; just provide sound reasoning and don’t make your disagreement a personal attack.

Develop fortitude. Generating and developing good ideas requires a lot of work. From 100 ideas, you may get only one that is viable in the end. Remember, if the idea you propose is rejected, it’s not personal!

Embrace change. Change is not easy to accept and if a new idea requires a significant change in ideology or practice, we may be too quick to reject that idea without really considering it.