



# THE ART OF: “CREATIVE THINKING”

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# We are all problem solvers:

- From the day you started as a compliance professional you have been learning and practising the **science of compliance**.
- As you developed your skills you became more comfortable with the traditional approach to compliance.
- Today we are going to have a discussion about something very non-traditional: the **art of “creative thinking”**

# What is meant by creative thinking?

- It is the willingness to take risks.
- It is the creation of ideas, processes and strategies.
- It is seeing the world in a way that is different from others.
- It is what leads to innovation.

# What is meant by creative thinking?

- In school, we are taught to approach problem solving in a very linear fashion. Very little creativity was involved in this process.
- In fact, the key to creative thinking is looking for and finding the leverage that exists in every problem-solving exercise.
- I'm hoping that today you will see the merit in this approach and start to use it yourself.

# How do you start thinking creatively?

- **The first rule** is truly discovering what the problem is. The problem as first stated is rarely correct. Restate it often to be sure it is the essential problem.
- **The second thing** you have to do is collect all of the key information and get rid of the clutter. Then you need to clearly state what the gaps are in your knowledge and do everything in your power to fill them. A comprehensive understanding of the facts and the issues is the most important foundation for creative thinking.
- If you **assume** that there are no gaps in your knowledge and you are wrong, you will not solve the problem creatively. Therefore, do not make assumptions.

# How do you start thinking creatively?

- When you look at all of the elements of the problem honestly and without assumptions, you will know the limits of your knowledge and this will give you new possibilities for finding solutions to complex problems.
- You have to refine your knowledge and revisit fundamental issues until you find new and creative insights.
- **The third stage** is to start problem solving. If the problem seems overwhelming, don't try to solve it all at once. First identify a smaller and easier problem that you can solve and work your way up to the larger problem one piece at a time.

# How do you start thinking creatively?

- Be sure to look at all possible sources of good ideas. One idea alone is very dangerous.
- Suspend judgment and criticism when collecting ideas from your team. Be curious, challenge others' statements and believe the problem can be solved.
- **There is no one right answer.** When trying to collect ideas, do not censor or evaluate them as they occur. Nothing kills creativity faster than self-censorship of ideas while generating them.

# How do you start thinking creatively?

- Remember that we are very used to looking at everyday issues from the same point of view. Instead of looking at a difficult problem in a traditional way, look at it more deeply and construct original ideas by doing so.
- To think creatively, you have to look at the same things with a more probing approach and you will see those things that you've never seen before.
- **Learn to think unconventionally**. Creative people do not think analytically and logically. Conventional thinkers look for ways to eliminate possibilities.



# How do you start thinking creatively?

- Creative people are inclusive thinkers. They look for ways to include everything, including things that are dissimilar and totally unrelated. Generating connections between unrelated subjects is how they provoke different thinking ideas.
- **Expect people to be negative**. The more expert and specialized a person becomes, the more their mindset becomes narrowed and the more fixated they become on confirming what they believe to be true. Consequently, when confronted with new and different ideas, their focus will be on conformity.

# How do you start thinking creatively?

- Always remember, there is no such thing as failure. Whenever you try to do something and do not succeed, you do not fail because you will have learned something that does not work.

# So what is the take away from today?

1. Creative thinking is very hard work and also very rewarding.
2. It is one of the best team building experiences you can have.
3. Assumptions will cause you to fail.
4. Drill down deeply when you collect all of the information so that you will know your subject deeply which will allow you to creatively plan strategies to solve the problem.
5. Work as a team and do not be afraid of trying on any idea and rejecting it if it is unacceptable.
6. Stop thinking in a linear fashion and start thinking creatively and strategically.

# Conclusion

- To a certain extent, it is useful to consider conventional approaches to solving a particular problem. I accept that. But if you are going to do top quality work, **you have to start there but not finish there.**
- The art of creative thinking is something that has to be learned through experience and also taught. I would be more than happy to facilitate some of the early meetings I am proposing and give you some simple lessons in how to move forward with those meetings, if that would be helpful.

# Thank You

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