

Stratagame Project

Ability to break the pattern



The charm of the investigation – as stated by Arthur Conan Doyle in "Elementary, My dear Watson!" – often lies precisely in realizing and enhancing what others neglect because it is 'taken for granted' or what does not seem important to most and instead opens new paths for investigation.[1] The most common mistakes in work or science come from settling into what is known, not realizing obvious rebuttal, or not giving weight to what is considered unimportant.

Giving weight also to the possible new and original aspects of one's work gives rise to a strange but more frequent phenomenon than one might think. Sometimes it happens, in looking for something, to find another one that was not sought but that is even more interesting: many important discoveries, from radioactivity to penicillin, have happened like this.

In this case we refer to the ability to break the patterns, which is one of the peculiarities of "Creative Thinking".

This skill could be described, using the words of De Bono, as the ability to try to solve problems with unorthodox, apparently illogical, methods.

Following a good method is always the best way, and anything that is consequently sought or not will be welcome, as long as you always pay attention to details that

seem obvious or unimportant, secondary or irrelevant.

Mental activities are normally regulated by thought patterns and reference systems that determine predefined paths of thought and use cause-effect strategies, based on logic and judgment (linear thinking). When, on the other hand, different categories and areas are mixed together, one works mentally on different levels, moves away from the rules, it is possible to produce unpredictable, creative, typical solutions,

precisely, of creative thought: we refer, in this case, to a form of thought that analyzes the facts by not reading them through predetermined assumptions.

To do this it is, therefore, useful to question established methods, routine and rules even when they seem functional or reassuring because they are consolidated and therefore certain.

Getting out of the box, questioning the pre-established order, therefore, implies multiple difficulties and resistances.

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It is possible, however, to do this by capturing the stimuli of the environment, changing point of view, experimenting and trying new situations, identifying solutions through insight, outside the domain of knowledge and traditional-linear logic.

There are many cases that testify the tendency of scientists, even famous ones, not to consider everything that they consider insignificant or irrelevant, thus underestimating new aspects, not at all irrelevant, which would have led to very different conclusions from those presumptuously expressed, such as when famous physicist Lord Kelvin, president of the English 'Royal Society', in 1895 declared the flight of machines heavier than air absolutely impossible.

Breaking the patterns doesn't have the single purpose of producing something new and original, but of overcoming the rigid functioning of the systems, modifying concepts and perceptions, favoring the change of point of view and developing other strategies (not necessarily original).

To improve these ability you can:

- Change perspective and use new forms of thought and communication to describe a problem.
- Think, forgetting just for a moment what the rules are, find a way that it is only yours to express and solve the problem.
- Challenge the traditional point of view and test innovative tools and methods.
- Take your time for new things and choices you made, rather than take a road shaped by habits.

[1] Santo Di Nuovo Elementare, Watson! Criteri e metodi per la ricerca e l'investigazione. 2010. Città Aperta Edizioni

