

Video Transcript

8 Creative Thinking Exercises to Boost Your Creativity

Mental creative blocks are very real, you're stumped, staring at your canvas not knowing where to begin believe it or not there's exercises that can help.

Hello world I'm Mike Ploger with Visme, the platform that will change the way you prepare for the biggest professional challenges and projects. One thing that I've struggled with in the past is defeating a creative block, also known as the inability to come up with original ideas. The gears in my mind just stop turning and fresh thoughts or ideas completely elude me. These occurrences can last a day, a week, or even months to a year. When you're stuck and struggling to be creative though you can't just hope you'll come out of it. Believe it or not there's creative thinking exercises that you can do to boost your creativity. In this video I will share eight of those exercises to help you start coming up with brilliant original ideas.

Exercise 1: Schedule Creative Free Time

One of the most difficult times to be creative is when you're given a deadline to come up with a brilliant idea. It is extremely difficult to focus on brainstorming when your mind is worried about how little time it has, for example, rather than sitting around waiting and then being dealt a deadline of devise a new ad campaign by the end of the day set aside a time in your daily or weekly schedule to do some creative thinking there's no expectations, no pressure, just you and your thoughts. Think of creativity as a plant it's not going to grow in a closed box of restrictions and deadlines it needs space time and regular treatment in order to flourish. (Check out this daily planner infographic on visme.com if you need help visualizing your schedule maybe there's a free half hour in your day that you can devote to creative thinking.

Exercise 2: Set a Timer

Now considering everything I just said, some people are just the opposite some work better under pressure and their creative gears turn faster when there is a deadline an example would be giving yourself 10 minutes to come up with as many captions for an Instagram post as possible or an hour to conceptualize designs for a marketing project while deadlines can restrict some of us they can also push us to work harder in effect pushing through that mental block find out what works best for you.

Exercise 3: Think Quantity over Quality

When it comes to creativity quantity over quality can take you very far. What do I mean? Well, instead of searching for that one perfect caption in your mind start churning out 30 different captions and write them down do the same for ad campaign headlines or article topics or whatever your project may require by writing one idea down a second idea will surface and then a third and a fourth creativity is a domino effect once you get the ball rolling there is no stopping you so don't focus on nailing down that one perfect idea on the first try don't be afraid to brain vomit for lack of a better term and let your ideas spill onto paper.

Exercise 4: Become an Idea Machine

To be creative you might have to step outside of your comfort zone think about it like this to become smarter or expand your vocabulary you should read more books. Don't like reading?

Well, tough luck it's a surefire way to help you. Don't limit yourself on how you're going to help your creative outlook sometimes you need to step outside your comfort zone in order to grow one idea that's proven to work turning yourself into an idea machine. The concept was pioneered by author James Outtager and it's quite simple every single day you need to come up with at least 10 original ideas one day it might be 10 funny Halloween costumes, the next day it could be 10 ideas for the next great superhero. While those are more abstract you can also go professional and think of 10 new inventions or 10 new businesses that no one's thought of yet. The goal is to simply write down 10 new ideas each and every day by doing so your creativity is given a chance to expand in ways that you hadn't realized before. You're thinking outside of the box in making new connections, and besides it can be fun challenge your co-workers or employees to do the same and you'll be blown away as to what you can think of.

Exercise 5: Switch Up Your Routine

So, you're in need of some inspiration what are the chances you're doing the same thing you are now the last time you needed inspiration and the time before that and the time before that a change of scenery and switching up your routine can be the perfect flint for sparking some new ideas go for a walk, drive a new way home, listen to different music, or tackle a new podcast. Move things around at your desk, if you have a set schedule every day move events around instead of lunch at noon push it back. Same project but different day, work on it at a different time you'd be surprised by how these smallest things can make you feel like an entirely different person. Think of these as a breath of fresh air. They are helpful ideas to help you get back on your feet.

Exercise 6: Look at Something Familiar Through a New Lens

Here's an exercise. Take a minute and look around you. Any ordinary objects laying around maybe a paper clip, tissue box or a mouse pad? Set a timer for two minutes and come up with as many unorthodox uses for that object as you can. A paper clip could pop a lock, a tissue box could store plastic bags, a mouse pad can be used to hold steamy hot pots. This is called the alternative uses test and it was developed in the 1960s by a guy named JP Guilford. It forces your creative muscle to grow by looking at ordinary objects through a different lens encouraging divergent thinking.

Exercise 7: Read More

Did you really think after bringing it up earlier I wasn't going to encourage you to read more? It's undeniably one of the greatest ways to learn. Here's the thing though, pick up a book about a topic that is completely unrelated to your line of work. Don't read a book that you could write, read a book that's going to help you grow and better your understanding of another topic by exposing yourself to new ideas. You're helping your brain pick up new ways of thinking.

Exercise 8: Freewrite More

Along the same lines as reading is writing. Take 10 minutes a day to sit down grab a pen and write your thoughts down. Whatever comes to mind write it. It doesn't have to be grammatically correct or win a literary award. The purpose is to just let your thoughts flow and free your mind of clutter. One of the most common ways to do this is with a diary. Keep a notebook and pencil by your bed and jot down your thoughts before getting some shut eye. It can be your little secret on your way to enhanced creative thinking.

Ladies and gentlemen that's all I have. Training your mind is just as, if not more, important than training your body. It takes practice repetition and exercise and even then, you must challenge yourself in order to get ahead. Follow these tips I've shared today and it won't be long before you're ahead of the game and wowing your audience with your great ideas. Thank you so much for watching.