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# 3 Ways To Improve How You Think



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Now what are the 3 ways? SERHIY KOBYAKOV

By Dianna Booher

Nothing sets you apart as a leader like having a reputation for always coming through with new ideas and solutions to problems. That distinction requires brainpower. But standing before a crowd and trying to think on your feet under pressure or offering answers off the cuff in a meeting doesn't always represent your best thinking.

So what *does* improve your chances for analytical thinking?

Improve How You Think—3 Specific Ways

### 3 Ways to Think About How You Think

#### Write

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Writing proves to be a tough task master. You can't mumble through it. You can't fake it. You can't fill up the screen by just staring at it. I've just finished my 48th book, and I can say from experience that writing is the single best thing to develop or deepen thinking skills.

By the time I slog through the process from beginning to end, I always realize how little I knew at the start. Writing demands research, analysis, creativity, discipline, and organization. Writing forces you to think—that is, unless you plan to write drivel. And most of us recognize drivel when we see it, especially our own.

#### Imagine Yourself Seeking Capital From A Roomful Of Venture Capitalists

With an idea or recommendation that you'd like to propose, it's rarely a slam-dunk. If you feel passionate about the idea, it may be difficult to see downsides or dangers that could derail your success.

But eventually, you'll need to roll out enough details so that you or other team members can implement the product, service, goal, or whatever.

Imagine yourself in a conference room surrounded by VCs. What questions will they ask you before investing in your idea?

Now back to the drawing board for analysis: Look at what you wrote in Step 1. What did those VCs want to know that you didn't tell them. Fill in the missing gaps to give a clear, complete, accurate picture.

#### Sit For A Final Exam With Your Virtual "Board"

If you've completed a master's degree or PhD program, then you've had the experience of facing a group of professors while they question you about everything you've read and

studied during the previous 2-4 years of your university program. If you haven't gone through that grueling experience, then you've probably heard from others who have.

To improve your thinking on the new idea, simulate that experience for yourself. Ask 3 colleagues to get on a conference call with you. Give them a 3-minute briefing on your idea (as applicable, include the what, why, when, how, who, how much).

Then toss the floor open for 3 to 5 minutes for their questions. What else do they need to know before "approving," "sponsoring," "implementing," or "recommending" the idea to others? Don't answer their questions; just voice record or make note of their questions.

This board exercise will demonstrate what you may have missed in your own first analysis of the idea: Did you leave out important information? Did they connect the proverbial dots in the overview you communicated to them? Did they get sidetracked by nonessential information?

Granted, analytical thinking is hard work, but facing a blank screen or a virtual "board of buddies" can be far less brutal than implementing a half-baked idea.

Dianna Booher is the bestselling author of 48 books. Her newest is ***Faster, Fewer, Better Emails***. She helps organizations communicate clearly. Follow her at BooherResearch.com and @DiannaBooher.

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