CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING IN EVERYDAY SITUATIONS

212-Careers

The scenario is familiar: you're heading to work on your usual route, only to find the road closed. You need to quickly find an alternative route to avoid being late. Or perhaps you're facing an impending deadline on a project, but the resources you've always relied on are suddenly unavailable.

These are just a couple of examples of everyday problem-solving situations that people encounter regularly. When you find yourself in a similar situation, remember the following tips to navigate through it effectively.

First, Identify the Problem

The first step in solving any problem is to identify it. This requires you to be objective and remove your emotions from the process. While this can be challenging, it's crucial for gaining clarity. Describe the problem in its simplest terms, avoiding emotional language or opinions. By acting as an impartial observer and using as few words as possible, you might discover that the issue is less significant than you initially thought.

Question the Problem

Once you've identified the problem, it's time to start questioning it. This is where creativity comes into play. If the problem seems real and pressing, ask yourself whether it must be solved. Is it something that can be avoided altogether without any negative consequences?

Questioning the problem from different angles can lead to creative solutions that might not have been apparent initially. Ask yourself why the problem exists and why it needs to be addressed. This process of constant questioning can reveal alternative approaches and innovative solutions.

Reframe Obstacles as Opportunities

Creative thinkers know how to approach issues from different perspectives. If a solution doesn't immediately present itself, they change their viewpoint. Instead of seeing obstacles as barriers, they view them as opportunities for growth and learning.

This shift in mindset requires conscious effort. For instance, if a new skill is needed to overcome an obstacle, don't think, "This is too hard; I'll never be able to learn this." Instead, ask yourself, "How can I make this easier to understand?" This approach will kickstart the creative process, helping you find a solution.

Give the Solution a Deadline

Deadlines are powerful motivators for creativity. The urgency of a looming deadline can inspire more creative thinking than when a task is far off in the future. Setting an aggressive but achievable deadline for solving a problem can push you to think creatively and develop effective solutions more quickly.

Ask Others This One Question

Finally, don't hesitate to tap into the creativity of others. Often, the problems you face have witnesses or involve other people. In such cases, asking others, "*What*

would you do?" can open the door to innovative solutions you might not have considered. This simple, four-word question leverages the diverse experiences and perspectives of others, often leading to unexpected and valuable insights.

By following these tips, you can approach everyday problems more creatively, turning challenges into opportunities and finding solutions that might have otherwise remained hidden.
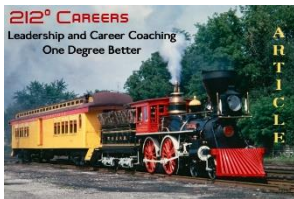
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