

Brainstorming ideas positively



Strategic thinking

Let me out

In general, it can be argued that strategic thinking and acting within a certain set of assumptions and potential action alternatives as well as challenging existing assumptions and action alternatives, potentially lead(s) to a new and more appropriate one.

(Harvard Business Review, Thinking Inside the Box)



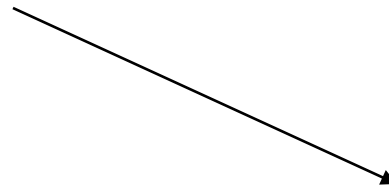
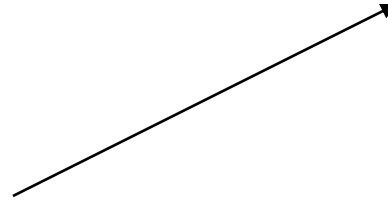
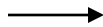
“Come up with solutions in 30 minutes?”

Why is there a need for strategic thinking?

- Most people spend their time either “doing” or “managing”
- Without thinking strategically you are stagnant; consistently striving for status quo because there are no options
- There is a lack of creativity; there are no incentives for creativity.



Visions and strategy – What's the best way to get to New York from Indy?



Glossary

- **Strategic Leadership** – constant management attention to that which differentiates a company in the competitive marketplace.
- **Strategic Management** – critically approving, leading and reviewing strategic and business plans, as well as evaluating the strategic leadership skills of the decision-makers in the organization.



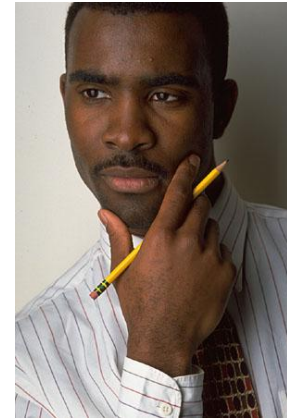
Glossary

- **Strategy Implementation** – building an organization capable of carrying out the strategy and plan successfully, developing budgets that steer resources into those activities critical to strategic success, establishing strategy supporting policies, motivating people in ways that induce them to pursue the strategic objectives, and creating a culture and climate conducive to successful execution.
- **Strategic Manager** – someone who is able to ease the “fit” between the way things have always been done and the change required to get things done in the future.



Glossary

- **Strategic Intent** – relentlessly pursuing an ambitious vision and related strategic goals and objectives; staking out a particular business position.
- **Strategic Initiatives** – a group of, or multiple initiatives, aligned to advance toward your vision.
- **Strategic Goals** – describe corporate aspirations related to achievement of vision; stated in the form of a larger idea that describe the game plan for achieving the strategic objectives.
- **Strategic Objectives** – measurable metrics that indicate progress toward the achievement of the vision and related goals; they convert the vision statement and goals into specific performance targets.





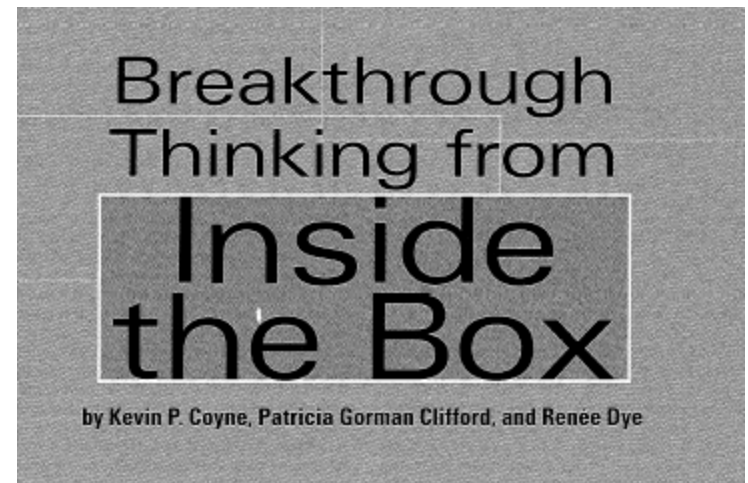
Theoretical Construct

Thinking inside the box

Thinking inside the box

Thinking Inside The Box

Based on research
published in the
Harvard Business Review,
December, 2007



Basic concepts

- Brainstorming: “a group creativity technique designed to generate a large number of ideas for the solution to a problem.”
- Start: Popularized in late 1930s by Alex Faickney Osborn - *Applied Imagination*. Osborn proposed groups could double their creative output by using the method of brainstorming.
- Popular group technique, researchers have failed to find evidence of its effectiveness for enhancing either quantity or quality of ideas generated.



Brainstorming

- Distraction, social loafing, evaluation apprehension, and production blocking, brainstorming groups are just as effective as group work; actually less effective than individuals working independently.
- Traditional brainstorming *may not* increase the productivity of groups
 - ▣ Benefits - enhancing the enjoyment of group work
 - ▣ Benefits - improving morale
 - ▣ Benefits - useful exercise for team building



Reality sets in (Example)

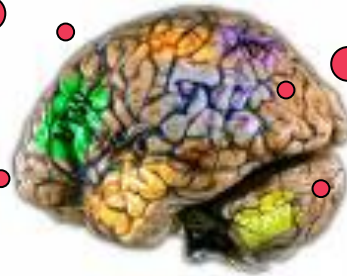
Task: We want a full neuroscience program established at Community Hospital North by 2010.

The physicians
don't want to
do this

We don't have
the technology

Staff doesn't
have the
training

Clarian and St.
Vincent already
do this...no
market



Reality sets in

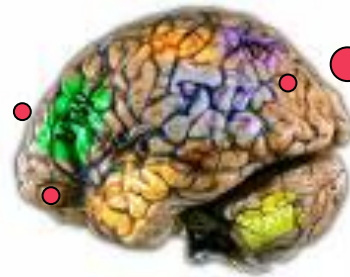
Task: We want a full neuroscience program established at Community Hospital North by 2010.

What the
*&#\$% is
coiling

We don't do
skull based
fractures.....
coiling???

The nurses don't
have the time or
interest for
training

The cost of
entry is huge



Shift from *do* to *engage*

□ Research Findings:

- *Fertile questions* focus the mind on possibilities different than current experience or overlooked because they are at opportunity continuum extremes.
- Traditional brainstorming requires abstract thinking.
 - The right level of abstraction tends to occur about three to six levels down in the thought process.
 - Stopping early results in question too broad to continue; questions become too specific to generate useful responses.



Leader create focus and guardrails

1. Bound the range of acceptable ideas, the select and tailor the questions.
2. Ensure team engagement.
3. Structure the meeting so social norms are in your favor.

Program X has been highly profitable and an opportunity for physician engagement. The field is more competitive – hospitals, health systems, physicians. Technology allows for increased ambulatory volumes.

4. Focus discussion on preselected questions.
6. Narrow the idea list to what seriously should be reviewed.

Strategic thinking toolbox

- Create guard rails – before meetings develop criteria and boundaries for thinking
- What are the requirements of the problem to be solved?
- Identify questions that are as far from how you traditionally (status quo) do things to create parameters.
- Use words that the project team understand (e.g. customer – patient – consumer).
- Be selective in who is invited to develop a solution.
- Use tricks of the trade to engage the team.



Strategic thinking toolbox

- Set up ground rules for the team and boundaries that enable creativity but within a specific framework.
- Limit discussion – avoid overkill; enable the team to think out loud but then limit options.
- Think openly; understand how broadly you can think.





Brainstorming for change actions

Remember the basics

Remember, change is a process

- Establishing a sense of urgency
- Creating The Guiding Coalition
- Developing a Vision and Strategy
- Communicating the Change Vision
- Empowering Broad-Based Action
- Generating Short-Term Wins
- Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change
- Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture
- Timeline (Summary)
- Empowering Broad-Based Action



Change has a time and place

- Change is needed when a system, business, organization must cope with new competitive realities.
 - ▣ The wrong way
 - “Promulgating companywide *programs* (i.e. mission statements, “corporate culture” *programs*, training courses, quality circles, and new pay-for-performance systems) will transform organizations
 - Employee behavior is changed by altering a company's formal structure and systems.
 - Memo or voice mail

Change in a business model

- Competitive success in this economy requires transformation of how and the way systems function.
 - ▣ Reducing reliance on managerial authority, formal rules and procedures
 - ▣ Narrow divisions of work
 - ▣ Teams, sharing information, and delegating responsibility and accountability far down the hierarchy
 - ▣ Shifting from **hierarchical** and **bureaucratic model** of organization that has characterized business units since World War II to **task-driven organization** where what has to be done governs who works with whom and who leads.

Greatest obstacle to revitalization and change

- The greatest obstacle to revitalization is the idea that it comes about through companywide change programs.
- Formal organization structure and systems cannot lead a corporate renewal process.



Change from the top down

- Change works best top down.
- You don't have to wait for senior management to start a process of organizational revitalization.
- There is a lot they can do even without support from the top.
- A CEO or other senior managers committed to change makes a difference.
- When it comes to changing an entire organization, such support is essential.



Mobilize commitment to change through business problem diagnoses

- The starting point of any effective change effort is a clearly defined business problem.
- Action Steps
 - ▣ Develop a shared diagnosis of what is wrong in an organization and what can and must be improved.
 - ▣ Managers mobilize the initial commitment that is necessary to begin the **change** process (i.e. Work group, task force addressing the business issue).



Don't force it

- Change is organic.
- Regardless of who was involved, consensus does not come from an edict or memorandum
- Action:
 - ▣ Allow clusters to reinvent the wheel
 - Find its own way to the new organization.
 - The conclusions reached will not be surprising, but because it was the cluster's choice, people committed themselves to learning the necessary new skills and attitudes.



Change needs to be hardwired – formal business structures change

- Hardwire the new learning's through formal policies, systems, and structures.
- Actions:
 - Create new stories, new folklore.
 - New approaches to entrench the right people, organizational structure, and operations.
 - Enacting change in the systems of the organization earlier will fail.
 - Formal systems will have imperfections.
 - Imperfections can be minimized, however, once people have worked in an ad hoc team structure and learned what interdependencies are necessary.



Monitor, revise, adjust continuous improvement cycles

- Change is designed to “create an asset that did not exist before -- a learning organization capable of adapting to a changing competitive environment.”
- Action:
 - ▣ Results and behavior need to be measured and monitored.
 - ▣ Course corrections are okay!
 - ▣ This is the formation of a learning culture.

Test organizational readiness

- The team believes. Is the organization *ready* for transition and change?
- Key questions before final implementation
 - ▣ Is there consensus among leadership?
 - ▣ Have alternatives, options, worse-case scenario implications been through ?
 - ▣ Is there alignment between the change and the organizational mission?
 - ▣ Is there an action plan, responsibilities, outcomes identified?





Wrap-Up

The most important concept

Cowardice, as distinguished from panic,
is almost always simply a lack of ability
to suspend functioning of
the imagination.

Ernest Hemingway, *Men at War*



One last thing....

- It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change. *Author unknown, commonly misattributed to Charles Darwin*
- There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction. *Winston Churchill*
- Consistency is contrary to nature, contrary to life. The only completely consistent people are the dead. *Aldous Huxley*

For additional information or to continue our dialogue

□ Brandon A. Roger, MSW, MBA

□ (c) 317.496.4995

□ www.brandonaroger.com; broger1206@aol.com