

Beware of group think. This is the phenomenon in which group members are more interested in retaining approval of the other members than trying to come up with a creative solution. Listen to “the fool” who is poking fun at an idea, they may have something important to say!

10. “I’m Not Creative”

This attitude results in the self-fulfilling prophecy. And individual stifle themselves because they believe that creativity belongs only to others. To be creative, one must believe in the worth of their ideas and have the persistence to build on them.

Source: von Oech, Roger, (1983). *A Whack On The Side Of The Head*- Warner Communications Company, New York, New York.

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## ***Mental Locks to Creativity***

1. "The Right Answer"  
Much of our educational system is based on the search for the one right answer. Thus the "right answer" approach becomes deeply ingrained in our thinking. The problem is that life is ambiguous; there are many right answers – all depending on what you are looking for.
2. "That's Not Logical"  
The thinking process can be divided into two processes: soft thinking which is approximate, diffuse, and contradictory and hard thinking which is precise, specific and consistent. For some, the thought process involves little soft thinking during idea conception. Their attitude being, "that's not logical".
3. "Follow The Rules"  
Our culture puts a great deal of pressure on one to "follow the rules". From "don't color outside the lines" to "don't shout in the library"; our daily lives are governed by rules. Although some rules are good and serve to protect society, "following the rules" can result in only "thinking of things as they are".
4. "Be Practical"  
As one grows older, they become a prisoner to the familiar and practical. When faced with a problem, the question is "what has been done" rather than "what if—". For many daily activities, the practical is important. But the practical can be destructive if it prevents us from asking "what if".
5. "Avoid Ambiguity"  
We have been taught to "avoid ambiguity" because of the communication problems it can cause. And in situations where misunderstanding would be serious, "avoiding ambiguity" is good. However, too much detail and specificity can stifle the imagination.
6. "To Error is Wrong"  
There are times when error is inappropriate. Although many times an error on the first, second, or fiftieth attempt can serve as a stepping stone to the desired result. Being afraid to fail and constantly playing it safe can work to slow down or halt the creative process.
7. "Play is Frivolous"  
Necessity may be the mother of invention, but play is certainly the father. Many times an idea will be generated when you re involved in a task completely unrelated to your problem. But for some, the attitude is "stop playing around and get down to business".
8. "That's Not My Area"  
Specialization is a fact of life. Society requires you to narrow your focus and limit your field of view. To counter this attitude, make it a habit to be on the look-out for novel ideas that others have used successfully. Actively be on the hunt for new and interesting approaches.
9. "Don't Be Foolish"