

The 16 Habits of Mind

Developed by Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick, the 16 Habits of Mind include the varied ways successful individuals approach problems. The 16 habits are described in this planner to provide you with the opportunity to utilise them in your day-to-day teaching.



Persistence – It is important not to give up on a problem, regardless of how ambiguous the situation may seem. Analyse the problem and come up with alternative ways to solve it. Remember, if one strategy doesn't work you can always try another!



Managing Impulsivity – The value of thinking before reacting is somewhat understated. By gathering information and taking the time to reflect on your possible answer and actions, you will find that a better suited one may come to mind!



Listening with Empathy and Understanding – Listening involves understanding what the other person is saying. Make an effort to hold back values, judgements, opinions and prejudices in order to listen to and consider another person's thoughts.



Thinking Flexibly – The ability to think flexibly requires you to keep an open mind and to approach problems from different angles. You should develop alternative solutions, whilst working within rules, criteria and regulations. Display confidence in your intuition!



Thinking about your Thinking: Metacognition – When approaching a problem, it is important for you to develop a plan of action and monitor its effectiveness through reflection and evaluation upon completion. This habit also involves the ability to recognise when to make changes to your approach and placing them into action, in effect, altering your initial plan.



Striving for Accuracy – Taking the time to check over your work is essential to success. You will need to continuously review your work to ensure it meets the set criteria.



Applying Past Knowledge – The knowledge gained from past experiences is a key information source that is often overlooked. When approaching a new problem or situation, you should draw upon this knowledge and allow past theories, experiences and solutions to aid in developing a plan of action.



Questioning and Posing Problems – The ability to ask questions that provide you with the information you don't know is a characteristic of an effective problem solver. Identifying and questioning discrepancies and occurrences within your environment will allow you to gain a better understanding of the problem and possible solutions.



Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision – Refining your language aids with your ability to think critically, which in turn allows you to action problems more effectively. Use precise language and support your statements with explanations, comparisons, quantification and evidence.



Gathering Data through All Senses – It is a known fact that all information is derived through our senses (sight, smell, touch, taste, sound), therefore to increase your knowledge base, pay attention to your environment and allow your senses to absorb all that is around you.



Creating, Imagining & Innovating – By allowing yourself to go beyond your perceived boundaries, you can discover and generate new approaches you never thought possible. Examine each potential approach from different angles and accept criticism – both positive and negative – to help you refine your solution.



Responding with Wonderment and Awe – Effective problem solvers are curious individuals who commune with their environment. They find the world fascinating, seek problems and approach learning with enthusiasm and passion.



Taking Responsible Risks – By thinking outside your usual parameters you can learn so much more. Being adventurous and taking responsible risks allows you to add to your knowledge base by discovering new information. It is important to note, however, that not all risks are appropriate and it is important to be able to differentiate between those risks you should take and those you should not.



Finding Humour – Humour has been found to trigger higher level thinking skills such as visual imagery, creating analogies and discovering new relationships. Find the humour in situations and laugh at yourself. Remember, there is a fine line between humour and harassment, so do not laugh at others, violence or profanity – to laugh is to condone.



Thinking Interdependently – Working with other people allows you to generate more information, which aids in establishing new ideas and possible solutions. You can also draw on the collective intelligence to test and improve current strategies you had in place.



Remaining Open to Continuous Learning – Learning never stops! Intelligent people know that they do not know everything and continually strive for improvement by increasing their body of knowledge, allowing them to become better problem solvers.

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