

Tips To Removing Filters For Creative Works

People who view the past nostalgically are believed to look through rose-tinted glasses. Similarly, assessing future circumstances and decisions is often colored by a "filter bubble." This filter, much like a search engine, presents users with results that they expect based on their given search terms. However, this distorted perception of reality can be overcome by eliminating any filters. To think creatively, you must approach concerns with a set of unique and unbiased views.

It would be unwise to remove these filters permanently because they offer important clarity and understanding. Nevertheless, when attempting to think critically, one must abandon these preconceptions to envision different perspectives and embrace new data.

This chapter elucidates on various types of reality filters and emphasizes how to eliminate them to foster creativity. The exploration commences by examining the method behind why the feline remained unscathed on that darkened road.

Five Filters Through Which We See the World

Diversity in life experiences results in varying perspectives. Our individual filters enable us to quickly relate present circumstances with past experiences. For instance, in the case of a previous abusive boss, the moment a new boss says something similar, the assumption is that it might be a toxic environment. Life filters are essential in making evaluations and increasing awareness of familiar situations. However, they also have the potential to hinder creativity. There are five such filters through which we all perceive the world.

Filter One: I Know the Problem

The limitations imposed by one's preconceptions significantly narrow the range of plausible answers, undermining creativity. By embracing one's assumptions and challenging the core of the problem, it is possible to identify new and innovative ideas. This was demonstrated by the insight gained from understanding that bank customers desired access to cash instead of wanting longer banking hours. Avoiding hasty assumptions is crucial since it is equivalent to failing to read the question before answering an exam. Such a mistake carries the potential of arriving at the incorrect conclusion.

It takes courage to challenge one's preconceptions, since it involves admitting that one's beliefs may be incomplete or flawed. However, it is necessary in order to broaden one's perspective and find novel solutions. Successful innovators have been able to deconstruct problems and reframe them in unexpected ways. For example, the inventor of the Post-it note was trying to create a strong adhesive, but instead discovered a weaker one that could be used for temporary notes. By being open to unexpected solutions, we can find new approaches to old problems and create breakthrough innovations. Ultimately, the key to overcoming the limitations of preconceptions is to remain curious, flexible and willing to learn

Filter Two: I Know the Solution

The utilization of the "I know the solution" filter occurs when an individual presumes they possess the ability to solve a particular issue or have knowledge of the solution. It is important to note that this filter is distinct from the "I know the problem" filter, although they may be employed concurrently.

The "I know the problem" filter is used when an individual believes they understand the root cause or source of an issue, but may not necessarily have a solution in mind. The "I know the solution" filter can be helpful in situations where quick resolution is necessary, but it can also lead to a lack of collaboration and consideration of other perspectives. It's important for individuals to be open to other possibilities and solutions, even if they believe they have the answer. In this way, the "I know the solution" filter can be a helpful tool, but only when tempered with humility and openness to other viewpoints.

Filter Three: I Live in the Real World

When Albert Einstein developed his theory of relativity, he innovatively envisioned himself chasing after a beam of light and mapped out his journey. Our thought patterns are often influenced by the reality we perceive. For instance, in an exercise to generate ideas for a new tourist attraction, when asked to suggest alternative hours of operation, group members typically filter their ideas through common operating hours, resulting in a mundane list lacking originality.

However, if the group were to ignore their preconceived notions of typical operating hours and conjure up innovative alternatives, their list would sparkle with newfound creativity. Although some of these ideas may not be practical, the list would harbor novelty and imagination. For example, setting operating hours during a full moon may lead to unique nighttime surfing competitions aptly named *Night Surfari*. Similarly, opening the attraction for only the first fifteen minutes of every hour could create a smoother flow of visitors. By letting go of the expectations of reality, the ideas that surface may be offbeat, distinctive, and captivating.

Filter Four: I Am an Expert

At times, extensive knowledge and expertise can impede one's capacity to explore alternative solutions or lead to making conjectures about a particular problem. For instance, when a group of skilled magicians was asked to observe a fellow illusionist performing a trick involving the appearance of an ace card from a shuffled deck, they presented elaborate explanations involving intricate and dexterous techniques. However, a group of novices observing the same trick provided a simple explanation that the deck only contained aces, which turned out to be the correct answer. The experts' proficiency hindered their ability to think critically.

Similarly, an anecdotal example of older boys teasing a younger boy by offering him a nickel and dime, and the younger boy repeatedly choosing the nickel, reveals the extent of the expert filter. The older boys and the teacher knew that the dime was worth more, but the younger boy removed the expert filter and considered the best possible way to earn more money. His innovative solution was to keep picking the nickel, knowing that the older boys would keep offering him more money.

The expert filter can suppress creativity when one assumes to possess the knowledge to see things better than those who lack it.

Filter Five: What Is It?

It is crucial to refrain from being overly literal when striving to think creatively. Creativity is not bound by the concepts of right or wrong, but rather revolves around perceiving things from an alternative perspective. The practice of examining an image and contemplating what it could represent rather than what it is can facilitate unique trains of thought. Children have a propensity for exhibiting this imaginative form of creativity. They possess a liberated mindset, unencumbered by constraints or concerns of error. For example, a twig can transform into an airplane, water spraying from a hose can be envisioned as a rushing mountain stream, a hole in a wall can become a frightful and eerie cave, and the petals of a flower represent hidden treasure. By adopting such a mindset oneself, by becoming unrestricted in thought, one can glean creative insights. An exemplar of this method is Richard James, a naval engineer who was engaged in the development of tension springs for battleships. When one such spring plummeted to the ground and continued to move unexpectedly, Richard had a flash of inspiration and envisioned this spring as a plaything for children. Thus, the Slinky was invented, and Richard became rather prosperous. To pursue this form of creativity, one can simply pick an object present in front of them, evaluate its properties while asking oneself what it could potentially represent.