

rethink

updates



From left to right: Principal Nerida Pierce, Dr Edward de Bono, Middle School captains Alice Mosley and Chloe Rees.

Edward de Bono is Principal for a Day at Canterbury Girls' Secondary College

Dr Edward de Bono jetted into Melbourne on April 24th to be Principal for a Day at Canterbury Girls' Secondary College (CGSC). Dr. de Bono officially launched the Creative Minds Initiative and delivered the first CoRT thinking skills lesson to Year 7 & 8 students.

In her introduction, CGSC Principal, Neridah Peirce said "Dr. de Bono's day as Principal officially begins the implementation programme the school has devised for its more formal introduction of thinking and creativity into the classroom, and the commencement of the Creative Minds Initiative."

"The Creative Minds Initiative is a partnership between CGSC and the de Bono Institute. It sets out to prepare young Australians for the future by teaching thinking and creativity skills" the Institute's CEO, Susan Mackie commented.

Ms Mackie also stated that "Dr de Bono is delighted by the partnership that we have formed over the last year and was honoured to be principal for a day."

Ms Peirce explained that "The Creative Minds initiative is a holistic approach by the school to teach design and creative thinking which is crucial for building adaptive and enterprising thinkers who are equipped and ready for future work. It helps to raise awareness about change, build skills and transfer those skills. In his presentation to our students, he focused on how thinking skills can assist students to think creatively. Dr de Bono also talked about the need for lateral thinking which is a method to create new ideas by exploring new trains of thought."

The Challenge begins!



RMIT University and Melbourne University Future Leaders use Lateral Thinking in their University Challenge

April 6 saw 200 students from RMIT University and The University of Melbourne converge on Storey Hall in Melbourne to battle it out at the 2006 University Challenge. RMIT students took first and third prizes with students from Melbourne University taking second prize.

The day was facilitated by the de Bono Institute and accredited trainers from the Victorian Department of Primary Industries. Before the challenge, the twenty participating teams were taught a number of Edward de Bono's Lateral Thinking tools to assist them in developing innovative ideas and solutions.

The challenge facing the students was to generate ideas and solutions about the high profile and multi-faceted social problem of childhood obesity. Their output was judged on their lateral thinking, problem solving, teamwork, and communication skills. These students represent Australia's future scientists, nurses, town planners, teachers, politicians, engineers and business leaders who will have the capacity to influence this issue in the future and help change society for the better.

Organisations, outside of the two universities, who are working on childhood obesity, have expressed interest in the findings from the Challenge. Opportunities are now being explored to turn the innovative ideas and solutions generated by the students into reality.

upgrade

Understanding Serious Creativity

“Innovation is the key to improved business performance... [Innovative] companies *inspire* their people, *create* outstanding products and services and *connect* effectively with their customers and markets.”

Design Council, UK.

“Creativity is primarily an individual act, creating something that is novel, useful and valuable, whether it is an idea, a product or concept. Innovation is the process of actually implementing some novel new idea, product or process.”

John Hunt, Plowden Professor of Organisational Behaviour at the London Business School.

Innovation has become a buzzword.

The pressure is on for companies, governments and organisations to commit to innovation.

So what is innovation and why does it matter? How can it become part of

your business? In this article, we start to explore some of the real questions about innovation:

- Does creativity and innovation occur spontaneously?

- Are creativity and innovation the same?
- Can creativity and innovation be catalysed?

A dictionary definition of the word “innovate” says:

“innovate > making changes in something established, especially by introducing new methods, ideas or products.”

Innovation is the result of this process. It is the new method, the new idea or the new product.

Innovation requires change in order to exist. Change requires flexibility, an open mind and, above all, creativity.



Understanding creativity is the first step towards understanding innovation.

Creativity is the generation of new and original ideas. Its domain is the brain. It is the result of our ability to think and imagine.

In his book *Serious Creativity*, Dr Edward de Bono explains that, contrary to popular belief, creativity is not the preserve of artists. He also dispels ‘the myth’ that creativity is restricted to brainstorming or serendipity, where good ideas emerge from thin air:

“People can be trained in creative thinking skills in a deliberate manner. This disagrees with two traditional principles of creativity:

1. That creativity is a natural talent that some people have and others do not have; that there is nothing you can do about creativity except to employ people who have this natural talent.
2. That creativity consists of being

freed from fears and inhibitions and that once these are removed, it is enough to mess around and something useful will happen. To encourage this messing around, judgement must be suspended”.

He goes on to note: “We can train in creativity just as we can train in mathematics, cooking or playing tennis. It does not mean that everyone trained in creativity will become a genius... There is a huge amount of useful creativity to be done at all levels below the level of genius.”

Dr de Bono contends that creativity is a deliberate process, made possible through the application of thinking strategies.

His theories are grounded in an understanding of the human brain.

Brainwork

The brain is the seat of our consciousness and intellect. It allows us to make sense of the world and of ourselves.

It operates using a self-organising system. Contrary to most information systems (such as computers) it is active, not passive in nature. It does more than simply record data. It is constantly rewriting its own “files”. Every new

 **Special Offer!**

The first 5 people to send an email with the subject: “serious creativity” and including their name, company and address to: mail@debono.org will receive a complimentary copy of Edward de Bono’s *Serious Creativity*.

“Thank goodness the brain is designed to be uncreative. With eleven items of clothing to put on there would be 39,916,800 ways of getting dressed. The brain is designed to make patterns, to use them and to stick to them. That is why we can get dressed, eat breakfast, cross the road and do more or less useful work when we get to the office. Creativity, concept formation and all the wonderful aspects of the brain are nothing to do with these established patterns: they arise from the brain’s defect as an information system.” Dr Edward de Bono

piece of information absorbed goes on to change the way that subsequent pieces of information will be processed and stored.

When data is received, neural networks in the brain organise it into patterns. These patterns are then used to identify and process future data. The patterns are constantly being reinforced and expanded. They are asymmetric: spreading out like the branches of a tree or river.

Over time, the brain collects a ‘storehouse’ of patterns that work well. It prefers to apply these patterns instead of seeking out new ways of thinking. As a result, thinking can become rigid, stereotyped and uncreative.

Creative thinking seeks out new paths and new ideas. It looks beyond patterns that, in one sense, create a comfort zone but, in some cases, may lead us to make errors of judgement and perception.

Lateral Thinking

Lateral Thinking takes ‘the brain’s defect as an information system’ and exploits it in order to generate creativity.

Originated by Dr de Bono in 1967, Lateral Thinking is a term that has captured the public imagination. It provides a means to escape well-worn paths of thought and find novel, creative ways of thinking and being.

Instead of applying the most obvious pattern, Lateral Thinking actively seeks out alternatives. There are a number of tools that can be applied to make this process happen.

With hindsight, Lateral Thinking almost always reveals a logical answer. The challenge is leading the mind to an idea or possibility that is not logical or instinctive from the outset. Lateral Thinking does not come naturally.



Why Innovate?

Innovation is a framework for companies to compete and succeed, exceeding market expectations.

Why: Edward de Bono states in his book *Serious Creativity* (1996) that:

“What happens when you have a lean and competent organisation? What is this lean and competent organisation going to do? What happens when your competitors are just as lean and competent as you and your cost effectiveness is no longer a unique advantage?”

“Creative thinking is rapidly growing in importance and will come

Creativity is a deliberate process, requiring specific tools and training. With the right mental attitude and equipment it is possible for everyone to think laterally. Mark Twain, the acclaimed writer and journalist once said:

“There is no such thing as a new idea. It is impossible. We just take a lot of old ideas and put them into a sort of mental kaleidoscope. We give them a turn, and they create new and curious combinations. We keep turning making new patterns, but they are the same old pieces of glass that have been in use throughout all the years.”

Locked into our existing thought patterns, his assessment is accurate. There can be no new ideas.

Creative thinking, however, allows us to achieve Twain’s “impossible”. It also forms the bedrock of innovation.

to have as central a position as finance, raw materials and people. As organisations reach a plateau of competence, it is only better concepts that will provide the competitive advantage.”

Edward de Bono states in *New Thinking for the New Millennium* that:

Information is becoming a commodity. State of the art technology is becoming a commodity. Management competence is becoming a commodity. Price differentials favour less developed countries. The way forward lies with value creation. This is not a destiny to be ‘achieved’ but a constant activity.

Ken Hudson in his Article for the AFR in 2001 states that:

“..If we learned anything from 1990’s, it is that in most cases cost-cutting by itself is not sustainable.a 21st century leader will manage costs as well as selectively pursuing revenue growth strategies. This will require new thinking, new ideas and new actions; business as usual will not be enough.”

Edward de Bono supports this argument in his book *Surpetition* where he states that cutting costs, downsizing and efficient housekeeping are often necessary but they are not sufficient long-term strategies. Value creation is essential. Business as usual will not be enough.

DesignLab; building creativity and innovative capabilities

de Bono Institute’s DesignLab programme works to increase the innovative capability of people. It helps to create organisational structures and mechanisms that support and sustain innovation. It delivers skill building programmes to increase the creativity skills of individuals and teams.

Talk to the team at de Bono Institute about how DesignLab can make a difference.



Join us for an inspiring and illuminating breakfast exploring the function of collaboration and creativity in the pursuit of innovation.

For innovation to flourish, organisations must create an environment that fosters creativity: bringing together multi-talented teams who work in close collaboration together.

At this *refresh*:

Explore some of the thinking strategies that facilitates and stimulates collaboration and creativity.

Examine some of the approaches to foster creativity.

Experiment with ideation tools.

When: Wednesday 19th July

Time: 7.30am to 9.00am

Where: The Point, Albert Park

RSVP: Friday 14th July

T: 03 9935 6387

E: mail@debono.org

Cost: \$50 per person GST inclusive



emergent thinking Launch of Emergent Thinking

With programs targeted at building effective and responsible management practices the de Bono Institute and a group of recognised thought leaders have launched Emergent Thinking Pty Ltd (ET).

Based in Melbourne, ET will focus on exploring, designing, building and disseminating new management methodologies with global application.

ET has been granted world-wide rights to introduce the ground breaking research of Dr Johan Roos for dealing with the unexpected, developing new strategic practices and cultivating practical wisdom for strategic preparedness. From this research ET has developed *Thinking from Within™* a facilitated group based programme.

The first *Thinking from Within™* Accreditation programme and workshop is scheduled for September 2006. For more information please email ET with your name, organisation and title to mail@emergentthinking.com. ■



Product of the Month Tudor Creative Thinking Guide



Together with Tudor, we have developed the *Creative Thinking Tools Guide*. The guide uses Dr. Edward de Bono's tools to assist students in developing alternative approaches to tackle their day-to-day educational and personal requirements. This guide helps students develop thinking skills that will allow them to take charge: to set up choices, to make decisions, to consider possibilities, to make things happen.

RRP: \$10 GST inclusive

For a full thinkshop catalogue please email mail@debono.org ■



hi-octane thinking

Upcoming Workshops

Six Thinking Hats® \$475 per person

Melbourne: 20 July

Sydney: 22 June

Wellington: 10 October

Brisbane: 24 October

Lateral Thinking™ \$770 per person

Melbourne: 26-27 July

Sydney: 23-24 August

Wellington: 11-12 Oct

Brisbane: 6-7 June, 25-26 October

DATT™ \$770 per person

Melbourne: 14-15 June

Sydney: 23-24 November

Everyday Creativity™

\$660 per person

Melbourne: 16-17 August,

15-16 November

Sydney: 20-21 September

Simplicity™ \$770 per person

Melbourne: 7-8 June,

13-14 September

Sydney: 30-31 August, 5-6 December

- Please note that all Fuel prices are GST inclusive.
- For our Fuel seminar series dates in other parts of Australia and New Zealand please contact us.

- For bookings and further information on Fuel or for details on our in-house skill building partnerships and programmes contact fuel@debono.org.



Important Notice

It has come to our attention that some people within Australia & New Zealand are presenting Edward de Bono's thinking methods without proper licensing or accreditation. If you are a trainer and would like to become accredited please email or call us. If you are an organisation looking to contact a trainer please be sure to use one of our official accredited trainers.

Please contact kendra@debono.org