

What if your debtor lived on the moon?

In order to out-perform the competition you must create superior ideas. In order to accomplish this you must think "out of the box"?

*By Phillip W. Duff, President and Founder,
Lighthouse Consulting & Asset Management, Inc.*

How do I think "out of the box"

First, we must define the meaning of thinking "out of the box". Most organizations use traditional methods to solve traditional problems. **Thinking out of the box** is the term used for people who use untraditional methods to solve traditional problems. The term is used to describe any method that is not previously been used to solve the problem currently at hand.

Most **thinking out of the box** is actually intentional brainstorming to solve a problem. Usually, a percentage of the unconventional solutions are the vision of someone involved in the process.

Can my group be trained to think "outside of the box"?

Not all people are visionary or able to see solutions to everyday problems. Most employees are far too engrossed in the daily affairs of their position to spend any time trying to make it easier to accomplish. They do their job and exactly as they were taught, without questioning whether it is the best way to perform the task. Yet some employees always see a better way to accomplish every task. These employees are generally able to over-produce their coworkers by improving the processes within their own job parameters.

People can be trained to think in a diverse manner but it will always be easier for those fortunate employees who have *the vision* to do so. As a manager, it is imperative to deploy the right people (the visionary employee) in the right situation. Using visionaries to help create new ways to solve old problems is a win/win situation for the employee, the business, and you. By using creative thinking, you can strengthen the skills of your visionary employees and help develop this skill in those that have not yet been exposed to the visionary method of **"thinking outside the box"**.

One of the most common tools used in brainstorming in the Six Sigma methodology is the use of "what if?". In this exercise (after defining the problem) you ask **"what if the problem existed on the moon, underwater, below freezing temperatures, within a culture of cave-men?"** or any other off the wall suggestion. This exercise may bring many answers that will not be helpful to solve your current problem but employees will begin to think about the problem in a different manner. This is essential to **thinking out of the box**.

Creating a culture of visionaries

So how can you create a culture of visionaries? It will probably be difficult to create a complete culture of people who are forward thinking but with the deployment of the proper personnel to the projects, you'll be able to come up with ideas that are "out of the box". As this culture is formed it will slowly grow, the non-visionaries will see what the visionaries have been seeing for sometime, and they will learn to think in unusual patterns. This is when all problems within the culture will be approached with an **"out of the box"** solution.

Is your group in the driver's seat or in the back seat?

There will always be room for traditional solutions to traditional problems but visionaries who see solutions no one has thought of will be the ones who succeed at business. The debt collection industry is full of people who have been doing the same job the same way for decades. Technology is the only major transformation in the debt collection process in decades. In recent years though, many entrepreneurs are coming into the collection industry with new ideas and new ways to skin the same old cat. New Methods are emerging and the cat



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is becoming a lion. Will your team be ready to face the future of the collections industry?

If you are interested in creating a culture of "out of the box" thinkers call Lighthouse Consulting and a Six Sigma Agent can help you out-perform the competition.

info@lighthouseconsultinginc.com

This is a reprint of a past article.

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