

Tip Sheet – For Immediate Release

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Two approaches to challenges

When working on challenges, it can be easy to get bogged down. Following are a couple of techniques that you can use to get unstuck.

First, look at history. What worked in the past? What did not work? Forty years ago did this problem exist? How were challenges approached and solved in the past that are analogous to your current challenge? What barriers had to be breached for past advancements, and what methods were used to overcome them? Could any of those techniques be used today? Examine the assumptions that you are currently operating under. What led to formulation of these assumptions? Are they still valid given the current understanding of the situation?

Secondly, can you concentrate on part of a problem and ignore, or hold constant, everything else. By doing so, seek to focus only on what is most important, and work out the details later. Break your challenge into chunks and slices. Isolate the over-riding factors from the associated smaller concerns. Look past the small problems and work on the big one, or work on the smaller ones and ignore the big one. Filter what intelligence you need out of the information that has been gathered. Decide to make a decision based on what you know now.

Looking at history as a framework for problem solving and selectively concentrating your energy can be good ways of moving from where you are today to where you envision being.

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STORY PREP INFORMATION

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