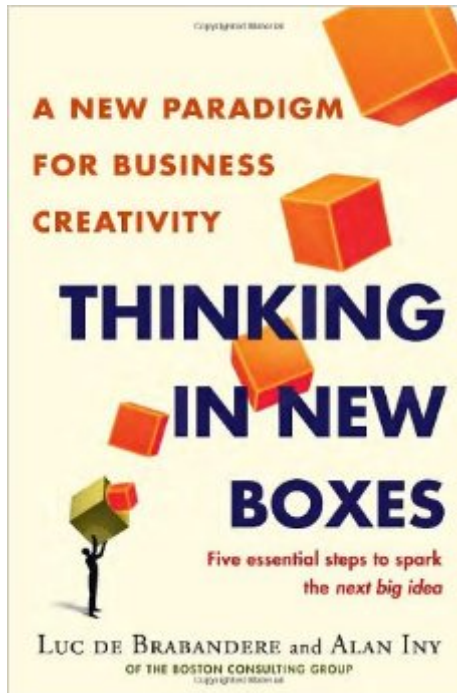


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# Thinking In New Boxes: A New Paradigm For Business Creativity



## Synopsis

When BIC, manufacturer of disposable ballpoint pens, wanted to grow, it looked for an idea beyond introducing new sizes and ink colors. Someone suggested lighters. **“LIGHTERS?”** With an idea that seemed crazy at first, that bright executive, instead of seeing BIC as a pen company “a business in the PEN box” figured out that there was growth to be found in the **DISPOSABLE** box. And he was right. Now there are disposable BIC lighters, razors, even phones. The company opened its door to a host of opportunities. **“IT INVENTED A NEW BOX.”** Your business can, too. And simply thinking “out of the box” is not the answer. True ingenuity needs structure, hard analysis, and bold brainstorming. It needs to start **“THINKING IN NEW BOXES”** a revolutionary process for sustainable creativity from two strategic innovation experts from The Boston Consulting Group (BCG). To make sense of the world, we all rely on assumptions, on models on what Luc de Brabandere and Alan Iny call “boxes.” If we are unaware of our boxes, they can blind us to risks and opportunities. This innovative book challenges everything you thought you knew about business creativity by breaking creativity down into five steps:

- 1. **Doubt everything.** Challenge your current perspectives.
- 2. **Probe the possible.** Explore options around you.
- 3. **Diverge.** Generate many new and exciting ideas, even if they seem absurd.
- 4. **Converge.** Evaluate and select the ideas that will drive breakthrough results.
- 5. **Reevaluate.** Relentlessly. No idea is a good idea forever. And did we mention Reevaluate? Relentlessly.

Creativity is paramount if you are to thrive in a time of accelerating change. Replete with practical and potent creativity tools, and featuring fascinating case studies from BIC to Ford to Trader Joe’s, Thinking in New Boxes will help you and your company overcome missed opportunities and stay ahead of the curve. This book isn’t a simpleminded checklist. This is Thinking in New Boxes. And it will be fun. (We promise.)

**Praise for Thinking in New Boxes**

“Excellent . . . While focusing on business creativity, the principles in this book apply anywhere change is needed and will be of interest to anyone seeking to reinvent herself.” **Blogcritics**

Thinking in New Boxes is a five-step guide that leverages the author’s deep understanding of human nature to enable readers to overcome their limitations and both imagine and create their own futures. This book is a must-read for people living and working in today’s competitive environment.” **Ray O. Johnson, Ph.D., chief technology officer, Lockheed Martin**

“Thinking In New Boxes discusses what I believe to be one of the fundamental shifts all companies/brands need to be thinking about: how to think creatively, in order to innovate and differentiate our brands. We need to thrive and lead in a world of accelerating change and this book challenges us to even greater creativity in our thinking. One of the best business books I’ve read in a long time.” **Jennifer**

Fox, CEO, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts "As impressive as teaching new tricks to old dogs, Thinking in New Boxes is both inspirational and practical" a comprehensive, step-by-step guide to sharpening one's wits in order to harness creativity in the workplace. "Peter Gelb, general manager, Metropolitan Opera

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Are you tired of being exhorted to 'think outside the box'? I know that I am! What, exactly, is this 'box' that I am supposed to think outside of? de brabandere and Iny postulate that the box is actually a mental model we have and embedded in this is all manner of assumptions, opinions, conjectures and beliefs. In other words, all our thinking is contextual. We ALWAYS think in a context and this is shaped by our life experience and the conditionings we have been subject to. Since the context is the box and we think in contexts the way to be creative is to Think in New Boxes and hence the title of the book. Neat way of looking at it but not an earth shattering revelation. What makes the book valuable is that they go into greater detail. It is difficult to think outside the box and virtually impossible to do so on command. They show you many different ways of creating new boxes. For example, complete the sentence "An example of a bird is..." Odds are that you could do this easily and you drew from a sample of names you knew were birds like eagle or sparrow. Now complete the sentence "A bird is an example of..." Now it gets more complicated. Did you come up with 'flying creature'? Or 'feathered animal'? How about 'something I like to roast and eat'? (UGH!) The former is an example of deductive reasoning and the latter of inductive reasoning and the latter generally

gives you richer and different ways of looking at any situation. It helps you create new boxes more easily. The authors show you how you create boxes and you do this with limited data. Which company, for example, does not belong in this list: Goldman Sachs, Deutsche Bank, American Express, Pfizer?

If you, or your company, work with innovation, this book might be invaluable to you. It chronicles how to structure a process of thinking which forwards creativity or innovation. It is not a jumble of creative exercises for you to try to jump start innovation. It is a process which The Boston Consulting Group uses with clients to create innovative products and/or services. You can pay The Boston Consulting Group thousands of dollars to facilitate these exercises with your company, or you can read this book to understand the innovation sequence. Or do both, if you're fortunate. Experts say we have morphed from the Agricultural, Industrial, and Information Ages to the Innovation Age. Innovate or die they imply. This book tells you how to innovate. The authors work fairly exclusively with innovation with clients. Their credentials are impressive: Luc De Brabandere leads strategic seminars in the Paris office of The Boston Consulting Group with boards and executives to develop "new visions, new products, services and long-term scenarios to prepare for the future". He has written nine books. Co-author Alan Iny is the global topic expert for creativity and scenario planning at The Boston Consulting Group based in New York. This isn't just beautiful theory for the authors - they deal with the messy reality of innovation and guiding clients through it. This book teaches strategic creativity or "thinking in new boxes". This involves embracing complexity, navigating uncertainty and preparing for the inevitable disruptions. It is a creative process they stress. Boxes they define as mental models. Thinking in new boxes is more than just "thinking out of the box." Their process joins "pragmatic analysis with the free-flowing generation of ideas" they tell us.

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