

# How Information Makes You More Creative

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Creativity and information are closely linked. Creativity is about forming new ideas from what already exists in the world. These new ideas are formed from new connections based on sensory input, information, data, and life experiences. If you never take the time to recharge your brain with new information, you'll never be as creative as you otherwise could be.

The more you know, the more you're able to innovate and create. Innovation depends on knowledge. Some people naturally seem to soak up everything around them. Facts and figures never pass them by. The difference between those who are able to create and those who aren't is how much knowledge they strive to have about the world.

## **Explore New Topics**

You likely consider yourself to be good and knowledgeable on at least one topic. Generally, this relates to your line of work. But, do you ever explore information outside of your main focus? If not, you're really missing out. An accountant who cares and knows a lot about art will be able to develop more creative solutions in his line of work than an accountant who only focuses on facts and figures. Basically, you shouldn't have one tone in your life—you should seek out information on a variety of topics to become better rounded.

It's a fantastic cycle-- those who are creative do things that add to the body of research and knowledge. The current body of research and knowledge leads to more creativity. You can't have one without the other. The more you learn, and the more you know, the more creative you can become.

We've talked a lot about stepping out of your comfort zone. If you're stuck with the same ideas and the same way of doing things, your mind closes itself off to new ideas. Seek knowledge about things you know nothing about, and your mind will be open to making new connections.

In order to create, you have what experts call "raw material." A simplified way of looking at this is that if nothing is going in there, nothing can come out of there. Obviously you have knowledge about a lot of things right now—but it's not enough. You have to step outside the box and gather additional raw material as fodder for creation.

How can you do this? Watch movies in different genres. Read at least one fiction or nonfiction book a week. Go to talks and lectures you wouldn't have considered before. Watch a new TED talk every day. Explore information about other religions and ways of living that go beyond the way you live. This is all part of shaping your mind so you can become more creative.

## **Amazing Ways to Find More Information**

I've already mentioned some great ways to expand your base of information, but it's time to talk about those methods more in-depth. You may not be inspired to try each of these methods, but I urge you to try more than one. Do this even if it's not something you would normally do. This is about going outside of your comfort zone to become more creative and have more information, data, and inspiration to draw from.

## **Schedule Time Every Day to Learn Something New**

It's so easy to find yourself worn out at the end of the day, just hanging on by a thread. You're working a lot, trying to set aside time for your family, and just trying to scrape by. It can seem impossible to schedule time for anything else... but that is exactly what I urge you to do.

I want you to schedule 30 minutes a day for the next month dedicated to learning something new every day. Whether you read books, look up random facts on the Internet, watch videos on YouTube—learn something new every day. They say it takes around 28 days to form a habit. Do this for a month, and it will become natural for you to seek out new information on a daily basis.

Is it really worth it? It absolutely is. In just one half-hour per day, heck—even 10 minutes a day— you'll be filling your brain with information you can draw on now and in the future to develop new solutions and innovative ideas.

Don't dismiss this as something you should do but will never actually do. Put it on your calendar right now—write it down and make a commitment to it.

### **Read Books on a Variety of Topics**

You may already enjoy reading and regularly seek out new books. Others wish they could do that, but don't feel they have the time. Still others don't enjoy reading at all. Maybe they never got into it in their younger years, or don't see the value in it, or whatever the case may be.

Which of those statements do you feel matches you the best? Think about why you gave the answer you gave.

My next challenge is for you to make a commitment to reading at least two books this month on a topic you've never explored before. The books you choose should be interesting to you, or you'll never get through the material. The books can be fiction or nonfiction, or whatever you would like.

Read before you go to bed at night. This is a fantastic time to take a break from your usual thought process and not dwell on work or stress. Your mind does some amazing things while you're sleeping, and reading before bedtime can certainly add to that.

Everyone can find the time to read two books per month, so please don't balk at this. The greatest thinkers in the world take great strides to ensure they never stop learning. They never stop absorbing the written word—and you shouldn't either. Reading things you wouldn't have considered reading before can inspire you in ways you never thought possible. Having this motivation to read can turn you into an avid reader even if you've never been one before.

### **Read or Watch Biographies and Learn from Those Who Inspire You**

I've already mentioned that you should read more, but I want to specifically point out biographies and autobiographies because they serve more than one purpose. The point is to learn about and become inspired by those who've come before you.

It's easy to feel alone in this vast and impersonal world. It's easy to feel removed from the greatest thinkers and achievers in history. By reading or watching biographies, you'll learn that the greatest thinkers were and are really just like you. The difference is that they were motivated and inspired to change their life and the lives of those around them. Learning about their journey can help you start on your own journey.

It will be interesting for you to go through a list of biographies and choose the ones that stand out to you. Your choices will say a lot about your hopes and dreams. If you're drawn to Mark Twain's autobiography, for instance, it can give you some clues as to what you really want to do and what kinds of things you really want to create. If you're drawn to the Steve Jobs biography, it can give you some excellent clues on your goals and aspirations.

### **Make Lists and Ask Questions As You Go**

As you're absorbing this new material, make sure you're taking notes along the way and ask yourself questions as you go. This helps you remain actively engaged in what you're reading or watching. It also helps you

think critically about the material. Critical thinking helps you look at information in new and different ways.

Ask yourself questions about what you're reading, and make sure you set out to answer those questions. Research and explore beyond the material in front of you. Come up with the answers and conclusions for your own life. Pay attention to what intrigues you—it will do a lot for your internal network of information and ideas.

### **Finding New Topics to Explore**

There should never come a point where you feel you've explored all of the information of interest to you. If you're feeling uninspired, visit the nonfiction section on Amazon. Click through the categories and subcategories. Glance at the top-selling books in each subcategory. There's bound to be something that stands out to you—something you want to know more about.

You'll hopefully find exactly what you want to explore. At the very least, you'll find inspiration for new topics.

### **Pay Attention to What Interested You as a Child**

I don't know about you, but I frequently think about my years in elementary school, middle school, and high school. Those years do a lot to shape your experiences in life. Sadly, creativity often dwindles as we move from elementary school to high school. Elementary school is where you learn about important topics for the very first time. There's something special about the newness of this information—especially as it relates to some of the most popular and standout events in history.

What is it that fascinated you in elementary school? What did you find yourself checking books out about when you went to the library? What did you obsess over or constantly talk about?

Think about exploring these topics today—from an adult perspective. This will help you get in touch with your childlike innocence, sense of wonder, and more.



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