

The 10 best books on creative problem solving that should be on every innovator's bookshelf

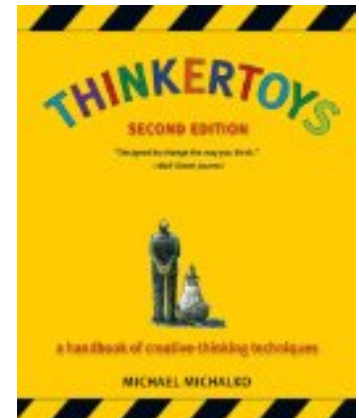
During the last several decades, there have been hundreds of books published on the topic of creativity. These are the handful that stand head and shoulders above the rest. They are the books that I turn to again and again for creative inspiration:

Thinkertoys

Michael Michalko

Thinkertoys will teach you how to generate new ideas for businesses, markets, sales techniques, and products and product extensions. Packed with fun and practical tools and exercises, it outlines 30 practical linear and intuitive techniques that can be used by individuals or groups to tackle and solve business problems in fresh, creative ways. This book is my all-time favorite in this subset of creativity books, by the way, and was recently re-released in a second edition.

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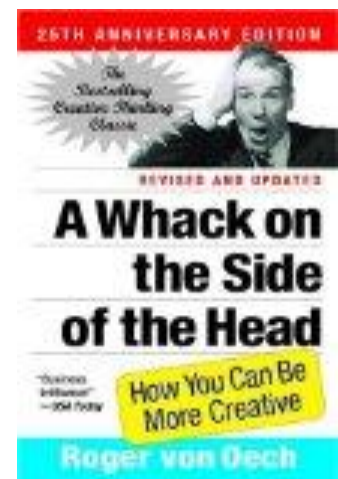


A Whack on the Side of the Head

Roger von Oech

This playful and informative book is filled with provocative puzzles, anecdotes, exercises, metaphors, cartoons, questions, quotations, stories, and tips designed to systematically break through your mental blocks and unlock your mind for creative thinking. This book has sold over 2 million copies to date, and is now in its third edition.

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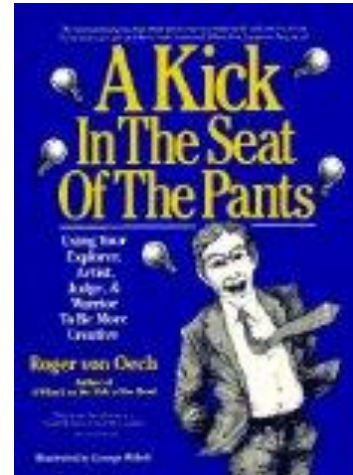
A Kick in the Seat of the Pants

Roger von Oech

This book is the follow-up to *A Whack on the Side of the Head*, and continues to develop the concepts he first explored in *Whack*. He introduces the reader to four personality types:

- The Explorer (get off the beaten path and look for new insights and ideas),
- The Artist (Ask what-if questions and look for hidden analogies. Break the rules and look at things backwards. Add something and take something away. Develop original ideas),
- The Judge (Evaluate your ideas), and
- The Warrior (put the best ones into action, with the soul of the warrior).

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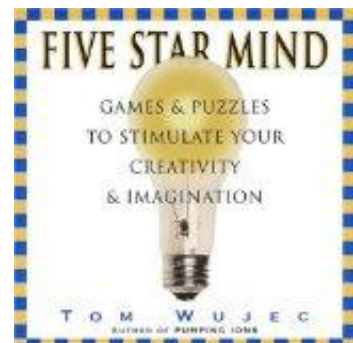


5 Star Mind: Games & Puzzles to Stimulate Your Creativity & Imagination

Tom Wujec

Five Star Mind teaches you to unlock and expand the creative potential you already possess and develop it to give you confidence and skills that will enhance your work and your life. Using puzzles, tips, thought association, relaxation techniques, games of "What If," and constant questioning, Wujec cajoles you into realizing your inherent power for creative thought and expression using an engaging culinary theme.

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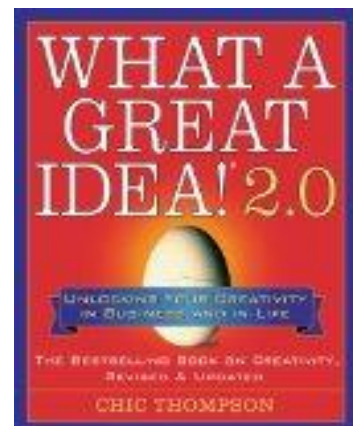


What a Great Idea 2.0! Unlocking Your Creativity in Business and in Life

Chic Thompson

The author helps you to harness your ingenuity to generate new product ideas, resolve difficulties in the workplace, and overcome bureaucratic language and "killer phrases" that stifle innovation. The good news is that this thoroughly updated edition features even more brain-stimulating suggestions, exercises, action sheets, tips for using new technologies, and ideas for encouraging creativity at home, and much more.

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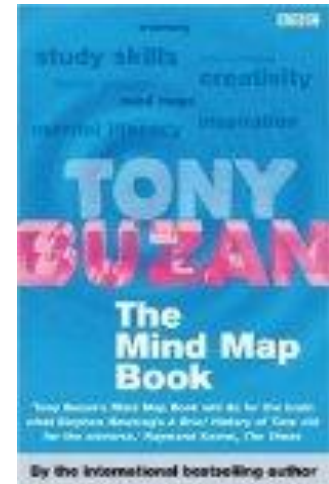


The Mind Map Book

Tony and Barry Buzan

This excellent book is a highly readable how-to guide to mind mapping, the technique that Tony Buzan developed to help people to be more creative and improve memory. It's full of excellent insights into how our creative brains work, and how aligning our note-taking technique with its visual capabilities can significantly increase our productivity and creativity. Highly recommended!

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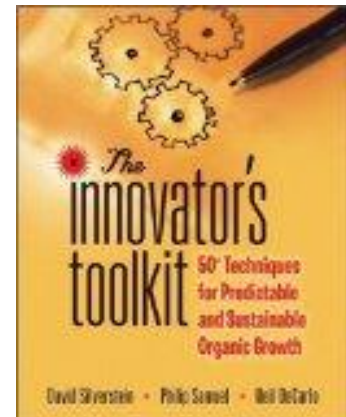


The Innovator's Toolkit: 50+ Techniques for Predictable and Sustainable Organic Growth

David Silverstein, Philip Samuel, and Neil DeCarlo

The Innovator's Toolkit explains all the fundamental tools and concepts anyone involved in innovation should be familiar with – especially methods and strategies for improving products and services and developing new ones. This book is written in an easy-to-use reference format that helps readers understand why, when, and how to apply each tool. The tools and techniques in this book are organized around a four-step innovation methodology – define discover, develop, and demonstrate – that takes readers through problem identification, then flows into idea generation, idea selection, and, finally, idea implementation. Constant innovation is a necessity for business success today; *The Innovator's Toolkit* presents an effective plan for achieving it.

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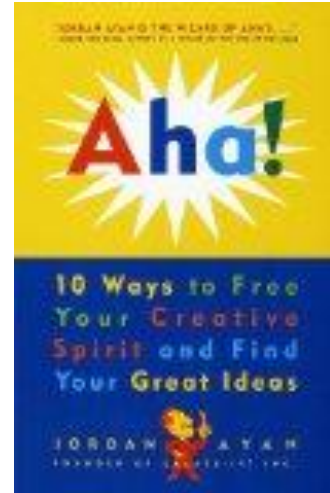


Aha! 10 Ways to Free Your Creative Spirit and Find Your Great Ideas

Jordan Ayan

If you're looking for ways to think more creatively and fluently, you'll find Jordan Ayan's great book *A-ha! 10 Ways to Free Your Creative Spirit and Find Your Great Idea* is a terrific catalyst. I consume many business strategy and innovation books and articles, always looking for fresh material to "feed my head" and keep the raw material pile of my mind full. Unfortunately, many books seem to recycle the same principles and concepts over and over. That's why it's always a pleasure to find a book like *A-ha!*, which breaks this mold. It sparkles with fresh insights, thought-provoking stories and fascinating techniques for courting your creative muse and coaxing forth your best ideas.

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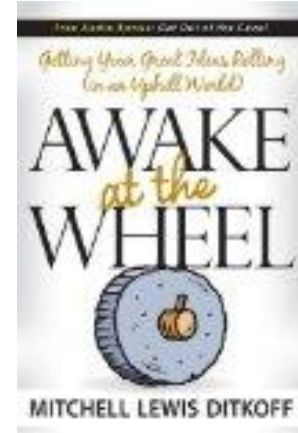


Awake at the Wheel: Getting Your Great Ideas Rolling in an Uphill World

Mitch Ditkoff

There's just something about stories. They appeal to our minds on a deep, emotional level in ways that have greater impact than any other type of written or spoken communication. *Awake at the Wheel: Getting Your Great Ideas Rolling in an Uphill World* by Mitch Ditkoff is a highly engaging business fable, well told. This entertaining story teaches the reader about the nature of big ideas, what to do when you have one, the resistance you're likely to encounter when you try to convince others of its value, and how to overcome this hurdle and bring your idea to life. *Awake at the Wheel* tells the story of Og, a Neanderthal caveman who gets a Really Big Idea – the wheel – and his long, sometimes difficult quest to bring it to fruition. Readers of Creativity Hacks will find this business fable really hits home with its important lessons and insights!

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I hope you find these books to be as valuable as I have!

Best Regards,

Chuck Frey

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