

A TOOLKIT FOR PROFESSIONALS
MINDFULNESS AT WORK

Mindful Problem Solving



No matter how smooth and efficient our work and workplace may be, we are bound to run into problems from time to time. Bringing kind curiosity and creativity to our challenges can help us dream up new ways of working through them.

MINDFUL PROBLEM SOLVING:

When unable to reach a solution for a challenge faced in the workplace, consider the following approach. Work through each step with curiosity and openness.

- ▶ Pause, set aside the issue, and ground yourself with 5 minutes of mindful breathing.
- ▶ At the top of a piece of paper, articulate the problem. State only the facts, avoiding interpretations based on feelings or personal biases.
- ▶ Next, get creative. Spend at least 10 minutes writing down any and all ideas that come to mind as possible solutions. Be spontaneous and avoid censoring yourself.
- ▶ When finished, review what you've written. If others are involved, read all your ideas out loud, even the implausible ones.
- ▶ From your list, select the best 3 solutions. Contemplate each one by one, considering the pros and cons.
- ▶ Continue exploring until the best solution becomes known. If you feel stuck, take a mindful break and return to the exploration later.

MINDFUL REFLECTION:

- Are past experiences limiting my ability to think creatively?
- Are emotions hindering my ability to see other possibilities?
- What opportunities co-exist with this challenge?
- Might it be helpful to take a step back, rest, and clear my mind?
- What might help me approach this issue with a beginner's mind?

We cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them.

- UNKNOWN