

Creative Characters

It's common in the world of work to get stuck now and then. Sometimes we confront an obstacle that seems insurmountable and sometimes the unexpected changes our career path.

Roger VonOech, author of *The Creative Whack Pack* suggests we get creative instead of mad. He doesn't mean that we paint, sculpt, sing, write or draw (although it may be just what we need). He does propose we shake up our thinking and apply four different creative roles to our situation: the explorer, artist, judge, and warrior.

To apply this approach, identify a problem you are trying to solve. Then imagine you are each character (in order). Use each persona to expand your thinking and possibilities.

1. Explorer is the role for discovering the resources you'll use to create new ideas.

To find new information with an adventurer's perspective use some metaphorical binoculars and ask: What uncharted territory is calling me? Where else can I look? What is right in front of me? What ideas can I recycle? Where is opportunity knocking?

2. Artist is the role for transforming your resources into new ideas.

To generate new ideas with a painter's brush and blank canvas ask: What am I creating? What moves me? What rules can I break? How can I reverse the way I look at my situation? What different ideas can I combine? What off-beat questions can I ask? What would a five-year-old see?

3. Judge is the role for evaluating an idea and deciding what to do with it.

To evaluate decisions like a judge with a gavel in a courtroom ask: What's best for all? What is the criterion for my decision? How is my timing? What is at risk? What would a fool say?

4. Warrior is the role for implementing your idea.

To kick into action with the strength and passion of a Kung Fu master ask: What puts a lion in my heart? What do I have at stake? How persistent am I? What am I willing to do to put my idea into action? What excuses do I need to challenge? Can I visualize the outcome?

For more on Roger Von Oech's creativity strategies check out www.creativethink.com. Look for his creativity card packs "Innovative Whack Pack" and "Creative Whack Pack" on www.amazon.com.

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