

modes of problems solving

methods of thinking to bring quick and complete resolution to obstacles and challenges



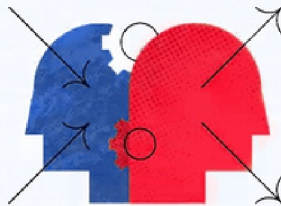
What Is Divergent Thinking? It's an unstructured way of problem solving in which participants produce many ideas or solutions to a pressing problem. Divergent thinkers are often *independent, curious and risk-takers*. Think "brainstorming". Divergent thinkers can:

- Find multiple ways to solve a problem
- Think of ideas most people might not
- Creatively implement better solutions
- Use feedback to improve ideas and methodologies
- Quickly and spontaneously produce many ideas
- Work collaboratively with others on unique challenges

What Is Convergent Thinking? Convergent thinking is associated with *analysis, judgment, and decision-making*. It is the process of taking a lot of ideas and sorting them, evaluating them, and making decisions. It is the most *common* method that we associate with decision making.

Convergent vs. divergent thinking

Convergent thinking focuses on reaching one, well-defined solution to a problem, while **divergent thinking** involves more creativity and accepts multiple solutions to a problem.



Is One Better Than the Other?

Everybody is capable of both convergent and divergent thinking, depending on the situation. However, it's natural to lean more toward one or the other when approaching problems and projects.

Some people have a natural preference for one or the other. The real issue lies in becoming too reliant on one method of thinking. Too much divergent thinking can lead to endless ideation and *no solutions*. Too much convergent thinking can lead to no new ideas and '*analysis paralysis*'.

Divergent Thinking + Convergent Thinking = Lateral Thinking (AKA - Thinking outside of the box)

Lateral thinking is using both logic and creativity to approach problem solving. **Why is it important?** People who engage in lateral thinking can find solutions to problems that aren't obvious to others.

Think without preconceived notions Be open to considering ideas without any bias. We all have unconscious biases, so it's important to be aware that you have blind spots and aim to be as open-minded as possible when you're searching for a solution.

Reverse thinking This involves analyzing what people normally do in a situation and then *doing the opposite*. To avoid getting stuck in the same roadblocks as others, you may want to start at the end and work backwards. For example, identify a problem and then describe what you would like the solution to be. From there, you can begin working backwards to find the starting point to your solution.

Let your mind wander If you are facing a block when trying to find a solution, go for a short walk, close your eyes for a few heartbeats. Researchers even found that taking breaks to scan the horizon helps to restructure your thoughts and improve your focus when back at your desk.

Conventional thinking has its place, but it also has limitations. On the other hand, practising lateral thinking can help you find unexpected and creative solutions. Developing this skill is an excellent investment in times of crisis, and can open up new lines of thinking that will take your business further.