



Seeing with New Eyes

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One of the difficulties in finding new ideas is the very efficient way which our brain has developed for dealing with the world. We quickly learn patterns and recognize them and we can develop a set of responses for dealing with familiar patterns which becomes almost automatic. 'The way we do things around here' becomes embedded – and that can be both a good and a bad thing. On the plus side it means that we have a quick ready response but on the minus side we may miss opportunities for approaching the problem differently and coming up with novel solutions.

Seeing with new eyes is an approach which tries to take a fresh look at something, by-passing the pattern recognition and seeing the issue with a different perspective.

Tools for bringing such 'new eyes' include:

- Bringing in outsiders – literally bringing fresh eyes to look at a problem
- Using challenging techniques to strip away the surface problem and get down to its core – fishbone (Ishikawa) diagrams, 5 whys
- 'Putting on different glasses' – imagine you were looking at the problem through the lens of a 5-year-old child. How would they see it? Or try another lens – how would an alien from another planet view it, assuming they didn't know the rules of our physics?
- Use metaphor and analogy – make connections which force a different way of thinking about the problem