



6 Learning to build the plane while flying it

When your organization is in the midst of crisis, use these prompts as a regular touchstone to ensure you are thinking creatively enough about ways to address challenges.

Invite people to help

Don't try to solve complex challenges on your own – reach out to others and ask them to help. Drawing together a diverse team will not only help to open up possibilities that you may not have thought of, but it will also mean you can stress test options from multiple perspectives as you go.

Iterate towards the solution

Don't get stuck by trying to find the ideal solution. Accept that it may take a few iterations before you reach perfection. Follow a fast prototyping process; make a start, seek feedback and improve over time.

Learn from others

While you may think that the situation your organization is facing is unique – trust me, it isn't. Someone, somewhere around the world will have dealt with a challenge before of a similar nature. Do a quick google search to see what turns up. Also leverage your social capital – ask others to tap into their networks to see if people can suggest solutions.

Generate ideas

Don't assume you already know the best solution. Consciously seek out alternative options or ways of doing things. Use rapid brainstorming cycles to not only source a large number of ideas, but also to stretch people into thinking more creatively.

Change the venue

Are your people feeling tired and out of ideas? Try changing location – there is nothing like working from somewhere different for the day to spark off your creative juices.

Seek expert input

Shortcut your way to solutions by asking someone who deals with this kind of problem all the time. They will be able to quickly map out a suite of possible solutions you could investigate.

Capture learnings for next time

Every time you think 'if only we had...' or 'if only we could...' jot these ideas down. They are the starting point for your lessons learned process. See if you can ensure that next time you can deliver on some of your wish-list.