

Think!

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WHAT DO YOU
MEAN—

THINK

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THINK

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TOP FLIGHT BUSINESS MEN will tell you that the ability to think is the rarest commodity in the industrial and commercial world. Executives in every field—manufacturing, construction, distribution, transportation, communication, promotion, salesmanship, advertising, personnel directing, public relations—everywhere those who are responsible for results are crying for men and women who can use their heads when put on their own.

Such people are scarce, as hard to find as the proverbial needle in a haystack. Some executives will tell you that they cannot be had for love or money. When one turns up he is worth his weight in gold—or diamonds, even.

Demand

Certain it is that the demand for people who can think far exceeds the supply. And the greater our expansion in commerce and industry, the greater is the demand for people who think, for people who use their heads in the performance of their duties and the solution of their problems.

Not long ago I talked with a man who had a big promotion job on his hands. He was

lamenting his inability to find men for his organization who could take an idea and develop it without the need for direction or supervision, men who could be depended upon to think for themselves and find the right answers. The growth of any business, of any enterprise, depends on the number of such people who can be incorporated into the organization at strategic points.

For such people the rewards are unlimited. Executives are on the lookout for men of this type. The competition for their services is always keen. Are you that kind of man?

NOW you are asking, "What does it take?" "What do you mean—Think?" "Doesn't everybody think?" The answer is—Sometimes, but not much!

What passes for thinking in most of us is scarcely more than a mental process by which we resurrect past experiences and follow the paths already beaten in the brain. When a situation arises for which there is no precedent, no path already marked out for us, we become confused and are finally lost.

What executives are looking for is the type of mind that is able to recognize the new elements in a situation and to carve out new channels of thought and action appropriate to the new circumstances and calculated to achieve

the desired results. This is *Real Thinking!* It is in demand in every field—science, religion, literature, art, education, social service, government, every area of human endeavor.

This is the area where progress is made. It is vital to growth and development. Without it there is stagnation and decay. It is the fertilizing element in all human activity. It is the difference between mediocrity and genius. Its possession makes one man stand out like a mountain on a plain. It is what we mean by "creative thinking."

The man who has it is bound to rise. You cannot keep him down. He surmounts obstacles. He overcomes difficulties. He creates new ways and methods. He solves hard problems. He forges ahead and nothing defeats him.

SOME MEN are born with it. They are the pioneers of progress. Their names stand out like peaks in a mountain range—Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison, the Wright Brothers, Charles Lindberg, Luther Burbank, Henry Ford, Charles Steinmetz, Booker Washington, George Washington Carver, John Wanamaker, Andrew Carnegie, Julius Rosenwald, Christopher Columbus, Napoleon Bonaparte, George Washington, to mention only a few.

Other men have had it in lesser degree. They are the spark plugs, the key men in their organizations. They stand out for their quick thinking, their originality, their record of accomplishment. They are the men we call leaders.

But any man, unless he is a moron, is capable of the same thing in some degree. A little coaching, a little prodding will start him off in new directions, will stir up talents that he never thought he had. But there is no great mystery about this kind of thinking. It follows the same process in all the men just mentioned. It must follow the same process in other men.

What follows is a description of that process. It may serve as a guide to the man who would lift himself out of the rut of mediocrity. It will make him indispensable to the organization that employs him.

Thinking Is Observation

The first step in Thinking is to get your facts together—all the facts. Don't assume that you already know all the facts! Investigate! Inspect! Examine! Explore! Search! Inquire! Whatever is necessary to put you in possession of all the facts, all the relevant facts, do that!

The average man is apt to think he knows all there is to be known about a given subject,

especially if he has been dealing with it for a long time. But such familiarity often creates a closed mind, and eventually the eyes, too, are closed. As a result many details are overlooked, or even one small detail that later proves to be critical, the one around which the whole problem revolves. And that is where progress stops.

Ben Franklin put it this way: "For want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; for want of a horse the rider was lost;" and some one has added: "for want of the rider the battle was lost." That's how important the facts are. That is why Observation is the First Step in Thinking.

Thinking Is Analysis

The next step in thinking is Analysis, the study of the relations between facts. This, too, is observation but of facts not apparent to the eye or other senses. Analysis involves comparison. It observes the relation of cause and effect, the arrangement of categories, whether of size or weight, color, sequence, variation or quality. It measures reactions, notes changes, traces continuities.

This is where real thinking begins. It is where most men fail. Analysis calls for insight, a deeper kind of observation. It looks for the facts behind the facts. The ability to think at

this level is the ability to discern relations that underlie the obvious phenomena.

All this takes place in the mind. The brain is the tool for this kind of work. The brain interprets what the eye sees, the hand feels, the instruments measure. Without this faculty the man is himself only a tool, a cog in a machine, doing only what he is told to do or what he has been trained to do.

This kind of thinking calls for an inquisitive mind, a mind that asks how? and why?, that looks beneath the surface and never stops asking questions. It is the kind of mind that takes things apart and puts them together again or makes new combinations. The man who has this kind of mind will go places, will make a place for himself wherever he goes. He has what it takes to make an executive. He makes himself indispensable.

Thinking Is Evaluation

Evaluation comes next in the process called thinking. This, too, is a function of the brain. To evaluate is to distinguish between the important and the unimportant. Importance is gauged by objectives. What is important for one purpose may be unimportant for another. Value or importance may depend upon a wide variety of factors. In dealing with things, value is determined by physical factors, in some in-

stances small, in others large. In dealing with human problems value will depend upon personality factors, sometimes obvious, sometimes obscure.

In matters of this kind the determination of value is assisted by a knowledge of facts beyond immediate observation. Here is where education comes in, the kind of education, whether acquired in schools or from experience, that equips the mind with a wide range of factual data and trains it in the processes and habits of accurate observation and critical appraisal.

This kind of work—analysis—calls for a quick mind, a keen mind, an alert mind, a disciplined mind. The man who has it is marked for advancement. Before long the front office will be sending for him to help with its problems.

Thinking Is Imagination

From this point on the vital element in thinking is Imagination. At this stage thinking becomes creative. Here is where the Thinker draws upon all his resources of knowledge and experience to solve his problem. Here is where originality comes into play. In the use of his imagination the Thinker adds to his immediate observations all the data gathered from other sources that may throw light on his

present problem. His brain becomes something like the old gadget called a kaleidoscope. It takes all the assembled material and turns it over and over, selecting, rejecting, arranging it into different patterns, until the right answer is found, until the pattern appears that fits his needs.

Imagination, creative thinking, is what men ordinarily mean by intelligence. It is the ability to assemble facts in orderly arrangement for the solution of a particular problem or the accomplishment of a desired objective. Creative thinking supplies the missing factors that other men look for in vain.

It is imagination that solves riddles, that discovers the answers to perplexing questions, that brings up the solution to vexing problems. The man who has it, of the right sort, has the solution of his own problem right in his hand. He is invaluable to any business. He is the key to successful enterprise. Without him it is impossible to operate. All successful executives have it.

Thinking Is Execution

The final step in thinking is Execution. The acid test of all that has gone before is . . . Will it work? This is the climax and proof of all thinking. It is the difference between thinking and dreaming. The Dreamer turns things over

and over in his mind in endless contemplation. The Thinker puts his ideas into operation.

If they don't work, there is something wrong somewhere. A man may think he has the right answer until he puts his theories to the test of operation. Not till he tries to make it work does he discover his error—an oversight, a miscalculation, a misinterpretation, a blunder.

If he is made of the right stuff he goes back over the whole thing, checking at every point till he uncovers the flaw. It may not show up at first, but he keeps at it till he puts his finger on the weak spot and then proceeds once more to demonstrate his conclusions—to make them work.

What began as theory, as speculation, becomes in the process of Execution a proven fact—the end product of Creative Thinking.

Rewards

It is creative thinking that carries the office boy to the presidency, that moves the brakeman, the telegraph operator, the section hand to the head of the company. Without it business could not operate for a day, the wheels of production would cease to turn, the entire business structure would collapse.

Have you got it? It is invaluable to any

enterprise. The highest paid men in American business have this one talent in common—creative imagination. This is what they are paid for. It is the vital link in Thinking.

What do you mean—Think? Taken step by step Thinking calls for—

Observation—Getting the Facts

Analysis—Interpreting the Facts

Evaluation—Weighing the Facts

Imagination—Organizing the Facts

Execution—Demonstrating the Facts

These are the Key Words to constructive achievement.

As one goes about the country he sees everywhere, in offices, shops, school rooms, stores, factories, on the wall, on the desk, over the work bench, the simple, silent, suggestive, challenging, provocative message—THINK. It has become the slogan of American business. It says to alert, aspiring, ambitious, energetic men and women, young and old, if you want to get anywhere

THINK !!

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