



Discussion Guide – Quarter 4 - 2020

Think Wrong: How to Conquer the Status Quo and Do Work That Matters

Author: John Bielenberg

The way we solve problems is broken. We are trapped by techniques and assumptions of a prior era. Today challenges emerge at an ever-accelerating rate, and we struggle to find the imaginative answers we crave. When we do, biology and culture conspire to obstruct our progress. *Think Wrong: How to Conquer the Status Quo and Do Work That Matters* teaches you how to use a radical problem-solving system to reliably produce surprising, ingenious, and seemingly magical answers to your most wicked questions. This book provides you with a new language, frameworks, and tools to conquer the status quo and drive change.



Note: instead of discussion questions, the authors of this book have created a series of drills and exercises you can do with your own team to reinforce its teachings. Below is one such drill. For more free resources, visit their website at <https://solvenext.com/free-resources>.

Set brazen goals.

Use the Deflection Point Drill when you want to forge a bold path that deflects from the status quo—shifting from the way things are to how they might be.

Deflection Point is a foundational drill for us, and we use it with pretty much every Think Wrong Collaboration—sometimes more than once—to help envision the change(s) we might want to create for/with our constituents. We like to kick off with this exercise to warm up the voices in the room and set a collaborative tone for our work together.

Deflection Point is also a helpful standalone drill for any kind of strategic planning you are doing with your team.

Outcomes

- Insights into the current state
- Aspirations for a future state
- Shared understanding and enthusiasm for change

Materials

Blue painter's tape
Sharpies
Post-its



Discussion Guide – Quarter 4 – 2020 (cont'd)

Instructions

Step 1

Ask “Wrong Thinkers” to make a horizontal line on the wall with blue tape and label it the Predictable Path/Status Quo.

Step 2

Given the challenge, ask participants to describe the current state of things (the good, the bad, and the ugly) by writing these brief descriptions down on Post-it notes. They should say aloud what they’ve written on their Post-it when they place it on the wall, under the blue line. Continue to generate Post-its until ideas are exhausted.

Step 3

Ask Wrong Thinkers to create a new line, at a 45° angle, from the left end of the Predictable Path, and label it the Bold Path.

Step 4

Ask Wrong Thinkers to describe the aspirational state of things (how they might want things to be), above the new blue line—again, using Post-its and saying aloud what they’ve written down. Continue until ideas are exhausted.

Step 5

Ask Wrong Thinkers to share their observations about the Predictable Path and the Bold Path. You might also ask them to vote (using a hash mark or dot) on the three ideas they find most compelling.

Tip

Encourage Wrong Thinkers to be as honest about the current state—and as aspirational as possible about the bold path—as they can be.