

Managing The Psychological Bias Against Creativity

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Forbes:

You come up with a great new idea at work, or at home. Or a political leader actually tries something “new and different” when faced with a previously intractable problem. But then, rather than grateful acceptance, or even a fair hearing, the idea is squashed, ridiculed, or otherwise ignored.

Sound familiar? It should. As anyone who has ever suggested a creative solution knows, people often avoid the uncomfortable uncertainty of novel solutions regardless of potential benefit. Creativity, no matter how much we say we like it, frequently elicits what my grandmother used to warn about, “too smart is half stupid” (for a current illustration look no further than the Obama administration).

Now, new research, soon to appear in *Psychological Science*, titled “The Bias Against Creativity: Why People Desire But Reject Creative Ideas” empirically documents how our resistance to uncertainty makes the “old ways” far stickier than they should be given the practical benefits of creative, new solutions. Once again, the biases built into our minds leave us simultaneously moving in opposite directions; we like creativity but avoid creative ideas because creative ideas are too, in a word, creative.

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