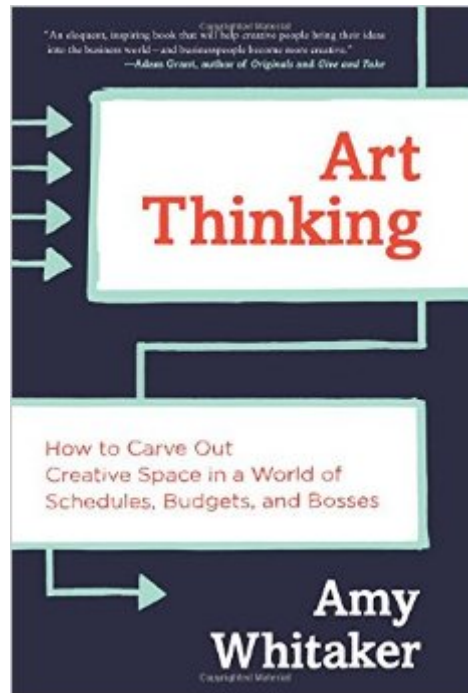


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# Art Thinking: How To Carve Out Creative Space In A World Of Schedules, Budgets, And Bosses



## Synopsis

An indispensable and inspiring guide to creativity in the workplace and beyond, drawing on art, psychology, science, sports, law, business, and technology to help you land big ideas in the practical world. Anyone from CEO to freelancer knows how hard it is to think big, let alone follow up, while under pressure to get things done. Art Thinking offers practical principles, inspiration, and a healthy dose of pragmatism to help you navigate the difficulties of balancing creative thinking with driving toward results. With an MBA and an MFA, Amy Whitaker, an entrepreneur-in-residence at the New Museum Incubator, draws on stories of athletes, managers, writers, scientists, entrepreneurs, and even artists to engage you in the process of "art thinking." If you are making a work of art in any field, you aren't going from point A to point B. You are inventing point B. Art Thinking combines the mind-sets of art and the tools of business to protect space for open-ended exploration and manage risks on your way to success. Art Thinking takes you from "Wouldn't it be cool if . . . ?" to realizing your highest aims, helping you build creative skills you can apply across all facets of business and life. Warm, honest, and unexpected, Art Thinking will help you reimagine your work and life "and even change the world" while enjoying the journey from point A. Art Thinking features 60 line drawings throughout.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Hitting the Pause Button and Making Time for Creative Habits By Amy Whitaker, author of Art Thinking For authors, there is an interesting time between when the book goes to press and when

it actually comes out. The book is frozen in form, save for grave errors or small misspellings. But it keeps growing, in the manner of a plant or an eight-year-old. You keep getting asked, "What is your book about?" And the question still makes you think. "I am lucky" maybe owing to my hybrid MBA-MFA background that I get to meet a wide variety of people. For every savvy marketer, there's a hard-core Renaissance art historian. For every copyright attorney, there's a choreographer. For every tireless 7 a.m. office worker, there's an equally tireless parent of five (or two or one). In all these people, I see a beautiful mix of duty and love, and of creativity and practicality. Shortly after I turned in the first full draft of the book, I went on a fasting retreat in Germany. As a former chubby kid and "not to show off" professional-grade eater, a guided, partial fast was a physical pathway to hitting a mental pause button. Like so many people, I had been on a treadmill of work, plus a side hustle, for years. You'd be surprised how much time gets freed up when you're not eating. (As the author Jeanette Winterson wrote in an essay about her time at the same fasting clinic, quoting Leonard Cohen, "We humans are always looking for things to do between meals.") In the second week, I signed up for an excursion to the Island of Mainau, a tourist attraction full of over a million flowers—30,000 rose bushes alone—some freely growing, some manicured into topiary peacocks, a bit like a zoo with trees and blooms instead of large animals. While I was walking around with a woman named Maria, she asked me how to describe my book. While we wandered a butterfly sanctuary and a stepped flower garden, I thought about how present she was, with her family and the many other people in her life. I thought about what it is to be busy on a Wednesday afternoon, far from a butterfly sanctuary—one where your mind and body are squeezed into the vise of your to-do list. How in that moment do you access wonder and open-endedness? How do you hold space for creative thinking when you're racing to get things done, to put out fires, to be the personal and professional equivalent of a cartoon plate-juggling chef (or is Ginger Rogers, doing the same thing backwards, in heels)? The starting point is simple. It is to develop space for small creative habits. You might only be able to hold the space for a thirty-second stare at a paperweight, or a ten-minute walk around the block. I experience that, too, more days than not. The art thinking framework grows from that ground—to help you take in a wider view, to get comfortable in the messiness of work in progress, to identify the questions you most care about, and then to move forward skillfully into a future of your own design. I'll drink and eat "to that."

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