

## 56 Ways to Change the World:

### Tips by IBM researchers on how to get unstuck.

1. Clean your desk (Note: Blue items are my favorites)
2. Instead of sending an email, use the phone. .
3. Explain your idea to a kid.
4. Remember: If you don' t exceed your authority at least once a week, you probably aren' t doing your job.
5. Have a lunch with a physicist. Or don' t.
6. Demo your work to someone who hasn' t seen it before.
7. Take a long, hot shower. (If you don' t get any new ideas, at least you' ll be clean...)
8. Go backpacking.
9. Go to a seminar outside your field of expertise.
10. Paint. A picture... the house...it doesn' t much matter.
11. Walk the perimeter of an IBM building—take along a colleague from another discipline.
12. Read works by someone who changed the face of your field.
13. Talk with someone who' s been around long enough to know how to skirt the system.
14. Write your obituary. (What will you be known for?)
15. Email a colleague in another lab and ask for advice.
16. Go stock up on tools for creativity: pens, toys, log books, models.
17. Teach a class. Kindergarten or college—it doesn' t really matter.
18. Come in early—enjoy the quiet.
19. Have an argument.
20. Spend a whole day walking around the lab.
21. Invite comment from a colleague who has a completely different opinion. Listen carefully.
22. If you don' t want to read the book, then write it.
23. Work the problem. Write down everything that' s wrong, and then tackle each thing one at a time until you' re done. (It worked for the crew of Apollo 13.)
24. Admit to your boss that you' re stuck. See what ideas strike you during this moment of confession.
25. Jot down everything you' ve learning so far about your project—good and bad. Reflect.
26. Forget the plan. Build a prototype.
27. For a day, switch places with your boss.

28. Go for a walk and meet someone new. Then go see what's going on in their lab.
29. Make your second best idea better than your first.
30. Leave the office. Sit with just a pencil and a pad of paper. See what happens.
31. Get your hands dirty.
32. Go for a bike ride.
33. Buy a magazine you've never seen, and read it cover to cover.
34. Cruise a competitor's website.
35. Reread your own published work to remind yourself that you really CAN do this.
36. Walk a dog. (If you don't have your own, borrow one.)
37. Forget URLs. Visit the public library. Hang with other humans and books.
38. Run the problem through your head again and again like a movie. Until it's solved.
39. Switch to a different project
40. Make your best ideas compete for space in your brain.
41. Sketch your problem out on someone else's whiteboard.
42. Shut the door (very important). Practice shooting rubber bands at targets in your office.
43. Realize that even Nobel laureates get stuck. Daily.
44. Focus on the hotshot in some start-up who wants to beat you to market. Now get back to work.
45. As Churchill said: "Never give up. Never give up. Never give up."
46. Put it into action. You can always stop-or upgrade -later.
47. Brush your teeth.
48. Brainstorm with someone 10 years older and someone 10 years younger.
49. Join a sales rep on a customer call.
50. Reread your favorite book from childhood.
51. Become a Luddite for a day. Turn off your computer and see what happens.
52. Remove all the guest chairs from your office for a week. Hold all your meetings standing up.
53. Visit a third-grade class and let the kids lecture YOU about the future.
54. Ponder something else. (For example: If a belt were placed around Earth's equator, and then had six meters of length added to it, and you grabbed it at a point and lifted it until all the slack was gone, how high above Earth's surface would you be?)
55. Remind yourself of what you don't know.
56. Call your mom.