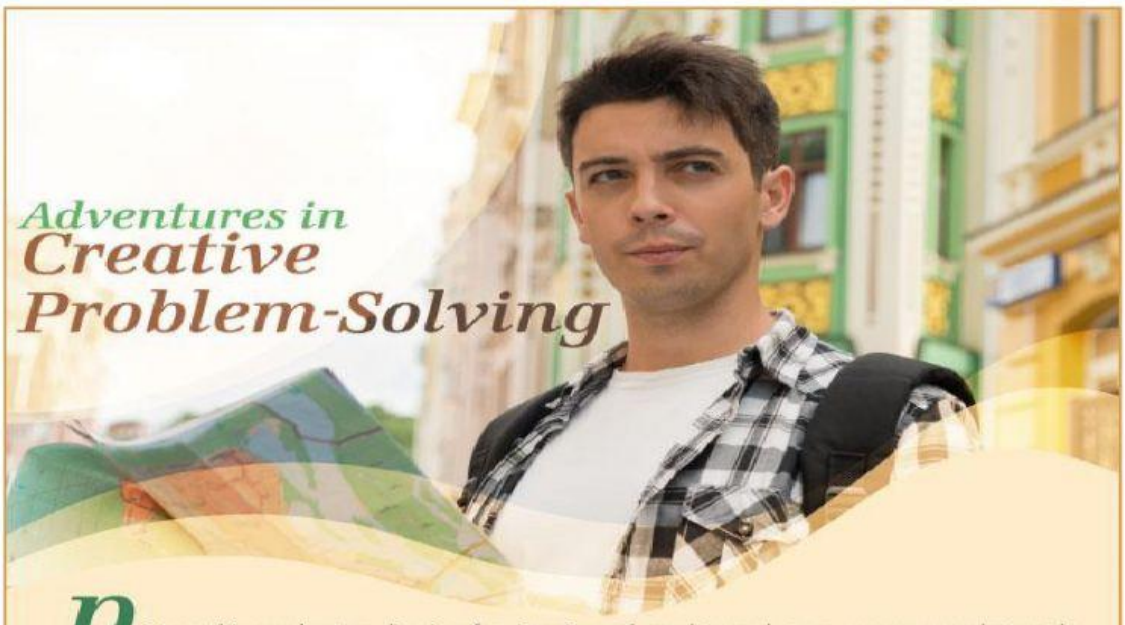


Adventures in Creative Problem-Solving

Picture this: you're traveling in a foreign city and need to exchange some money but can't find a bank. You ask someone for help, but you don't speak the local language. You flip through a phrase book, but you can't find the right word. Maybe you've been in this **hopeless** situation yourself. Art Lebedev was, and it inspired him to come up with an idea. He designed a **useful** T-shirt covered with common symbols for things tourists need, like a restroom, a hotel, or a post office. This allows him to simply point to the symbol on his shirt for the thing he is looking for. It's certainly more **painless** than carrying a phrase book around! Thinking creatively can help you find a lot of **helpful** solutions to common problems. Here are a few of our favorite examples of thinking outside the box.

For Safer Buses, Just Add Water!

The Longxiang Bus Company in China was getting many complaints about **careless** drivers from passengers who were sick of being bumped around. The bad driving had gotten out of control, so the company came up with a creative idea. To encourage **purposeful** driving, they hung up bowls of water next to each driver. If the driver turned or braked too quickly, the bowl would tip over and spill the water. Drivers were required to have a full bowl of water at the end of their shift—and a dry uniform! Some felt that the company went a little overboard, but the idea was **successful**. Just like that, the complaints, along with the buses, slowed down.

Sidewalk Art? Watch Where You Step.

In Auckland, New Zealand, city leaders had another problem. Absent-minded pedestrians on cell phones were walking into roads and causing accidents. Unbelievably, between 2008 and 2012, almost 750 people were hit by cars at a single intersection! So the government decided on a **meaningful** and inventive way to get people's attention. They commissioned an artist to create 3-D drawings on sidewalks near busy roads. The realistic pictures showed frightening animals, like sharks and snakes, breaking out of the sidewalk and the words "Don't step into danger." With these eye-catching safety reminders, pedestrians became much more **careful**.

Video Game Chores: Can I Play?

Parents know what a pain in the neck it is to get children to help out around the house. But again, creative thinking can even make boring chores like doing the laundry almost **effortless**. How? Take ChoreMonster, a mobile app that turns chores into a game. As children complete chores that parents have programmed into the app, they earn rewards from both the game and their parents. For example, by washing the dishes, a child might earn the chance to see a clip from a new movie—before it hits the theaters!

As these examples show, sometimes all you need to solve a problem is a little imagination. After all, think of how far you can get with a **powerful** idea—In Art Lebedev's case, it took him all the way around the world!

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Reading: Adventures in Creative Problem-Solving

Read the article. Answer the questions, according to the information in the article.

1. What difficult situation gave Art Lebedev his creative idea?

He was traveling in a foreign country and couldn't find a bank.

He could never find comfortable clothing to wear while traveling.

He had to cross a dangerous intersection in Australia.

2. What did Art Lebedev make for tourists?

a phrasebook for every country in the world

a T-shirt with symbols for things many tourists need

a T-shirt that warns pedestrians of traffic dangers

3. Why did the Longxiang Bus Company hang water bowls in its buses?

It wanted its drivers to slow down and drive safely.

It wanted drivers to complete routes more quickly.

It wanted to warn pedestrians not to walk into traffic.

4. How did the water bowls encourage purposeful driving?

Drinking more water helped the drivers relax and focus better.

To avoid spilling the water, the drivers had to drive carefully.

If the water spilled on the drivers, it could cause an accident.

5. How did Auckland teach pedestrians about dangerous intersections?

The city posted pictures of frightening accidents.

The city created a new cell phone app.

The city painted 3-D pictures on the sidewalk.

6. What is one picture the city of Auckland might have used in its sidewalk campaign?

a tiger

a sunrise

a new car

7. What problem does the ChoreMonster app try to solve?

It is difficult to motivate kids to do chores.

Children spend too much time playing games.

Children don't know how to do basic chores.

8. Why do kids enjoy using the ChoreMonster app?

They can play games instead of helping around the house.

By doing their chores, they can earn rewards.

They can get tips on how to do chores with less effort.

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