

Concurrent Thinking

Concurrent Thinking is embracing the opposites of a dilemma and acting to preserve the benefits of each while avoiding the pitfalls of both: it is flexible thinking that seeks decisions based on a balance most appropriate for a given situation.

Concurrent thinking eschews binary decisions, either-or options, and insists on conjunctive solutions that combine opposites in a creative way. Roger Martin (2009) describes such integrative thinking as the ability to hold two diametrically opposing ideas in the head and then act by blending the best of both ideas, a hallmark of exceptional leaders. Concurrent thinking enables leaders to flourish in the midst of contradiction, confusion, and conflict; it is a cultivated skill critical to both the success of rational choice and leadership.

Creative leaders take the best in two opposing ideas and blend a solution that is superior to either.