



Force-Fitting

"The ability to relate and to connect, sometimes in an odd and yet striking fashion, lies at the very heart of any creative use of the mind, no matter in what field or discipline."

— George J. Seidel

Force-fitting is a useful problem-solving technique which draws upon two fundamental design principles derived from observing nature: harmony and contrast. **All things are both alike and different from everything else.** Select a concept or object that does not seem to be related to your problem. Really stretch your limits and compare truly different things like an automobile with the Fourth of July or chopped liver, rather than with a bus, which would be too similar.

Once you have selected a concept or object, write out all the characteristics and qualities you can think of; then, force as many connections between the object or concept and your problem as you can. Look for clues and hints that help you generate a novel idea to begin to solve the problem. The forced relationships are usually established by arbitrary and mechanical means. For example, my problem is like painting a large room because:

- * It looks a lot easier than it really is.
- * There is considerably more preparation required than meets the eye.
- * Without thorough planning, I'll have a real mess.
- * It's easy to lose track of my place.

Write out your problem statement. Start it with, "How might I...?"
Posing a question ignites the brain to look for solutions.

Choose an unrelated concept, object or book you've read.

List the characteristics and qualities of that concept or object:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Force connections with your problem:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

