

# WHAT'S YOUR "NO ONE KNOWS" ASSUMPTION?

Being able to recognize when you may be incorrectly assuming that data, knowledge, and a path forward does not exist is an invaluable business advantage for company leaders. It is also a key to success for everyone setting out to shape the Future of Work. Use this tool to help you move forward when you feel stuck in the "no one knows" trap.

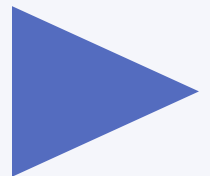


# 9

# STEPS

to escape the "no one knows" trap

Read the full article in *Workforce Architecture*: ["Solve your workforce problems by escaping the 'no one knows' trap"](#)



1 Think about how you react when you are faced with a difficult problem. What do you do when you are avoiding taking action or procrastinating because something feels difficult?

List the positive and negative behaviours or patterns you fall into.

This is List 1.

Examples:

1. Continually seeking new information online without real direction or purpose (e.g., doom-scrolling)
2. Engaging others in discussions, not necessarily because they will help you move forward, but because you get unstuck by talking out loud
3. Stepping away from work tasks to do something else, such as exercising, cooking, or other activities that “take your mind off” what you can’t solve at work

2 Identify tasks or activities that refocus you or get you back into your work when you become distracted or unmotivated.

This is List 2.

Examples:

1. Setting a timer or using an app that creates “focused time”
2. Calling a client to connect and continue a relationship
3. Listening to a particular song or type of music in the background
4. Going for a walk around the block

3 Now, let’s turn to the specific reason you feel stuck in a “no one knows” trap. Are you facing a problem? A challenge?

Clearly define the issue that you believe can’t be addressed because “no one knows.”

Write it out in as much detail as you can. If you struggle with this, start simple:

- ▶ “The problem facing my company is...”
- ▶ “If you really knew me, you’d know that I...”

You can also phrase the issue as a question instead of a statement.

4 For your issue or question, list 5-10 “if only, then” statements.

Examples:

- ▶ “If only I knew \_\_\_\_\_, then I could \_\_\_\_\_.”
- ▶ “If only I had \_\_\_\_\_, then my ability to \_\_\_\_\_ would increase.”

5 For each “if only, then” statement, consider what proxy information (data) you might have access to.

What feels loosely related but not quite the data you are looking for?

Who might you talk with to brainstorm other ways to approach the problem?

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Gather all of the “then” parts of the statements from Steps 4 and 5 into one list.

6 Using this list, create an action plan of activities and tasks you would take if you had everything you needed (all the required information, resources, etc.).

These activities and tasks can be as broad or specific as you want. Organize them into steps that you would complete in order.

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Evaluate the action plan you created in Step 6. Determine if you have enough (not perfect, but enough) resources, information, skills, relationships, etc., to begin carrying out the action plan.

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Don't be a perfectionist. Determine if you have *enough* resources, not necessarily the *perfect* resources, to get started.

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If you decide you don't have the resources you need, create a new action plan dedicated to securing those resources. If you are missing information (data), use what you identified in Step 5 to create a plan for getting what you need.

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The activities and tasks in this action plan can be as broad or specific as you want. Organize them into steps that you would complete in order.

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At any point, if you find yourself doing any of the activities in List 1, immediately choose an activity to do from List 2.

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Then get back to work!

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