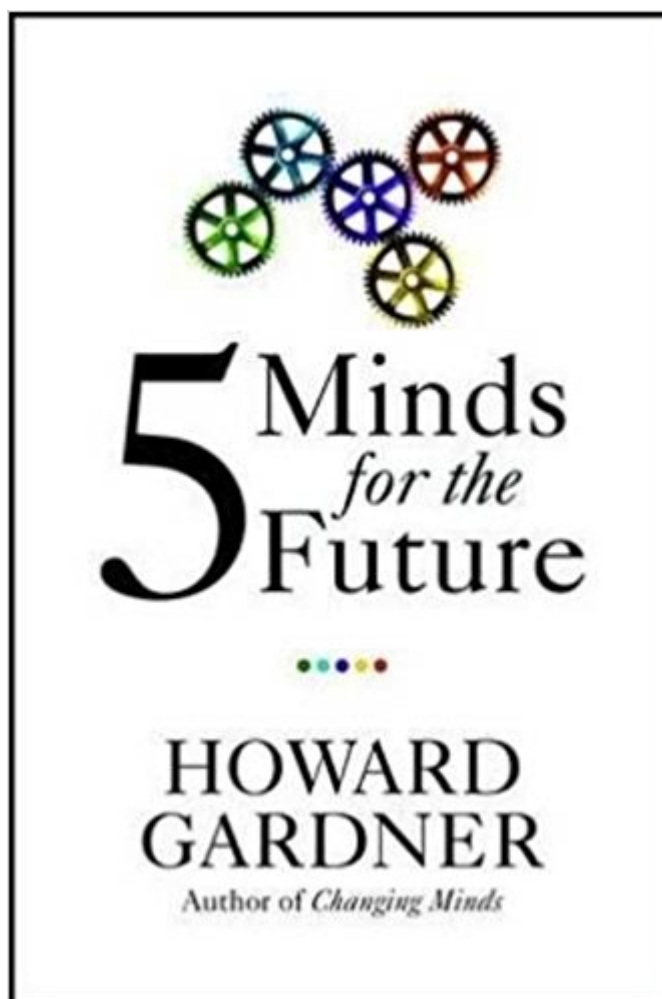


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# Five Minds For The Future



## Synopsis

We live in a time of relentless change. The only thing that's certain is that new challenges and opportunities will emerge that are virtually unimaginable today. How can we know which skills will be required to succeed? In *Five Minds for the Future*, bestselling author Howard Gardner shows how we will each need to master "five minds" that the fast-paced future will demand:

- The disciplined mind, to learn at least one profession, as well as the major thinking (science, math, history, etc.) behind it
- The synthesizing mind, to organize the massive amounts of information and communicate effectively to others
- The creating mind, to revel in unasked questions - and uncover new phenomena and insightful apt answers
- The respectful mind, to appreciate the differences between human beings - and understand and work with all persons
- The ethical mind, to fulfill one's responsibilities as both a worker and a citizen

Without these "minds," we risk being overwhelmed by information, unable to succeed in the workplace, and incapable of the judgment needed to thrive both personally and professionally. Complete with a substantial new introduction, *Five Minds for the Future* provides valuable tools for those looking ahead to the next generation of leaders - and for all of us striving to excel in a complex world.

Howard Gardner is cited by *Foreign Policy* magazine as one of the one hundred most influential public intellectuals in the world, and a MacArthur Fellowship recipient; is the Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Psychologist, author and Harvard professor Gardner (*Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*) has put together a thought-provoking, visionary attempt to delineate the kinds of mental abilities ("minds") that will be critical to success in a 21st century landscape of accelerating change and information overload. Gardner's five minds-disciplined, synthesizing, creating, respectful and ethical-are not personality types, but ways of thinking available to anyone who invests the time and effort to cultivate them: "how we should use our minds." In presenting his "values enterprise," Gardner uses a variety of explanatory models, from developmental psychology to group dynamics, demonstrating their utility not just for individual development, but for tangible success in a full range of human endeavors, including education, business, science, art, politics and engineering. A tall order for a single work, Gardner avoids overly-technical arguments as well as breezy generalizations, putting to fine use his twenty years experience as a cognitive science researcher, author and educator, and proving his world-class reputation well-earned. Though specialists might wish Gardner dug a bit more into the research, most readers will find the book lively and engaging, like the fascinating lectures of a seasoned, beloved prof. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"...a detailed and thoughtful description of the multifaceted brains that are likely to be most valued in the coming decades." --BusinessWeek, May 7, 2007 --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Howard Gardner lays out "five minds" he thinks are necessary for future societies and workplaces in *Five Minds for the Future*. He even in a later chapter gives the order in which he believes these five different ways of thinking should be developed. I will try to tell you what they are from memory.1. The Respectful Mind. Gardner thinks that people should develop a respectful mind early on in their life. Developing a respectful mind just means developing respect for other people and their differences, being able to understand different and similar ways of thinking and behaving. Gardner argues that in many ways such minds can be developed when societies hold up role models for the younger generations, people who were respectful themselves of differences and who encouraged them.2. The Disciplined Mind. What people ought to learn to have next, Gardner thinks, is a disciplined mind. When a person has a disciplined mind, they are able to understand the major disciplines needed to function as a literate adult. These disciplines are learned over time, of course, and incrementally. The disciplines include what you would probably think. For a modern American, they would be mastery of the English language, understanding of major mathematical and scientific

concepts, a working knowledge of American and world history, an adequate grasp of literature, both American and international, and so on--that is, most of what has been traditionally taught in schools. Gardner does believe, however, that the current educational organization could be rearranged to develop more a disciplined mind; most of those proposals are to be found in his book *Multiple Intelligences*.

3. **The Synthesizing Mind.** The synthesizing mind is able to take the deep knowledge she has acquired throughout much of her time while studying the various disciplines and then re-combine it to be able to get a clearer picture of the world. An example of this might be understanding how evolutionary processes (biology) and game theory optimization techniques (mathematics, economics) seriously delimit the scope of certain kinds of human thought and behavior (psychology). That example I just gave, by the way, is not fully fleshed, but you get the picture.
4. **The Ethical Mind.** In Gardner's use of the words 'respectful' and 'ethical,' the respectful mind is when a mind tries to relate to other minds and understand those minds as people to be respected, whereas the ethical mind is when a person tries to relate what should be the proper thoughts and actions given a certain role she occupies in the workplace, in her society, or in the world. This would involve a doctor, for instance, being on time for his/her appointments or for a lawyer adequately defending his/her client. It could also be conceived of more broadly, as with a civil rights activist understanding that it is part of his/her role to defend other people's civil rights.
5. **The Creative Mind.** Gardner thinks developing a creative mind is hardest to cultivate but it can be done in small doses, especially when people find new ways to relate to other people, or relate to their roles, or to develop new ideas in a discipline, or find a new and creative way to synthesize. Etc.

Howard Gardner is well known for his development of a theory of multiple intelligences (in contrast to the simplistic notion of a single intelligence measurable by something like IQ). In this book, he goes a step further by describing five "minds" which he believes will need to be cultivated in order for individuals and groups to flourish in the future. This cultivation will require substantial reform of our educational systems, will need to continue for each individual as a lifelong pursuit, and will need to be balanced (in the best liberal arts tradition) in a way that encompasses the arts and humanities along with the usual mathematics, science, and technology. In my opinion, Gardner's proposed five minds pass the basic test of being reasonably distinct from each other. It could be debated whether additional minds need to be added, but I think that they cover plenty of ground, and are at least an excellent starting point. The five minds can be summarized as follows:

1. **The Disciplined Mind** has mastered the distinctive ways of thinking associated with a scholarly discipline, craft, profession, or other practice. The resulting expertise goes well beyond the erroneous or inadequate approaches

laypeople would employ, and often involves the ability to conceptualize problems in multiple ways. Such mastery doesn't generally come naturally and therefore typically takes about a decade of steady effort to develop, followed by continued education and practice to maintain it; coaching and mentoring can be a big help in this regard.<sup>2</sup> The Synthesizing Mind is skilled in drawing information from various sources and organizing it in sensible ways, making useful connections while avoiding false or unproductive ones. Since we tend to operate in domain-specific ways and are driven toward specialization, synthesis doesn't come naturally, but we yearn for it. We often achieve it in the form of narratives, taxonomies, complex concepts, rules, aphorisms, metaphors, themes, theories, metatheories, works of art, etc. Interdisciplinary work explicitly aims for synthesis.<sup>3</sup> The Creating Mind breaks new ground by putting forth new ideas, new ways of thinking, unfamiliar questions, and unexpected answers, and then ideally also gaining their acceptance by others. Not surprisingly, creators are much rarer than "mere" experts and have traits like willingness to deviate from the crowd, perseverance in the face of difficulties and failures, comfort with turbulence, and eagerness to continue pushing boundaries (even after achieving success). But creativity isn't simply a result of individual "genius," since sociocultural context can also play a large role.<sup>4</sup> The Respectful Mind recognizes and accepts the diversity among individuals and groups and thereby shows tolerance and the ability to collaborate effectively with others. Ever-intensifying globalization makes development of the respectful mind an imperative.<sup>5</sup> The Ethical Mind ponders one's work and society's needs at a more abstract level than the respectful mind, and then finds ways to go beyond self-interest and instead also serve others. Ethical work is "good work" in the senses of being of excellent quality, responsible to the community, and engaging in a way that provides meaning. Gardner does an excellent job in this book of fleshing out the five minds and illustrating their importance. He does this by drawing on his formidable erudition and giving a wonderfully diverse range of great examples. His writing is also exceptionally clear and the book is very well organized. As a result, I found it very easy and enjoyable to read. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in their own personal development and continuing education, the education and development of their children, service to society, and the welfare of the world. This book has made me an appreciative fan of Gardner and I look forward to reading his other books. Also, readers who like this book may also want to check out "Secrets of a Buccaneer-Scholar: How Self-Education and the Pursuit of Passion Can Lead to a Lifetime of Success" by James Marcus Bach.

Howard Gardner continues his research about multiple intelligences and thinking frames in this book about what are the essential areas that the younger generations should be brought up in through

education. There is nothing revolutionary about what he writes. But there is something to be said about writing on what the essence of education should be. It is such thinking that cuts through the various education wars that are happening today - over the subject content, over the curriculum frameworks, over the skills that need to be taught. Gardner brings the focus back to what we should equip our children with - the need to think with clarity over what one is exposed to, whether in writing, conversations or otherwise. A good read, easy on the eyes and yet creates the need to digest over the content over a very long time.

So many good ideas and research about education makes it so hard for us teachers to have an overview that rises above and can give us a path so "of all there is to teach what must be taught" in order to balance the tendencies of to industrialize education which although it is necessary for economic development it would be a disastrous lose of humanistic knowledge for human kind with the danger of dehumanizing education . Howard Gardner is one of my favorite Gurus of Education, his overview gives us a universal approach to education, inclusive and ethical I as a Mexican educator feel part of this master vizion that will unite world education with respect of diversity and value of what it enrich universal knowledge.

well written.

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