



BOOK NOTES

Inside the Box

by David Epstein

- Embrace boundaries for creativity, productivity, collaboration, and personal satisfaction...do more with less.
- Break problems into testable pieces; learn from specific failures.
- Constraints force deeper thinking and novel solutions; total freedom often leads to mediocre or scattered results.
- As humans, we bias toward adding features/solutions instead of subtracting; fight the 'Christmas tree effect'.
- Define boundaries and test small early (Pixar), then execute rapidly.
- Innovation's hardest part is deciding what NOT to do.
- Focus on the single biggest limiter for outsized system gains.
- Satisfice: Settle for 'good enough' on small decisions to save energy for what matters most.
- Block familiar paths (preclude) + add new rules (promote) to spark radical creativity.
- Distraction kills focus; use rituals, silence, and commitment devices.
- Design for real humans, not the average that doesn't exist.
- Anchor new ideas with familiarity - build from a base of what they already believe.

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