



Context[®]

THEME DESCRIPTION

You look back. You look back because that is where the answers lie. You look back to understand the present. From your vantage point, the present is unstable, a confusing clamor of competing voices. It is only by casting your mind back to an earlier time, a time when the plans were being drawn up, that the present regains its stability. The earlier time was a simpler time. It was a time of blueprints. As you look back, you begin to see these blueprints emerge. You realize what the initial intentions were. These blueprints or intentions have since become so embellished that they are almost unrecognizable, but now this Context theme reveals them again. This understanding brings you confidence. No longer disoriented, you make better decisions because you sense the underlying structure. You become a better partner because you understand how your colleagues came to be who they are. And counterintuitively, you become wiser about the future because you saw its seeds being sown in the past. Faced with new people and new situations, it will take you a little time to orient yourself, but you must give yourself this time. You must discipline yourself to ask the questions and allow the blueprints to emerge because no matter what the situation, if you haven't seen the blueprints, you will have less confidence in your decisions.

POWER AND EDGE

Checking the rearview mirror is essential for safe driving. It keeps drivers up to date with what's happening behind them. In the same way, the genius of people with strong Context is their unique ability to understand the link between where they have come from and where they are going.

CONTEXT IN ACTION

Words that might describe a person with dominant Context talents:

historical
orienting
perceptive
highlighting
collecting
studious

ACTION ITEMS

- Read historical novels, nonfiction or biographies. You will discover many insights that will help you understand the present. You will think more clearly.
- Help your organization strengthen its culture via folklore. For example, collect symbols and stories that represent the best of the past or suggest naming an award after a person who embodied the best of the past.
- When a problem occurs, ask your colleagues to identify the actions and other factors that led to it. Having learned from the situation, your colleagues will be equipped to make choices that lead to better outcomes in the future.
- Find a mentor with a long history in your community or organization. Listening to his or her experiences will likely spark your thought process and accelerate your learning.
- Collect memories through photographs and written materials — they can be motivational for you.
- Partner with someone with a strong Futuristic or Strategic theme. This person's fascination with what "could be" will stop you from becoming mired in the past, while your Context will stop him or her from ignoring the lessons of the past. Together, you are more likely to create something that lasts.