

Differences between concrete and abstract thinking

People always think differently. Some may think in concrete terms and some in abstract terms. Concrete thinking refers to the thinking on the surface whereas abstract thinking is related to thinking in depth.

Concrete thinking does not have any depth. It just refers to thinking in the periphery. On the other hand, abstract thinking goes under the surface. A person having concrete thinking looks at the Statue of Liberty and only sees it as a lady with a torch. A person with abstract thinking will see the Statue of Liberty differently. He may think of it as a symbol of liberty and freedom. The Statue of Liberty is just a piece of concrete for the person with concrete thinking and it is a piece of art for the person with abstract thinking.

Concrete thinking is just regarding the facts. On the other hand abstract thinking goes down below the facts. While some mental process is involved in abstract thinking, no such effort is evolved in concrete thinking. A person with concrete thinking does not think beyond the facts. They do not have the ability to think beyond a certain limit. Concrete thinkers only have a generalized concept for all things. On the other hand, abstract thinkers have a very specific concept of things.

When compared to concrete thinking, abstract thinking is about understanding the multiple meanings.

When abstract thinking is based on ideas, concrete thinking is based on seeing and also on facts. Abstract thinking may be referred to the figurative description whereas concrete thinking does not think so.

Summary

1. Concrete thinking does not have any depth. It just refers to thinking in the periphery. On the other hand, abstract thinking goes under the surface.

2. Concrete thinking is just regarding the facts. On the other hand abstract thinking goes down below the facts.
3. Abstract thinking may be referred to the figurative description whereas the concrete thinker does not think so.
4. Unlike the concrete thinking, abstract thinking involves some mental process.
5. A person with concrete thinking does not think beyond the facts. They do not have the ability to think beyond a certain limit.
6. When compared to concrete thinking, abstract thinking is about understanding the multiple meanings.
7. While abstract thinking is based on ideas, concrete thinking is based on what the person sees as well as the facts.