



FUTUREquipped

Meta Skills

Creativity (Innovation)

UNIT

3

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Creativity

Introduction

The dictionary definition of creativity is, “the use of imagination or original ideas to create something”. That something could be the solution to a problem; a new product or service; or a new way to connect and communicate with others.

But where does creativity come from?

Some believe it is inherited, or something that you are born with, while others see it as a skill that we can all develop through the application of our knowledge and experiences.



Why creativity?

In a rapidly changing world, we are faced with many new opportunities and problems about which we need to think creatively. This will help us as individuals and as a society to take an active, rather than passive role in this change.

For those in the digital and computing sectors, creative problem solving can be the catalyst for innovation and solutions development. Being able to visualise and generate ideas to address complex problems is a skill that is highly prized by employers.

Health and social care provision is an increasingly complex and demanding sector. Care professionals who can imagine and apply new ideas to improve service provision and/or reduce costs will help to positively address the needs of our ageing population and other care service users.

For those working in the built environment, creativity may help to identify alternative solutions to existing problems, for example how to combine production technologies to deliver cost effective, future proof and adaptable housing.

Ways to develop your creativity

As with any skill the more you practice the better you will become at putting it to use, so it is important to find a way of practicing that works for you.

There is no sure fix way to develop your creativity but some suggestions to help you get started are provided here. You are encouraged to research and develop your own methods too!

Suggestions to help you develop your creativity:

1. Hobbies can be a great way to flex your creative muscles. Taking part in artistic pursuits, learning a language, playing a sport or a game of dungeon and dragons can all help you use your imagination and foster a sense of creativity that is transferable to other areas of your life.
2. A useful exercise that you can practise daily is free writing. Put simply, this involves taking a pen and a piece of paper and writing for a short period of time (3-5 min) about whatever it is that comes into your mind. The idea is not to focus on grammar, spelling or judgement of any sort. Your task is simply to capture your stream of consciousness on the paper by writing it down. Over time, this practice is reported to loosen up your creativity and make you more comfortable with connecting with this style of thinking.
3. The “thirty circles” exercise is a fun activity that is best carried out in groups. To participate, each person should be given a sheet of paper with 30 circles of

a similar size drawn on it - you can find some blank templates on the internet by searching "30 circles exercise". A link to one such example is provided below:

<http://traiestecreativ.ro/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/39.30-circles-creativity-exercise.png>

Participants are required to turn as many of the circles into recognisable objects (clocks, faces, snooker balls) in three minutes – so the focus is on speed and volume rather than filling each circle with an artistic masterpiece!

- When comparing results, consider the quantity, fluency and creativity of the ideas that have been generated. Has anyone worked outwith the assumed rules of the game e.g. combining circles to make a larger object?

As with any exercise focussed on developing your creative muscles, the goal is to practice without self-editing, or personal judgement. Often and without realising it, we can censor ourselves too quickly and prevent a creative idea from forming – the above exercises aim to reverse that trend and encourage you to connect with your imagination and creativity in a free flowing and non-judgemental manner.

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