



# FUTUREquipped

## Meta Skills

Curiosity

UNIT

2

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# Curiosity

## Introduction

**C**uriosity is the desire to seek out new knowledge or experiences. It is one of the fundamental forces driving human nature and can be responsible for motivating someone to research new medical drugs, look for hidden areas in their favourite video game, or learn a new programming language that could be a first step towards the next big software innovation.

We are all born curious, but as we settle into daily routines this can fade away. This can lead to a fear of the unknown or preferring to stay within your comfort zone and avoid trying anything new.

By constantly engaging and developing our sense of curiosity we can fight off stagnation in our personal and work lives, and position ourselves better to continuously learn and develop.



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## Why curiosity?

**A**s the world changes around us we need to continually adjust to and understand what this means for us. One of the best ways to achieve this is to remain curious.

Curiosity is another meta-skill that interacts with and supports other skills. For example, it provides us with the fuel to be creative and innovate.

Curiosity is a useful skill in the context of information and communication technologies. It drives people to keep up to date with new technologies, learn new programming languages and explore innovative ways to put technology to use.

For those working in the construction sector, a curious mind can be the driving force to experiment with or produce new materials that can offer some value-add novelty to how things are done. Curiosity is an essential driving force for progress. We can only advance if we ask ourselves "how can I do this better, quicker or easier? Can it be done in a different way?"

For those working in the health and care sector, curiosity is very important. Being observant, or asking questions is essential when looking to find out about a service user's needs. The health and care sector, like many others, is constantly evolving and customer/user needs change, as do regulations, enabling technologies and support mechanisms. By taking a curious approach to their work, health and care workers can contribute to a sustainable and innovative service provision.

# Ways to develop your curiosity

**W**hen broken down, curiosity stems from several other behaviours e.g. being observant; questioning things we don't know or understand; and using multiple sources to obtain different perspectives on a subject or problem (Skills Development Scotland, Skills 4.0, 2018).

Check out this short TED talk on the relationship between curiosity and creativity:

TED Talk: Curiosity Fuels Creativity:  
Chris Wire - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fw3aynVqWs4>

Do you default to your SMART device to “deduce” an answer to a question too often? Why not challenge yourself to answer some of the below questions using your powers of deduction. You can check your answers using your SMART device afterwards to see how you did.

## ***Some potential questions:***

1. What is the weight of a Boeing 747?
2. A man rode into town on Friday. He stayed for three nights and then left on Friday. How so?
3. You are in a pitch-black room, and you need to get dressed. In your sock drawer, there are 10 pairs of white socks, and 10 pairs of black socks, and you are already wearing one sock. Having unmatched socks is a fashion faux pas, so how many socks do you need to pull out of the drawer without seeing them until you have a matching pair?

These exercises will help you to fire up your deductive reasoning which in turn should help to fuel your curiosity and creativity.

***To develop your powers of observation, you might like to try the following activity:***

Take one inanimate object and place it on a table in front of you. Look at it for five minutes and take note of everything you notice about it. If it is an apple, notice the shape - is it round, is it bumpy, does it have many grooves? Notice the size; is it large, small, medium – and in comparison to what? Notice texture, color, shine and polish. Does it look old? Why? Does it look freshly picked? Why? Is it mouthwatering? Then what makes it so? Ask every question you can about your object until you can think of absolutely nothing else. What kind of stories were you making up in your head about this object? Why? (Digital Photography School, 2018)

- To take this a step further and employ your communication skills as well, you could work with a partner and describe the object to them while they attempt to draw the object based on your description.

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