



Creativity in the Workplace

Session starts at
10am



HELLO!

I am **Karen Maher**

I am an experienced HR consultant and workforce development specialist originally from the North East of England.

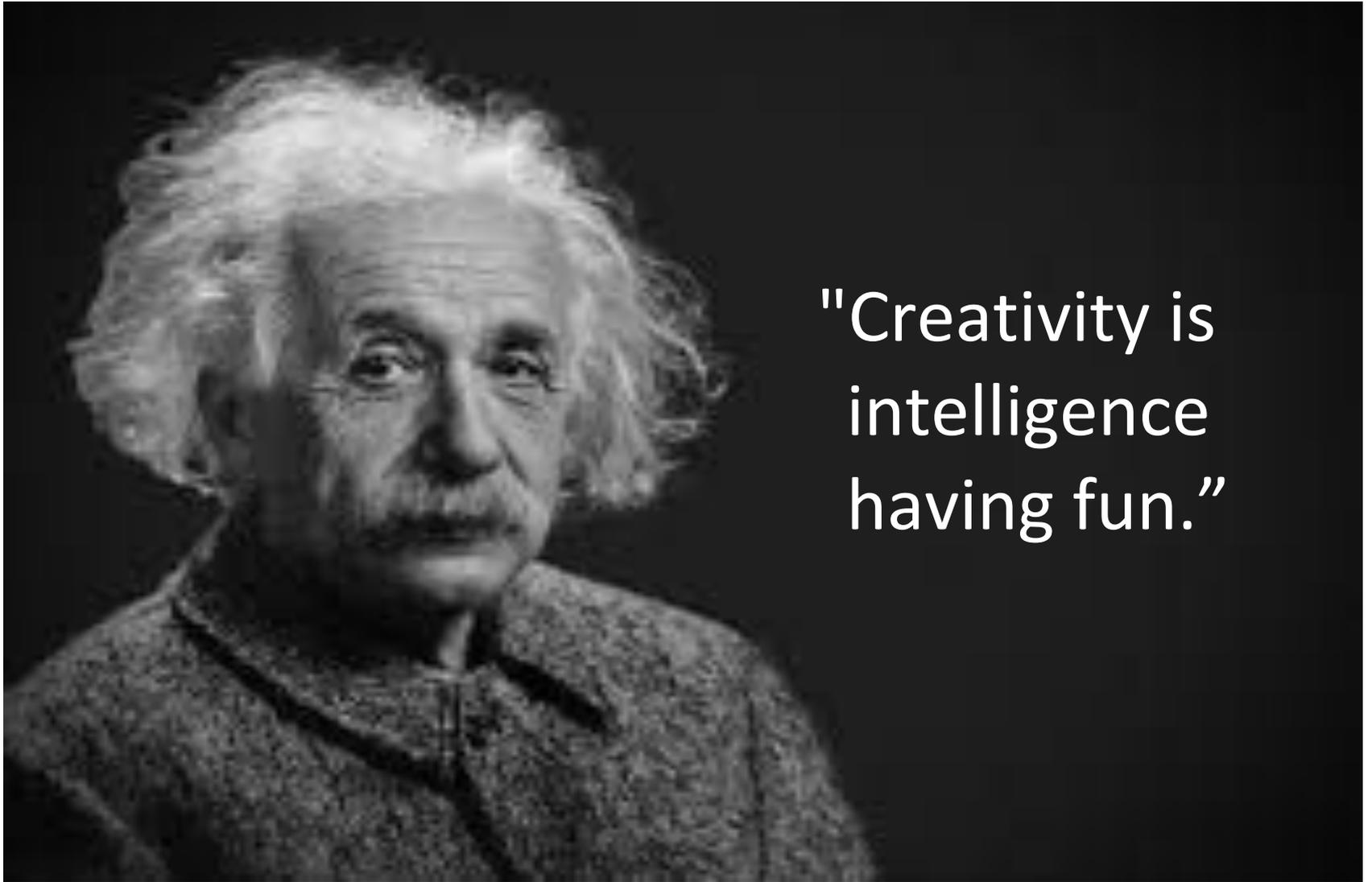
I specialise in coaching, mentoring, mediation and training delivery. I deliver QQI accredited courses including People Management, Supervisory Management and Medical Secretaries

I am also qualified to administer and deliver psychometric tests including EQi2 (Emotional Intelligence) and MBTI (Personality Types).



OVERVIEW

- Benefits of using a creative approach
- Recognising the difference between creativity & innovation
- Breaking through thought patterns and assumptions
- Enabling creativity
- Methods and tools for generating ideas
- Logical versus lateral thinking
- Creative problem solving
- Turning creative ideas into action



"Creativity is intelligence having fun."

Creativity in the Workplace

Given the rapid pace of the business, companies are interested in innovations that will give them a competitive advantage.

Managers and employees have the opportunity to take the lead and explore ways to make their workplace ideal for creative thinking and innovation.



3 Key Benefits of a Creative Workplace

1. Better Teamwork and Team Bonding

Creativity inspires employees to work with each other. As they have new ideas, they seek out colleagues for their feedback. The creative process encourages collaboration, and this is the most important benefit of offering a workplace where creative thinking can occur.

Team bonding also helps the overall engagement among employees. Interactions are more likely among co-workers and those who do not work together regularly. An increased level of comfort in a team is a positive for any organisation.



3 Key Benefits of a Creative Workplace

2. Improved Ability to Attract and Retain Employees

By developing an environment where creative minds are welcome, companies can attract more talented professionals. They can fill positions more effectively and efficiently.

A similar effect occurs with current employees, who are more likely to stay because of the creative environment. They become content with their job and commit to remaining with the company long term.



3 Key Benefits of a Creative Workplace

3. Increased Problem-Solving

The most important aspect of creativity is how it affects the work. With the ability to think creatively, employees are more likely to come up with unique and innovative solutions to obstacles they encounter.

This eagerness to solve problems can lead to new ways to accomplish tasks and run the organization more effectively.



Similarities and Differences

What do these terms mean to you?

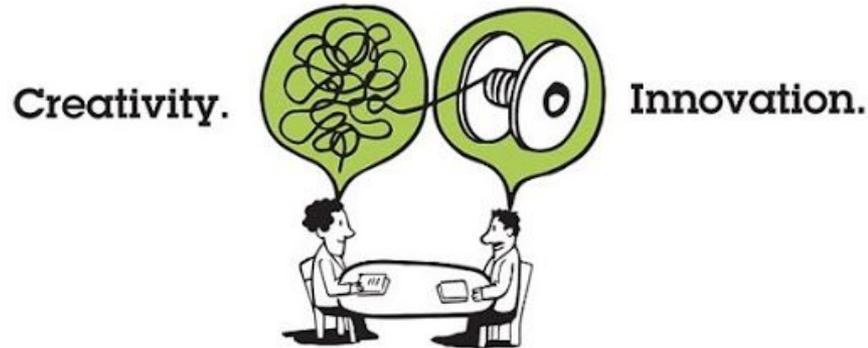
- Creativity
- Innovation



Definitions

Creativity is the capability or act of conceiving something original or unusual

Innovation is the implementation of something new.



Comparisons

BASIS FOR COMPARISON	CREATIVITY	INNOVATION
MEANING	The act of creating new ideas	The introduction of something new
PROCESS	Imaginative	Productive
QUANTIFIABLE	No	Yes
RELATED TO	Thinking something new	Introducing something new
COSTS	No	Yes
RISK	No	Yes

What's involved?

CREATIVITY

Ideas Imagination
Thoughts
Expression Concepts
Problem Solving
Ingenuity Ideation
Brainstorming
Creative Process

INNOVATION

Process Value
Invention
Doing Action
Implementation
Enable
Useful Change
Product
New Measurable

Breaking through patterns and assumptions

Breaking Old Thinking Patterns

We need to break away from established patterns of thought and start to see new paths ahead.

Here are some of the best ways to do it:

1. Challenge Your Assumptions

Challenging your preconceptions can also open up some exciting possibilities.

2. Rephrase the Problem

The way you define or frame your problem can limit your creativity. If you describe the issue you're trying to solve in a different way, or look at it from a different angle, new solutions can emerge.

3. Think in Reverse

If you're finding it difficult to think of a new approach, try turning the problem upside-down!

Flip the question and explore the exact **opposite** of what you want to achieve. This can present you with innovative ways to tackle the real issue.

4. Mix Your Media

Radical ideas can arise from tackling problems in unusual ways. A great way to do this is to apply different types of creativity – don't just talk or write about your plans, explore them through whatever enables you to express yourself. Fresh thinking can emerge when you let your creative juices flow!

Breaking through patterns and assumptions

Making New Connections

Another way to generate new ideas is to make new and unexpected connections. Some of the best ideas seem to occur almost by chance – you see or hear something unconnected with the situation you're trying to resolve, and a lightbulb goes on in your head!

Try some of the following strategies for forging creative connections:

1. Random words

Pick a word at random from any document, then look for novel associations between that word and your problem.

2. Picture prompts

Images can be a great way to inspire creative thinking. Pick any image, find a connection with your problem – however tenuous – and notice any new possibilities that open up.

3. Objects of interest

How about asking your team members to bring a small object of their choice to your next ideas meeting? You could generate new ideas by asking questions such as, "How is this object like the problem we're trying to solve?" or "How could we use this object to meet our challenge?"

Breaking through patterns and assumptions

Finding Fresh Perspectives

You often get a new take on an issue by talking to someone with a different perspective, maybe because of their age, life experience, or cultural background.

Or, try playing the "If I Were" game. Ask yourself, how would I address this challenge "if I were...Mick Jagger.....the Pope.....Joe Duffy.....?"

Consider how the person you've chosen would approach the problem, and see if that gives you any new ideas. Identify that person's distinguishing characteristics, and use them to address the challenge. The entrepreneur, for instance, might take bigger risks, while the athlete would focus on achieving success through intensive training.



Methods and Tools

Creative thinking skills involve such approaches as: -

- Looking for many possible answers rather than one.
- Allowing yourself to make crazy suggestions as well as those that seem sensible.
- Not judging ideas early in the process - treat all ideas as if they may contain the seeds of something potentially useful.
- Allowing yourself to doodle, daydream or play with a theory or suggestion.
- Being aware that these approaches necessarily involve making lots of suggestions that are unworkable and may sound silly.
- Making mistakes. - Learning from what has not worked as well as what did.
- Brainstorm ideas on one topic onto a large piece of paper: don't edit these. Just write them down as soon as they come into your head.
- Ask the same question at least twenty times and give a different answer each time.
- Change your routine. Do things a different way.
- Be open to ideas when they are still new: look for ways of making things work and pushing the idea to its limits.
- Ask questions such as 'what if....?' Or 'supposing....?'.



Are you a logical thinker?

A man has 53 socks in his drawer: 21 identical blue, 15 identical black and 17 identical red. The lights are out and he is completely in the dark. How many socks must he take out to make 100 percent certain he has at least one pair of black socks?



Answer: 40 socks. If he takes out 38 socks (adding the two biggest amounts, 21 and 17), although it is very unlikely, it is possible they could all be blue and red. To make 100 percent certain that he also has a pair of black socks he must take out a further two socks.

Are you a lateral thinker?

A man was wanted for burglarising dozens of businesses over a period of several months. Surveillance footage from the businesses clearly showed this man's face and the local TV Station showed this footage to viewers on many occasions. The local garda station even placed "wanted" posters around the community to help catch the burglar. However, when the man was spotted by two police officers familiar with the burglaries, he was not arrested. What happened?

Answer: The man was currently in jail and the two police officers came to get a statement from him for the upcoming trial.



Logic-v-Lateral Thinking

Logical thinkers observe and analyse phenomena, reactions, and feedback and then draw conclusions based on that input. They can justify their strategies, actions, and decisions based on the facts they gather. Logical thinkers don't go with their gut or develop a strategy because it "feels right." Logical thinking also requires setting aside assumptions and biases.

Lateral thinking is a manner of solving problems using an indirect and creative approach via reasoning that is not immediately obvious. It involves ideas that may not be obtainable using only traditional step-by-step logic. The term was first used in 1967 by Edward de Bono.



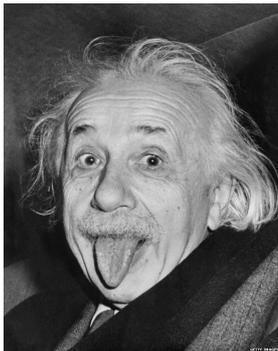
Creative Problem Solving

Creative problem solving is a well-defined process that can help you get from problem definition to implementing solutions.

Creative ideas do not appear in people's minds for no apparent reason. They are usually the result of trying to solve a specific problem or achieve a goal.

Albert Einstein's theories of relativity were not sudden inspirations. Rather they were the result of a huge amount of mental problem solving.

Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Edison and other creative geniuses worked in the same way. They did not wait for creative ideas to strike them. Rather they focus on trying to solve a clearly stated problem.

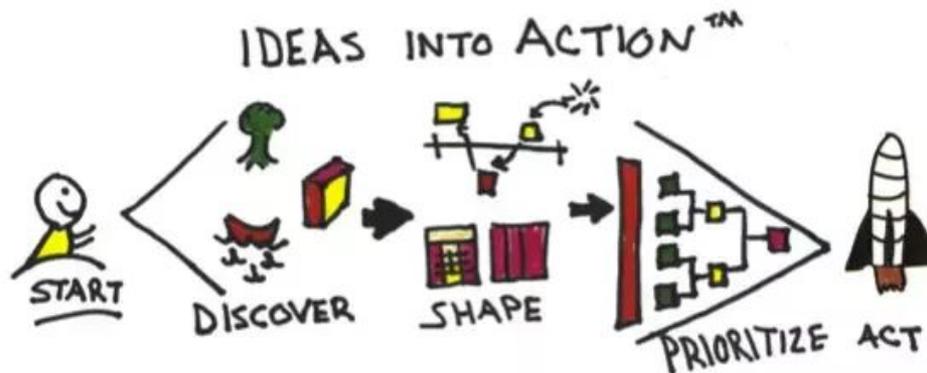


'Insanity: doing the same things over and over again and expecting different results.'

Albert Einstein

Ideas into Action – marrying logic with lateral thinking

1. Clarify and identify the problem
2. Research the problem
3. Formulate creative challenges
4. Generate ideas
5. Combine and evaluate the ideas
6. Draw up an action plan
7. Do it! (implement the ideas)



Enabling creativity

1. Encourage Both Individualism and Teamwork

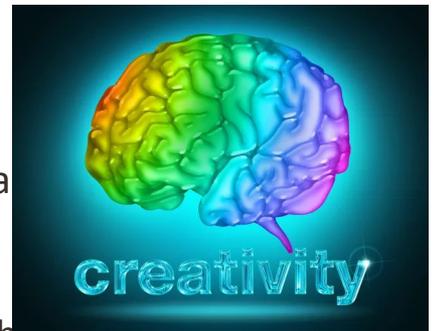
It's important that employees are encouraged to bond with their team and work collaboratively and to ensure that they do not leave their individuality at the door. Many unique ideas come from just one person but are molded by a team to become fully formed.

2. Never Say No

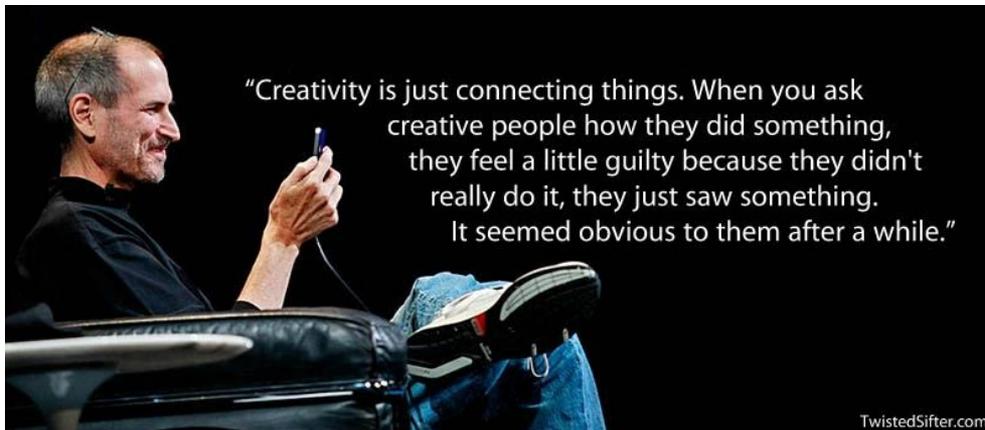
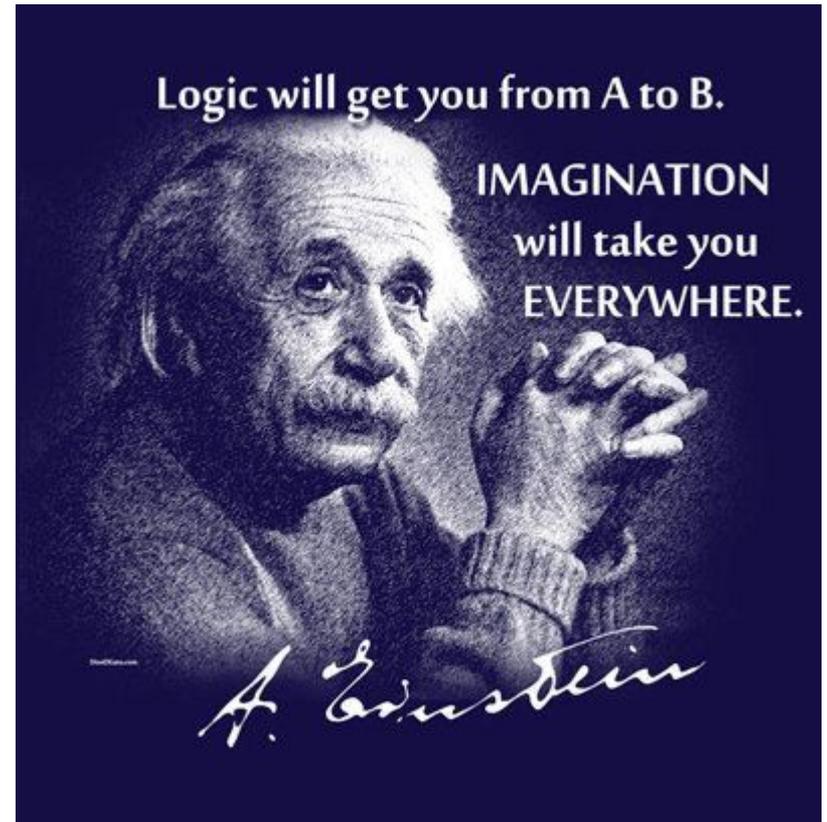
The brainstorming process can be delicate and complicated, especially when a large team is working together to find a solution. In these settings, it's easy to make quick judgments about an idea. Instead of allowing negativity to stifle growth, encourage positive and additive feedback. The phrase "yes and ..." can go a long way and help the entire team contribute better ideas.

3. Diversify Your Team

One easy and quick way to build a more creative workplace is to add a variety of perspectives, insights and learning styles to accelerate problem-solving. It is thought that diverse teams are more likely to generate innovative ideas thanks to the different ways people approach a problem.



You can't use up
creativity. The more
you use, the more you
have.— *Maya Angelou*



Summary

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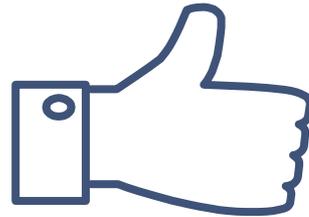
Summary & Recap

Q&A



**GOOD BYE &
GOOD LUCK!**





THANKS!

Any questions?

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