

# Principles of Creativity in the Workplace



# Principles of Creativity in the Workplace

*ROD CORBETT AND KRIS HANS*

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# Preface

# Principles of Creativity in the Workplace



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This book is a living collection of thoughts, reflections, challenges,



and resources passed on to [Kris Hans](#) in August 2020 by [Rod Corbett](#). Rod collected his knowledge along with many others to help the reader gain a better understanding of the principles that can be applied to develop creativity in any workplace. This book is meant to serve as the primary textbook for [MGMT 2275 – Creativity in the Workplace](#) at [Mount Royal University](#), and can be used by learners who are studying how they can develop their own creative abilities and support the development of others that they may be in a position to supervise, lead, and support.

This work is organized into pages that deal with each principle of Creativity in the Workplace. The principles are numbered for convenience of referencing and listed in the table of contents or via *The Principles* link at the bottom of each page.

The word and concept of a *principle* are used throughout this book. The working definition of the word *principle* is a fundamental assumption or understanding that is generally accepted and applicable to generic contexts in a valuable way. The focus of this book is on several principles that are valuable when applied in any workplace context to enhance creativity and produce valuable innovations.

The book also includes many examples, stories, and links to other writings and presentations that reinforce these principles. This book will continue to evolve, grow, and develop over time through student input and feedback. As big believers of Open Education Resources (OER), the book is purposely being authored in an online environment so people can collaboratively contribute to the content development to share it freely with anyone who finds it useful through a Creative Commons license.

This project has been made possible through the generous support of the [MRU Library](#) and [Academic Development Centre OER Grant](#). Their commitment to advancing open education has been invaluable in the development of this resource, enabling its expansion and adaptation for free access.

The best way to get the most from this book is to do the following:

- engage in its explanations,
- reflect on the stories, examples, anecdotes, and questions,
- view the embedded videos and read the linked articles,
- accept the challenges and tasks found throughout the pages to practice applying and thinking about these principles.

You are welcome to make the most of this book to develop your creative abilities in your workplace.



"Slides 11.2 MGMT 2275," CIW W20 – *Invitation to Collaborate*, August 15, 2020.

This electronic book was originally authored by [Rod Corbett](#) for the purpose of helping you develop your creative abilities in your workplace. Rod began developing this book in 2012 with his last revisions taking place in 2017 and made the book available to the public through Creative Commons licensing. This work was primarily prepared as a textbook for a course he taught about Creativity in the Workplace, but is presented in a form that anyone interested in studying these principles may also benefit from working through the principles and challenges. The Creativity in the Workplace course was originally developed by [Ilene M. Gilborn](#), MCE, CPA(CMA), FCPA(FCMA).

As of August 2020, [Kris Hans](#) first adapted and edited Rod's original book into a [Medium publication/website](#) to ensure maximum accessibility across platforms, including mobile devices with small screens. In a significant evolution facilitated by the generous support of the [MRU Library](#) and [Academic Development Centre OER Grant](#) awarded in December 2022, the book has been further adapted and migrated to Pressbooks for Fall 2023. This format not only broadens the book's accessibility but also enhances its interactive and collaborative features. While the book can still be printed using your web browser's print function, many of the embedded videos and interactive elements are exclusively accessible online.

Special thanks are extended to [Kailie Stobbart](#) and [Christopher Hoang](#) for their invaluable contributions in transitioning this work from its original Medium format to Pressbooks. Their expertise and dedication have not only enhanced the accessibility and interactive elements of this book but have also ensured its alignment with open educational resources standards. Their work has been instrumental in bringing this project to a new level of academic excellence and public accessibility.

Your feedback is very welcome to help further refine and improve this book. Please feel free to contact [Kris Hans](#) via his website at <https://www.krishans.ca/> with any comments, feedback, questions, and suggestions.

*In the spirit of open educational resources, we have made this book available to the public through Creative Commons licensing. If you wish to make copies of this book, please attribute it to Rod Corbett as the original author and Kris Hans as contributor/editor.*

Corbett, Rod, *Creativity in the Workplace. Principles of Creativity in the Workplace*. Edited by Kris Hans. Calgary, AB: Self Published, 2020. <https://medium.com/creativityintheworkplace>.

The following resources, **do not** fall under the CC-BY-NC license for this book.

- Appendix A: Connecting the CIW Principles to Fields of Human Resources, Marketing, Finance, and Accounting.
- Appendix B: Implementing MGMT 2275 Creativity in the Workplace Principles to Public Relations and Communications.
- YouTube videos that are listed in the Bibliography.
- Third-party images from stock image websites (eg. Unsplash).

# 1. Creativity will improve your workplace



[Get in the flow](#) by [Tim Mossholder](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Creativity is the ability to produce new, diverse and unique ideas. Thinking creatively means looking at things from a different perspective and not being restricted by rules, assumptions, customs, or norms. For example, the ability to look at the same thing that everyone else is looking at but seeing something that no one else can see.

. . . . .

Watch this presentation about why creativity benefits the workplace.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=5#oembed-1>

Advocating Creativity at the Workplace <https://youtu.be/qO7Np9gXgow>

Creativity is the valuable life blood of any workplace and, if it is nurtured and supported properly, it can bring many benefits to the people working at that workplace as well as the organization as a whole. On the other hand, if creativity is stifled and suppressed then any workplace can become very difficult to work in and organizations could seriously suffer. Creativity does this by allowing new ideas to be implemented to improve the various aspects of a workplace and solve problems that may arise. All workplaces need to keep pace with changes in their environments and without a healthy creative environment, workplaces will become stagnate and unpleasant places to work. Also, creativity can make work enjoyable and motivate all of us to invest more of our energies into getting our jobs done, no matter what it is.

Watch this video presentation about how creativity is a valuable life skill.



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*Creativity as a Life Skill: Gerard Puccio at*

TEDxGramercy <https://youtu.be/ltpAsp7lrmI>

[Here is a list of the 100 most creative people in business in 2020.](#)

Review the list. Do you see anyone you know? How valuable were these people to their workplace?

I have worked in many different workplaces within many organizations over my career. I have only enjoyed and thrived in those workplaces where creativity is encouraged and supported. Naturally, I chose to remain in those workplaces as long as I could and always looked forward to going to work. On the other hand, I have also worked in workplaces where creativity was controlled and suppressed. I felt smothered in these workplaces and that my talents were not valued. This led to great frustration and I did all I could to remove myself from those workplaces. Unfortunately, I have to admit, the focus of my energies were more on surviving the job instead of excelling in the job. What kinds of experiences have you had in the jobs you have had?

[Here is a list of the 50 most innovative companies in 2020.](#) Do you know any of these? Would you like to work for any of these? Why?

As I reflect back on some of my experiences, I realize that the fault was not with the organizations I was employed by, but rather with supervisors that apparently didn't understand how creativity is an important element in the workplace. Actually, I find that although most organizations claim to value and support creativity and [innovation](#) in their workplaces, some middle managers don't seem to understand how to do this and tend to employ controlling managerial strategies that break trusts and drain the enthusiasm of most of the people involved. Some of the symptoms of this include lethargic employees, high absentee and employee turn-over rates, and basically a pretty undesirable place to work. Can you relate to this observation?

You can apply creativity in your workplace under any conditions that are either favourable or adversarial. The latter likely may require more creativity to prevent unpleasant reactions from others, but once you push through that and prove to others how

valuable a worker you are, you will be recognized for what you can contribute. Sometimes, that reward comes in the form of new responsibilities and related benefits or sometimes in finding a better employment opportunity to move to.

Watch this following video presentation about 10 ways to make your workplace more creative.



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=5#oembed-3>

Top 10 Ways to Make Your Workplace More  
Creative <https://youtu.be/poN2BXkpRwI>

This book describes many principles of creativity that can be applied in any workplace to improve working conditions for at least yourself, but commonly will also benefit others. These principles can be learned and mastered by anyone willing to invest the time, thought and efforts to do so. The benefits that I can promise you is that your work will become significantly more interesting and enjoyable. Ultimately, you will also make yourself indispensable to your employer, and never have a problem finding employment.

What is your perspective on this? Do you prefer working in jobs where you can make adjustments to the workplace, whether that is in your physical workspace or in improving working practices and procedures?

Not everyone agrees with my views of creativity being valuable in the workplace. Many people misunderstand that creativity is about art and the creation of art work or crafts. So to them, creativity in the workplace may be limited to the artwork hanging on the walls. Some management styles are also very top-down heavy where



the managers feel they are the only ones capable and authorized to generate new ideas, take risks and be innovative. Have you ever worked for managers like this? Do you feel there is merit in their views about this?

Another misconception about creativity is that it is not related to innovation. Even if creativity is not deemed as valuable in workplaces, innovation is certainly valued. Unfortunately, by ignoring the relationship between the two, many valuable opportunities and resources that can contribute to innovations are overlooked. What I mean is that any employee or volunteer in an organization can be creative and contribute to valuable innovations, if they are allowed and encouraged. Where things go wrong is when managers overlook this and feel they have to hire outside consultants to come in to spark and engineer innovations, while internal people are left frustrated and feeling they have no voice. This also contributes to the common misconception that only “creative” people can be creative, which eliminates a huge creative resource in any organization.

- What are your experiences with creativity in places where you have worked?
- Do you feel that you are a creative person that can contribute to innovations that made valuable differences at work?
- What are some of the barriers preventing you from being more creative and enjoying your work?

This book will help you build your abilities and confidence to respond positively to all three questions.

## **Challenge:**

Commit yourself to study the principles of this book and seriously experiment on applying these principles in your life to test how valuable they can be to you.

## 2. Creativity is fun



*Red brick wall with live, work, create quote by [Jon Tyson](#), [Unsplash](#). is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).*

Creating things and implementing new ideas is [fun](#), and having fun enhances our creative abilities. Even if you are struggling to overcome setbacks and obstacles, you need to recognize the fun in what you are doing. If you don't have fun being creative, your results will fall short of their potential.

Playing with toys and games is a great example of having fun being creative. We enjoy this kind of play because of the creativity it promotes. Watch the video below about how making something routine more fun helped to solve a problem?

That's what I call Creativity n Fun Theory, Must see!



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=35#oembed-1>

Thats what I Call Creativity N Fun Theory, Must See

<https://youtu.be/3ms-Ex7lwHk>

Visit Paul Neave's digital playground site at <http://neave.com/> Play with all of the toys and games on this site and then consider if you had fun and if you found your creativity enhanced. Share your experience with a friend.

What are your favourite games to play? Why do you enjoy these games?



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Tales of creativity and play <https://youtu.be/RjwUn-aAOVY>

Humour is also a fun way to play with creativity. Google has created some pretty funny, creative and innovative ideas for April fools jokes. Check out this list of some of the best ones: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Google\\_April\\_Fools%27\\_Day\\_jokes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Google_April_Fools%27_Day_jokes)

Here is the complete list of Google's Hoaxes and Easter Eggs that they hide in their apps. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Google's\\_hoaxes\\_and\\_easter\\_eggs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Google's_hoaxes_and_easter_eggs)

As you check out these very creative and humorous creations, consider the cost and time that were invested in their production. Do you think that the Google workplace benefited from this kind of fun? Why?

. . . . .

Making full-length feature movies is a very expensive and creative activity. Some movies do make their production costs back but many don't. Do you think the film makers have fun? Watch this short video:



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Action Movie Kid – Volume 01 <https://youtu.be/34Q0BB8-2nA>

Watch this short video about a very interesting, creative and fun project remaking the first Star Wars movie.



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Making Star Wars Uncut by Casey Pugh <https://youtu.be/FQ-GpIS-rCE>

Now check out the movie. Are they having fun? Are they being creative?

[Star Wars Uncut: Director's Cut](#) from [Casey Pugh](#) on [Vimeo](#).

And here is the second movie that has now been completed in the same way.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=35#oembed-5>

*The Empire Strikes Back Uncut: Full Movie (Official)*

<https://youtu.be/GjsFAZWnA00>

If you would like to learn more about how these were made by fans go to <http://www.starwarsuncut.com/>. And now there are several similar “fan created” videos on YouTube.

Not everyone agrees that having fun will generate any benefits in the workplace. Do you know of anyone that believes having fun is not valuable? What are their reasons?

Consider what is preventing you from having more fun when you are engaged in creative and innovative activities. How can you find more fun in your workplace to boost your creativity?

## Challenge:

Commit yourself to look for and identify two new ways to have more fun in your workplace. Focus on developing these new ways of having fun into strategies to enhance your creative abilities. Share your two strategies with a friend and ask for feedback.

If you need more help with this, check out this book on how fun is good for your workplace and career. It is

called: [Fun Is Good: How to Create Joy and Passion in Your Workplace and Career by Mike Veeck and Pete Williams](#)

Here is an interesting list of things to do for fun.

And here is a fun list of truths for mature humans:

**Truths For Mature Humans:**

1. I think part of a best friend's job should be to immediately clear your computer history if you die.
2. Nothing sucks more than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.
3. I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.
4. There is a great need for a sarcasm font.
5. How the hell are you supposed to fold a fitted sheet?
6. Was learning cursive really necessary?
7. Map Quest really needs to start their directions on # 5. I'm pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood.
8. Obituaries would be a lot more interesting if they told you how the person died.
9. I can't remember the last time I wasn't at least kind of tired.
10. Bad decisions make good stories.
11. You never know when it will strike, but there comes a moment at work when you know that you just aren't going to do anything productive for the rest of the day.
12. Can we all just agree to ignore whatever comes

after Blue Ray? I don't want to have to restart my collection...again.

13. I'm always slightly terrified when I exit out of Word and it asks me if I want to save any changes to my ten-page technical report that I swear I did not make any changes to.
14. "Do not machine wash or tumble dry" means I will never wash this — ever.
15. I hate when I just miss a call by the last ring (Hello? Hello? \*\*\*\* it!), but when I immediately call back, it rings nine times and goes to voice mail. What did you do after I didn't answer? Drop the phone and run away?
16. I hate leaving my house confident and looking good and then not seeing anyone of importance the entire day. What a waste.
17. I keep some people's phone numbers in my phone just so I know not to answer when they call.
18. I think the freezer deserves a light as well.
19. I disagree with Kay Jewelers. I would bet on any given Friday or Saturday night more kisses begin with Miller Lite than Kay.
20. I wish Google Maps had an "Avoid Ghetto" routing option.
21. Sometimes, I'll watch a movie that I watched when I was younger and suddenly realize I had no idea what the heck was going on when I first saw it.
22. I would rather try to carry 10 over-loaded plastic bags in each hand than take 2 trips to bring my groceries in.



23. The only time I look forward to a red light is when I'm trying to finish a text.
24. I have a hard time deciphering the fine line between boredom and hunger.
25. How many times is it appropriate to say "What?" before you just nod and smile because you still didn't hear or understand a word they said?
26. I love the sense of camaraderie when an entire line of cars team up to prevent a jerk from cutting in at the front. Stay strong, brothers and sisters!
27. Shirts get dirty. Underwear gets dirty. Pants? Pants never get dirty, and you can wear them forever.
28. Is it just me or do high school kids get dumber & dumber every year?
29. There's no worse feeling than that millisecond you're sure you are going to die after leaning your chair back a little too far.
30. As a driver I hate pedestrians, and as a pedestrian I hate drivers, but no matter what the mode of transportation, I always hate bicyclists.
31. Sometimes I'll look down at my watch 3 consecutive times and still not know what time it is.
32. Even under ideal conditions people have trouble locating their car keys in a pocket, finding their cell phone, and Pinning the Tail on the Donkey — but I'd bet my \*\*\* everyone can find and push the snooze button from 3 feet away, in about 1.7 seconds, eyes closed, first time, every time!  
<https://iwastesomuchtime.com/14216>

## Further readings/viewings

- [A fun list of 24 things to do if you are bored](#)
- [27 Ways to Answer How Are You?](#)
- [How to be an almost pro video editor without pricey software](#)
- [Work hard, play harder: Fun at work boosts creativity, productivity](#)
- [Alan Iny: Reigniting creativity in business](#)

### 3. Innovations make valuable differences



[Woman Using Laptop Computer With VR Headset](#) by [ThisIsEngineering](#), [Pexels](#), is licensed under [Pexels License](#)

Innovation is the implementation of creativity to make a valuable difference – the introduction of a new idea, process, or product. Creativity provides the necessary spark to get the ball rolling.

Creativity is best applied in the workplace to create [innovations](#). Innovations are essentially doing something different to make a valuable difference. Innovations in the workplace could result in any of the following:

- improved working procedures
- improved business and/or production processes
- improved services or products for sale

- improved skills and proficiencies of people in the workplace
- improved job satisfaction.

Innovations can be small or very large in scale, but they all need to create value or they would just be an interesting exercise.

. . . . .

Watch this video presentation about how innovation is so valuable.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-11>

Robert Gordon: The death of innovation, the end of growth

<https://youtu.be/PYHd7rpOTe8>

Watch this short video that introduces what innovations are about:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-1>

Nova Malaysia: What is Innovation? <https://youtu.be/5Uh1KxcpWz0>

Here is a presentation about innovations that can solve poverty related problems.



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from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-2>

Paul Pholeros: How to reduce poverty? Fix homes [https://youtu.be/XDBWEKBq0\\_w](https://youtu.be/XDBWEKBq0_w)

How about this idea for an innovation?



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-3>

Phonebloks <https://youtu.be/oDAw7vW7H0c> Here is another example of an interesting innovation on a bit larger scale.



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-4>

UTEC – Potable Water Generator <https://youtu.be/35yeVwigQcc>

Watch this short video below about a simple innovation that solves a simple problem.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-5>

Terry Moore: How to tie your shoes <https://youtu.be/zAFcV7zuUDA>

I wear shoes with laces all of the time and I walk a lot. Before I watched this video, my shoe laces were always coming untied, but then I watched it very carefully about 4 times and figured out how to improve the way I tie my shoes. It has been a couple of years now and my shoes have *never* come untied by themselves. This worked and it has been very valuable to me. Give it a try and see if it will work for you and add value to your life.

Oh, and if you like that innovation, [check out this website](#) that has 37 different ways to lace up your shoes. Personally, I hate the way new shoes are laced when I buy them from a store. Before I will wear them I will re-lace them using the [Straight European Lacing](#) method. My father taught me this method when I was very young and I have used it ever since. I like it because it is much easier to tighten and loosen your laces. I have observed that many use this method for lacing up their ice skates, but it also works great on shoes. I challenge you to try this method on one of your shoes for a week and see if you find it valuable. If you don't then you can go back to the default method.

Creativity in the workplace is mostly about making innovations that are valuable improvements to the organization and/or people involved, including yourself. All of the principles in this book will help you to become a more creative and innovative person. Another benefit is that innovative people are very sought after as employees or leaders in any workplace.

. . . . .

Watch the following video about the innovation of innovation. What are the questions you could ask to help you create an innovation?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-6>

The Innovation of Innovation <https://youtu.be/jP80EoL4Z70>

Watch this short video that answers the question: “What is an innovation?”



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What is innovation? <https://youtu.be/2NK0WR2GtFs>

Do you consider yourself an innovative person? Would you like to become more innovative? You can develop your creative and innovative abilities by learning and applying the principles in this book. But it also takes making a choice to be more creative and looking for ways to create improvements in your workplace. Start with small things and then take on more challenges as your confidence grows. Look for something this week that you can improve in your workplace and share it with a friend. Update them on your progress in implementing your innovation.

Using new technologies (new for you) is a popular way to make improvements in your work. There are many new technologies available to you to explore using to be innovative with. Many of them can be downloaded onto your phone or they may already be there waiting for you to discover them.

And just for fun, take a look at this article at <http://www.designyourway.net/blog/inspiration/incredible-gadgets-you-would-kill-for-20-examples/>. This is an interesting list of new innovative “gadgets” that you may find useful. Check it out.

. . . . .

Watch this TedTalk about how one guy is making a significant difference in education. Is this a valuable improvement? Would you find this valuable?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-8>

Salman Khan: Let's use video to reinvent education <https://youtu.be/nTFEUsudhfs>

Watch this video of Tom Peters talking about innovation.



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Tom Peters: Innovation is Actually Easy! [https://youtu.be/8AGTpu\\_i8sc](https://youtu.be/8AGTpu_i8sc) If innovations always make valuable differences, what value do you see in the device shown this video demonstration? Or is this an innovation? Would you buy this device?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=65#oembed-10>

Solarbotics Useless Machine 1.1 Kit <https://youtu.be/DCMZZRTbR-Q>

An opposing view to this principle is that only special people can be creative and innovative. Perhaps the people promoting this view are the high priced consultants that are making their living by helping organizations make improvements. Have I convinced you, yet, that you can be just as innovative as those people? Yes, it takes practice, courage, and experience, but you can gain that expertise as they did. Believe in yourself.

So, now what do you think is holding you back from being more creative and innovative?

What assumptions, misconceptions or habits are preventing you from gaining the full benefit of applying this principle?

## Challenge:

Identify one or two changes that you can make in

your workplace that will make a valuable difference.  
Share these and your progress in implementing these changes with a friend.

### Further readings/viewings:

- [37 incredible drone photos from across the globe that would be totally illegal today by Melia Robinson and Christian Storm](#)
- [The Art of Innovation by Guy Kawasaki](#)

## 4. Communities best nurture creativity



*A sign that reads we can just imagine by [Marija Zaric](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).*

When two or more people are organized into a group of some kind, they become a [community](#) with the potential to support and [nurture](#) creativity. Classes of students can be developed into communities of learners if the members take the time to get to know each other, build an environment where it is safe to share ideas, ask questions and give each other honest and meaningful feedback. This kind of community can be very valuable to support significant learning but it can also be further developed to successfully support and nurture creativity. These communities also need to provide a safe place to support and encourage the taking of

risks and supporting the failures that often come with developing innovations.

Communities that are diverse can support valuable creativity and innovation because of the diversity of ideas, backgrounds, values and life experiences that can be found in any diverse group of people. [Here is a recent article by Gwen Morgan titled: “6 CREATIVITY HABITS FOR PEOPLE WHO THINK THEY’RE NOT CREATIVE” that describes 6 strategies for helping communities to help members develop their creative abilities.](#)

Watch this short video about how Apple supports this.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=76#oembed-1>*

Apple – Diversity – Inclusion inspires innovation <https://youtu.be/qxKFDnzluOs>

Communities that support creativity well are very valuable in any workplace because they will help people to develop and exercise their creative abilities to create value for the community. This typically leads to happier and more meaningful experiences, as well as the development of everyone’s individual creative abilities. In a business context, this can develop significant value for the organization.

Communities nurture creativity the best when they maintain an environment of trust that is positive and supportive to practicing the principles of creativity. This includes providing opportunities for sharing questions, ideas, and feedback about a wide array of things that may not even appear to be initially of value to the organization. These communities need to provide safety for taking risks and allowing for the failures that will take place from those

risks. Creativity needs to be valued and celebrated by all members of the community.

Get to know the people you are working with. Be supportive to them and encourage them to be creative. This will reciprocate back to you in helpful ways.

The people that you interact with in your workplace can form a community. This could be formally called a “team”, “department” or “unit.” From my experience, the community of people you work with will either make your work enjoyable and satisfying or not. But it is up to you to participate in the building of the community to make it rewarding to you. Communities can be very dynamic and shift quickly under the influence of many factors. You need to actively contribute to the building of the community and the kind of work environment it will sustain, be it constructive or destructive.

Not all managers or leaders of workplaces believe that communities need to be developed or sustained. I remember choosing to disregard investing valuable class time in my courses to build a learning community. I would focus on learning my students’ names and just assumed they knew each other’s names. I have later learned the power of taking this time to help the students learn not just the names of their peers but also more about them so they can develop relationships of support and trust. This does take time, but it pays off over all with the benefits of more significant learning taking place. I also found that the same characteristics that help learning communities support significant learning are also the same that support creativity and innovation.

. . . . .

Watch this short clip from a presentation by Sir Ken Robinson.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=76#oembed-2>

Sir Ken Robinson: Creative Leadership <https://youtu.be/KAGHCwlfh-o>

What are your experiences with the people you have worked with? Did you feel that there was a sense of community present? Why or why not?

Would you have been more successful if you had a supportive community and environment to work in?

What could you have done to contribute to building a positive workplace community?

Do you feel it is a waste of time to participate in team or community building activities?

## Challenge:

Engage in a community of people that have interests and values in common with you. Participate in this community to explore and practice the principles of this book.

## Further Readings/Viewings

*Creativity in the Workplace – Mission  
Impossible* [https://youtu.be/P\\_NJXHVIK88](https://youtu.be/P_NJXHVIK88)

## 5. Leverage strengths and opportunities



[A chalkboard with the word possible written on it](#) by [Towfiq Barbhuiya](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

We all have [strengths](#) and [weaknesses](#) when it comes to creativity. Strengths are our personal characteristics, that help us be more creative. Weaknesses are our personal characteristics that hinder us from being more creative.

Some examples of strengths that can help you be more creative are:

- healthy imagination
- healthy self-confidence
- enjoy learning and experiencing new things
- knowledgeable about a wide variety of topics



- enjoy taking on challenges
- comfortable socializing with people

Some examples of weaknesses that can hinder you from being more creative are:

- fear of failing to complete a task
- low self-esteem and confidence in your abilities to do things
- fear what others think of you
- lack of imagination
- narrow range of interest and hobbies
- keep to yourself and socialize very little

I have personally experienced all of these examples. What are your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to being creative? Make your own list like the one above.

Now that you have identified your strengths and weaknesses, the power of making a difference in your life comes from taking your strengths and applying them to your weaknesses to turn the weaknesses into strengths. For example, if you have a healthy self-confidence, yet you socialize very little, you can use that strength to overcome that weakness. Use your self-confidence to change your socializing patterns and go out and get involved where you can meet new people. Volunteering to help out at a non-profit service in the community would do it. As you do this, your strengths will increase and help you, while your weaknesses will decrease their hindering influences in your life.

Opportunities are like strengths but they are things external to you that can help you be more creative. As well, threats are like weaknesses in that they also hinder you from being more creative, but they are external to you and are a part of the environment you are living in.

Examples of opportunities in your workplace may be:

- supportive peers

- professional development courses
- counselling services
- libraries or similar resources
- mentors you can learn from

Examples of threats in your workplace may be:

- supervisors that oppress people
- peers that ridicule everyone
- limited resources and tight budgets
- unhealthy work conditions

All of these examples I have experienced at one time or another in my life. What opportunities and threats are you experiencing in the workplace right now? Make your own list like the one above.

The power of identifying these threats and opportunities is to relate them to your strengths and weaknesses, thereby leveraging your strengths and opportunities to increase your capacity to be more creative. Here are a few ways to do that:

- Apply the opportunities to your strengths to make them even stronger.
- Apply your strengths to the threats to reduce their negative influence in your life.
- Apply the opportunities to your weaknesses to turn them into strengths.

This is a very personal thing and it is up to you to find the best matches that will work for you. Start with the easy ones and then with success, move up to those that are more challenging. One example would be to take advantage of a counseling service to address any low self-esteem problems you may have. Of course, if you are lacking the courage to do that, you may need to apply one of your strengths of being out-going to overcome that obstacle.

Watch this video about a woman who overcame a significant weakness by applying her strengths and opportunities.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=83#oembed-1>

[Living beyond Limits | Amy Purdy | TEDxOrangeCoast](#)  
<https://youtu.be/N2QZM7azGoA>

You may recognize this approach of analysis and problem solving as a [SWOT analysis](#) and you would be correct. Have you ever applied a SWOT analysis to yourself, before? If you take this seriously and work through this, you will find valuable benefits in how you can make changes in your life, to become more creative and more successful in whatever field you are working in. Review this article that talks more about how to use a SWOT analysis to understand your own creative abilities better. [http://www.canadaone.com/tools/buy\\_a\\_biz/section1c.html](http://www.canadaone.com/tools/buy_a_biz/section1c.html)

I have used this approach many times in my life to help me be more successful in both my professional and non-professional lives. Now, this has become very natural to me so that I will use this automatically to take advantage of any opportunity that presents itself and overcome any threat as soon as it arises.

What changes will you make in your life based on what you have discovered from doing a personal SWOT analysis?

What is holding you back from completing this challenge? What strengths or opportunities can you employ to help you overcome obstacles?

Share your thoughts with a friend and ask for honest feedback and support.

## Challenge:

Complete a SWOT analysis on yourself and document your findings and conclusions. Identify things you can do to leverage your strengths and opportunities to overcome your weaknesses and threats. Then document your progress on doing that.

*Strength doesn't come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn't. — Unknown*

*Strength: A river cuts through a rock not because of its power but its persistence. — Unknown*

## 6. Imagination powers creativity



[Do Something Great neon sign](#) by [Clark Tibbs](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution. It is, strictly speaking, a real factor in scientific research. — [Albert Einstein](#).*

*Everything you can imagine is real. — Pablo Picasso*

Creativity is powered by [imagination](#). Nothing can be created without it first being created in someone's imagination. Ideas can only come from somebody's imagination.

*"Discovery is seeing what everybody else has seen, and thinking what nobody else has thought." Albert Szent-Gyorgyi*



Photo by [Tommaso Cantelli](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Consider how the first person discovered that oysters were food.

How did they get the idea that oysters could be eaten? From looking at one? Creative people are known for looking at the same thing as others and seeing different possibilities.

Watch these two videos about some very interesting ideas for sculptures. How do you think the artist generated these ideas?



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=87#oembed-1>

Aparna Rao: Art that craves your attention <https://youtu.be/PrZwUTdFmis>

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Janet Echelman: Taking imagination seriously <https://youtu.be/9YekkGz1E2k>

Watch the following video about the top 20 trends for 2019, then ask yourself where did the ideas for these innovations come from?



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Top 20 Trends in 2019 Trend Report – Futurist Keynote Speaker  
Jeremy Gutsche <https://youtu.be/FASqDtzsp4c>

Watch this video and consider how the imagination of the artist generated the ideas for this work.



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BIG BANG BIG BOOM – the new wall-painted animation by  
BLU <https://youtu.be/sMoKcsN8wM8>

Where do your ideas come from? Do your good ideas come from anywhere different than your bad ideas?

We need to fuel our imagination constantly so it will continue to give us new ideas and points of view. This is not only required to generate ideas in the initial stages of the creative process but we also need strong imaginations to select the best ideas, develop and execute implementation plans, overcome setbacks and to evaluate our success. Imagination actually powers all of the steps in the creative process.

Some of the best ways to fuel our imaginations come from the arts:

- Reading fiction
- Listening to music
- Reading poetry
- Viewing visual and performance artworks
- Playing games
- Solving puzzles

Imaginations are also fueled through sharing, conversing, and collaborating with others.

What do you do to fuel your imagination? Is it working for you?

Not everyone fuels their imaginations in the same way. This explains why the arts are so valuable in our society and why there is so much diversity in the arts. For example even in music, there is



a wide array of diversity, and we all have our own personal tastes in music that appeal to us.

What forms of art appeal to you? Why does it appeal to you? Does it fuel your imagination?

Unfortunately, many of us have had our imaginations “schooled” out of us and we need to relearn how to use our imaginations. Like a muscle, we can redevelop our imaginations through exercise and practice. Watch this video by Ken Robinson. Can you relate?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=87#oembed-5>

Do Schools Kill Creativity? | Sir Ken Robinson | TED  
Talks <https://youtu.be/iG9CE55wbtY>

Consider what is keeping you from using your imagination to power your creativity. What can you do to unleash your imagination?

## Challenge:

Start right now to use your imagination more. Start today to fuel your imagination through any of the methods described above or one of your own. Share your decisions and results with a friend.



## 7. Capture and manage all ideas



*Things to do* by [Absolut Vision](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

I get [ideas](#) occurring to me at all times of the day and night. Many have little value, but just as many are quite valuable to me. The challenge is to capture them all in a way that I can retrieve and make use of them at the right time to capitalize on my brilliance. I find that I receive some of the best ideas when my attention is focused on something totally unrelated or when I am relaxed and letting my mind wander. Do you ever get ideas come to you when you are relaxed, like in the shower or just waking up and find that if you don't capture them, you lose them, forever? This is pretty common.

One of the best books I have read that helped me learn how to do this is David Allen's book [Getting Things Done](#). The key principle that I learned from this book was that I need to have a system for

capturing ideas when they occur to me before they disappear. This system will work best if I can trust that I will be able to retrieve that idea when needed, which will allow me to clear my mind of that idea and focus on the current tasks at hand. I found that capturing the ideas was easy, but coming up with a way to manage the ideas so I can retrieve them was a challenge.

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*Write down the thoughts of the moment. Those that come unsought are commonly the most valuable.* — Frances Bacon

by Robert Epstein, Steven M. Schmidt, and Regina Warfel.  
University of California, San Diego –

Robert Epstein promotes this principle quite a bit in many of his writings and encourages us to “...find places and times where new ideas can be observed easily, use dreams and daydreams as sources of ideas and always keep a recording device by your bed at night.” See [Measuring and Training Creativity Competencies: Validation of a New Test by Robert Epstein, Steven M. Schmidt, and Regina Warfel. University of California, San Diego](#)

I have tried many methods for capturing ideas and managing them so I can retrieve them when needed. Some of these included using small pocket-sized notebooks, computer programs, pocket computers, tablets and smart phones. I am currently using a combination of Google Keep and Google Docs for this and it is working very well for me. They are not perfect so I am always on the lookout for better ones. How do you capture your ideas and retrieve them?



[Google Keep Note Art](#), by [sagesolar](#), [Flickr](#), is licensed under [CC BY 2.0 Deed](#).

[Google Keep](#) is a free cloud-based note making and management system to do the following:

- capture ideas and notes as they occur using either my smart phone, tablet or computer
- it allows me to capture ideas as text, images, photos, audio recordings, or hand drawings
- I can tag the ideas for easy retrieval
- Share lists of ideas with other people
- I don't have to do much management of the collection, which is good because I won't
- there is a powerful search function to retrieve the ideas when required
- the collections of notes and ideas are synchronized to all of my devices automatically so I can use any device that I have at hand to retrieve and I have everything backed up all the time.

- the notes can be easily transferred to a Google Document for more longer-term storage or be integrated into plans, reports or other documents.

I can also schedule reminders for to-do lists and incorporate them into my Google calendar. This allows me to easily access my task lists when I need them. Although I am now working with Google Tasks to manage my task lists.

### **Evernote**



[Person using laptop](#), by [Kaitlyn Baker](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

[Evernote](#) is a free (for basic level) cloud based note making and management system that I used to use that has many of the same features as Google Keep but without the integration into other Google Apps.

I realize that each of us need to develop our own personalized system for this that will be compatible with our life and working styles. There are many different systems available to meet everyone's style and need. Try Google Keep, Evernote or some other

idea or note capturing and management system to see if one of them will work for you.

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Watch the video below and look for ways you can use doodling to capture ideas.



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=96#oembed-1>

Sunni Brown: Doodlers, unite! <https://youtu.be/7fx0QcHyrFk>

Using my systems over the past couple of decades has helped me to be a very successful professional in my field. Good ideas are worth their weight in gold when captured and retrieved so they can be applied to solve a critical problem or meet an unmet need. Have you had the experience where you came up with a valuable idea at the right time to contribute to a success? How did you feel about doing that? For me, it is one of the best feelings you can have in the workplace.

Some professionals don't rely on recording systems to capture their ideas, but rather they just *wing-it* and rely on their memories to retrieve the right idea at the right time. Do you know anyone that claims to do this? Are they successful at it?

For myself, I could still make improvements to my system. For example, I know that some of my ideas get buried in the large volume of ideas that I have accumulated over time. I need to take the time on a regular basis to organize the ideas for easy retrieval. There are plenty of books available to help us learn how to do this better. One example for Google Keep is called: [Keep Getting Stuff Done: 7 action items for teachers, students, parents, \(anyone really\) on using Google Keep effectively](#) and one for Evernote is called: [Evernote: The unofficial guide to capturing everything and getting things done.](#)

What is preventing you from capturing all of your ideas so you can retrieve and create value from them?

What are some ways that would be effective for you to capture the ideas you encounter?

## Challenge:

Start keeping a journal and document your thoughts, reflections, questions and ideas as they occur to you while you are studying this book. Share your journal entries with a friend to give you encouragement and feedback. This will help you take it seriously and implement the principles in this book more successfully.

*Always keep a notebook handy. You never know when inspiration will strike.*



## 8. Develop your creative competencies



*From a naming brainstorm at a talk by [Patrick Perkins](#), [Unsplash](#), licensed under [Unsplash License](#).*

by Robert Epstein, Steven M. Schmidt, and Regina Warfel. University of California, San Diego –

Our abilities to be creative can be developed. Like a muscle, we can exercise these abilities to help them grow and become stronger. As we do that we will also become more comfortable using these abilities. I have been working on developing my own creative abilities over many years to the point that it has become second nature to me to use them whenever opportunities arise. Specific creative abilities could also be called [competencies](#) and [Robert Epstein](#) describes four core competencies of creativity that we can focus on developing and strengthening. They are:

1. [Capturing](#) and preserving any new ideas that occur to you so you can retrieve them later.
2. [Challenging](#) yourself to take on difficult tasks and risks while managing the fears and stresses of failing.
3. [Broadening](#) your experiences and knowledge outside your current areas of expertise.
4. [Changing your surroundings](#) or physical and social environments regularly, and seeking out new kinds of stimuli.

Epstein claims that all four of these competencies can be practiced and developed with effort and result in your becoming a much more creative and innovative person. Do you agree?

This book is devoted to helping you explore several principles of creativity, and develop your abilities to practice these principles in your daily workplaces to magnify your value as professionals. As you have been working through this book, are you seeing the results?

There are many other ways to develop your creative competencies besides Epstein's four core

. . . . .

Watch this video about 29 ways to stay creative.



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29 Ways to Stay Creative. <https://youtu.be/dbP-b0VzXuW>

Next, watch this short talk by David Kelly about developing our creative confidence.

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*How to Build Your Creative Confidence | David Kelley | TED*

Talks <https://youtu.be/16p9YRF0l-g>

As you have been working through this course, are you finding that your creative abilities and your confidence in applying these competencies are getting stronger?

Creativity does not yield much value when you just read about it. To gain true value in your life, either within or outside of your profession, you need to practice being, doing and thinking more creatively. As you do this, I promise you your confidence in yourself will grow.

What assumptions, misconceptions or habits are preventing you from gaining the full benefit of developing your creative competencies and reaping all of the wonderful rewards this can bring?

## Challenge:

Commit yourself to deliberately work on developing your creative competencies, either by focusing on any of the Epstein's four core competencies, or any of the

other suggestions presented on this page and the rest of this book. Describe your commitment to a friend and ask them to support you. As you develop your competencies watch for the benefits that will come as a result and document them.

#### 15 Cool Ways to Boost Your Creativity:

1. Write your ideas down
2. Relax
3. Have no expectations
4. Be easy on yourself
5. Read
6. Listen to Mozart
7. Meditate
8. Exercise
9. Ask for help
10. Expand your horizons
11. Eat blueberries
12. Stop doing drugs
13. Do puzzles
14. Make music
15. Practice

<http://www.pickthebrain.com/blog/15-cool-ways-to-boost-your-creativity/>

<http://www.pickthebrain.com/blog/15-cool-ways-to-boost-your-creativity/>



## 9. Challenges are valuable opportunities

All [challenges](#) in life can be scary and difficult to deal with, but they can be wonderful [opportunities](#) to accomplish something [valuable](#) if we view them so. The key is to choose to view challenges as opportunities that are worth the time and effort to take on. The trick to that is to practice doing just that; starting with easy challenges and build up your confidence to then take on more difficult ones.

*The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with but whether it is the same problem you had last year. — John Foster Dulles, Former US Secretary of State*

People who do this successfully will embrace all challenges with enthusiasm towards the reward of capitalizing on an opportunity that they have not accomplished before. They will happily take on difficult tasks when others will be reluctant. They will set open-ended goals to avoid limiting their potential. They will manage their fears and take risks. Yes, there is some stress associated with failing to overcome a challenge, but they will manage that and not give up until they do succeed. I have talked to many business people who have become successful only after a few significant failures, which they turned into learning opportunities that helped them to ultimately succeed. With practice, you can become more adept at seeing past the scary bits of a challenge and see the opportunities to do some wonderful things.

. . . . .

Watch this video that explains how we can turn problems into solutions.





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Pink Bat ~ Turning Problems into solutions <https://youtu.be/cRLOXh6uJeo>

Watch this video that explains how the speaker is working on solving a problem by developing a valuable solution.



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Nikolai Begg: A tool to fix one of the most dangerous moments in surgery <https://youtu.be/TRajLqEaWhQ>

By Robert Epstein, Steven M. Schmidt, and Regina Warfel. University of California, San Diego –

Robert Epstein also promotes this principle as one of the four core creativity competencies in his article [Measuring and Training Creativity Competencies: Validation of a New Test](#). His premise is that taking on challenges is a required competency to develop our creative abilities. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

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Watch the following videos and consider what opportunities to create value exists in the challenges described.



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A Vision of Students Today <https://youtu.be/dGCJ46vyR9o>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=113#oembed-4>

Did You Know (Officially updated for 2023) <https://youtu.be/u06BXgWbGvA>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=113#oembed-5>

Did you know, in 2028... <https://youtu.be/QpEFjWbXog0>

I have found that I have become quite bold and courageous when



it comes to taking on challenging and difficult tasks, projects or assignments. I find that they excite me as I look forward to the opportunity to do something I have never done before, and learn new things along the way. I believe what drives me is the opportunity to create something valuable as I do this, whether it be a monetary value or just the value of helping someone out with a problem.

Think of an experience you have had where you took on a challenge, that may have been scary at first, but you eventually did complete successfully. How did you feel about doing that?

Did you recognize the opportunity that was inherent in the challenge when you first considered taking it on? Did you find the challenge more appeals when you did?

Did you create something of value that surprised you?

Watch these two videos about how a young boy and a design company took on a challenge and made a valuable opportunity from it.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=113#oembed-6>

Richard Turere: My invention that made peace with lions <https://youtu.be/RAoo-SeUIk>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=113#oembed-7>

*From an ugly problem to a beautiful solution* <https://youtu.be/Kb6DUSv4c1Y>

I challenge you to find something in your workplace that may be a bit scary to do and look at the opportunity that it really is, then take it on and create value from it. Share your experience with a friend and discuss it with them.

Not everyone in our workplaces shares this view or applies this principle. You may know people who seem to work on the principle of just getting through their day by doing the least possible. Or they choose to never volunteer to take on any tasks, challenging or not, unless they have to. And even if they agree to take on the task, some people do all they can to avoid completing it.

What assumptions, misconceptions or habits are preventing you from gaining the full benefit of taking on more challenges in your life?

## **Challenge:**

Identify one or two challenges that you are facing in your life right now. Consider the opportunities that each of those challenges presents to you if you can overcome it and share this with a friend.

## 10. Broaden yourself



[Susan Q Yin](#), [Unsplash](#), licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*The creative is the place where no one else has ever been. You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. What you'll discover will be wonderful. –Alan Alda*

One very powerful way to increase your creative abilities is to broaden your personal knowledge, skills, and experiences. You can do this by simply learning about anything and everything you have an opportunity to learn about. Embrace the diverse world we live in and be interested in all things.

*The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go. – Dr. Seuss*

This works because the more knowledge, skills, and experiences you have about a broad range of things in this world, the more creative and innovative you can be. From this broad base of

understandings, you can draw ideas, combine ideas, and plan successful implementations.

*If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got. – Henry Ford*

by Robert Epstein, Steven M. Schmidt, and Regina Warfel.  
University of California, San Diego –

[Dr. Robert Epstein](#) gave this challenge:

“New ideas emerge when old ones become interconnected; that’s where all creativity comes from. Aha! That means that one way to prime the creativity pumps to produce interesting and novel material is to broaden one’s knowledge – the broader the better. In an organization, that means encouraging people to get training far outside their current areas of expertise. This also works for individuals at home. Don’t take yet another course on French cooking; take a course on cartooning, or on 12th century architecture, or on nuclear physics! The more diverse your knowledge, the more creative your ideas will be.”

. . . . .

Watch this video presentation about how a fashion designer broadens himself to find creative ideas.



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-1>

Isaac Mizrahi: Fashion, passion, and about a million other <https://youtu.be/eSn6GP0UhKM>

Here are some ways that I broaden myself:

- Watch documentaries about things I know nothing about.

- Attend presentations about things that look interesting.
- Read fiction and nonfiction books, articles and blogs.
- Browse YouTube and TedTalks.com for interesting things and watch them.
- Chat with people, both to ones I don't normally talk to and ones I do. Ask them about themselves.
- I took a Massive Online Open Course (MOOCs) one summer on Genealogy.
- Listen to people tell their stories more than sharing mine.
- Explore interesting apps on iPads and Android devices.
- Visit other professor's classes, when invited.
- Studied foreign languages.
- Read interesting news magazines and web feeds.
- Observing other people who are experts in their fields.
- Learn to play new games.
- Look up things I don't know in [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)
- Volunteering in programs like Scouts Canada.

What do you do to learn more about the interesting things in the world we live in?

Check out the Reader's Digest website <http://www.readersdigest.ca/> for literary hundreds of interesting items that can enhance your life by broadening your understanding of practically everything.

Most educational and development programs are designed to include both specific courses of content that are directly related to the purpose of the program and very general courses that are unrelated to give the learner both specific and broad learning experiences. When I was studying in my Bachelor's of Science degree program, I was required to take several non-science courses. At the time, I didn't buy into why they were important but now I value what I learned in those courses, especially since I didn't become a scientist.

Not everyone appears to agree with this principle. University

professors are notorious for knowing a great deal about a very narrow topic. What are the hazards of that?

- **Challenge:**

Below are several brief video presentations that will introduce you to a broad range of interesting topics. View each of them and identify the ones that interest you the most. Share this with a friend. Look for more resources related to these.

Oh and by the way, learning about things that you don't know anything about is really fun, so enjoy the clips below. They all come from <http://igniteshow.com/browse> where you can find hundreds of more on hundreds of topics.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the*

*text. You can view them online here:*

<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-2>

How to Get 5 Million People to Read Your Website by  
Matthew Inman <https://youtu.be/QYyJZOHgpc0>



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text. You can view them online here:

[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=119#oembed-3](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-3)

FIGHTING DIRTY IN SCRABBLE by Mehal Shah – Ep  
30 <https://youtu.be/s1aq6sJEuVU>



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[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=119#oembed-4](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-4)

Hack Your Electric Meter and Save the World –  
David Glover <https://youtu.be/-a4VVH6Zh7Y>



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[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=119#oembed-5](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-5)

iPHONING MY WAY TO RETIREMENT \$.70 AT A  
TIME by Eugene Lin <https://youtu.be/7FtWWTllCrg>



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[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=119#oembed-6](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-6)

Ignite – Jason Grigsby on Cup Noodle: Innovation,  
Inspiration and Manga [https://youtu.be/  
h65O54MZMp8](https://youtu.be/h65O54MZMp8)





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<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-7>

The Psychology of Incompetence – Ron Burk [https://youtu.be/L\\_vcy7l0zIM](https://youtu.be/L_vcy7l0zIM)



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<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-8>

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY AFTER YOU DIE by Stacy Holmstedt, Ep 33 <https://youtu.be/LHwu-XY2pC4>





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text. You can view them online here:

[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=119#oembed-9](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-9)

“The Menaissance” by Brett McKay – Ignite  
Tulsa [https://youtu.be/\\_AxLaCltp2o](https://youtu.be/_AxLaCltp2o)



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text. You can view them online here:

[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=119#oembed-10](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=119#oembed-10)

How to Work a Crowd by Alexis Bauer –  
Ep23 <https://youtu.be/LLDJG-F-maQ>

## Further readings/viewings:

21 Suggestions for Success by [H. Jackson Brown, Jr.](#)

1. Marry the right person. This one decision will determine 90% of your happiness or misery.
2. Work at something you enjoy and that's worthy of your time and talent.
3. Give people more than they expect and do it cheerfully.
4. Become the most positive and enthusiastic person you know.
5. Be forgiving of yourself and others.
6. Be generous.
7. Have a grateful heart.
8. Persistence, persistence, persistence.
9. Discipline yourself to save money on even the most modest salary.
10. Treat everyone you meet like you want to be treated.
11. Commit yourself to constant improvement.
12. Commit yourself to quality.
13. Understand that happiness is not based on possessions, power or prestige, but on relationships with people you love and respect.
14. Be loyal.
15. Be honest.
16. Be a self-starter.

17. Be decisive even if it means you'll sometimes be wrong.
  18. Stop blaming others. Take responsibility for every area of your life.
  19. Be bold and courageous. When you look back on your life, you'll regret the things you didn't do more than the ones you did.
  20. Take good care of those you love.
  21. Don't do anything that wouldn't make your Mom proud.
- <http://www.21suggestions.com/>
- [Here is a list of the 100 best novels from ModernLibrary.com](#)

## II. Change surroundings



[Have you ever done something that you always dreamed of doing? Stay tuned friends! I have something to show you!](#), by [Alessandro Erbetta](#), [Unplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*The environment determines the individual. –B. F. Skinner*

We all live and work in environments of some type or other which constitutes our surroundings. These environments include both the physical objects as well as the people that we interact with. Our workplace surroundings can have a significant influence on our attitudes, well-being, productivity, and creativity. When we change our surroundings, we can change how we...

Your workplace surroundings do influence your creative abilities in particular because your surroundings can constantly stimulate you in ways that can peek your creativity with new ideas and provide a safe place to take risks.

*Transform your energy, transform your life... We're creatures of habit, which means we quickly become accustomed to certain things in our space. Without realizing it, we also attach memories to, and trap energy within, colors, smells, images, sounds, lightness and darkness in our environment. Making small changes to your mindset and environment can dramatically transform your life. – StephenieZamora.com*

Dr. Robert Epstein gave this challenge:

“One of the easiest, most economical, and most powerful ways to change the way people think is to change the stimuli – both physical and social – that surround them. Are you stuck thinking old, ineffective thoughts? Sweep the items off your desk and put some new ones there. Turn your desk a different way. Hang out with some new people. Put posters on the walls of your business reading NEW IDEAS WELCOME HERE, or, better yet, put blank posters everywhere that say WRITE YOUR NEW IDEAS HERE at the top. The next time you order pens and paper, make sure they're all printed with a message such as, NEW IDEA RECORDER. A stale, unchanging space produces stale, unchanging ideas. An ever-changing space that broadcasts messages welcoming creativity can alter an organization's culture overnight.” [http://drrobertepstein.com/downloads/CREATIVITY\\_FOR\\_CRISES-e-booklet-c-2009-Dr.\\_Robert\\_Epstein.pdf](http://drrobertepstein.com/downloads/CREATIVITY_FOR_CRISES-e-booklet-c-2009-Dr._Robert_Epstein.pdf)

A few years ago I was using five different email address for various purposes and would log into five different email systems to access and send messages. I then discovered that I could centralize all of my emails into one system with Gmail. Now I only log into Gmail and I can still manage five or more different email addresses. This changed my work flow and environment significantly. Now when I need to change that part of my environment, I can just change the themes in my Gmail display. I am currently using the Mountains theme.

Can you change the themes and backgrounds on your email system? Could you benefit from changing to Gmail?

. . . . .

Here are some other ways that I keep my environment fresh:

- Go for walks on various routes, observing different things along the way.
- Look for different things in my surroundings and create photographs of them.
- Change the forms of entertainment I engage in.
- Look for new technologies to explore their value of application in my work.
- Change the location of my workplace sporadically. Have a laptop computer helps.
- Change my routines sporadically especially when I feel they are getting stale.

. . . . .

How do you keep your environment fresh in your workplace?

Trying applying this now:

1. Create a list of the things in your surroundings that stimulate you the most.
2. Create a list of things that don't stimulate you anymore.
3. Consider when was the last time you changed things in your environment.
4. Plan how you can change your environment to make it more stimulating again.
5. Evaluate how successful your changes were and would you would change again.

. . . . .

The people in your surroundings can also have a significant influence on your success. Some of the most important elements of the environments in our workplaces are the people that we work

with. People that we work with can be the best or worst part of our working experiences. I find that communications with these people seem to play the most significant role in determining this. You may want to examine how you are communicating with others in your workplace and make changes. To learn more about this go to [Five Communication Mistakes That Are Holding You Back](#) and read how you can improve your communications.

Watch this video presentation created by Caleb Langford, Chelsea Anderson and Brianna Keil about how to apply this principle.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=126#oembed-1>

Surroundings <https://youtu.be/A6nGPUiAVy8>

Not everyone recognizes the value of changing environments. They may even see it as an unnecessary cost. You may identify people in your workplace that are like this. What can you do to keep your environment fresh?

What is holding you back from changing your surroundings more often?



## Challenge:

- Change something in your environment and see how it influences you. It doesn't matter what you change.
- Visit other people's work environments to get ideas on how to improve your own.

*I'm in love with cities I've never been to and people I've never met. – Unknown.*

*In order to lead a fascinating life – one brimming with art, music, intrigue and romance – you must surround yourself with precisely those things. – Unknown.*

## Further Readings:

[Can Office Environment Boost Creativity?](#)

## 12. Good entertainment powers imagination

Our imagination is a crucial asset to either enhance or block our creativity. This works because our imagination is what creates images in our minds depicting either positive or negative thoughts, ideas, notions, concepts, memories, experiences and such. The [entertainment](#) that we engage in will directly influence how positive or negative our imaginations will be influenced. Because of this relationship, I have found that some forms of entertainment will suppress our creative abilities and some will enhance them. But I am also sure that this may be different for each of us, i.e. what forms of entertainment enhances one person's creativity may be very different for another person. The trick is to figure out what kinds of entertainment enhances your creativity and what suppresses it.

. . . . .

The following types of entertainment inspire my creativity:

- Listening to popular classical music.
- Reading novels or viewing movies about stories of protagonists overcoming challenging obstacles.
- Reading or viewing documentaries about inspiring stories of overcoming challenges.
- Viewing TED Talks — presentations about great ideas and/or innovations.
- Playing games that present challenges and interesting opportunities to be innovative in overcoming them.

. . . . .

The following types of entertainment depress my creativity:

- Listening to music that just sounds like noise to me.
- Reading novels, playing video games or viewing movies about stories that are violent, horror, and/or pornographic in nature. eg. I don't get why zombies and vampires stories are so popular.
- Viewing videos that don't have any substances that just seem to be about people doing silly things.
- All forms of gambling because they are designed to both hook you into spending time playing as well as helping you lose your money.

. . . . .

Some of the forms listed in my second list can have the effect of filling our minds with so many negative and even disturbing images that our positive and creative nature can be severely repressed.

I think there are many things in our world that are interesting, but do they really provide any value to us?

I believe a simple cost/benefit analysis can help you make better choices in selecting your entertainment. Consider the true costs of engaging in one entertainment event, this would include the dollar cost as well as the time consumed. Next, compare the cost against the benefits you derived from the experience. Do the benefits outweigh the costs? If the costs outweighed the benefits then why would you repeat that investment of your time and resources?

You will find that it is pretty easy to identify the costs of entertainment by adding the cost of purchasing the admission, book, movie or game, to the number of hours you spent engaged. That is after you decided what your time is worth to you. You can do this by considering how much you get paid per hour for your

job since you are actually selling your time to your employer at an hourly rate, right?

This could be applied to attending a sporting event, a movie, reading a novel, playing a video game, attending a music concert or any other forms of entertainment.

Watch the following video presentations about spoken word poetry and their power of influencing others and your imagination.



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Shane Koyczan: “To This Day” ... for the bullied and beautiful <https://youtu.be/sa1iS1MqUy4>



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Sarah Kay: If I should have a daughter ... <https://youtu.be/0snNB1yS3IE>

The real challenge is to put a dollar value on the benefit of the entertainment you engage in. You may engage in entertainment to relax, recharge or socialize, which all have a value that may be difficult to quantify. Consider how much value you could create from enhancing your creative abilities to generate great ideas for innovations in your work from inspiring entertainment. Other

valuable benefits come from broadening your knowledge of useful things and motivating you to be more positive, courageous in making better choices.

## Challenge 1:

1. Name five movies that you found really inspiring.
2. Name five movies that you found a waste of time.
3. What is your favourite three movies? Are they found in your first or second list? Why?

What forms of entertainment do you typically engage in? Do you receive more benefit from these events than what they cost you?

Is avoiding boredom by itself a valuable benefit to you?

## Challenge 2:

Pick at least three different forms of entertainment

that you normally invest your time and money in. Do a cost/benefit analysis on your investment for each of these forms. Consider if these forms of entertainment are helping you to be more or less creative. Share your conclusions with a friend and ask them to give you honest feedback. Ask them what forms of entertainment they find valuable.

### 13. Good health powers creativity



Shallow focus photo of black SLR camera on white wooden shelf, by [Cristofer Maximillian](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Good [health](#) is an attribute that we often take for granted when we have it, but miss it dearly when we are ill. Being healthy powers creativity because when you are ill your creative abilities are limited to surviving the negative effects of your poor health. For this reason, good health greatly contributes to being more creative and successful in your workplace.

The reason this works is that work and creativity, in particular, require the expenditure of energy, time, ideas and resources that can become exhausted and need to be replenished often. Some of the more common ways to rejuvenate ourselves include:

- Taking adequate time to rest and relax
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating healthy foods in healthy proportions
- Engaging in enough physical exercise
- Have a healthy variety of activities in your life

## Taking adequate time to rest and relax

Work can be stressful and exhausting. I need to take time out in my day to take breaks from my work to refresh and recharge myself to continue working effectively. Often a change is as good as a rest so I also change the tasks I am working on. On a weekly basis, I find it invaluable to take one day a week off from work and do other things. Taking vacations once or twice a year is also a great way for me to recharge and be more productive when I am back at work again.

Are you taking enough time to rest and relax to recharge yourself?



# Getting enough sleep

Sleep is very different than just resting, you actually need to get several hours of sleep as well. How much sleep is enough for you? View this short video of Arianna Huffington talking about success and sleep.



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Arianna Huffington: How to succeed? Get more sleep <https://youtu.be/nncY-MAIlu8>

Watch this TED Talk by Matt Walker about how Sleep is your superpower.



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Are you getting enough sleep? How could you get more sleep regularly? <https://youtu.be/5MuIMqhT>

I find that sleep is like a debt; you can borrow against your account when you are in a jam but you eventually have to repay that debt or suffer the consequences, which may lead to illness or injury. Or at least I thought of sleep this way before watch the TED talk by Matt Walker. But I am convinced that the lack of sleep will definitely suppress your creativity. What is your experience?

Check out this article about an interesting way to get more productive sleep by Dr. Travis Bradberry “[4 Ways Sleeping Naked Makes You Healthier and Wealthier](#)”

## Eating healthy foods in healthy proportions

Are you eating enough fruits and vegetables? For most of us, this is the part of our diets that is the most neglected. I find the chart below very helpful to remind me what foods I should be eating and in what proportions. I also find using 9-inch dinner plates very helpful, as well as drinking enough water. I try to drink about 2 litres a day. One strategy that works is to fill a 2-litre bottle of water in the morning and make sure you drink it all before the day is out.

(<http://www.health.harvard.edu/plate/healthy-eating-plate>)

How can you improve your eating and water drinking habits to improve your health and creativity?

How good are you with managing stress in your life? Watch this video about how to make stress your friend.



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=143#oembed-3>

Kelly McGonigal: How to make stress your friend <https://youtu.be/RcGyVTAoXEU>

## Engaging in enough physical exercise

Are you active enough? Although it is important to balance your eating with your activity to manage your weight, it is also important to be physically active enough to keep your body in a healthy state. Activity can be anything that gets you moving and the more variety the better. Fun activities have the appeal to help you engage in them more often.

There are many popular forms of physical exercise but simple forms of activities like walking are also very healthy and low-risk activities that are easy to do. I bike 20 kilometres 4 days a week and do strength training with weights twice a week to keep healthy. This has really made a difference to my health. It also helps my creativity because of the hour or so a day I have to reflect on problems and challenges I am working on.

I am now using Google Fit, [google.com/fit](https://google.com/fit), to help me track my physical activities. It is free and works great on my Android phone. It is very easy to use as it will automatically detect when I am walking, running or riding my bike. I also use a heart rate monitor to help me monitor my heart rate while exercising. There are many other apps for Android and iPhones that you can try.

Are you getting enough physical exercise? What changes can you make to help you get enough?

Here are some posts that may help you:

- [10 Ways You CAN Exercise At Home without Any Equipment](#) by Suzanne Hiscock
- [Top 25 At-Home Exercises](#) from [acefitness.org](https://www.acefitness.org)

And what about just walking more. Check out these two videos:



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Walking with Sandwiches: Ben's New Year's Resolution <https://youtu.be/eeOf006HCf8>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=143#oembed-5>

Nilofer Merchant: Got a meeting? Take a walk <https://youtu.be/iE9HMudybyc>

What can you do today to get more physical exercise?

## Have a healthy variety of activities in your life.

All work and no play is not healthy. You need a variety of things in your life to help you not only to recharge and rejuvenate, but also to add quality to your life beyond the workplace.

Do you live to work, or do you work to live?

Where do you find the passions and joys in your life? How can you make more time for those really valuable aspects of your life?

What habits would you like to add to or remove from your life? Watch this short (3min) talk about how to try something new for 30 days. That appears to be the right length of time to make new habits or break old ones.



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Matt Cutts: Try something new for 30 days <https://youtu.be/JnfBXjWm7hc>

Here are two interesting articles from ba-bamail.com about some interesting phone apps and habits that will help you live a healthier life.

- [7 Apps for a Better Life](#)
- [What Are the Good \(and Bad\) Habits of Very Smart People?](#)

## Challenge:

What can you do better to promote a healthier life for yourself right now? What is preventing you from living a healthier and happier life?

Check out this

website <http://mtroyal.read101.ca/> and look for one thing you could be doing that you are not doing to promote a healthier life as a student.

## 14. Assumptions block creativity



Long night, by [Steve Johnson](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

The [Assumptions](#) we make can block our creativity. Often, we may not even realize we are being blocked. The real cost of allowing assumptions to block our creativity is when it blinds us from seeing effective solutions to problems.

Here are three great short videos that illustrate this:



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from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=151#oembed-1>

Escalator failure <https://youtu.be/ZYexOIC0CXw>



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Divert your course over!!! I'm a light house over <https://youtu.be/fscydKvocrw>



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Assumptions <https://youtu.be/zNbF006Y5x4>

Some of the most common assumptions in the workplace, that I have observed, are those that relate to established procedures for doing things that everyone assumes to be the best way. Most times, a little digging discovers that there are better ways to do those tasks but no one had ever challenged the assumption before.



Albert Einstein explained how silly this can be when he said: “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”

I have experienced this many times and made a career out of making improvements in my workplace.

There are many assumptions that block our creativity. [Roger von Oech](#)’s wrote an interesting book called: “[A Whack on the Side of the Head](#)”, which had made him a lot of money. In his book, he describes 10 common assumptions that block creativity. [You can view a summary of these 10 assumptions here.](#)

[Bill Breen wrote a review of some research that identified 6 common assumptions or myths that block creativity in the workplace.](#)

What assumptions are blocking your creativity?

View this video presentation below of 25 famous predictions that were made by experts that later proven to be wrong. Look for the assumptions that influenced these experts to make such bad predictions.



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25 Famous Predictions That Were Proven To Be Horribly Wrong [https://youtu.be/zNxluqQn2\\_I](https://youtu.be/zNxluqQn2_I)

View these two videos below about some common misconceptions that you may have. Did you find any surprises there? Why did you make those assumptions?



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50 Common Misconceptions – mental\_floss on YouTube  
(Ep.1) <https://youtu.be/kxIGlMrrhQM>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=151#oembed-6>

Amazing Facts to Blow Your Mind Pt. 1 <https://youtu.be/6Ni5HOdGtzM?t=13>

The key to overcoming the assumptions that block your creativity is to learn to recognize them in your life and have the courage to challenge the assumption. This takes courage and requires you to take a risk, and you may be wrong, but I promise you that the rewards will make it worthwhile.

The best way to challenge assumptions is to ask critical questions. Here is a list of questions that could help you challenge assumptions:

- What are 10 different ways we can do that?
- Why can't we do it this new way?
- Why have we always done it that way?
- What new approach could help us solve this problem?
- How can we overcome that barrier?
- What new opportunities could this new resource generate?

You also have to be careful about [misconceptions](#). These are assumptions that are based on misleading information. [Check out this website about the dangers of Dihydrogen Monoxide](#). Actually, all of the information on site is true as Dihydrogen Monoxide is dangerous, but it is misleading. Can you see the misconceptions and assumptions?

Would you bathe in Dihydrogen Monoxide?

Not sure? [Check out this website](#) posted by the Friends of Hydrogen Hydroxide, which is another name for Dihydrogen Monoxide. This second site shares facts in opposition to the warnings of the first website. Often you need to get both sides of the story.

I would take a bath in Dihydrogen Monoxide under the right conditions. [Click here to find out why](#).

Another common misconception is the meaning of very large numbers. Typically once numbers get very large we can no longer comprehend them properly. For example, what is the difference between one hundred dollars, one million dollars, one billion dollars and one trillion dollars?

Do you see why you need to be careful of how your own assumptions can block you from making better choices?

Unfortunately, not everyone that we work with shares this understanding. They may be closed to any attempts to challenge their own assumptions or those of the organization. Have you had experiences dealing with people like this? How did you overcome this? Are you one of these people?

How can you make sure you don't have any assumptions that are blinding you from being more creative and/or solving problems in your workplace? Or worse, are you letting your assumptions prevent others from being more creative and innovative?

Are you okay with being wrong?

Count how many time the letter "F" appears in the following sentence: "FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS."

Ask someone else to count the “F”s and see if you agree.

## Challenge:

Identify the assumptions that are holding you back from being more creative and describe them to a friend. Then identify how you can overcome these assumptions. Share your progress with a friend.


*To live a creative life we must lose our fear of doing wrong. — Joseph Chilton Pearce.*

## Further readings/viewings:

- [5 Common Logic Traps You May Be Falling For](#) by Emily Guy Birken
- [The Gallery of Fake Viral Images](#) by Alex Boese



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[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=151#oembed-7](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=151#oembed-7)

Why challenging assumptions is the way to go | Kevin  
Weijers | TEDxBreda <https://youtu.be/yeebug-XxBM>

## 15. Constraints enhance creativity



[Ticket to ride game, by Dave Photoz, Unsplash, is licensed under Unsplash license.](#)

One strategy to enhance your creativity is to constrain your resources. One example of this is if you limit yourself in how much time you have to complete a task, you will have to be more creative. The resources that can be constrained may be different as appropriate to the task at hand. Perhaps it is funding, materials or people that need to be limited. This works because of the point of diminishing returns, where too many resources just add to the costs of completing a task and not the benefits of the results.

Some examples:



[Old pocket watch](#), by [Veri Ivanova](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash license](#).

Working within a limited budget or timeline as opposed to no budget or due dates.



[Man standing](#), by [Campaign Creators](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Trying to accomplish a task with a small team of only five people. Have you ever tried to get more than 12 people to agree on the same thing?

One of the reasons for this is when you have more resources available, you have more options that you have to consider and deal with. With the extra time, you often over think things and second guess your earlier decisions. Have you ever found that if you have a day to accomplish a task, it will normally take you the whole day? Could you have completed the same task in just three hours, instead?

*Over-thinking always ruins you. It ruins the situation, twists things around, makes you worry and just makes everything much worse than it actually is. – Unknown*

Another reason this works is that a little stress in our lives will actually get our creative juices flowing better. It forces us to make decisions sooner and move to the next one without looking back and allowing assumptions to hinder creativity.

Watch this video of an artist that creates a painting in less than 60 seconds.



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Super Fast Spray Paint Artist <https://youtu.be/dv8kNTH-KDY>



There are many forms of creative art that are defined by constrained resources:

- [Haiku](#) and [Limerick](#) poetry
- [Elevator pitches](#)
- Twitter posts that are only 280 characters or less.
- Hint fiction that has stories written in [25 words or less](#). See also [6 word stories](#),
- On some of the popular TV talent shows where contestants only have 90 seconds to perform.
- YouTube videos — how many do you watch that are longer than 5 minutes?
- Resumes confined to only two pages. (Most people don't read beyond the second page.)
- [5 Minute Ignite presentations](#) — View this example on how to buy a car.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=155#oembed-2>

4.1.5 Rob Gruhl — How to Buy a New Car — Ignite Seattle  
2007 <https://youtu.be/pPor5b7JLLE>

Here is another example of an Ignite presentation about how to write better.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=155#oembed-3>

Scott Berkun — How to write well, instantly, every time <https://youtu.be/D85NqSrpzew>

I have had many experiences where I have had to work under constraints of time, money and other resources. Most of the time, it can really push me out of my comfort zone and be creative in managing the task. Sure, I would prefer to have unlimited resources available, but I know my creativity and productivity would suffer.

What experiences have you had that reinforce this principle?



[\*What is Your Story?\*](#), by [Etienne Girardet](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#)

Try this exercise:

1. Write your life story: who you are, what significant life experiences have shaped your character and values. What are your goals and aspiration?
2. Now rewrite your story in 100 words. Did you have to use your creative muscles?
3. Now rewrite your story again in only 25 words. Did you manage it? Is it better?
4. If you thought that was challenging check out the 6-word stories at <http://www.sixwordstories.net/> Can you rewrite your story in 6 words? Try it.
5. Read this article about the miniskirt [theory of writing](#). Consider how you can improve your writing by following this principle.

Watch the video below about an interesting innovation being implemented under extreme constraints of lack of resources.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=155#oembed-4>

Coke Bottle Lights Up Filipino's Lives – It is just Amazing  
WOW!!!! [https://youtu.be/Q0\\_4qFrXw\\_4](https://youtu.be/Q0_4qFrXw_4)

Another problem with having too many resources available is that you may fall into the trap of attempting to make something perfect. **Resist this!** Striving for perfection will kill your productivity and in business, kill your net revenues on projects. I have seen this happen many times when the costs of completing a task/project perfectly quickly exceeded the revenues generated.



[White paper](#), by [Nick Fewings](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*The pursuit of excellence is gratifying and healthy. The pursuit of perfection is frustrating, neurotic and a terrible waste of time. — Edwin Bliss*



[Stay weird](#), by [Dan Parlante](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Not everyone agrees with this principle. Some people abuse this principle to push forward tight budgets and defend them by citing this principle but there does need to be enough resources to allow for the creativity to be completed. But how much is enough? Experience and building up knowledge of your craft will help you determine that. Failures will help you learn quickly.

When you have a lot of time to complete a task or project do you use it all to maximum effectiveness?

Could you be a better manage of your time and finances? If you answered no... Really? Can you teach the rest of us how you do that?

## Challenge:

The next task or project you undertake, set your own constraints for the resources significantly less than what you have available and push yourself to be creative to get the job done within those limits. This is taking a risk but then you have a fallback, the rest of the resources available. Share with a friend how this worked for you. Did it help you to be more creative and productive?

On a final note, watch this short video about how Sebastian Wernicke summarize 1000 TedTalks in 6 words.



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can view them online here:

<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=155#oembed-5>

Sebastian Wernicke: 1000 TEDTalks, 6 words <https://youtu.be/XZ3nEK1qSkA>

# 16. Mind mapping enhances creativity



[Person working on blue and white paper on board](#), by [Alvaro Reyes](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

[Mind mapping](#) is a specific method of illustrating ideas and how they relate to each other. Normally there is a main idea in the centre of the diagram with connectors spreading out to other ideas.. . . .

[Click here to view several examples of mind maps about mind mapping.](#)

. . . . .

Mind maps can make illustrating complex ideas or concepts easy. They can also enhance planning, brainstorming, presentations, project management, and many other productivity tasks.

. . . . .

[Click here to view some more examples of mind maps](#) about other things that may be interesting.

. . . . .

I find mind maps are very useful tools for the following:

- Exploring and presenting complex concepts.
- Capturing, organizing and combining ideas to generate more and rank the best ones.
- Planning complex projects and tracking their progress.
- Making, organizing and retrieving notes.

. . . . .



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=168#oembed-1>

How do you use Mind Mapping techniques in your business and personal life? <https://youtu.be/c8TPpV3Fan4>

I know of a professor that gives his students an assignment to build a mind map illustrating the relationships of all of the principles and concepts of his course. This replaced a typical paper assignment.

The primary benefit that I gain from mind mapping is being able to view the entire map of ideas and concepts from a “birds-eye” view. This makes it easier for me to examine the whole picture and manipulate any part of it by moving items on the map around as needed. From this, I can more easily see relationships, patterns, missing elements, or improvements in the map and my understanding.

There are many tools you can use to create mind maps:



- Pencil and paper — or pen if you are brave. Using different colours is nice.
- [Google Drive Drawing](#) — is free, cloud-based and allows you to collaborate with others.
- [MindMup](#) — is a free cloud-based tool that also connects with your Google Drive.
- [Google](#) — is a freemium cloud-based tool.
- [FreePlane software](#) — is a free and open program for Windows or Mac.
- [Prezi](#) — is a cloud-based presentation tool that does mind maps very well.
- [SimpleMind](#) for Android or iPhones/iPads.
- There are many others, some for free, some for a fee.

Here is a tutorial on how to use MindMup.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=168#oembed-2>

Mindmap with MindMup — Free and Easy  
Mindmapping [https://youtu.be/TR-OdE\\_QhLc](https://youtu.be/TR-OdE_QhLc)

Concept maps are similar to mind maps, but typically concept maps do not have a primary idea in the centre that serves as the hub of the map. The image illustrating the [Creativity Process](#) described in that chapter would be an example of a concept map.

Watch the following video about how to make mind maps.





One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=168#oembed-3>

How to Mind Map with Tony Buzan <https://youtu.be/u5Y4plsXTV0>

The following list illustrates how a mind map tool could be used to work through the creative process:

1. A mind map can help you explore a problem by putting every detail about the problem and resources available on the map to examine closer.
2. A mind map is also a great way to do a brain dump, where you just try to brainstorm as many related ideas as you can on how to solve a problem. Capture all of the ideas, even the good, bad and ugly ones. Then review them to look for what is missing, patterns, duplicates and any new ideas that can be generated by combining existing ones.
3. A mind map can then be used to sort all of the ideas into clusters that could be categorized and ranked based on your selection criteria. This will help you to select the very best ideas to move forward.
4. The mind map can then be used to plan the tasks required to implement your solution. You can organize the tasks into timelines, clusters, and other useful details.
5. Most mind mapping tools include tools to help you mark tasks as complete, allowing you to use the map to manage the execution of the plan. It is also useful to distribute copies of the map to your collaborators to keep them informed. Some tools will allow collaborating with others on the same mind map.
6. Once the implementation is complete, review your mind map,

with all of the details and notes that it accumulated, to assess the success of your project and what remains to be done, or redone.

Not everyone uses mind maps to explain complex ideas. One reason may simply be that people are not familiar with this technique. Do you find it easier to understand a complex concept or idea if you see a mind map of it?

Better yet, would it help you to understand that complex concept or idea if you were to create your own mind map illustrating it? I know this really helps me.

Where could you use mind mapping in your workplace to help you be more creative and innovative?

Select one of the tools mentioned above and create yourself a mind map of a complex idea or concept. When complete, share it with a friend and afterwards ask yourself if creating the mind map helped you gain a better understanding of that idea or concept?

Now build a mind map illustrating how the principles in this book relate to each other.

Below are some mind maps that are interesting:



## 17. Challenges require risk taking



[Wooden Letters](#), by [Brett Jordan](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*Life is short, break the rules, forgive quickly, kiss slowly, love truly, laugh uncontrollably, and never regret anything that made you smile. Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in*

*your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover. — Mark Twain*

One of the major reasons that people shy away from challenges is because they fear failing. Risking failure is required if you want to overcome any challenge and turn it into a valuable improvement in your workplace. Failing is part of the landscape because not all of your initiatives will work and you can't stop there or you won't get to the ones that will work.

Watch this clip from Sir Ken Robinson.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=180#oembed-1>

Sir Ken Robinson on Creativity <https://youtu.be/kSlkQwS-kcs>

This is similar to the financial principle of [leverage](#), which basically explains that your potential to generate revenues equals your potential to lose money. This is normally applied in business or personal finance to increase the potential of making gains by increasing debts, which increases risks. Smart business managers will manage risk at levels that they can both tolerate, (meaning they can sleep at night) while at the same time, maximize (or leverage) the money making potential of their initiatives.

Failing is a normal part of life and you need to learn how to manage it. Failing at anything can actually teach you valuable lessons that will help you reduce the potential of failing on the next attempt. (See [Learn from failures](#)) Successful people are typically successful because they didn't give up and stop trying to be creative when they failed. I have heard from many successful [entrepreneurs](#),

and they are not ashamed to admit that they have had several failures in their businesses before the successful one took off.

. . . . .

Watch this video presentation created by Travis Horvath, Matthew Morrison and Elizabeth Tesfaye about the challenges and benefits of taking risks.



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here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=180#oembed-2>

Why Take Risk? <https://youtu.be/tF3wP8Hf18Y>

I have been quite comfortable with taking risks. I have had to be otherwise I would not be very creative or successful, and I have had my share of failures. When I teach my classes at the university, I find that I need to be very creative and have tried out many interesting approaches to teaching my classes. Some of these work and some don't work. But as I keep striving to make improvements in my courses, I am finding that I am failing less with my innovations. I think this comes from what I am learning from the failures and getting better at innovating. But, I am still nervous when trying out something new for the first or even second time.

An example of the latest innovation in my Creativity in the Workplace course is this book that serves as an online textbook. This is the book that I have written as a textbook, and after many revisions, it is shaping up pretty well. Mind you, I have learned that if the book is free, then my students will appreciate my effort even if the quality is not up to what a traditional textbook publisher would be satisfied with. The risks that I am taking with this textbook include the time I am investing in writing it and the feedback I receive from my students.

On the flip side of this risk, this book can be a very valuable

innovation, which is why I am willing to take the risk. This book will be available to the students at no cost to them, other than their time to read it. It will also be available to anyone else in the world that would find it useful. From the feedback, I will continue to refine this book so that it will genuinely help the student/reader to make significant changes in their lives as they strive to become more creative in their workplaces and help solve the challenges of our day and the future. This is something I am very passionate about, which drives me to take this risk and hope for a success.

What do you think of my book as an innovation? Is it a success?

Fear is a natural emotion that we all deal with. Watch this video about what we can learn from Fear.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=180#oembed-3>

Karen Thompson Walker: What fear can teach us <https://youtu.be/OwgWkUIm9Gc>

How about you? What risks are you comfortable taking and at the same time accepting the costs of failing?

How do you manage your fears?

Watch this video about how this artist has overcome her fears to take many risks to promote her work.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=180#oembed-4>



Amanda Palmer: The art of asking [https://youtu.be/xMj\\_P\\_6H69g](https://youtu.be/xMj_P_6H69g)

How can you be more comfortable taking risks in your work?  
Are you like Wally in this clip?



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fear to fail? then do nothing! <https://youtu.be/9Ffxi0S7ggM>

There are certainly many successful professionals in the world that can be very successful without taking risks. Perhaps you know people that fit this description. What makes them successful? Are they creative?

Watch this video presentation about four lessons about how to create in the face of challenge, self-doubt, and loss.



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4 Lessons in Creativity | Julie Burstein | TED Talks [https://youtu.be/sYOPf\\_pfqCI](https://youtu.be/sYOPf_pfqCI)

Watch these videos and then ask yourself why you are not more creative. Were you more creative when you were a child?



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Creative and Bold Motivational Video [https://youtu.be/Stc5aXdU\\_rl](https://youtu.be/Stc5aXdU_rl)

This begs the questions:

- Why take risks?
- What is the value of being creative in your workplace?
- What are you prepared to risk? Your job? Your reputation?
- What is holding you back from being more creative?

## Challenge:

Identify what you fear and is holding you back from being more creative. Then identify some things you can do to overcome those fears. Share these and your progress with a friend.

*An essential aspect of creativity is not being afraid to fail. – Edwin Land*

## Further Readings/Viewings

- [How to Stay Positive: 11 Smart Habits](#) by Henrick Edberg

## 18. Learn from failures



*[Difficult roads lead to beautiful destinations.](#) by [Nik, Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).*

We learn a great deal from [failures](#). We all do and we all fail even though we often hide this from others. The reason we learn so much is that failures are very emotional experiences where we discover that some of the key assumptions on which we were relying are incorrect. We can then replace those weak assumptions with stronger correct assumptions and learn valuable lessons.

Wise people learn from the failures of others and gain the same benefits without the costs of experiencing the failures themselves. How do you learn from your or others' failures? When we replace weak assumptions with stronger ones, we will be spared repeating failures.

We can learn from failures and even turn them into successes.



[Motivational sign in the window of a boxing gym](#), by [the blowup](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*"I've made billions of dollars of failures at Amazon.com. Literally. None of these things are fun, but they also don't matter. What matters is that companies that don't continue to experiment or embrace failure eventually get in the position where the only thing they can do is make a Hail Mary bet at the end of their corporate existence."* – Amazon's Jeff Bezos

Do you find that you are repeating the failures of others? Or your own failures? How can you prevent this from happening?



By [Miquel Parera](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

If failures are so valuable then why are they not tolerated in our society as much as they take place? Are you allowed to fail in your workplace without penalty? If you are not allowed to fail then how is innovation and risk taking encouraged, or is it?

One of the reasons that failure is looked down on in our society is because many of us were punished for making mistakes and failing in our schooling. Read this interesting post about this at <http://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2011/12/teachers-dont-like-creative-students.html>

*Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep. — Unknown*

*Failures are part of life. If you don't fail, you don't learn. If you don't learn you'll never change. — Unknown*

Many successful innovative professionals will share with you their stories of their failures on their road to success. No one can achieve significant success in their work without experiencing and learning from failures.



Taken at Yorkshire Sculpture Park March 2018, by Josh Couch, Unsplash, is licensed under Unsplash License.

Watch this video presentation that explains that there are two types of mindsets we can cultivate. One that embraces problems as opportunities to learn, and one that avoids them, often out of fear of failing. People that avoid conflicts can be described as having a fixed mindset. Those who see problems as interesting challenges have a growth mindset. Sometimes we like to switch from one to the other. This is based on the research of Carol Dweck.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-1>

Growth Mindset vs. Fixed Mindset [https://youtu.be/KUWn\\_TJTrnU](https://youtu.be/KUWn_TJTrnU)

Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm. – Winston Churchill

Watch these next three short videos of experts talking about learning from failures.



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Richard Branson: learning from failure. [https://youtu.be/S\\_3Dj5GZJNc](https://youtu.be/S_3Dj5GZJNc)



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-3>

How to Learn From Failure – Jason Anello <https://youtu.be/jYVt4Dk1nxc>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-4>

How Learning From Failure Makes You Stronger – Lauren Serota <https://youtu.be/EBBKXXgCH00>



Making mistakes and experiencing failures is very common in the workplace. The important thing is that we learn from these failures.

There are many stories shared on YouTube about famous people failing. Here are four of the better short ones:



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Famous Failures [https://youtu.be/Y6hz\\_s2XIAU](https://youtu.be/Y6hz_s2XIAU)



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-6>

Famous Failures <https://youtu.be/zLYECIjmnQs>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-7>

Famous Failures [https://youtu.be/rlapR\\_qVGwQ](https://youtu.be/rlapR_qVGwQ)





One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-8>

\* Famous Failures \* <https://youtu.be/NgwH2LOxN6g>

Do you feel better now that you know that failing is common among successful people?

What common things did all these people do to overcome their failures and move to being very successful?

Watch these video presentations and look for suggestions.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-9>

Brené Brown: Listening to shame <https://youtu.be/psN1DORYYV0>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-10>

KEEP FAILING AND YOU WILL SUCCEED – Best Motivational Video for Success, Students, and Entrepreneurs <https://youtu.be/4reKWuJ8jvE>

View these two videos about inventions that came from failures that changed the world. Look for what the failing inventors did to turn the failures into successes.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-11>

25 Accidental Inventions That Changed The World <https://youtu.be/JL9URxJA6r4>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-12>

15 Everyday Inventions Created By Accident <https://youtu.be/HMyRV6kts4E>

F.A.I.L. stands for First Attempt in Learning.

What is keeping you from learning from your failures? What can you take away from this principle that will help you?

## Challenge:

Starting now, embrace your failures as valuable learning experiences. Reflect on and document the valuable things you learn in your failures.

Better yet, learn from the failures of others and thank them for helping you learn valuable lessons.

Commit yourself to strive to remember the lessons learned so you can be liberated from repeating your failures.

*Failure is Truth: Failure wakes you up from the dream of who you think you are by forcing you to face the reality of who you really are. You can only change what's real. Failure is what's real. You can change the truth. — Unknown*

## Further Readings/Viewings

- [Anger management: 10 tips to tame your temper](#)  
by Mayo Clinic Staff



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has been excluded from this version  
of the text. You can view them online here:  
[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=187#oembed-13](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-13)

Fear Of Failure – Why We Have It & How To Deal  
With It <https://youtu.be/oN8-Np8zLfw>



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of the text. You can view them online here:  
[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=187#oembed-14](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-14)

Self Help – What to Do in Times of Failure? |

MySelfHelpDiary.com <https://youtu.be/GFWz9DOPyRo>



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has been excluded from this version  
of the text. You can view them online here:  
[https://openeducationalberta.ca/  
pcw/?p=187#oembed-15](https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=187#oembed-15)

Derek Sivers: Failure is the only way to  
learn <https://youtu.be/pYTN7yVYbeg>

## 19. The creative process can be learned



[White neon](#) by [Austen Chan](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under the [Unsplash License](#)

Anyone can learn to be more creative in their workplace. This book is devoted to helping you develop your abilities to be more creative and innovative in your workplace.

Watch this video presentation about the creative process.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=198#oembed-1>

*What creativity is trying to tell you: Jonathan Tilley at*

TEDxStuttgart [https://youtu.be/eMOqIJ9V\\_K4](https://youtu.be/eMOqIJ9V_K4)

Watch this video presentation that digs deeper into the creative process.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=198#oembed-2>

Where Does Creativity Hide? | Amy Tan | TED

Talks <https://youtu.be/8D0pwe4vaQo> Watch these next video presentations about why it is important to be creative and make changes.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=198#oembed-3>

Seth Godin: The tribes we lead <https://youtu.be/uQGYr9bnktw>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=198#oembed-4>

Why is Creativity Important in Education? Sir Ken Robinson Video Series from Adobe Education <https://youtu.be/Ee5A5NSbMN4>



## The Creative Process

There is a specific creative [process](#) that can help anyone in any workplace to be more creative. The creative process has 6 distinct steps.

Here are the steps described:

1. **Explore** — The creative process normally starts with a purpose, which appears either as a challenge to accomplish something or a problem to solve. Once this is established all aspects of the purpose need to be explored and all available resources to help complete the purpose should also be identified.
2. **Ideas** — The next step is to generate ideas of how the purpose could be completed. Don't stop at the first good idea as you will need many ideas to find the really great and innovative one. Ideas can be generated in many ways but it really helps to collaborate with others. Make sure that you do not judge your ideas in this step so that you can be free to generate many ideas, even bad ideas. Of course, you need to capture all of the ideas you generate.
3. **Select** — After you have generated at least 50 or more ideas, now is the time to judge their quality and select the very best ones. Judging your ideas will be easier if you have 3 to 5 criteria for ranking your ideas. Two commonly used selection criteria are to identify the potential value that could be realized by each idea and compare that to the cost of implementing each idea.
4. **Plan** — After you have selected your best idea, you need to plan how you will implement it and convert it into reality. This normally involves a project planning approach that identifies tasks to be completed, timelines to complete them by, resources required and who is going to complete each task.
5. **Implement** — Plans are great, but only when they are actually executed are they valuable. Implementing innovative ideas

requires courage to overcome any setbacks and unexpected obstacles that will arise.

6. **Assess** — After the implementation of the idea is complete, it is time to assess if the idea was successful. If the idea addressed the purpose by meeting the challenge or solving the problem then it can be assessed as successful. In some cases, even if the challenge or problem was not solved, but other values were realized then it could still be deemed as successful. Often the same selection criteria from step 4 are used to assess the success of an implementation.

This process is quite [iterative](#), which means it repeats in a cycle. Unless the solution is perfect, there is normally a need to repeat the steps of the process to refine the solution or innovation.

The creative process as described above can be learned and practiced in any workplace context. I have been developing my proficiency in applying the principles of this process to the point where it comes second nature to me. As soon as a challenge or problem appears, I start exploring it and generating ideas for solutions that I will then implement and so on. You can learn to do this proficiently as well.

You likely already have a creative process that has been working for you. How do you solve problems now in your workplace? Can you make improvements to your process from my process?

Let's explore this further; ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I identify all available resources before I start looking for solutions?
- Do I stop when I discover the first good idea and attempt to implement it right away?
- Do I implement my ideas without solid planning?
- How do I know whether my ideas were successful or not?

The following pages in the textbook will help you master the six steps of the creative process and the principles that will help you

improve your skill and proficiency in using this process in any workplace you are working in.

Not everyone describes their creative process in the same six steps that I have, but if you look closely you will see that there are more similarities than differences. Ask someone who claims to be creative what creative process they use and you will see much in common.

. . . . .

Watch this video presentation describing innovation and the creative process that leads to innovation a bit differently. They call it the innovation cycle. Look for the similarities with the diagram above.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=198#oembed-5>*

The Innovation Cycle <https://youtu.be/lujBtDB6ZjE>

## Challenge:

Select a challenge or problem that you would like to complete/solve using this creative process. Share the challenge or problem with a friend and commit to them that you will employ this process to complete this project. Then work through the following pages to

employ the creative process to this challenge or problem.

Use your new skills with [mind mapping](#) that you learned in [Principle 16](#) to map out the creative process as you would apply it to a real-world challenge/problem.

Build a mind map illustrating the challenge or problem that you selected in the challenge above to apply the creative process to. Share your mind map to a friend and ask them for feedback.

I promise you that if you commit yourself to learn to apply this creative process consistently, it will help you become a successful and valuable member of any workplace.

*You have to go whole heartedly into anything in order to achieve anything worth having. — Frank Lloyd Wright*

## 20. Explore problems thoroughly

The first step in the creative process is to explore the problem or challenge and identify available resources that could be utilized in a solution. It helps if you are really good at paying attention to details that are relevant, looking for opportunities that can be capitalized on. This takes practice.

Watch the following presentation about paying attention.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=204#oembed-1>

Crash Course on Creativity – Paying Attention <https://youtu.be/ZYUF!9wp3Qg>

How are you with optical illusions? Can your perception of reality be mistaken? Watch this presentation and take the challenge.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=204#oembed-2>

Optical Illusion Test: Are You Easily Fooled? <https://youtu.be/>

[4vTyEy7Dn70](#)

Here is another perception test that is kind of fun. Watch the video below and count how many passes the players in white pass the ball.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=204#oembed-3>

awareness test <https://youtu.be/oSQJP40PcGI>

Not only does paying attention help but it also helps to examine challenges and problems from different points of view. [Click here to](#) check out this humorous representation of two classically opposing points of view of a similar situation.

Your point of view can significantly influence your perception of a problem. Can you recall an experience where your perception of a problem was different from someone else's?

Edward de Bono introduced an interesting strategy for examining problems using six different points of view. The idea is to use these six coloured thinking hats to help you remember these points of view and specific questions that align with them so that you can identify all aspects of the problem being examined. You can read more about this model at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six\\_Thinking\\_Hats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six_Thinking_Hats)

Watch this brief video introducing de Bono's six thinking hats.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=204#oembed-4>

The Six Thinking Hats 2012 <https://youtu.be/BWpGn3Fmsq4>

How well do you explore problems? Do you take enough time to examine the problem from multiple points of view? Would using de Bono's model help you?

The key purpose of exploring problems and challenges is to identify all of the aspects of the problem or challenge that will help you lead to a brilliant, creative and effective solution. It will also help you identify available resources that can be utilized in the solution. But when do you know when you have reached the point in your exploration that you have identified all of the aspects, details, and resources that are useful?

Watch the following video as an example of exploring for critically understanding the goal or desired outcome and considering all available resources.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=204#oembed-5>

Xavier Vilalta: Architecture at home in its community <https://youtu.be/2G0wQfU19EU>

Creativity is often defined as the ability to look at something everyone else is looking at but seeing something that no one has seen before. This takes a very healthy imagination. How do you think the first person who looked at an oyster in its shell, figured out that it was food? How can you develop your abilities to do this?

You probably know people who don't take the time to examine problems much beyond the surface that is presented. Are they successful problem solvers? What hazards exist when problems are not explored thoroughly?

What prevents you from examining problems and challenges thoroughly? How do you know when you have explored a problem thoroughly enough?

## Challenge:

Consider one challenge or problem that you have recently solved or attempted to solve. Could you have been more successful with that problem if you would have taken more time to explore it thoroughly, from different points of view?

How will you explore challenges or problems differently in the future? Capture your ideas and share them with a friend.

*How to be an explorer of the world.*

1. *Always be looking. (Notice the ground beneath your feet.)*
2. *Consider everything alive & animate.*
3. *Everything is interesting. Look closer.*
4. *Alter your course often.*
5. *Observe for long durations. (And short ones)*
6. *Notice the stories going on around you.*
7. *Notice patterns. Make connections.*
8. *Document your findings (field notes) in a variety of ways.*
9. *Incorporate indeterminacy.*
10. *Observe movement.*



11. *Create a personal dialogue with your environment. Talk to it.*
12. *Trace things back to their origins.*
13. *Use all of the sense in your investigations.*

*Keri Smith*

## 2I. Reflecting solves problems



[Passion led us here](#), by [Ian Schneider](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Good ideas rarely come to us exactly at the time that we need them. Normally it takes some time and [reflection](#). Often we even need to “let it soak” by stepping away from the problem and changing our focus to something unrelated, and then brilliance can hit us with valuable ideas we have been searching for.

Have you ever discovered great ideas for solving a problem when you were focused on something else, like taking a shower, preparing a meal or just waking up in the morning?

*Taking time to live life will only inspire your work.* — Unknown.

This happens to me quite often and I have learned to take advantage of this by stepping away from problems when I get stuck looking for good ideas for solutions. I do make sure I can capture

the ideas when they surface because they often come when I am not expecting them.

This works because sometimes our mind needs to be able to dip into the sub-conscious part of ourselves to find brilliance. We need to be relaxed for this to happen and when we are focused on a problem and stressing ourselves to solve it, we get stuck, frustrated and effective thinking is hindered.

Watch this Ted presentation about the power of slowing down and reflecting by Carl Honoré.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=209#oembed-1>

Carl Honore: In praise of slowness <https://youtu.be/UhXiHJ8vfuk>

I also think this works because when we get stuck, we are working on a level of thinking that will not provide the kinds of ideas we need for a solution. We need to get to a different level of thinking or approach the problem from a different angle. This often will allow us to find the ideas that was alluding us.

*We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we did when we created them.*

– Albert Einstein

*If I had 60 minutes to solve a problem, I'd spend 55 minutes defining it, and 5 minutes solving it.*

– Albert Einstein

Read this article about letting our problems soak for a while. <http://lifedev.net/2008/10/letting-it-soak-creativity/>

Watch this video presentation about what happens when we take

more time to create something. Are the products more valuable when more time is invested?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=209#oembed-2>

Café Communications – Deadlines <https://youtu.be/jgvx9OfZKJw> Watch this Ted presentation about the power of Introverts by Susan Cain. Watch for her point about reflecting on problems.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=209#oembed-3>

Susan Cain: The power of introverts <https://youtu.be/3yyeI1jaGDU>

How much time do you schedule in your week to relax and reflect on the challenges you are dealing with in your workplace? Are you too busy to do this, or are you too busy **not** to do this?

I have learned to do this very well. I know that when I first feel that I am blocked from progressing with any challenge it is time to step away from that problem. I either switch to something else, take a walk, leave it for the next day or find someone to talk to about something else. This works. Normally, within a day, I have found many great ideas for solutions to the problem and they are more brilliant than if I had just pushed through the block when I am stressed and tired.

Have you ever had this experience?

What prevents you from applying this principle more in your work?

## Challenge:

Take at least an hour to relax and reflect on a project or challenge you are working on. Try to set the project aside if you are not making progress on it and let your mind wander. Record your experience in your journal and share it with a friend.

*Strength doesn't come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn't.*

– Unknown

## Further readings/viewings:

- [Meditation For Creativity \(Here's How To Do a](#)

[Mantra Meditation](#)) by Dina Kaplan

## 22. Great ideas come from many



*Sticky notes* by [Jo Szczepanska](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*If you want to have good ideas you must have many ideas. Most of them will be wrong, and what you have to learn is which ones to throw away. –[Linus Pauling](#)*

One of the key principles that creative people live by is to generate many ideas in order to find really good ideas. They may generate over 50 different ideas for most situations and much more than that in some cases.

When I first acquired a decent camera, an expert photographer gave me a valuable tip that illustrates this principle. He told me the secret to being a good photographer is to take many pictures, but only show people the very best ones, which are very few. Even after

a couple of decades of trying to master photography, I still take hundreds of photos for every photograph that I would judge as good and worth displaying. Digital cameras have now made this much easier to do.

Source: [copywriter.giorgiotave.it](http://copywriter.giorgiotave.it)

When you take photos with your camera, how many photos do you take of one scene? And from that pool of photos, how many do you show to anyone?

Developing the valuable ideas that will help you solve a problem and/or help you be successful follows the same principle. If you have been tasked to develop a new product, service or solution to a problem, you may need to generate 100 or more ideas before you find the one idea that is worth implementing.

[Click here to read this brief blog post about 7 ways to generate great ideas.](#)

Watch this video that describes where good ideas come from.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=215#oembed-1>

WHERE GOOD IDEAS COME FROM by Steven  
Johnson <https://youtu.be/NugRZGDpPFU>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=215#oembed-2>



The surprising habits of original thinkers | Adam Grant <https://youtu.be/fxbCHn6gE3U>

**Brainstorming** is a common method for generating ideas that you can either do by yourself or in collaboration with others. This method works best when the idea generation step in the creative process is separated from the idea selection step because when you are generating ideas, you can't be evaluating them. Judging ideas when they are generated is the best way to shut down the idea generation process. Instead, the rules of brainstorming dictate that all ideas that are generated are captured and not judged until later. Of course, this will lead to a large pool of ideas that are good, bad and ugly, but that is okay because new ideas can be generated by comparing and combining even bad ideas.

*If at first, the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it. – Albert Einstein*

Watch this video about how to brainstorm:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=215#oembed-3>

Create Brainstorming Magic <https://youtu.be/QS3GQSgr4KE> Now watch this video about how **not** to brainstorm:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=215#oembed-4>

how NOT to brainstorm <https://youtu.be/ttWhK-NO4g8>

Another way brainstorming sessions can be shut down is if anyone falls in love with their first good idea. Don't do this. If you do, you will have trouble putting that idea aside and continue in the idea generation process. Remember you need 50 or so ideas. If all of the ideas are being recorded, you can be assured that those great ideas are safe from being lost. Don't stop at the first good idea either, there are likely better ideas to be generated. And besides, you are not supposed to be judging the ideas at this stage, anyway.

What rules have helped you brainstorm successfully?

Would using a mindmap help you with your brainstorming? View the following video demonstrating how to use mind mapping software to brainstorm. This also works great when you don't have a group to brainstorm with.

There are many ways to make your idea generation more productive beyond brainstorming. One is to use a random word generator, like the one at <http://creativitygames.net/random-word-generator>, or this one at <http://watchout4snakes.com/wo4snakes/Random/RandomWord> or at <https://www.thegamegal.com/word-generator/> Generate a random word and focus your attention on relating this new word to the problem or challenge that you are generating ideas for. This may take a few minutes but it will help you to consider the problem or challenge from a point of view that you would not have considered before, hence allowing you to generate more ideas. Remember to record all of the ideas, even the weird ones.

Watch the short tutorial below on how to use random words for generating ideas.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded*

— from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=215#oembed-5>

Advanced Brainstorm Methods — SCAMPER and Random Word <https://youtu.be/YvN0sogS6Mg>

How do you generate your ideas? How do you know when you have generated the best ideas possible?

Not everyone takes the time to generate a lot of ideas when they are looking for a fast solution. What is the hazard of going with the first good idea that is generated? Does it save time?

What prevents you from generating enough ideas when you need to find good ideas? What will you do to generate more ideas in the future?

*“The difficulty lies not so much in developing new ideas as in escaping from the old ones.” John Maynard Keynes*

Are you prevented from generating new ideas because you can't let go of any old ones? How can you make sure you are not being hindered by old ideas?

## Challenge:

Pick a challenge or problem that you would like to complete/solve. Use the methods described above to generate at least 50 ideas for completing that challenge

or solving that problem. Record these in a list and show them to a friend for feedback.

## Further Readings/Viewings:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=215#oembed-6>

Generating ideas: Shimpei Takahashi at TEDxTokyo  
(English) <https://youtu.be/ZdJOHgSQJ1Q>

## 23. Collaboration magnifies creativity



[Human reconnection](#), by [Toa Heftiba](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

*Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success. —  
Unknown*

Being creative with other people can help you complete challenges and solve problems more effectively and efficiently. Although you can complete the creative process on your own, when you [collaborate](#) with others who share the same objectives, each step of the creative process can be magnified in its power to complete tasks. For examples:

- More resources can be identified when collaborating.
- More ideas can be generated through collaborating.

- Better criteria for selecting the best idea can be applied.
- Better plans can be made when collaborating.
- Executing plans is easier when you have more people to share the tasks.
- Assessing the success of projects is easier when collaborating.

*No one is as smart as everyone. — Unknown*



[The world is ours](#), by [charlesdeluvio](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=221#oembed-1>

Method 6-3-5 (BrainWriting) <https://youtu.be/TRliPPd8ZU>

Collaboration works because everyone in the group brings different points of view, life experiences, knowledge, and skills to the table. This diverse pool of knowledge, skills and experiences can make each step of the creative process more powerful. Who would be the best people for you to collaborate with?

If you have a choice, do you prefer to work alone, or to collaborate with others? Why?

A different way of collaborating is to build on the work of other people. [Click here](#) to watch this interesting [mashup](#) that is a composition of the artistic works of many people.

The [Creative Commons](#) is an interesting licensing strategy that makes it easier for the owners of creative works to share and give permission to others to build on their works. Watch this video description about the Creative Commons.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=221#oembed-2>

A Shared Culture <https://youtu.be/1DKm96Ftfko>

An easy way to find creative works that are licensed through the creative commons is to go to <http://search.creativecommons.org/> and use this search engine.

Not everyone is interested in collaborating with others. They may choose to not share their works and ideas with others, nor build on the works or ideas of others. What are the hazards of this approach? What are the benefits?

This book is licensed under Creative Commons. As well, I have built it on many ideas and creative works of others. Do you find value in a book like this?

I am open to collaborating with anyone interested in helping me further develop this book. Are you interested or do you know someone who would be? Some students from past terms have contributed to this course. You may have found their items already embedded in the pages of the book and there are larger pieces in the appendix.

Do you use the creative works of others in your creative work? Do you share your works for others to use?

Watch the following Ted Talk presentations about how collaboration and exchanging ideas drive innovations.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=221#oembed-3>

Matt Ridley: When ideas have sex <https://youtu.be/OLHh9E5ilZ4>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=221#oembed-4>

Catarina Mota: Play with smart materials [https://youtu.be/\\_QwRsVyk7us](https://youtu.be/_QwRsVyk7us)

Here is a video about an interesting organization at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/ifwerantheworld/about/> where you can start projects or join and help projects to change the world. The site helps you to collaborate with others to make a difference.





One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=221#oembed-5>

IfWeRanTheWorld – How it Works <https://youtu.be/QM0VOgazG8g>

**Consider why collaboration is important and valuable.**

## Challenge:

Find at least two people to collaborate with as you work on completing the challenge or problem you selected to work on in the previous few pages.

*Be with people who knows your worth. You don't need too many people to be happy, just a few real ones who appreciate you for exactly who you are. – Unknown*

## 24. Judge ideas carefully



[Man holding incandescent bulb](#), by [Riccardo Annandale](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

After you have generated 50 or more ideas for your task or project, you now need to judge your ideas and find the one or two best ideas that are worth implementing. Often you will find it useful to pick the top three or five ideas, ranking them in order so that you will have a second and third alternate idea ready if anything happens to remove the first idea from the project.

The best way to rank your ideas is to keep two things in mind:

1. You will want to select the idea that will produce the most benefit in completing the challenge or solving your problem.

2. You will also want to select an idea that will be the easiest or least costly to implement.

These are just two criteria for judging and ranking your ideas, but this common combination of criteria is often referred to as looking for the “low hanging fruit”, as seen in the chart below.

Another way to view this approach is to perform a [cost/benefit analysis](#). This analysis consists of identifying the potential costs and benefits of implementing an idea and confirming if the benefits outweigh the costs. If the return on the investment of the implementation is not large enough to justify the costs, then another idea should be selected. The challenge of using this approach is estimating with accuracy the dollar value of the costs and benefits.

Watch the video below about how to do a cost/benefit analysis.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=232#oembed-1>*

Cost/Benefit Analysis [https://youtu.be/Rh7ygXiR\\_rs](https://youtu.be/Rh7ygXiR_rs)

There are other criteria that you may need to consider when you are judging your ideas and they would depend on your particular context and circumstances. Perhaps some of the following examples would be important criteria for you:

- Is the idea morally correct?
- Does the idea fit into the overall mission and values of the organization?
- Can we implement the idea within the timelines given?
- How interested are you personally in investing in this idea?
- Has this idea been implemented before within the

organization?

What criteria would you use to judge your pool of ideas to rank the top 3 ideas?

When you consider purchasing something that costs more than \$100, do you consider and compare the costs vs. the benefits of acquiring that item or service? Does it help you make the best choice?

Personally, I have developed the habit of using a cost/benefit analysis every time I face a significant decision in my life. What helps me to separate the trivial decisions from the significant ones, is that I ask myself if the consequences of my choices are going to make a difference in my life one year later. If I decide my decision will not affect me beyond a year, I treat decision as trivial and make a quick decision and move on. If I decide the decision could make a significant difference in my life beyond a year, I essentially weigh the costs vs. benefits of each alternative that I am considering very carefully.

## Challenge:

Identify at least 3 criteria that will help you rank the top three ideas in your pool of ideas from the previous pages.

Share your top three ideas with your collaborators or a friend for feedback.

## 25. Plan your implementations well



[Bucket list](#), by [Glenn Carstens-Peters](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Even the best ideas are only valuable when they are made into reality. Implementing an idea for a change or innovation requires effective planning.

*He who fails to plan is planning to fail. — Winston Churchill*



[Crumpled Pages From a Book](#), by [Michael Dziedzic](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Normally implementing any new idea in the workplace is a [project](#) with a definite start and end, so good project planning techniques will help you.

Have you attempted to implement a new idea into your workplace that didn't work out? Why didn't it work out?

Watch the following 2 videos about project management.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online

here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=236#oembed-1>

What is Project Management? Training Video <https://youtu.be/>

<https://youtu.be/SxmTFTZ9T1c>

The Essential Skills Series – Project Management <https://youtu.be/SxmTFTZ9T1c>

The process of planning projects can be broken down into these simple steps:

1. Identify the tasks to be completed.
2. Determine the best sequence in which the tasks should be completed.
3. Determine the due dates for each task.
4. Select who should complete each task.
5. Identify the resources that will be required.

Along with identifying tasks that need to be completed, it is often helpful to identify strategies and tactics that will help you and your team to successfully complete a project plan. [Strategies](#) are high-end action plans that will help you reach your objectives in completing your project. Some examples of strategies could include:

- Reduce the organization's debt by 50% by reducing needless spending through budgeting more carefully.
- Maintain the holdings in your investment portfolio to be 30% global equity stocks and 60% Canadian equity stocks.
- Jeremy plans to develop a successful career in business in the energy sector after successfully completing a BBA and MBA degree.

. . . . .

[Tactics](#) are much smaller action plans that focus on helping you achieve your strategies. They may consist of completing just one or two of your tasks. Some examples of tactics could include:

- Each purchase must be reviewed and approved by a line

manager.

- Avoid purchasing U.S. bank stocks.
- Jeremy plans to achieve an A grade in each of his courses by completing and submitting all of our assignments at least one day before their due dates.

. . . . .

There are several tools that can be used for planning projects. Collaboration tools, like the applications in Google Drive, are very commonly used. Ganttproject is a free and open source tool designed specifically for project planning that you can download from <http://www.ganttproject.biz/> and install it on most computers. Several free tutorials available on how to use these tools can be found through a google search.

If you have been using one of a mind mapping tools, here is a video about how to use mind maps to plan projects.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=236#oembed-2>*

### Project Planning using Mind

Mapping [https://youtu.be/\\_ERcknXoT1o](https://youtu.be/_ERcknXoT1o)

There are some useful things to keep in mind when you plan a project and they are identified in the triangle below. All three elements are desirable to have in any project but reality dictates that you can only have two of the three as one must always be sacrificed. When you plan your projects which one will you be sacrificing to achieve the other two?

I have found that this principle has been very valuable to me when it comes to planning any innovation in my workplace. The trick is to plan carefully so that all three elements can be achieved



in a satisfactory way, which typically means you need to sacrifice one of the elements, ie. the project will either take longer, cost more or the quality will be lower than desired. Learning to balance these elements in your planning is a valuable skill that comes from experience.

Not everyone agrees with this principle and they will do things with little or no planning. Do you know of anyone like this? How successful are they?

Are you a strong project planner? How could you improve your project planning and implementations?

Watch this video below that Andy Faraj created. How much planning do you think Andy had to do to create this video?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=236#oembed-3>

A great example of how creativity requires careful planning. <https://youtu.be/ep5VCh9EDLA>

## Challenge:

Plan a project to implement the idea that you selected for an innovation in your workplace. Share your plan in with a friend and ask them for feedback.

Goal	Date	Steps	Action
------	------	-------	--------

## 26. Courage powers innovation



*Never a truer word spoken*, by [Nick Fewings](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

Implementing innovations involves taking risks and that requires [courage](#) to face the possibility of failing and opposition from peers.

*Fear is what stops you... Courage is what keeps you going.* – Unknown

Courage is the internal fortitude to move forward when the path is uncertain and hazardous. Courage is what all great leaders have to help them be successful.

. . . . .

Watch this video of some great examples of courageous innovators that you may recognize.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=242#oembed-1>

Apple – Think Different – Full Version <https://youtu.be/5sMBhDv4sik>

There are three attributes that I think all successful leaders have in common and you could call these the ABCs of innovative leaders.

## A — Have a Positive Attitude.

It is really important that you have a positive attitude about what you are doing. This helps you identify what improvements can be made with the confidence to implement them.

*“The greatest revolution of our generation is the discovery that human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives.”* William James, in Lloyd Albert

Johnson, comp., *A Toolbox for Humanity: More Than 9000 Years of Thought* (2003), 127.

*“Attitude, to me, is more important than ... the past, ... than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company, a church, a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.” Charles Swindoll, in Daniel H. Johnston, *Lessons for Living* (2001), 29.*

Do you have a positive attitude about your abilities to make improvements in your workplace?

Why is your attitude not as positive as it could be?

Tips for keeping a positive attitude:

- Balance work and leisure.
- Smille, giggle – laugh, laugh, laugh.
- Try volunteering.
- Break major goals/problems into smaller ones.
- Take short time-outs during the day to energize.
- Feel good about how you look – Clean, neat, dressed for the situation.
- Find someone you trust, someone who will listen.
- Ask for help when needed and when appropriate.
- Spend time on a favourite activity or with a favourite person.

Unknown

. . . . .

Watch the following Ted Talk about the power of a positive attitude and why it works.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded

from this version of the text. You can view them online here:  
<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=242#oembed-2>

Shawn Achor: The happy secret to better work <https://youtu.be/fLJsdqxnZb0>

Having a positive attitude is also related to how happy you are. [Click here to view 101 Ways to Feel Happy on a Daily Basis](#)

## B — Believe in Yourself.

Believing in your own abilities to succeed is crucial. You are your own worst critic so if you don't believe in yourself, you will not be able to accomplish much.

*He does not believe that does not live according to his belief. — Thomas Fuller, in H. L. Mencken, ed., A New Dictionary of Quotations (1942), 96.*

Do you believe in yourself, that you can be an innovative leader in your workplace?

What is preventing you from believing more in yourself?

*Just because you fail once, doesn't mean you're gonna fail at everything. Keep trying, hold on, and always, always, always, believe in yourself, because if you don't, then who will? — Marilyn Monroe*

## C — Face Challenges with Courage

Courage follows the first two attributes and is required to push any innovation through to completion. It often requires the courage

of a warrior to [overcome setbacks and unexpected obstacles](#) in implementations.

Whatever you do, you need courage. Whatever course you decide on, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising that tempt you to believe that your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires some of the same courage that a soldier needs. Peace has its victories, but it takes brave men and women to win them.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson, in Roy B. Zuck, *The Speaker's Quote Book*(2009), 113.

Watch this video of some courageous people.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=242#oembed-3>

BEST OF THE YEAR, SO FAR! <https://youtu.be/3E-bSvr3hN8>

And another compilation of people that are awesome.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=242#oembed-4>

PEOPLE ARE AMAZING 2017 \* FEAR IS JUST A STATE OF MIND  
\* <https://youtu.be/L3mkwLZfXM8>

Watch the video below and look for the courage in this speaker. Is it the same kind of courage depicted in the video above?



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=242#oembed-5>

Katie Makkai – Pretty <https://youtu.be/M6wJl37N9C0>

Do you have the courage required to implement innovations in your workplace?

What is keeping you from being the courageous innovative leader that you desire to be?

. . . . .

Read this short article by Diana Adams about 5 ways to build your courage.

<http://www.bitrebels.com/lifestyle/creativity-takes-courage-5-ways-to-build-your-courage/>

Could you use some or all of these ways to build up your courage?

Watch the next video and reflect on how you can develop your courage to make a difference.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=242#oembed-6>

Joshua Prager: In search for the man who broke my neck <https://youtu.be/3Z6x5t5A9so>



## Challenge:

Commit yourself to develop the three attributes of Attitude, Belief, and Courage in yourself so that you can be a more courageous innovative leader in your workplace. Identify two things that you will do over the next two weeks to accomplish this and describe them in your journal.

*Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen. – Winston Churchill*

## Further Readings/Viewings

- [8 of 10 Self-Made Millionaires Were Not 'A' Students. Instead, They Share 1 Trait](#) by Jeff Haden



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=242#oembed-7>

Bel Pesce: 5 ways to kill your dreams <https://youtu.be/sR6P5Qdvlnk>

## 27. Overcome all setbacks and obstacles

*No campaign plan survives first contact with the enemy.*

– Field Marshall [Helmuth Graf von Moltke](#)



[Lightbulb on black background](#) by [Alessandro Bianchi](#), Unsplash, is licensed under the [Unsplash License](#).

Even though we don't like [adversity](#) in our lives, it is very normal to have setbacks and unexpected obstacles appear in our path of life and our projects. This is especially true when we are doing

something of great value, like implementing an innovation in our workplace.

It is so important to take these setbacks and obstacles in stride and find ways to overcome them without giving up on our projects. The best way to find ways to overcome setbacks and obstacles is to use [the creative process that you read about earlier](#).

*Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.*  
– Samuel Beckett

. . . . .

Watch this video that illustrates this point. Oh, don't quit before the end of the video, it ends well.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=250#oembed-1>

Mouse Trap Survivor Cheese Commercial HD 1080 <https://youtu.be/KpZ3geNWzZ0>

You really only fail when you quit. Have you ever failed at something that you didn't give up on?

Watch this video about a successful professional that overcame many setbacks.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=250#oembed-2>

Secret to Success: Famous Failures <https://youtu.be/ta-Y76uwjgY>

And watch this video about a woman overcome a rare health challenge.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=250#oembed-3>

How Do YOU Define Yourself Lizzie Velasquez at TEDxAustinWomen <https://youtu.be/c62Aqdlzvqk>

Watch the following video for some sound suggestions of how to prepare yourself for and how to prevent setbacks.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=250#oembed-4>

Daniel Levitin How to stay calm when you know you'll be stressed <https://youtu.be/GUhmKMfV6P0>

When projects run into setbacks or unexpected obstacles typically you need to review your plan and make adjustments that will help you overcome the setback or obstacle. This may require you to come back to the elements of the triangle below and you will need to decide which element will have to be sacrificed for the sake of the project.

Examples of sacrifices:

- the project is taking too long to complete so more people are hired to help out. (higher costs)

- additional funding to help meet a deadline is not available and when the deadline comes, we have to go with the project as it is, even when it is not at the standard of quality we desired. (lower quality)
- the deadline is extended in order to meet the quality and budget. (slower)

If you can still complete a project even though it didn't turn out exactly as well as you had desired, is that a failure?

How do you overcome setbacks and obstacles in your projects or in your life in general?

Check out this list of 20 quotes about getting through tough times.

1. Tough times never last, but tough people do. — Robert H Schuller
2. The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is how you use them. — Unknown
3. Never let your head hang down. Never give up and sit down and grieve. Find another way. And don't pray when it rains if you don't pray when the sun shines. — Leroy Satchel Paige
4. A problem is a chance for you to do your best. — Duke Ellington
5. I ask not for a lighter burden, but for broader shoulders. — Jewish Proverb
6. If you don't like something change it; if you can't change it, change the way you think about it. — Mary Engelbreit
7. When things are bad, we take comfort in the thought that they could always get worse. And when they are, we find hope in the thought that things are so bad they have to get better. — Malcolm S Forbes
8. Prosperity is a great teacher; adversity is a greater. Possession pampers the mind; privation trains and strengthens it. — William Hazlitt
9. Show me someone who has done something worthwhile, and

I'll show you someone who has overcome adversity. — Lou Holtz

10. I love those who can smile in trouble, who can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink, but they whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves their conduct, will pursue their principles unto death. — Thomas Paine
11. If you aren't in over your head, how do you know how tall you are? — Unknown
12. The friend in my adversity I shall always cherish most. I can better trust those who helped to relieve the gloom of my dark hours than those who are so ready to enjoy with me the sunshine of my prosperity. — Ulysses S. Grant
13. The bravest sight in the world is to see a great man struggling against adversity. — Seneca
14. Adversity is a fact of life. It can't be controlled. What we can control is how we react to it. — Unknown
15. The true test of a person's character is how they stand during test of adversity — Unknown
16. The hardest struggle of all is to be something different from what the average man is. — Charles M Schwab
17. He knows not his own strength who hath not met adversity. — William Samuel Johnson
18. In times of great stress or adversity, it's always best to keep busy, to plow your anger and your energy into something positive. — Lee Iacocca
19. Prosperity makes friends, adversity tries them. — Publilius Syrus
20. One who gains strength by overcoming obstacles possesses the only strength which can overcome adversity. — Albert Schweitzer

From <http://allswagga.com/blog/2010/09/01/20-quotes-for-getting-through-tough-times/>

Here are twenty more powerful quotes that can be



inspiring: <https://www.notsalmon.com/2015/09/21/inspiring-quotes-for-tough-times/>

How can you strengthen your abilities to overcome setbacks and obstacles in your life?

## Challenge:

Implement the innovation project that you have been planning. Look for any setbacks and unexpected obstacles and work through them. Be creative in your solutions. Record your progress and experiences and share them with a friend for feedback.

*God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the Courage to change the things that I can and the Wisdom to know the difference. – Serenity Prayer*

*Your journey has molded you for your greater good, and it was exactly what it needed to be. Don't think that you've lost time. It took each and every situation you have encountered to bring you to the now. And now is right on time.*

*– Asha Tyson*

*A failure often does not have to be a failure at all. However you have to be ready for it. – Will you admit when things go wrong? Will you take steps to set them right? – Because the difference between triumph & defeat isn't about willingness to take risks. It's about mastery of*

*rescue.*

*– Atul Gawande*

## 28. Creativity is iterative



[Person writing on white paper](#) by [UX Indonesia](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under the [Unsplash License](#).

The creative process doesn't end after one cycle through the six steps below. It is an [iterative](#) process that repeats as many times as required.

When you get to the step where you assess the success of the implementation of your innovation, unless you have executed it perfectly, you will need to start the process again to explore the new situation and new challenges, then generating new ideas for addressing the new challenges or solving the problems.

When a setback or unexpected obstacle arises, this is the best time to start the process from the exploring step to apply the process to overcome the setback or obstacle.

Watch this video presentation created by Alex Hayvren, James Fischer and Mitchell Oucharek about the iterative process of creativity in overcoming setbacks.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=255#oembed-1>

CREATITERATIVE: A Journey for Friendship <https://youtu.be/nUFYO72WXZ4>

Watch this video presentation about the value of sharing ideas and innovations so we can build upon them.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=255#oembed-2>

Catarina Mota: Play with smart materials [https://youtu.be/\\_QwRsVyk7us](https://youtu.be/_QwRsVyk7us)

I have learned to work through the steps of the creative process in repeating cycles in an efficient way. It has become so automatic to me that I hardly notice that I am repeating the process.

How often do you repeat this cycle in your creative work?

Writing is a great example of how the creative process is repeated several times. Whether you are writing prose, poetry, stories or music, you can't expect yourself to write something perfectly the first time. Even professional writers go through many iterations of their work before they feel it is publishable. The trick is to improve the writing on each rewrite.

How many times do you rewrite an important document?

Not everyone seems to agree with this principle. I have observed people that work through one cycle of the creative process and

consider their project finished. They may judge their work as either a success or a failure but they never go back to the project. What are the hazards of this method?

What prevents you from repeating the creative process when it could continue to help you be successful?

## Challenge:

When you come up against a setback or obstacle in your work, keep working through the creative process and repeat it as often as required to be successful. Share your experiences with a friend and ask them how they do this.

How do you know when it is not worthwhile to continue going through the creative process?

*Devote yourself to an idea. Go make it happen. Struggle on it. Overcome your fears. Smile. Don't you forget: this is your dream. — Unknown.*

## Further Readings/Viewings



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=255#oembed-3>

Scott Berkun Lecture: The Myths of Innovation <https://youtu.be/amt3ag2BaKc>

## 29. Evaluating innovations

Evaluation is assigning a value to an innovation or project in order to help assess or determine how successful it was. In most workplaces, assigning values using the same currency that the organization operates with is the easiest way to managing the expectations and resources required to implement these innovations.

Evaluations are useful for making the following decisions:

- Deciding if a proposed innovation is worth funding by comparing the forecasted costs with the benefits.
- Comparing one proposed innovation with other proposed innovations that may be competing for the same limited funding.
- Assessing how successful a completed innovation was in achieving its forecasted cost and benefits.
- Assessing if a completed innovation is worth continuing.

*“True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information” – Winston Churchill*

There are different ways to evaluate an innovation or project.

The most basic way is to compare the cost with the benefit. If the cost is higher than the benefit that it is not worth doing until adjustments are made to make the benefit greater or the costs lower. For example, if the total benefit of project A is \$10,000 and the total cost is \$1,000 then it is a promising project. If the total benefit of project B is \$10,000 but the total cost is \$20,000 then logic would dictate that it is a project that shouldn't be implemented.

The best way to estimate the benefit in dollars is to estimate how much the organization will gain in revenues after the innovation is implemented, minus how much they will gain if the innovation is not implemented. This is the benefit of implementing the innovation. For example, if the organization stands to make \$40,000 in revenues

per month without the innovation, but stands to increase that to \$60,000 per month after implementing the innovation, then the benefit of the innovation is the difference, ( $\$60,000 - \$40,000$ ) \$20,000 per month.

Sometimes the value of a benefit is best estimated as being what is saved when a cost is eliminated or reduced for an organization. For example if an organization has a problem that is costing them \$100,000 a year, then the value of the benefit of a solution to eliminate that problem would also be \$100,000 a year, because the organization would be now saving that amount of money instead of losing it as a result of the innovation. If the cost to the organization is not fully eliminated but is reduced by half, then the value of the benefit would be \$50,000 a year because that is what the resulting estimated savings will be.

It is easy to convert benefit evaluations to different time frames simply by multiplying or dividing by the appropriate factor. For example, a \$20,000 per month benefit could be multiplied by a factor of 12 to calculate the annual benefit. ( $\$20,000/\text{month} \times 12 = \$240,000$  per year)

The cost of the innovation is simply what it will cost to implement the innovation. This should be the total of all costs to the organization, including the time of everyone involved, manages, instructors and participants. This could also be presented related to a time frame, such as, \$10,000 per month, or depending on the context and time frame in focus, it could be presented as a one-time cost, as an amortized cost over several years, or anything in between. This usually depends on the time frame of the benefits evaluation as well. For example, a project that promises to produce a benefit of only \$20,000 per month but its one-time cost is \$100,000 would not look appealing from the short time frame of only one month. But if you expanded the time from one month to a year, assuming the benefit will continue each month for a year, then the benefit is converted to \$240,000 over the year which is now significantly higher than the cost.





[Never stop](#), by [Fab Lentz](#), [Unsplash](#), licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

### **Net Benefit**

A common evaluation method is finding the net benefit of an innovation project by subtracting the dollar value of the costs from the dollar value of benefits. For example, if the annual benefit is \$240,000 and the cost is \$100,000 then the net annual benefit is \$140,000. If the net benefit is large then the project is a more promising investment than another project with a smaller net benefit.

$$\text{Benefits} - \text{Costs} = \text{Net Benefit}$$



[Investment](#), by [Precondo CA](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

### **Return On Investment**

A more advanced method for evaluating innovation projects is to calculate the Return On Investment ratio or ROI. This is done simply by dividing the net benefit (Benefit – Cost) by the dollar value of the Costs. For example, using the same numbers as above,  $(\$240,000 - \$100,000) \div \$100,000 = 1.4$ . Normally because these ratios are small numbers they are multiplied by 100 and converted into a percent. So in this example, the ROI would equal  $(1.4 \times 100)$  140%.

Calculating an ROI evaluation is useful to providing a fair way to compare competing innovation projects. For example: If project A has a net annual benefit of \$120,000 but will cost \$100,000 to implement then it is a higher risk project and has a lower ROI than project B that also has a net annual benefit of \$120,000 but will only cost \$50,000 to implement. In this case, the ROI for project A is 20% over a year and the ROI for project B is 140% over a year.

Comparing ROI evaluations of projects makes it much easier for decision makers to select the innovation project with the highest potential benefits compared to the risks of the investment. Projects with higher ROIs are better than lower ROIs because that means

the potential to gain benefits is larger compared to the risk of not recovering the investment of the costs.

When comparing ROI evaluations, it is also necessary to convert these percentages to the same time frame. For example, comparing a project with an ROI calculated over a month with a project with an ROI calculated over a year would not be helpful.



[Woman counting dollar bills](#), by [Alexander Grey](#), [Unsplash](#), is licensed under [Unsplash License](#).

### **Payback Period**

Another evaluation that helps to compare the time frames of ROIs is the Payback Period. This is calculated by dividing the dollar value of the cost of the project by the dollar value of the benefits and you will derive the time it will take to pay back the cost of the investment. A low payback period is better than a high one. For example, if the benefit is \$20,000 per month and the cost is \$100,000, then the payback period will be 5 months. ( $\$100,000 \div \$20,000/\text{month}$ ) It is important to include the units of time and currency for this calculation to work.

$$\text{Costs} \div \text{Benefits} = \text{Payback Period}$$

Practice evaluating some initiatives or projects in your personal life. Such as purchasing a computer, cell phone, car, taking a trip somewhere, or any other initiation where you can estimate the dollar values of costs and benefits.

How can calculating the ROI and Payback Period values of some of your personal initiatives and innovations help you make better decisions?

See if you can calculate the three evaluations described above for your innovation project. If you already know what the dollar value of the benefits and costs of your innovation are, these calculation are very easy.

*“Successful Project Management: PLAN, EXECUTE, EVALUATE Sounds simple, but most projects aren’t well planned nor are they evaluated well. The tendency is to jump right into execution and as soon as execution is completed (which usually isn’t soon), move on to the next project without evaluating what happen on the present project and what could have been improved. Successful project management requires more front and back end resources (and less middle) than are usually allocated” Source Unknown*

## Challenge:

Consider how you are going to evaluate your innovation project so you can determine the ROI and Payback Period. Most organizations will ask you for the ROI and Payback Period for any innovation project you ask them to invest in.

## Further readings/viewings:

- [FYI On ROI: A Guide To Calculating Return On Investment](#) by Andrew Beattie
- [How do you calculate the payback period? by Harold Averkamp](#)



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:

<https://openeducationalberta.ca/pcw/?p=261#oembed-1>

Investopedia Video: How To Calculate Return On Investment (ROI) <https://youtu.be/eoAR8ZyAyoc>



# Appendix A — Connecting the CIW Principles to Fields of Human Resources, Marketing, Finance, and Accounting

*This appendix is designed to further hone students understanding of the principles in “Creativity in the workplace” through highlighting the connection of the principles to the four business disciplines: Human Resources, Marketing, Finance, and Accounting.*

By Alex Jewell and Oliver Wallace — April 2018

## Human Resources

### Creativity Will Improve Your Workplace

The principle of creativity *improving your workplace* is essential to organizational success. Human Resource professionals foster organizational success by selecting, interviewing, and retaining the best employees with traits that allow the organization to succeed. The traits of a successful candidate have the organizational mindset of the organization of course, but also an innovative and adaptive mindset. If you are certain that you were not born with an innovative or adaptive mindset, you are wrong. Creativity can be

learned which directly leads to being more innovative and adaptive to external changes.

This image proves creativity in the workplace has no limits.

Source: (Heisler, Y, 2017)

## **Creativity Is Fun, Communities Best Nurture Creativity, Broaden Your Horizons, Change your Surroundings**

Employee retention is a large aspect of any organization to succeed. An organization must remain flexible to retain the best of the best. Human Resource professionals retain employees through “team building” exercises that foster a community. Team building activities such as taking the team out to the Rec-Room or for dinner allow the team to connect in a different environment. A different environment with your team can broaden the team horizons while fostering a creative community. After a team building activity, the team will remain competitive and often generate better ideas in the workplace, as now the members of the team are more willing to listen and help reach the common goal of the team. Human Resource professional team building activities now have set the foundation of the community. Now the team will have a more productive idea generation.

This image shows how changing one’s environment can produce the same result, but in a more unique way that could enhance effectiveness.

Source: (Heisler, Y, 2017)



## Explore problems thoroughly, Idea generation, Ranking Ideas

Human Resource professionals encounter problem-solving scenarios in regards to the conflict in many different ways such as when two companies integrate into one and you have to choose which employees to keep and which ones to let go. Cultural differences among the different groups give rise to conflict for Human Resource professionals to handle as well. Human Resource professionals need to explore problems thoroughly to make the right decision. Determining the most relevant variables in a situation is not easy, but can be learned with practice. The best approach for Human Resource professionals is write down all elements of the situation without jumping to a conclusion once you have found one piece of information. Once all info has been written down, one can then rank the most important information to make sure the most relevant variables are considered when making a decision.

Connecting the missing piece of the puzzle can only be achieved by finding the missing piece, therefore, you must generate all alternatives to the problem to come up with the piece that best matches the puzzle.

Source: (EDX, n.d.)

Try finding the most relevant variables in the scenario below:

Scenario: A telephone company is merging with a television provider company. What aspects should be considered when integrating the two companies?

- Did you come up with any of these answers?:
- Duplicate employees
- Duplicate equipment
- Mixing different cultures
- Segregation of employees
- Payroll differences, benefit issues

# Leverage Strengths and Opportunities

Human Resource professionals select candidates that would be best suited for the position. They look for transferable skills from previous work experience or school courses that will allow the candidate to succeed in the position. By selecting employees with strengths in this area, the organization can leverage that employee to add more value to the company quicker than hiring an employee that has no previous experience.

Organizations must capitalize on opportunities that can allow companies to further establish themselves in the industry. Human resource professionals assist in employee efficiencies through employee engagement and communication when a company is pursuing a new direction to capitalize on due to new market conditions.

The illustration above represents that you have strengths and need to leverage them to reach your goals and to overcome obstacles.

Source: (Walling, C, 2014)

## Finance

### Capture and manage all ideas, Creative Process,

Portfolio managers manage money with the intent to meet the goals of the client. When onboarding a new client, any portfolio manager must create a client information statement that outlines the client's objectives of their investment. Portfolio managers must keep a

system to capture and manage all client ideas and document them to be in compliance with regulators. For example, An environmental client may state they do not want any investments in their account that go against their belief, so you cannot buy oil and gas stocks. Thus, a portfolio manager must keep a system to keep track of all their client's requirements.

The following images show parity of how the creative process can be applied to other disciplines.

Source: (Investec, n.d.)

Source: Creativity in the Workplace

Here is a sample of a client information statement that a portfolio manager must keep track of:

Client: Rod Corbett

Long-term goal: buy a 1969 black Camaro (\$45,000) and a condo in Malibu California (\$280,000) in 7 years.

Short term goal: pay for his son's medical school training. (\$30,000 a Year)

Constraints: Rod does not smoke cigarettes, nor encourages it.

With the example client statement above, a portfolio manager must always have these goals and constraints in mind to make sure that Rod Corbett can meet his short and long-term goals.

## Broad knowledge,

After several Investment banking interviews, I have realized the importance of broad knowledge. Broad knowledge, diversity, and different backgrounds set a strong foundation for a variety of different ideas when proposing a solution for investment ideas. Broad knowledge allows one to see investment ideas differently. For example: when evaluating an oil and gas stock an engineer may only look at information that is consistent with his background and conclude that if the seismic activity indicates high porosity in the area, then it is probable that oil will be in that area. Therefore,

buy this oil and gas stock. While a financial analyst may take a holistic approach and believe that the economy is down, therefore, we should only invest in grocery stores during this period because everyone still needs groceries. Combining individuals with various backgrounds allows a process to be evaluated more in-depth and ultimately lead to a better outcome.

*No description available.*

The more you know, the more insight you have to generate new ideas and to overcome different problems, that's why employers look for this important creative trait.

Source: (300 Hours CFA, 2018)

Challenge: Learn 1 new thing each day and you'll have learned 365 new things in one year that separate you from the competition.

## **Innovations Make Valuable Differences, Change your Surroundings, Broaden Yourself**

Finance is an evolving industry, catalyzed by technology. The stock market used to employ hundreds of traders on the floor yelling at the top of their lungs the trade they have to offer to other traders on the floor. Today, all trades are conducted through computers and no personnel is required to execute the trade on your behalf as the computer automatically matches you up with another investor who is willing to take on the other side of that trade. Another example of innovations making a valuable difference in the finance industry is the rapid access to information and calculations. Mount Royal has a Bloomberg terminal available to all students in the EB building. The Bloomberg terminal is a normal computer that has the ability to run the terminal program which allows you to get the fair value of any stock in seconds. Essentially all these innovations allow us to get us

the same result, but at a much faster rate which allows investors to make more informed decisions quicker.

Located in the EB building:

This is the modern-day version of the Bloomberg terminal, showing endless amounts of data that can be generated through this machine.

Source: (Nusca, A, 2015)

## Challenge Your Assumptions

Heuristics are mental shortcuts we rely on to make our lives easier. Financial analysts and portfolio managers must be careful when it comes to rules of thumb as these can hinder a portfolio managers diligence in conducting research. For example: if you make the assumption that your favorite restaurant (McDonald's) would be a good investment you could overlook market factors such as ground beef poisoning rates are high this month and the stock is tanking. We must challenge our assumptions to avoid losing money and to ensure creativity is not blocked.

Please try the game below:

This game challenges your senses by having associations with different words.

Source: (Kahneman, D, 2011)

## Accounting

Accounting is a pivotal business discipline which is in high demand within any organization. Accountants know how to evaluate a business from the inside out, they can look at financial statements and determine within a matter of minutes if this is a strong company

that is worth investing in, and they are deeply trusted by the executive team of any company to produce timely, high quality, and consistent results. Many believe that accounting is an “all numbers” profession, this couldn’t be any further from the truth. Accounting connects to many of the Creativity in the Workplace Principles, and without these principles, the accounting profession would not be where it is today.

## **Innovations Make Valuable Differences**

Innovations in the accounting profession have been nothing less than radical. Technology and innovations have made massive differences in financial reporting. Keeping up and being familiar with the biggest trends reduces the struggle with higher efficiency and a more streamlined approach to managing accounting within a firm (Gerber, 2017). Examples of technological innovation in the accounting profession consist of cloud-based accounting, complete integration, manual entry minimized with OCR, new solutions in tax software, and the ability to have data on a mobile device. Cloud applications have the ability to handle everything from taxes and benefit distributions to invoicing and payroll. Data will be updated immediately as a change occurs and can be monitored in one place (Gerber, 2017). Think about how much time this saves compared to the original method of entering the new data by hand. This also allows management to gain access to this valuable information much more rapidly. Integration solutions are allowing companies to link all of their accounting software so that users from any department can access this at the click of a button (Gerber, 2017). As mentioned above, the manual entry has been minimized significantly. The implementation of optical character recognition (OCR) is reducing manual entry even more. Firms now use this technology to use scanners or even mobile devices to take pictures of printed receipts that immediately translates into digital files

(Gerber, 2017). Ultimately, these new technological innovations are very exciting for the accounting industry and have definitely resulted in improved working procedures, production processes, services, valuable skills and proficiencies of employees, and job satisfaction.

Please read the full article to dive deeper into these five accounting technology innovations:

<https://www.accountingdepartment.com/blog/5-accounting-technology-innovations-for-cfo>

## Explore Problems Thoroughly

Accounting is not an easy profession and it is not for everyone. Many problems can occur every day for accountants. They need to be very skilled at exploring a problem deeply before coming to an ultimate solution. Attention to detail is a skill that every accountant needs to have as they are looking at data every single day and need to be able to identify which details are relevant and look for opportunities to capitalize on.

Watch this video to find out how observant you are: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFL9bEezvSk>

Accountants mine data every single day at work to identify historical trends and make projections based on what they have found. It is not uncommon for data to be corrupt, and this means that the accountant will have to put his or her problem-solving skills to work in order to determine what is corrupting this data. They must have the patience to identify all aspects of the challenge, to help lead them to an effective, brilliant, and creative solution. While exploring this problem, the accountant will be able to identify available resources that can be used to help him or her solve this data problem. These resources may consist of internal co-workers or outside friends and other accountants that may have experienced the same problem at some point. While experiencing data problems

like this, there is no doubt that the accountant would have to put on all of Edward de Bono's problem-solving hats at some point, with a focus on the White Hat (information) because the accountant will have to focus the most on considering purely what information is available in order to solve this issue.

## Creativity Will Improve your Workplace

Many most definitely believe that there is no room for creativity in the accounting profession and that putting the word “accounting” beside “creative” is just flat out wrong. In some cases, this might be correct, but there is always more room for the creative part of your brain to get to work in the accounting world (Thomas, 2013). Some examples of implementing creativity in your accounting job consist of taking a notebook everywhere, make time for creativity and make your environment creative (Thomas, 2013). Taking a notebook to work every day will allow accountants to record the inspiration that surrounds us every day. Putting thoughts or words on paper may give you that extra motivation to hit that deadline that is rapidly approaching. Making time for creativity is important in any career, but especially accounting. Accounting can undoubtedly be dry sometimes, you can be buried in spreadsheets for days on end while trying to present the financial information in an effective way. Accountants need to make time to be creative in their day, if you want something to be a priority, make it a priority. Even setting aside fifteen minutes per day to get the creative juices flowing has the potential to improve an accountants efficiency (Thomas, 2013). Finally, making your environment creative at work, in an accounting job, is vitally important. Posting motivational quotes, pictures, or even some nice artwork in your office is essential in being the best you can be every single day at the office. To conclude, even though the accounting profession is very strict and rules must be followed, do not be intimidated to broaden your horizons and step away from



those rules for a certain amount of time each and every day. Work on looking at the numbers, the spreadsheets, and the reports, and seeing things that nobody else sees. This will set you apart from the herd and ultimately set you up for continued success.

Please read the full article to help yourself understand that there is room for creativity in the accounting profession and that it will improve your workplace: <http://goingconcern.com/there-room-creativity-accounting-job/>

## Broaden Yourself

Accountants can get stuck in their career and only focus on the numbers and what needs to get done. I believe that accountants have the power to continuously move up in organizations and that they have the skills to operate large companies successfully. Broadening yourself as an accountant is very important, the more skills, knowledge, and experiences you have allows you to draw ideas, plan them, and successfully implement them. As mentioned above, accountants are equipped with the skills to analyze a company from the inside out and find indicators that either prove a company's strength or prove that they are covering up financial data that tells a different story. This is a very valuable skill. If accounts can combine this skill with the skills of communicating with people, making connections, and networking, the career possibilities are limitless. To conclude, accountants should always be working on their communication skills and expressing themselves. They are the backbone of organizations and understand how the company operates the best. If accountants can broaden themselves and master the communication skill, they will find themselves in executive positions very quickly.

Please read this article to realize the importance of accounting: <https://www.globalfinanceschool.com/blog-post/importance-accounting>

Please read this article to understand the importance of effective communication in accounting: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/importance-effective-communication-accounting-3169.html>

## Good Health Powers Creativity and Performance

Many of us take our good health for granted and do not realize what good health provides us with. We do not realize that if our good health is taken from us, we are essentially left with nothing. Being healthy powers creativity and performance in an accounting position. Creativity is an essential part of accounting and accountants need to allocate time every day to focus on this. Without your good health, it is impossible to focus on creativity in the office because your mind will be focused on feeling ill and not being creative, effective, and efficient. Accounting can be very demanding and can consist of very long days, working on weekends, and limited time off. It is very important to take adequate time to sleep and rest, get enough sleep, eat healthy, exercise, and have a healthy variety of activities in your life. I have worked in accounting positions before and felt run down and worked out. One thing that I have found very helpful is preparing meals for your week every Sunday. This allows you to save money, eat healthily, and allocate time during your week to other things rather than worrying about making your next meal.

Read this article about staying healthy through the busy tax season in the accounting profession: <https://www.accountingweb.com/practice/team/how-to-stay-fit-and-sane-through-busy-season>

# Marketing

Marketing is another essential business discipline that must have creativity and that is vital to any organization. Below we connect the principles of Creativity in the Workplace to marketing.

## Communities best nurture creativity

Creative communities can be very valuable to support significant learning and it can also be further developed to successfully support and nurture creativity. In the marketing world, this principle is firmly held. For example, in marketing, the adaptation to branded communities is genius and it creates an opportunity for the customer to participate in the decisions in regards to products and services of companies (Brenner, 2017). Companies are using branded communities to perpetuate a “we” experience – a community – for the consumer instead of an “us-them” relationship, which can sometimes be unhealthy and ineffective for the organization (Brenner, 2017). Brands now have the opportunities to truly listen to their customer and they can use what they learn to help develop the next focused marketing strategy, or potentially the next product. This aligns directly with communities nurturing creativity. These branded communities now have the ability to brainstorm ideas and get immediate feedback which further propels the marketing creativity within an organization.

Please read the full article to learn more about branded communities: <https://marketinginsidergroup.com/content-marketing/5-examples-brilliant-brand-communities-shaping-online-world/>

# Great Ideas Come From Many

Developing a solution to a problem, or in the case, a marketing tactic involves the generation of hundreds and hundreds of ideas before one is decided upon and implemented. Brainstorming is an effective method for idea generation that can be done alone or with a group. Marketing departments have very long and intense brainstorming sessions to come up with ideas for marketing implementations. Marketing efforts are a significant driver of sales, if your ideas are poor, then your sales may drop as an effect. This proves that marketing is an essential component of any organization and should not be taken lightly. Marketing brainstorming sessions are all about idea generation and the goal of these sessions is to produce as many ideas as possible in order to come up with one great one. These steps are an effective way to brainstorm with marketing:

1. Gather a group for the brainstorming session. Choose people who are confident and eager to suggest fresh ideas.
2. Set up a whiteboard or large piece of paper to keep track of the ideas the group generates.
3. Announce the goal of the session, and write it at the top of the board. For example, if you need a marketing slogan, describe what qualities must be emphasized, such as the product's quality or low price.
4. Encourage participants to let loose. Brainstorming sessions should generate off-the-wall ideas if only to get people thinking outside the box. Novel approaches to marketing catch the attention of consumers.
5. Warn participants not to criticize suggestions. You don't want people to filter themselves. Otherwise, the marketing ideas the group generates will be stale and unimpressive.
6. Write down everything said — you never know what might stimulate a better idea later. When a promising suggestion occurs, circle it and ask the group to focus on that concept for

a few minutes.

7. Employ free-association techniques if progress slows. For example, describe an attribute of the product you're marketing, and ask participants to yell out the first word or phrase that comes to mind.

Not all the suggestions will be helpful, but someone might strike upon a fruitful concept not considered before.

(Mack, 2017)

Full article here: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/brainstorm-marketing-22752.html>

## Collaboration magnifies creativity

Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success! Being creative with others can help you complete challenges more effectively and efficiently. Collaboration with others who share the same objective is very important for marketing departments all over the world. Having a marketing team to collaborate with will ensure that the best idea for the marketing implementation is derived, selected, planned, and implemented in the best way possible. Marketing teams are constantly evaluating and adapting to different markets and demographics, which is a challenging feat. Teamwork is an essential part in marketing communication and good coordination of the team will most likely lead to convincing messages being sent to the consumer which in turn, will end in making sales and the conversion of the receiver if the messages to the client (Ramb, 2011).

Read this article to better understand why teamwork is an essential part of marketing communication: <https://bigeyeagency.com/blog/teamwork-is-essential-in-marketing-communication/>

Read this article to learn about 25 collaboration tools to power

your marketing team: <https://www.wrike.com/blog/top-collaboration-tools-to-power-your-marketing-team/>

## Judge ideas carefully

After the prolonged brainstorming sessions and idea generation within marketing departments, comes the time to select several ideas (out of the hundreds generated) to consider implementing. This period is referred to as the judging period, where ideas are carefully judged and ranked. Two factors to keep in mind when judging these ideas are selecting the idea that will produce the most benefit in completing the challenge of solving the problem, and you will also want to select the idea that is the least costly to implement. Marketing implementations usually come with a high cost, such as TV commercials, and therefore the ideas for commercials must be reviewed over and over again and judged very carefully in order to implement a successful marketing tactic.

## Plan Your Implementations Well

Implementing an idea or an effective strategy requires effective planning. The process of planning projects discussed in the Creativity in the Workplace textbook can be directly related to implementing a marketing strategy. These steps consist of:

1. Identify the tasks to be completed.
2. Determine the best sequence in which the tasks should be completed.
3. Determine the milestones and due dates for each task.
4. Select who should complete each task.

5. Identify the resources that will be required.

The implementation phase of the marketing strategy also consists of focusing on the following points:

**Facts:** This phase requires the addressing of the who, where, when, and how of reaching the objectives of the business. It also requires the allocation of specific tasks and timelines to individuals within the marketing group (Lorette, 2017).

**Features:** Implementation also translates into various procedures and policies for areas within the organization. In most cases, in each successful implementation, there is a visible leader, such as the CEO communicating the message that has been worked on for months (Lorette, 2017).

**Needs:** Trained people must be prepared to use their skills and abilities to implement the plan. Time and money are also needed to complete the project implementation (Lorette, 2017).

The image above is taken from the Principles of Creativity in the Workplace textbook. It explains that when one is implementing an innovation, they must attempt to locate the low hanging fruit by choosing the idea that has the largest benefit and is the easiest to implement. Marketers face a similar challenge when implementing advertisements and marketing strategies for their selective firms. They need to find that “sweet spot” of something that is smart and different from what consumers have seen before. This helps them break through and the solid strategy motivates consumers to take immediate action.

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# Appendix B - Implementing MGMT 2275 Creativity in the Workplace Principles to Public Relations and Communications

Written by Mikayla Kardynal – April 2018

## **Principle: Creativity will improve your workplace**

Creativity infused in the workplace is like superfood for your brain. If it is practiced with dedication, patience, and persistence – a valuable change in a workplace or individual's personal development will flourish and ream in benefits: see an improved flow of workplace culture/personal growth, problem-solving abilities, and resilience to tackle problems.

Tony Buzan, a leading expert in education and popularized mind mapping, shows how to embrace a more flexible and creative way of thinking in the video below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zO2LdDpx-Tc>

# The correlation between this principle and PR

In PR/communications, the ability to not only adapt to the constantly evolving industry is a must, but practitioners must be creative with planning, communication, and implementing strategies.

The University of Southern California depicts how creativity in one of the five essential skills a PR specialist needs. Whether you're solving problems and coming up with solutions, writing content or engaging new customers – the creative process is leverage to be competitive, innovative, and successful in PR in the resource below:

<https://communicationmgmt.usc.edu/msp-resources/articles-blogs/five-skills-every-public-relations-specialist-needs/>

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Schedule “creative thinking time” in your schedule once a week. Practice = results! And PR is results driven!

- Find items (pictures, quotes, music) that inspire you to use your imagination – then incorporate them into your workplace to brainstorm ideas for your PR project.

- Conduct experiments like, how can I accomplish this next task in half of the time? PR is a demanding and busy industry so learning how to be more efficient is good for maximizing your time!

- Observe the times you get a “energy rush/creative burst” and use this to your advantage. Being creative in PR will help you to keep up your competitors and stand out!

- Think creativity is important? Explain the values to others on

your team so that they join your mission. Creative collaboration in PR will ensure that fresh perspectives are always brought to the project.

“Creativity is the power to create something new, to reach deep into our subconscious for that “aha” solution. Sometimes it happens in a nanosecond, and sometimes that solution can take a lifetime to reveal itself.” – Linda Naiman

## Principle: Creativity is fun

Could you imagine having fun while completing daily tasks? Working doesn't have to be so daunting when you're finding ways to embrace the work you do while having fun. You know that feeling when your creativity expands after you do hobbies make you forget about time? That is the seed of creativity that enhances everything you do.

MIT Sloan Management Review shares a Deloitte case study that reflects that when employees were encouraged to be creative – they found a sense of play and relief from normal repetitive reporting methods. Read the article to learn how Deloitte motivated its employees to perform better – while having fun!

<https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/bringing-fun-and-creativity-to-work/>

## The correlation between this principle and PR

In PR/communications, it can be tedious keeping up with trends and ensuring your client, boss, or professor is pleased by your deliverables. But you can attain better results when you experience

more enjoyment out of your projects because you have the ability to turn a complicated task into an exciting game. The best part is, having fun while being creative will only enhance your creativity!

An ambassador of playing with ideas and having fun, Tim Brown CEO of the IDEO consultancy firm, had the first-hand experience of making sure that his corporate culture was truly welcoming and comforting. In his TED Talk below, he shares how his offices were fuelled with creative risks, and driven by non-judgment.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/david\\_kelley\\_how\\_to\\_build\\_your\\_creative\\_confidence?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/david_kelley_how_to_build_your_creative_confidence?language=en)

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Try spontaneous free-flow writing about something you're interested in. Whatever topic you choose, writing about anything will strengthen your writing skills in PR!
- Partake in activities/hobbies that are fun (to release dopamine) as this chemical is related to creativity in the brain. Having fun can help you multitask the various demands from your current PR project.
- Dance by yourself like nobody's watching! This one's for you. You deserve it and if you feel good about yourself, you will perform your best in your work.
- Explore your area with a bike – there's always a bike app for that. Learning how to navigate is a great asset as you might travel often in your PR career.
- Embrace a new culture while having fun – set out time for a culture day where you visit museums, eat food, and listen to music that pertains to your chosen culture for the day. Becoming

familiar with different cultures will help your ability to relate and communicate with them in the future.

“An hour of play is worth a lifetime of conversation.” – Plato

## **Principle: Innovations make valuable differences**

With a creative mind, you can curate ideas to implement innovations that make a valuable difference. With the implementation of innovations in the workplace, you find new ways to enhance ideas, processes, or products. Whether it starts by motivating employees to utilize their skills more efficiently or increasing business functionality, innovations are sure to make positive outcomes.

Zia Khan Vice President, a leader in initiatives and strategy at the Rockefeller Foundation,

shares why innovation is so important and how solutions of today address the problems of tomorrow.

<https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/blog/why-innovation-so-important/>

## **The correlation between this principle and PR**

In PR, innovations are always changing how practitioners tell a story, contact the media, and create mutually beneficial relationships. While PR has always been about telling a great story, our digital world creates the need for shareable experiences, so

practitioners can utilize innovative thinking skills to bring new value to projects.

Paul Holmes, editor-in-chief and CEO of the Holmes Report, talks about innovative content creation and experiential social media and how the landscape of PR is changing due to innovation in the video below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zA3SgW0W0o>

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Source out appropriate resources to implement creative innovations. Join a professional PR group/organization – such as CPRS (Canadian Public Relations Society) for resources and other support systems.

- Accept that while your innovation might fail, try again, it's never a waste! You will face this when you strategize and implement creative campaigns to raise awareness or increase company productivity.

- Reduce stress and practice self-care, you'll always be on your A game to brainstorm. More comfortable in your health will increase the likeliness of your courage in whatever you do – including your career in PR.

- Take risks! You might not be sure, but you gotta risk it for the biscuit!

- Always be curious – never stop wondering why things work and how it can be improved.

“Innovation has nothing to do with how many R&D dollars you have. When Apple came up with the Mac, IBM was spending at least 100 times more on R&D. It's not about money. It's about the people you have, how you're led, and how much you get it.” – Steve Jobs

## Principle: Communities best nurture creativity

Community support is the pillar that helps to drive an innovation's success. With a community of people working to innovate something, each person offers a unique set of values, ideas, backgrounds, and experiences that add fresh perspectives. The result of diverse perspectives bring evolving, changing, varying solutions, and ways of relating to possible outcomes.

Weber Shandwick, global communications, and engagement firm discuss the value in team collaboration and how the landscape of diverse opportunities can be attained stronger through collaboration. The article below shares his top five learning lessons from teamwork: <http://www.webershandwicksouthwest.com/more-heads-are-better-than-one-five-things-creative-teams-do-to-collaborate>

## The correlation between this principle and PR

In PR/communications, community fosters innovative thinking. Can you remember a time when you asked someone a question and were pleasantly surprised with a much different perspective? With community support, PR bridges gaps connect audiences and achieve organizational objectives. Community support nurtures the creative process.

Belinda Lawson, chair of the The International Debate Education Association, speaks to how collaboration takes someone's good idea and fulfills its potential by bringing it to life in the YouTube video below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrLikh2gcwc>



## How to employ the principle at work/school:

Not sure *where* to start? Let's start with *now*, rather than *later*!

- Attend free networking events at school. A successful PR career includes a variety of connections.

- Make a group on Twitter or Facebook and invite your colleagues/classmates to the page to seek insight, collaborate ideas, and to brainstorm. If you create an easily accessible platform to communicate, the collaboration will be attained.

- If there's a specific community you want to collaborate with then you should conduct research, find a value proposition, and create a pitch to encourage more community collaboration.

- If your project is newsworthy, strive to build a relationship with the media. Do research to understand what topics they cover, the appropriate media contact, and how to appeal to the media. This type of community will create exposure for your cause.

- Watch TED Talks that discuss collaboration and community to learn more about its importance. To learn is to grow in PR.

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." – Andrew Carnegie

## Principle: Leverage strengths and opportunities

Identifying your personal strengths and weaknesses is the key to bolstering opportunities and mitigating threats. Truth is, we all have weaknesses, but it's our ability to apply our strengths to our weaknesses to turn them into strengths! For example, if you haven't

made enough industry connections but you are a great conversationalist, then you can use that strength to work on your weakness.

James Carolin, a people and culture specialist, recites his top five ways to leverage your personal strengths in the LinkedIn article below:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20140612120704-30005423-five-ways-to-leverage-your-personal-strengths/>

## The correlation between this principle and PR

In PR/communications, it's crucial that you're able to adapt to the constantly changing workplace culture and industry trends. Not only externally in the field, but internally with your creative competencies. Employers seek practitioners that have an array of strengths and can adapt to cultivate new strengths.

The University of Alabama says that to be a leader in PR, practitioners must have self-insight, which is to understand their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, to be effective – they must leverage their capabilities to reach opportunities that suit their objectives.

<https://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/MeasureExcellentLeadershipPR.pdf>

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Conduct a personal SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis. This type of analysis helps to dig deeper with the understanding of how to tackle your problem.

- Research successful PR leaders who expose their strengths, study their trends of how they conduct themselves, and this will enhance your personal PR brand image.

- Mindmap your weaknesses and build on it with the integration of your strengths. This will help you to visually see what essential PR skills you have to leverage and which ones you need to work on.

- Stuck on your strengths or weaknesses? Ask a trusted friend or family member to help you brainstorm. This will enhance your ability to adapt to different perspectives and collaborate in your career.

- Find opportunities that exist! Your ability to connect with other practitioners in PR will broaden your scope of opportunities to capitalize on, which enhances your growth as a professional.

“The fear of losing something makes you weak, lose it and gain your strength” – Farid F. Ibrahim

## Principle: Imagination powers creativity

The creative process starts with your imagination. If you're serious about creativity and innovation, make a dedicated effort to develop, strengthen, and broaden your imagination. However, this is only the beginning of the creative process – it's also necessary to use your imagination to help you select your best ideas, learn how to adapt to unexpected changes, and evaluate of your efforts.

Tom Bates, a peak performance coach and author, elaborates on how imagination is the golden ticket to unlock your creative magic, check out the video below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hP24xpWcXyl>

## The correlation between this principle and PR

In PR/communications, you'll be required to use your imagination to spark your creativity with project concerns such as how to inform internal employees, lead a non-profit with limited resources, or how to create a clever media stunt to capture attention.

Sir Ken Robinson, a leader in the development of creativity, highlights the relationship between imagination, creativity, and innovation in the article below:

<http://www.conversationagent.com/2015/08/imagination-creativity-innovation.html>

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Expand your repertoire of interests by trying something new, which will broaden your imagination. In PR, you never know what project expectations might arise and the more insights you have – the more you'll have to contribute.

- Attempt a short meditation daily. With the fight or flight mindset, most of us are adept at, the ability to quiet the mind and expand your imagination will determine your “A game” at work.

- Surround yourself with new people – attend a workshop or event that doesn't pertain to your interests. You'll be surprised with how it elevates your imagination! Connections in PR help you to achieve your objectives! For example, knowing people in law, design, marketing, media, etc will help you accomplish things you can't do on your own.

- Read more! This will encourage your mind to wander into new zones, and this will broaden your imagination. As a PR practitioner, you read LOTS so get adjusted now!

- Solve puzzles as this will challenge your brain to think differently. Problem-solving in PR is a daily task and the more you train the imagination muscle in your brain, the more naturally the creative juices will flow to help tackle problems.

“The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination.”  
Albert Einstein

## Principle: Capture and manage all ideas

Imagination flows and creative ideas can transpire in the strangest of times! Whether you're in the shower, the car, or about to fall asleep – new ideas will always emerge. Ever think of ideas and say, “I will write that down later!” and never do..? Chances are high, as most of us know this struggle. Yet if you take the time to capture these ideas, you will manage your brilliant ideas and be able to use them later! The YouTube video below shares how Evernote, an idea management software, can help you capture your ideas:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QycPRuArkqc>

# The correlation between this principle and PR

Regardless of the type of PR industry you work in (agency/government/non-profit, etc), the RACE (research, analyze, communication and evaluation) cycle is a great tool to help you organize your project/deliverables. With the use of this principle, your captured ideas will help you visualize your progress and bolster previous ideas into current projects.

Tanner Christensen, a creativity blogger, suggests why organizing your thoughts are productive and shares how exploring your ideas, writing, and applying this to projects are valuable. This creative process deeply aligns with PR methods! Read more in the article below:

<https://creativesomething.net/>

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Play around with different platforms to capture ideas: Evernote, Google Keep, or a journal. This will make the information easy to access so that you can apply your ideas into real life solutions later on.

- Start a shared document in Google Keep with other colleagues/classmates in regards to their creative ideas that relate to the PR RACE cycle process – tips and tricks from others will help you bolster your own success and learning!

- Conduct experiments – how can I accomplish this next task in half of the time? PR is a demanding and busy industry, learning how to be more efficient is good for maximizing your time!

- Once you've captured many ideas, work on prioritizing them. This will help you stay organized and more efficient with your PR deliverables at work.

- Think of the workplace questions that have arose for you previously – capture them and address them with colleagues at an appropriate time.

“It's the ideas – the ability to put them down on paper, and turn them into stories – that makes me a writer.” – Neil Gaiman

## Principle: Develop your creative competencies

It takes practice and effort to develop your creative competencies, but with dedication, you'll apply your new knowledge to strengthen a skill or to master something you're already good at.

Robert Epstein shares how capturing ideas, challenging yourself to take difficult tasks while managing fear, broadening your knowledge, and changing your surroundings are four competencies to focus on to enhance creativity. View the article below!

[http://drrobertepstein.com/downloads/Epstein\\_Schmidt\\_Warfel\\_2008.pdf?lbisphpreq=1](http://drrobertepstein.com/downloads/Epstein_Schmidt_Warfel_2008.pdf?lbisphpreq=1)

## The correlation between this principle and PR

In PR/communications, the more creative competencies you have to offer, the more value you add to a team. In a highly competitive industry like PR, creative competencies leverage your competitive

advantage. You can dream about that dream job, but it's up to you to develop the required skills to be more diverse and qualified.

Creative and Cultural Skills, an online platform that provides creative career advice, recites how creative skills in PR are becoming more and more crucial. The article below describes how creative competencies (such as infographic creations) are highly sought-after:

<https://ccskills.org.uk/careers/advice/article/creative-skills-for-pr-careers>

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Rather than watching your favourite TV show, check out a documentary! PR is all about application of knowledge and experience to form into tangible ideas. Having knowledge about world events and cultures, you'll be better suited with your knowledge base.

- Take breaks! While it seems like a good idea to push yourself to finish before a break, a break will re-energize your body and freshen your mind to think creatively.

- Help a colleague work on a task out of your element and you'll be sure to gain a new skill or strategy. A PR practitioner that is well versed and able to deal with the unexpected is positioned as a leader and innovator.

- Don't give up when frustrated! Take a moment to pause and reset. PR is a demanding industry that requires resilience to achieve objectives.

- Take risks! If you avoid risks because you're worried you might fail, you will never know the value you could have brought to the



project. In PR, a practitioner creates strategies to gauge acceptance from its audience! So be bold, strategic, and see results!

“Dance above the surface of the world. Let your thoughts lift you into creativity that is not hampered by opinion.” – Red Haircrow

## **Principle: Challenges are valuable opportunities**

Challenges can be difficult to endure but the rewards are boundless. If you want to attain true success, be an entrepreneur, and innovate then you must prevail against the discomfort in challenges. Yes, it can be scary or you could fail. Yet, the opportunity to do new things, reach new heights, and be innovative is attained through previous challenges that show us where we need to go.

Tim Harford, a speaker on TED Talk, explains that while frustration and blockages are uncomfortable and messy, they enhance our performance. If you're learning you're growing!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7wF2AdVy2Q>

## **The correlation between this principle and PR**

If you're in media relations you might have a client who misses an important date, you've let the media down, and that challenge requires the need to quickly restore reputation. PR is about relationship building, and things won't always occur the way we plan! Maybe you're working for a non-profit organization that has little financial resources and you must multitask ten responsibilities

a day. We tend to see challenges as a hindrance, but subconsciously, your creative juices are rolling.

Kent Sanders, writer, and professor, shares four reasons why people should embrace new challenges at work in the article below and how it has personally impacted him:

<http://www.kentsanders.net/embrace-new-challenges/>

## How to employ the principle at work/school:

*Not sure where to start? Let's start with now, rather than later!*

- Capture the times you faced a challenge or failure – and use it as a timeline to track your progress. If you want to be a successful PR practitioner that runs his/her own firm, agency or consulting business, don't give up as the tides get rough!

- Find a time once a week to review what you've written over the past week, do this while you take a bath, transit, or a break at work, etc. PR practitioners must have the ability to time manage and evaluate their efforts to capitalize on new opportunities and refrain from what doesn't work.

- Consider buying a journal that has an attached agenda – less cluttered and more organized! As a PR practitioner, a schedule is already a part of your day-to-day.

- Incorporate different types of music genres or podcasts into your scheduled journaling time as this will spark new ideas. PR practitioners currently work alongside the digital world and podcasts are increasingly popularized!

- Ask your professor/work colleagues how they capture and manage their ideas. Collaboration is key in PR!

“Journal writing is a voyage to the interior.” – Christina Baldwin

## Principle: Broaden yourself

Broadening yourself is critical to stimulating your creative growth. As you work to broaden yourself through things like listening to stories, trying new games, attending free learning opportunities, or observing others – it will build into your repertoire of knowledge and experiences. With knowledge being your foundation, you can reach to this to source ideas and strategize implementation ideas.

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