



# The Art of Creative Leadership



Trainer: Mr Paul Gauci  
28 February 2024

# Agenda

- The Leadership Need for Creative Thinking
- Characteristics of Creative Persons
- Work Environments that encourage Creativity
- Stages of the Creative Process
- Types of Creative Focus
- Ways to Stimulate Creativity and Innovation





**“Leaders are fundamentally dissatisfied with the *status quo* and drive change towards a vision.”**

*ROBERT LUTZ*



And they do so...

**CREATIVELY**



**Create**... 'to originate', 'to bring into being', 'to give birth', 'to produce'.

**Making something out of nothing, bringing things into existence for the first time.**



- Why the need for

**CREATIVE THINKING?**



- **Generate New Ideas**
- **Problem Solving**
- **Competitiveness**
- **Innovation**





All human progress happens

...because there is an inner drive to invent, create  
and achieve.





“Man's greatness lies in his  
power of thought. “

Mortimer Jerome Adler,  
American philosopher



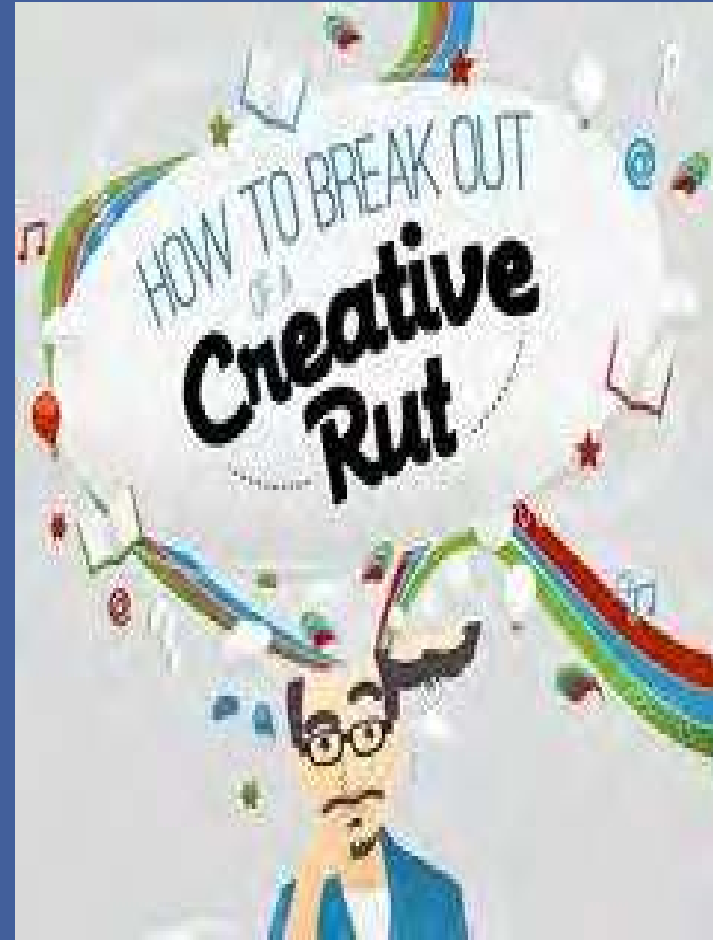
# A Paradigm Shift

- Making anew...starting afresh
- And not an extrapolation of yesterday's business !



“One’s mind  
once stretched  
by a new idea  
never regains  
its original  
dimension.”

Oliver W. Holmes



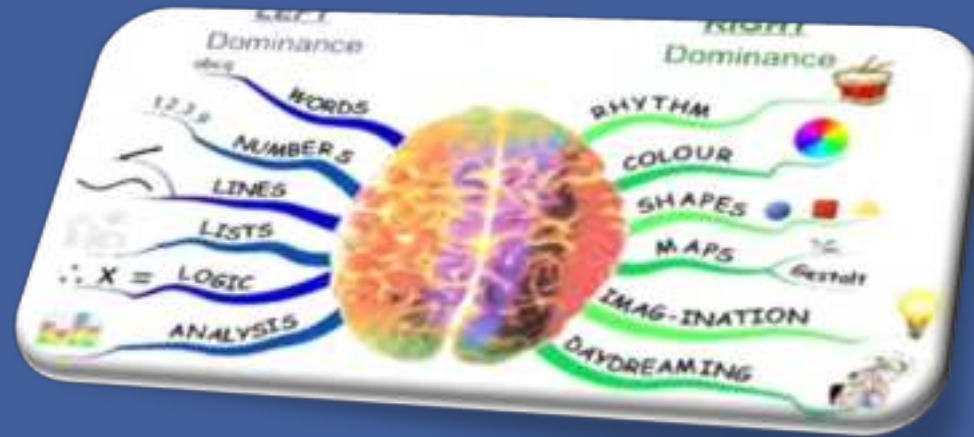
Being creative is seeing the same thing as everybody else but thinking of something different.



The mind is like a  
parachute...

it only works when  
it's open.





*It is a myth.. that we use only 10% or less of our brain capacity...The *right* and *left* sides of the brain both generate creative thought.*

The *right* is stimulated through imagery, colour, music.

The *left* is naturally evaluative and uses logic to accept ideas.

# Profile of a Creative Leader

- **Resources** – knowledge and access to information
- **Internal Motivation** – passion to be creative
- **Creative Thinking Skills** – ability to think outside the box



# Characteristics of Creative Persons

1. Exhibit a great deal of energy
2. Combine fun and discipline
3. Alternate imagination/fantasy with rooted sense of reality
4. Humble and proud at the same time
5. Rebellious and independent
6. Open and sensitive





# Creative Persons

- Are not 'born'....

*i.e. creative thinking can be developed.*



**“Nothing in the world  
is so powerful than  
an idea whose time  
has come.”**

**Victor Hugo**



Sketch of  
Leonardo da Vinci's complex ornithopter

# Barriers to Creativity

- Excessive Organisation
- Mindsets and Status Quo
- Lack of Time
- Financial Constraints
- Physical Environment
- Risk Aversion
- Bureaucracy



# Work Environments that encourage Creativity

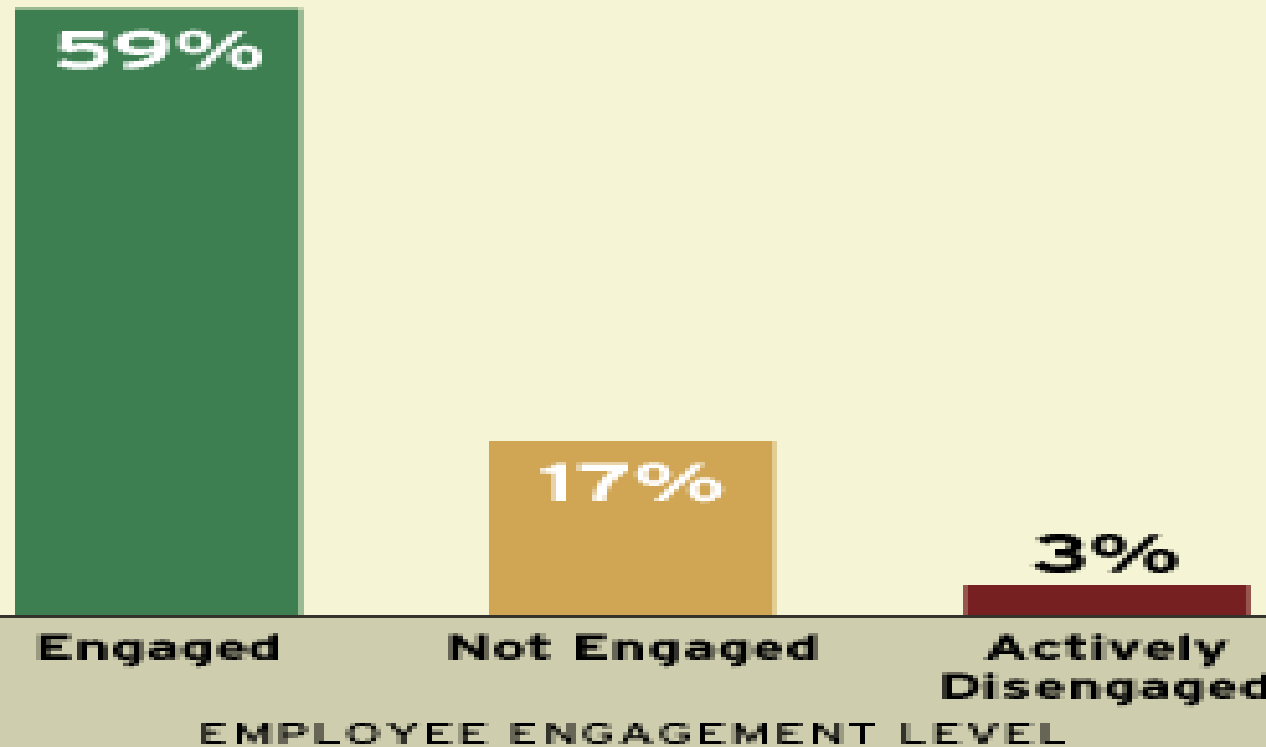
- Freedom
- Empowerment
- Sufficient resources
- Encouragement
- Recognition
- Sufficient time



## CREATIVITY ON THE JOB

Engaged employees are likely to be a company's best source of new ideas: 59% of engaged employees strongly agreed that their current job "brings out [their] most creative ideas"; only 3% of actively disengaged employees strongly agreed.

PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES WHO STRONGLY AGREED:  
"MY CURRENT JOB BRINGS OUT  
MY MOST CREATIVE IDEAS"



Source: Gallup

Graphic by Tommy McCall



Human Brain has a finite capacity to hold info in short term memory

Brain structured to retain info in clusters of  $7 \pm 2$  bits



## Decrease your technology dependence by exercising your brain!

- How often do you hear someone ask the question, "What did we do before cell phones?"
- One of the many answers to this rhetorical question is: we relied on our memories.
- Studies have shown that using our memory improves reasoning and creativity.
- Yet, because of our increased reliance on technology, few of us can even recall phone numbers or appointments anymore.



- Try using your memory more often by dialing numbers by hand or picturing your weekly calendar in your mind.
- It will not only help you use your mind in a healthful way, but may save you when the inevitable happens and your BlackBerry or iPhone crashes.





## What creative employees seek

*“A mechanism for considering new ideas, a corporate climate marked by cooperation and collaboration across levels and divisions and an atmosphere where innovation is prized and failure is not fatal.”*

Amabile T.





*not failure... but learning  
from the experience*



Bill Gates ; Richard Branson etc



True Creativity and Innovation  
consists of:

**SEEING** what everyone else has  
seen, **THINKING** what no-one else  
has thought and **DOING** what no-one  
else has dared.





Intelligence is enough to get you through past and present, *but imagination is what gets you to design the future.*



For most people the notion of creative thinking is difficult because it is contrary to the natural habits of recognition, judgement and criticism.

The brain is designed to set up patterns, to use them and to condemn anything that does not 'fit' these patterns.

**Creativity involves provocation, exploration.**



# Provocation

Provocative ideas are often stepping stones that get us thinking about other ideas...

The more you are used to something the less stimulating it is for our thinking...so change your patterns of work, time table, life style etc.

This forces us to make new connections in order to comprehend the situation.



for **PROVOCATION** you need

- Anger....with the status quo
- Courage...to change it

*“The world belongs to the disconnected “*

– Oscar Wilde



Provocation enables...



*Thinking outside the box !*





# PERSEVERANCE

In the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins, not through strength but through perseverance.



# The search for a different approach

One cannot dig in a different place  
by digging the same hole deeper.



## Five barriers block bravery:

- Fear
- Lack of self knowledge
- Lack of self vision
- Negative habits
- Unsupportive environment



## Three reasons why people are motivated to be creative:

- ✓ Need for novel, varied and complex stimulations
- ✓ Need to communicate ideas and values
- ✓ Need to solve problems



# 4 Stages of the Creative Process



Preparation; Incubation; Illumination;  
Verification

(Graham Wallas)



## Preparation

Involves worrying at a problem, investigating it 'in all directions'.

Essential hard work, if only to exhaust the mind to such an extent that intuition is allowed to take over.



## Incubation

Is the conscious mind 'letting go' of the problem.

We 'sleep' on it, forget about it, do something else...

the material goes 'underground', where intuition sets to work.



## Illumination

This occurs when elements of the problem 'click' into a new pattern – what Wallas calls 'a happy idea'.

It is the discontinuity that radically alters our perception of a situation.

We are enlightened and we are able to see what was previously invisible.





# Verification

Involves checking that the 'happy idea' makes sense, applying logic and evaluation to justify and validate it.



## *When and where to be creative ?*

Where do we choose to apply  
creative thinking?

When do we feel the need for  
creative thinking?



- Many people in the field of thinking regard all thinking as 'problem-solving'. This is very dangerous.
- The term 'problem' in general use means a fault, a deficiency or something we would rather be without. That is a legitimate area for thinking.
- But there are other areas where there is no obvious problem - nothing is wrong or lacking. *Should we not think about those areas?*



The attraction of problem-solving is clear. It also makes selling a new idea to others much easier.

If you can show that the new idea solves the problem, then anyone who wants to be rid of the problem will embrace the new idea.

*However, when there is no obvious problem to solve, it is still possible to turn up powerful, useful new ideas.*



- Sometimes there is a value which we want to add.
- *How can this be made more convenient?*
- *How could this be made more flexible? How could this be made simpler to operate?*
- As a general principle, things which do not seem to need thinking about do not get any thinking. Satisfaction and complacency are the biggest enemies of creative thinking.



# CREATIVE FOCUS



There are two broad types of **creative focus**:

- **purpose focus and area focus.**

**Purpose focus is the most familiar type.**

- We have a defined need and we seek to use our thinking to satisfy that need.
- We know what we are thinking about, and we know what we want to achieve. The target is defined and known.



1. The classic example of *purpose focus* is 'problem-solving'.

- For this, we may need creative thinking when the usual analytical approach has failed.
- We may also choose to use creative thinking when we have solved the problem with an adequate solution but decide to look for a better one.





2. Creative thinking may also be needed in *achieving a defined task*.

- Creative thinking is essential if there is no routine way of carrying out the task.
- Here creative thinking is part of design thinking.



3. A third type of *purpose focus* is 'improvement'.

- We are carrying out some operation and believe that the process can be improved.
- It is useful to define the direction of improvement. We may want to do things faster. We may want to do things at less cost. We may want to do things in a simpler way.



*Area focus is very different from purpose focus.*

- It may be the most important creative focus.
- With *area focus* there is no 'need' to focus on a particular area. You focus on that area because you want to.
- There is no problem or deficiency. You are not seeking improvement.
- You simply choose to define an area as your focus for creative thinking.



- With *area focus* you define the area as you wish.
- With *area focus* you set out to generate ideas within a defined area.
- You do not determine the nature of the ideas.



*Before you call it "new and improved"...be sure it is*

- Companies love to introduce "new and improved" products.
- Yet, all too often these new innovations are useful to the company but not the customers they aim to serve.



- For example, a self check-out lane may help a company reduce the number of cashiers it needs, but may be a hassle for customers who are baffled by the new machines.
- Before you roll out a new service feature, be sure to understand whether it is something that customers want.
- ***Evaluate new innovations through the lens of the customer — not just the lens of your organisation.***



*New challenges require new ways of doing things;*

*this means not only a new approach, but a refusal to be bound by the rules that applied in the past.*



# 3 ways to spur innovation (HBR)

1. Look outside.
2. Mobilize passionate individuals.
3. Embrace new technology.





## Defending your ideas without being defensive

*Being enthusiastic and passionate about your ideas is crucial to getting them implemented.*

*But protecting your ideas against criticism can come off as defensive and turn people off.*



*Here are three tips for sticking up for your ideas without overreacting...*

- 1. Be prepared.**
- 2. Be appreciative.**
- 3. Be patient.**



*The best idea can still die when naysayers raise concerns, even if the concerns are merit less.*

*Instead of trying to dodge unavoidable attacks, learn to expect the common types you'll face, and how to counter them simply and convincingly...*



# Protect your good idea

- **Death by Delay**.....*chase people for feedback and action.*
- **Confusion.** ...*detractors often present distracting information. Be clear about what your idea is and what it isn't.*
- **Fear mongering.** ...*nothing kills an idea faster than irrational anxieties. Know what fears your challengers might stir up and be prepared to allay them.*





# Techniques to stimulate Creativity

## Use Both Sides of the Brain

- Creativity is not genetically encoded. Anyone can learn to think creatively.
- The key is to use both the left and right hemispheres of the brain: logical and intuitive, respectively. Start by immersing yourself in a problem.
- Use the logical left side of your brain to understand what you know about the topic.



- Then switch to the right side by distancing yourself from the issue and mulling over the information.
- Exercise is a good way to access the visual nature of the right hemisphere. It often leads to an "ah-ha moment" where you see a new solution.
- Then switch back to the left hemisphere to challenge your creative breakthrough with rational thinking.

*How to think Creatively - Tony Schwartz*



# An Attitude Shift

Problems should be viewed as opportunities for improvement.

Whenever a problem is solved, a better product or service can be offered afterwards.



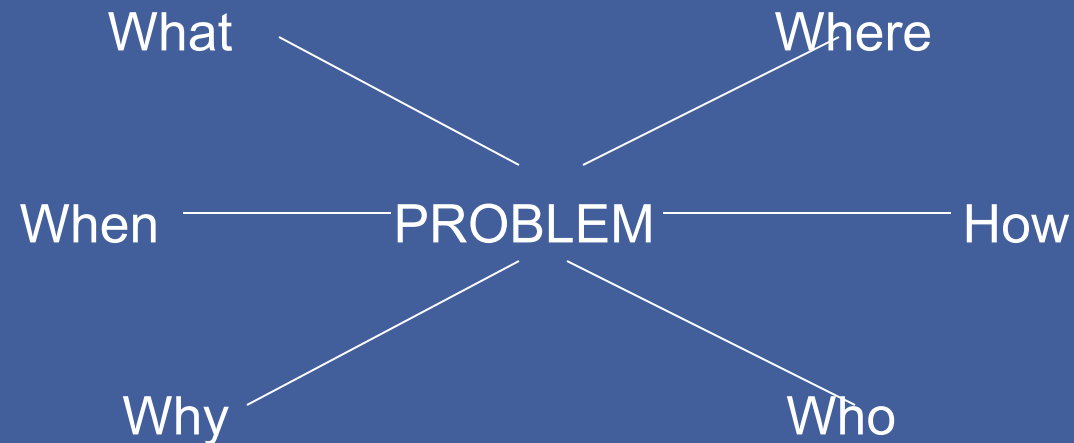


# The Mind Map – *Tony Buzan*



# Asking questions

Draw a mind map (Tony Buzan) of a problem with 6 words as nodes of the map...



# DO IT Technique

(Robert Olson - The Art of Creative Thinking)

Define... problem

Open... yourself to many possible solutions

Identify ...the best solution

Transform... it into action effectively



Write down those  
**BRAINWAVES!!**

*Don't just*

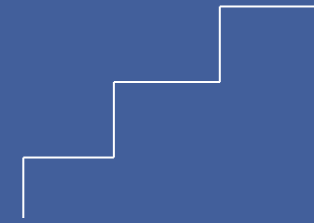
THINK IT...

INK IT!

DO IT!



From vertical thinking...



**to Lateral thinking**  
**...a quantum leap**  
**to move**  
**around the block**



# Lateral thinking – De Bono

It's all about moving  
sideways when working on  
a problem,

to try different perceptions,  
different concepts and  
different approaches...

cutting across patterns and  
perceptions.





Discoveries are often made by not following instructions,

*by going off the main road, by trying the untried.*



# Six Thinking Hats – De Bono

Metaphorical hats which give uniformity in group thinking process:

**White** hat...neutral, facts, figures, info needs

**Red** hat...intuition, feelings and emotions

**Black** hat...logical judgment and caution

**Yellow** hat... optimism, benefits, results

**Green** hat...new ideas, proposals, provocation, change

**Blue** hat...organisation and thinking process control





# The Six Thinking Hats...

Eliminate confusion by allowing the thinker to do one thing at a time.

Emotions are separated from logic, creativity from information.

*Result:* Intelligence, experience, intuition, knowledge of all team members are fully exploited



# Brainstorming

Group problem solving method, aimed at coaxing the greatest number of possibilities irrespective of how wild the idea sounds.

Also:

**Freewheeling** (individual brainstorming)

**Storyboarding** (linking ideas on paper)



# Brainstorming

- Define the problem
- Open floor & welcome all ideas mentioned
- Do not judge, criticize or request justification for an idea.
- Record ideas as they flow & keep visible on white board or flip chart
- Encourage imagination
- Explore problem from different angles



- Brainstorming sessions can easily degenerate into lacklustre wastes of time, with the same ideas coming up again and again.
- Ask yourself these three questions to prevent your next session from turning flat...



1. **Who's in the room?** Bring in a diverse set of people that represents your consumer base as well as the breadth of expertise within your company.
2. **Who talks?** Many sessions fail to produce fresh ideas because the usual suspects are doing all of the talking. Draw out those who are usually reticent and always ask for further clarification on ideas you don't understand.
3. **What signals are you sending?** As a leader, you need to create a safe space for innovation. Make sure your body language and tone signal that you want to hear from everyone and that all ideas are welcome.





It is better to have a wild idea and then tame it ...than to have a boring idea and try to make it interesting.

# Drawing and Visual Thinking

*Draw a picture of the solution to your problem. Forget about the problem in hand.*

This provides a *source of energy* for developing a solution as well as a *source of novel directions* in which to look for a solution.



# Remove negativity

Write a negative thought, something you want to get rid of, on a little piece of paper. Light a candle and burn your negative thoughts.

Negativity is the enemy of true creativity.





# Shoshin – (Japanese)

## ‘Beginners’ Mind

Our ‘original’ mind is an ‘empty’ mind  
...a mind ready for anything.

It is open to everything with many possibilities –  
in the expert’s mind there are few.

*Unlearn and forget to acquire anew.*



# Opportunity Thinking

**Tends to focus on constructive ways of dealing with situations and hence sees them as challenging opportunities**

The obstacle thinker is one who is constantly identifying reasons for doing nothing.



# The effect of water

“Think about water”...if you go someplace where there’s water, and then you just stare at the water and think about it, this releases tension.

It can be the sea, a lake, rain, or even a glass of water...it opens up your mind and allows you to think differently.





# Listen to music

Music as a wave frequency enhances the brain function and is very powerful in the creative process.

**Business is fast,  
furious, frenetic and  
focused.**

**Creativity can make  
it fun as well.**



# Have Fun

*Humour is important to creativity...*

Take business seriously but please don't take yourself too seriously!

Use humour at the workplace...at the right time!  
And enjoy your role and relationships with colleagues and customers.

A fun environment is more likely to be a creative environment.



**Quotes  
On  
Creativity**





"True discovery consists not in finding new landscapes, but in seeing the same landscape with new eyes."

- *Marcel Proust*





**“Creativity consists largely of re-arranging what we know in order to find out what we do not know.**

**Hence to think creatively we must be able to look afresh at what we normally take for granted.”**

**- G. Kaeller**



“There are no problems -  
only opportunities to be  
creative”

- *Dorye Roettyer*



# Continuous Development

“ To try to develop working ideas I try to develop as fast as I can.”

- *Richard Fergnman*  
(*Nobel Prize Physicist*)



“It is better to have enough ideas for some of them to be wrong, than to be always right and having no ideas at all.”

- *Edward De Bono*



## Be Brave

“An essential aspect of creativity is not being afraid to fail.”

- *Dr Edwin Land*

“People cannot discover new oceans, until they have the courage to lose sight of the land.”

- *Anon*



# *Change*

“The significant problems which we face today will not be solved in the same level of thinking which created them. If at first an idea is not absurd, then there is little hope for it.”

- *Albert Einstein*



# Originality

‘Always make **new** mistakes!’

- *Esther Dyson*  
*Publisher*





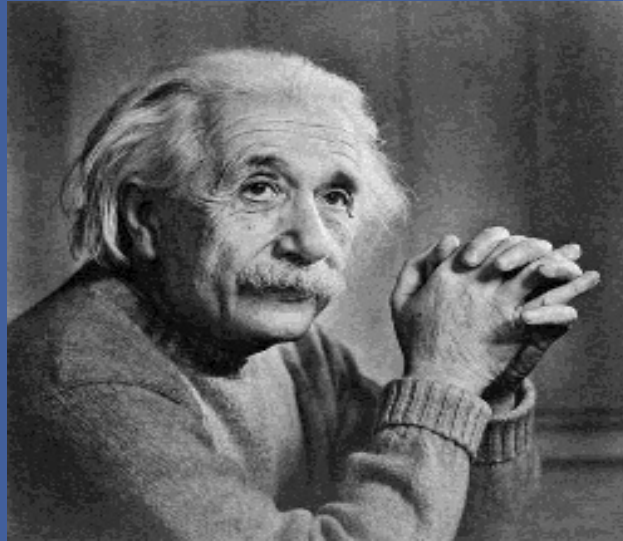
## Creative Pause

“ Being creative may just be a matter of allowing some time to yourself to step back and think of better ways to do something.”

- *Edward De Bono*







“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

- *Albert Einstein*



“Imagination is the highest  
kite one can fly.”

- *Lauren Bacall*



*Live creatively !*

Avoid getting stuck in a rut.

Try new things and open yourself to new ideas.

New opportunities generate energy and enthusiasm.



*And remember...creative thinking is not enough...do it !*

i2m  
(Idea to market)

IMPLEMENT YOUR IDEAS



“If the world is changing under  
our feet... we need to move.”

- Barack Obama





‘If you can dream it, you can do it’.

- *Walt Disney*



# CREATIVITY COUNTS...

*so lets go back to our roots !*











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