

Creativity and Innovation

To be creative or innovative is to be original, imaginative, expressive, ground-breaking, idea-generative, and inventive. However, these behaviors are not the exclusive domain of creative types: In the right circumstances, any one of us can be creative, just by having a view or idea that is relatively different. This storyboard focuses on the individual skills that are involved in being creative, as well as on the creativity process itself. A four-stage cycle is used to explain the process: INITIATE, DEVELOP, EVOLVE, and ACT. The circles to the right capture the main ideas in each stage, spelling out the word "IDEA."

1. INITIATE



Be inquisitive and open.

2. DEVELOP



Nourish and nurture ideas to help them grow.

3. EVOLVE



Find the right prototyping opportunities.

4. ACT



Bravely follow through and persist.

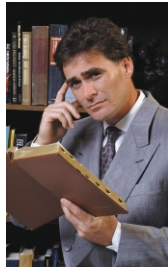


1.

INITIATE

► Assess your bias toward creativity.

- Evaluate your need for practical order, structure, pattern, and familiarity.
- Assess the extent to which you normally take risks, make inferences, and make loose connections in order to get more quickly from A to B.
- Determine how comfortable you are with multiple answers, surprising outcomes, and general ambiguity.



► Determine your basic level of curiosity.

- Invest more time and energy into gaining overall insight and becoming more inquisitive about the way in which the world operates in general.
- Start to look for breadth of knowledge rather than depth and develop your ability to connect diverse information or concepts.
- Be prepared to ask *why* and *how* questions more often, and listen carefully to the answers.



► Recognize the context of innovation.

- Develop an understanding of your mental stereotypes and the filters through which you view the world.
- Recognize the dangers of conventional wisdom, unsupported inference, and false extrapolation.
- Spend time assessing how the broad context of what you experience can materially change your view of things.



► Learn to think more laterally.

- Start to look at ideas and new situations encountered from several different angles and perspectives.
- Use analogies, metaphors, and any other similar mental "channel-switching" methods to reveal new thinking options.
- Use spontaneity, lateral thinking, and random thought-generation.



2.

DEVELOP

► Build idea-sharing networks.



- Identify others who enjoy being pioneers or early adopters of new ideas or different approaches. Build your relationships with them.
- Listen attentively to other people's ideas and take a genuine interest in helping them succeed.
- Develop the habit of sharing your creative thoughts with others, even if they are nascent or speculative.



► Give ideas time to grow and flourish.



- Adopt a positive, encouraging attitude about all fledgling ideas (your own and those of others).
- Avoid criticizing ideas in their infancy by suspending judgment and being genuinely constructive as much as possible.
- Nourish sound creative thoughts by suggesting helpful ways in which they might be developed or steered toward future success.

3.

EVOLVE

► Conduct reality checks.

- Carefully but positively assess ideas (your own and other people's) for their ability to make a real, tangible, and measurable difference.
- Identify what a particular idea can be linked to in order to strengthen its appeal.
- Identify small adjustments, modifications, or additional steps that are likely to increase the chances of successful implementation.



► Design appropriate ways to test idea prototypes.

- Tease out the particular aspects of an idea that require testing or prototyping, and what criteria you might apply.
- Look for suitable areas or circumstances where you can test ideas in a safe and controlled manner.
- Set up strong collaborative discussions so you can make any necessary adjustments before wider implementation.



4.

ACT

► Maintain courage under fire.



- Develop a thick skin to handle negative feedback about your ideas (when it occurs). Do not take comments personally.
- Be prepared to be the lone voice when you believe in a new creative approach. Do not worry about the consequences of being wrong.
- Defend your own personal judgment, even when the majority is against you.

► Adopt a plan to advocate for and promote your ideas.



- Build a multi-faceted plan to explain and emphasize the benefits of your ideas to all interested parties/stakeholders.
- Promote the advantages of the new methods/ways over the old in a variety of different and compelling ways.
- Maintain your personal passion and enthusiasm in order to overcome any apathy or complacency from others.

► Maintain forward momentum.



- Develop a range and variety of strategies to drive your idea(s) positively forward.
- Actively recruit people to the cause of a new idea to build supportive strength in numbers.
- Manage the transition from old or existing approaches to the new with care. Engage in regular widespread two-way communication.

Creativity and Innovation: Template

Persist:

Defend
Advocate
Follow through



How?

Reflect:

Ask questions
Challenge
Be curious



How?

Idea Development Matrix for: (name of idea)

SUPPORTERS (passive and private support)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Supportive and helpful

ENTHUSIASTS (active and public support)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Open and visible

SCHEMERS (passive and private resistance)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Unsupportive and unhelpful

ATTACKERS (active and public resistance)

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Trial:

Test ideas
Adjust
Modify



How?

Discover:

Break patterns
Accept ambiguity
New paradigms



How?

Nurture:

Shape ideas
Be positive
Enthuse/support



How?

Connect:

Link ideas
Think laterally
Extrapolate



How?
