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TriMetrix®HD Creativity

Creativity

The ability to adapt traditional methods, concepts, models, designs, technologies, or systems to new applications; or the ability to devise new approaches to make improvements or solve problems.

Why is this skill important?

It's easy to think of Creativity as something that only artists, poets, or musicians need in order to be successful. But truthfully, Creativity is an essential component of many jobs, and developing your Creativity will likely help you in all aspects of your life.

If you develop your mental flexibility, you will find that you are much better at understanding and synthesizing new information and that a broader range of ideas come to you when you are considering how to solve a problem. Often, people who hold too tightly to policies and established norms overlook the most creative and beneficial ideas.

Creativity is not only a free-form, loose process. Rather, both logical and intuitive thinking are necessary to innovation. What is logical thinking? Logical thinking tends to be linear. Creating a matrix analysis is an example of logical thinking. So is "Force Field Analysis"—comparing positive and negative attributes of a potential solution.

Intuitive thinking is looking at the big picture, rather than the details. Intuitive thinking often results in the "lightbulb" or "Eureka!" solution. Thinking of analogies, daydreaming, role-playing, or even drawing or writing often results in intuitive creativity.

For real innovation to occur, most of the time a "lightbulb" moment comes—an intuitive sense that an idea is new, unique, and good. Then, the idea gets mulled over with a more logical approach in order to determine if and how it can be practically implemented. But sometimes Creativity results in less dramatic outcomes. Creativity can just enable you to see your way out of a problem situation, give you an easier way to handle routine tasks, or manage your day more effectively.

Creative thinking is all about opening yourself up to new ideas, new technologies, new people. Creative thinking requires that you be attentive to new developments in your industry, approach new avenues of thinking in your own life, and be receptive to other people's good ideas.

You must learn how to use intuitive thinking effectively to break out of old, staid thought processes—but you must use logical thinking to determine which new ideas should be implemented and how.

What are skills associated with Creativity?

Someonewho hasmasteredskills associated with Creativity:

• Synthesizes and/or simplifies data, ideas, models, processes, or systems.
• Challenges established theories, methods, and/or protocols.
• Encourages and promotes creativity and innovation.
• Modifies existing methods, concepts, designs, technologies, or systems for new applications.
• Develops and testsnewtheoriesto explain or resolvecomplex issues.

How do you develop your own skills in Creativity?

The following are some ideas about how to improve your skills in Creativity:

• Challenge yourself and others to be creative. Don't just accept the traditional way of doing something. If someone says "It has to be done like..." ask "Why?" or "How else can it be done?"
• Learn when to be creative. Creative problem-solving works best when problems are poorly defined or you are not sure how to evaluate the problem or what caused it.
• Learn to recognize when you are being inflexible. Don't automatically stick with the first solution you come up with.
• Teach yourself to be more flexible. Do brain-teaser exercises. Consider alternative solutions to the ones you first think of.
• Engage in open-minded and uncritical brainstorming in the initial stages of solving a problem. Consider multiple perspectives and attempt to come up with several different solutions to each problem.
• Don't talk yourself out of ideas that seem off the wall or odd, but write them all down for further consideration.
• Don't rule out existing ideas or practices. It is unproductive to completely re-create a program just because you are unsatisfied with it. Rather, see what you can use from the old program and apply it toward the new one you create—figure out what worked in the old program and be sure to use it effectively in the new one.
• If you experience "creative block," acknowledge it, but work toward finding a new approach. Change your location—maybe you will come up with a new idea if you get away from your desk for a few minutes.
• Make a habit of exposing yourself to new ideas. Read trade publications and attend seminars in your field. Choose a subject and learn everything there is to know about it.

• Brainstorm. Alone or in a small group of up to about 8 people. Write down every idea, regardless of how wild it sounds. • Keep a file of new ideas. Each time you think of a good idea related to your job, write it down and keep it in your file.
• Accept failure in yourself and others. The failure itself may teach you a new way to approach the situation should it arise again.
• Imagine an "ideal world" when you are trying to come up with solutions or new ideas. In an ideal world, what would happen? How would things work?
• Make sure you get enough rest, and pay attention to what times of day you feel more creative. Take advantage of those times.
• Try diagramming or drawing problem situations on paper or a whiteboard. Drawing, rather than writing, may help you think differently.
• Keep a sense of play, and make sure you give yourself time to daydream.
• Be open to the possibility of changing your mind. Just because you have defined a solution in your mind doesn't mean there isn't a better one.

Creativity

Activities

Activity 1: RedesigningExisting Processes

Think of a process at your workplace that is inefficient or impractical. Or think of a rule that is so outdated or unreasonable that everyone flouts it. Begin brainstorming about how you can change the process or amend the rule.

a. What about the process or idea is wrong?
b. Why was it instigated? Why is was the process or rule designed in the first place?
c. Who developed it? What was his motivation for doing so?
d. What are three possible alternative processes or solutions? (Be as creative as you can here—don't rule out any idea, and let your mind wander.)

When you have come up with at least three other ideas, talk them over with a trusted co-worker or friend. Spend some time with that person discussing the merits of each alternative, and write down any new ideas that result from your conversation.

Activity 2: Logical Thinking

Think about a problem that you or your department currently faces at work. First, define the problem as clearly as possible, then practice your logical thinking skills by listing the negative forces that may prevent a positive outcome and the posi- tive forces that encourage it. Then, analyze the chart you make to determine how to strengthen the positive attributes.

Problem: _____

Negative Factors	Positive Factors

Activity 3: Brainstorming

Organize a brainstorming session, inviting project team members for a new project you are working on or trusted peers to discuss a new idea you are formulating. Be sure to write down all ideas people come up with—later you can identify which ideas are truly worth pursuing in the 'real world.'

Project Title: _____

Whom to Invite:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

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