Setting the Stage for Creativity

Part one of a series of presentations by Linda Gorchels on creativity and innovation.
Creatively Innovative
Book Three of the Product Management ShortRead Series.

Coming late 2017.
The Psychology of Creativity

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Let’s define CREATIVITY:

cre·a·tiv·i·ty  [kree-ey-tiv-i-tee, kree-uh-] noun  
the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations, etc.; originality, progressiveness, or imagination

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Who is more creative?

A

B

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Myth:

Only certain people are creative.

People are creative in different ways and to different degrees. Beyond thinking about whether people are creative, let’s talk about how they are creative.
A creative style continuum

Open (experiential)  Structured (cognitive)

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Another creative style continuum

More Adaptive <--- 

---\> More Innovative

Creativity, Innovation, and Change
Coursera course by Dr. Jack V. Matson, Dr. Kathryn W. Jablokow, Dr. Darrell Velegol

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Creative domains

Thematic-level domains

- Artistic/verbal
- Artistic/visual
- Interpersonal
- Problem-solving
- Math/science
- Performance
- Entrepreneur

2nd-level domains

Within math (for example):

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

Source: The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity

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Processes of creativity

1. Gather data
2. Build ideas
3. Fuse ideas
4. Act on ideas

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“Great ideas rarely start great; they need to brew for a while.”

Linda Gorchels
author
Generally accepted characteristics of individual creativity

- Curious
- Resilient
- Evaluative
- Autonomous
- Tuned in
- Introspective
- Visionary
- Energetic

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Curious
(passionate for fresh knowledge; desiring to learn new things)

Ask challenging questions:
Why?
How?
What if?
Why not?

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“Millions saw the apple fall, but Newton asked ‘why?’”

Bernard Baruch
American businessperson and political consultant
Resilient
(capable of overcoming setbacks; able to take risks; ambitious)

Rethink the meaning of failure

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• beware the relentless pursuit of perfection
• build your failure grit: “practice” small failures with a smile

Perfection is a myth...
Don’t lose your ambition

- Set goals with deadlines.
- Break into smaller pieces.
- Remind yourself of the goals.
- Keep score of progress
- Build in frequent personal rewards.
Evaluative

(willing to experiment and evolve your creativity beyond the idea stage)

Become a tinkerer – “play around with” different ideas. Set some priorities for your creativity.

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“You want experimentation. Every once in awhile, you stumble upon something that blows your mind.”

Jeremy Stoppelman
CEO, Yelp
Autonomous
(independent; norm-doubting)

Be prepared to occasionally break some rules. Question some norms.
Be independent.
Break from the script. Take careful risks.
Look for things invisible to others.

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“Sometimes assumptions seem so basic that we never think to challenge them.”

Michael Michalko, creativity expert
Tuned in
(open and alert to the world around you; highly perceptive)

Creativity rarely, if ever, occurs in a vacuum. Pay attention to what’s going on around you.

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• Tune into different broadcasting stations, publications, presentations, etc.
• Try new hobbies
• Pay attention to new conversations
• Travel
• Notice things you may have never paid attention to
Introspective
(driven by innate or intrinsic rewards; self-accepting)

• Take time for individual reflection.
• Learn how to employ a single-minded focus on something, with full enjoyment in the process of the activity - flow (Csikszentmihalyi).

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Flow refers to complete absorption in what one does. That’s when most creativity happens.
Activate your seven mental brainsets

(1) absorb
(2) envision
(3) connect
(4) reason
(5) evaluate
(6) transform
(7) stream

Shelley Carson, Your Creative Brain
Visionary
(having dreams and aspirations; original thinking)

“Never forget your dreams.”

Korczak Ziolkowski

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Merriam-Webster defines a visionary as: “one having unusual foresight and imagination.”
Energetic

(adept at managing and recharging your energy)
Establish your own rhythm to manage your energy.

Focus

Relationships

Energy

Stimuli

Hours

This and the following five slides are adapted from Todd Henry’s *The Accidental Creative: How to be Brilliant at a Moment’s Notice*, Penguin Books, 2011.

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Direct your efforts toward those things that will increase your level of creative engagement.
Build creatively stimulating friendships and limit access to the creativity vampires.
Discipline your energy management and build in buffers to recharge.

Prune your ideas to prevent overburdening your creativity.

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Evaluate the quality of the inputs you use as “creative nutrition.”
Ensure idea time that’s right for you.
Stay tuned for future presentations on creativity and innovation – and check out my 100 inspirational *Creativity and Innovation Quotes* on SlideShare.

If you want more, follow my creativity blog and links at [BrainSnacksCafe.com](http://BrainSnacksCafe.com).

Stay creative, my friends!

Linda
Just as we routinely upgrade computer systems, we must upgrade our own knowledge systems. Linda has helped over 10,000 people over a 25+ year period with these educational upgrades, merging anecdotal client experience with researched “best practices,” and sharing the resulting insights with managers and executives. After working in the office products, publishing and insurance industries, she joined UW-Madison’s Center for Professional and Executive Development, both as a corporate trainer and program director. Now, as a director emerita, she provides workshops for select clients.


Linda is now a blogger, mystery author and *Creativity Curator* for her own company, Tomorrow’s Mysteries, LLC.
For more information, refer to the following books on Amazon, follow my blogs, and download several free articles from my website, BrainSnacksCafe.com.

The Product Management ShortRead Series is a collection of “bite-sized” (about 100 pages) books on selected topics. Product Management 101 and Product Strategy & Roadmaps were published in January 2017. Creatively Innovative is scheduled for late 2017.