

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

WORKSHOP GUIDE



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Whatever a person's role in an organisation, they may have to apply creative thinking to overcome problems. At the end of the session delegates will learn how to enhance their own creativity with some straightforward techniques.

INTRODUCTION

This guide is designed for a manager or a facilitator to deliver a short workshop featuring videos from the Video Arts Leadership Essentials Series. Each video comes with a series of activities around the following structure:

LOOK - watch the video and reflect on the content and message.

THINK - activities and questions linking the video to their own experience and workplace.

REMEMBER - a summary of the key learning points.

These activities will take about 15 minutes to complete. At the end of this guide is a practical exercise to help bring all of the learning points together.

FEATURED VIDEOS

- Brainstorms (Uh, there's a...mouse? And he's...in a submarine)
- Fostering innovation (Sit down and tie yourself up again!)
- Unleashing your creativity (All the thinking has clogged up my brain pipe)

VIDEO 1 – BRAINSTORMS

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Good ideas can come from the most unexpected of places, and people. Encourage your team to share their ideas. You might be surprised by the results.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Think back to a time when your team or department was coming up with ideas for a new project, or ways to improve an existing process. How well did the session go? Was everyone's voice heard, or perhaps only the dominant few – maybe just the 'creative types'?

Build the following points into the discussion;

Create a safe place: People need to feel safe when sharing their ideas. Do this by encouraging good relationships between your team.

Lead the way: Many people won't share their ideas because they lack the confidence to speak up or believe their ideas are 'stupid'. Encourage them by sharing some of your ideas to open up the discussion.

REMEMBER (recap, 2 minutes)

When running a brainstorm;

- Give the team time to think before everyone comes together with ideas to share.
- Create a safe space for sharing - don't allow ideas to be shot down, however wild they may seem.
- Look for opportunities to combine ideas to create new and better ones.

VIDEO 2 – FOSTERING INNOVATION

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Some of the most successful and innovative companies realise that their best ideas are already within their organisations. Reward the creativity in your organisation, encourage an atmosphere of innovation.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

How can leaders foster innovation within their own teams?

Responses could include;

- **Give them time to think:** Give them space to think, perhaps on company time, to try out new ways of doing things.
- **Encourage risk-taking:** Encourage teams to think outside the box rather than using tried and tested ways of doing things. Give them examples.
- **Hold internal competitions:** Encourage them to come up with ideas they can share with the team.

REMEMBER (recap, 2 minutes)

- Reward employees for taking ownership of their own problems and coming up with solutions.
- Encourage an outward view - looking for inspiration from the world outside the organisation.
- Give employees the scope to carry forward their own ideas as far as they are able.

VIDEO 3 – UNLEASHING YOUR CREATIVITY

LOOK (play video, 3 minutes)

Some of our best ideas come to us when we least expect them. Always be prepared to capture those ideas and encourage your team to do the same.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Ask the group to discuss if they have ever come up a great idea that can either save the organisation thousands or streamline existing ways of doing things only to have forgotten the idea an hour later? How can leaders unleash their own, and their teams', creativity?

Responses could include these points;

- **Write it down/record it:** No thought is too small, and no idea is too silly to mention. Get an ideas book and start writing down your ideas and encourage your team to do the same. Perhaps get a whiteboard dedicated to 'team ideas'.
- **Take mental breaks:** A lot of companies frown upon their team taking mental breaks such as playing a game for a few minutes or reading something interesting online. But more often than not these are times when good ideas are likely to come to you because you are allowing your mind to wander freely.
- **Get some exercise:** Taking a walk, cycling to work or going to the gym is a great way to rejuvenate your body and your mind.

REMEMBER (recap, 2 minutes)

- Stop thinking about the subject and let your subconscious go to work - time pressure stifles creativity, which needs an incubation period.
- Be ready for ideas to flow at any time - always have a recording device or pen and paper with you, including during the night.

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION – PRACTISE

This exercise encourages participants to reflect on the ideas communicated in the films. It's also an example of a creative activity.

Divide participants into groups of 3-5.

Have each group answer the following questions:

- How do you get your best ideas?
- Where and when does this tend to happen?
- What stops you from sharing your ideas or being innovative in your work?
- What could be done to minimise these barriers? Aim to come up with at least three suggestions.

Have groups share their answers to the questions with everyone. Bring out any commonalities and relate these back to the points made in the films where possible.

Then, turn your attention to the exercise itself, which had a creative element. Ask them:

- How did you find the process of coming up with ideas to remove barriers to innovation?
- How could this process have been improved?

Look to reinforce points from the films, for example:

- Having more time to prepare for the creative session.
- Allowing more time for ideas to incubate.
- Being more open-minded to radical new ideas during the creative session.