



InnoWork

MODULE 10: REFERENCE TO OTHER CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION TOOLS	
Project Title	“Towards a More Innovative Workplace”
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I. Module overview

Learning Objectives	<p>As a result of engaging with the materials in this module, learners are intended to achieve the following learning outcomes:</p> <p>Knowledge: learn more about the difference between personal and organisational creativity; acquaint with tools for applying creative techniques;</p> <p>Skills: ability to adapt traditional methods, concepts, models to new applications; self-assessment;</p> <p>Competences: Encouraging creativity; conceptual thinking and analytical thinking; creative thinking.</p>
Time Schedule	<p>Time necessary for: Learning content (self-study): 30 minutes</p> <p>To acquaint with the additional material provided by the links, you will require some additional time.</p>
Structure	<p>This module is divided into 3 parts:</p> <p>Part 1 – Information about creativity and organisational creativity</p> <p>Part 2 – Information about innovation</p> <p>Part 3 – Tools for creativity and innovation</p>

II. Learning content

Introduction

This module functions as a toolkit. It provides tools for creativity and innovation that can be used for different tasks at the work place. Applying and managing creativity and innovation is essential for all organisations and companies where knowledge creation and use is part of their everyday activities.

This module primarily presents the tools and training materials for innovation of products and services from I-CREATE “Creativity Development & Innovation for SMEs” (website: www.icreate-project.eu/) as it is especially targeted at micro, small and medium sized companies. The module also represents other solutions that can benefit creativity and innovation at the workplace. The tools range from evaluating the state of creativity, knowledge management and creativity and innovation techniques to the culture of continuous innovation. The content of this module can help to implement the content of the other InnoWork modules at the workplace.

Part 1: Creativity

There are three aspects of creativity to consider when thinking about creativity at the workplace (see fig 10.1)

All three go hand in hand: a person’s own creativity can influence the organisation’s creativity, (see modules 3, 4 and 5) and a person naturally uses creative thinking every day. Similarly, organisational creativity is influenced by creative thinking (by individuals and organisation) and employees’ personal creativity and attitude towards it. Creative thinking is a way of thinking that is present and applicable in both contexts. Different tools can be used to enhance creativity and learning and using creativity leads towards innovation. Let’s have a more detailed look at what the three concepts of creativity are.

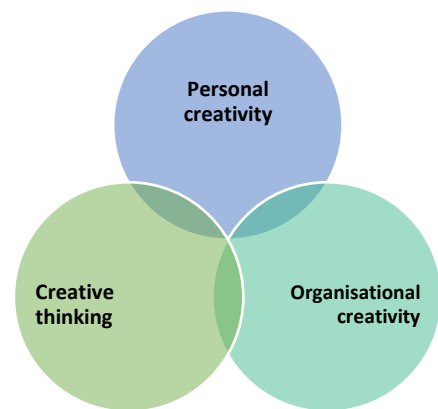


Fig. 10.1. Creativity at the workplace

Personal Creativity

Personal creativity means the ability of an individual to create new, relevant ideas and perspectives. Today very little attention is given to developing the creative thinking skills of individuals within organisations.

Developing personal creativity involves the following four elements:

- ✓ Understanding the process of creative thinking,
- ✓ Identifying blocks to creative thinking and the skills individuals can use to increase creative response,

- ✓ Using methods to get fresh ideas and solutions more frequently,
- ✓ Identifying a personal creative drive and life-long creative vision that will help individuals to achieve their personal and professional goals.

Creative Thinking

Creative thinking skills are as much about attitude and self-confidence as they are about talent. Creative thinking benefits from the openness of the mind, imagination, playfulness, combining unusual elements, crossing disciplines and other borders, and thinking outside the box. A relaxed state of mind helps creative thinking to flow. Many creative ideas that have proved to be brilliant and ground-breaking have a far less formal history.



However, creative thinking also approves the possibility of failure. Creative thinking can be used to retry after a failure which can lead to new, innovative solutions. Just think about Thomas Alva Edison and the hundreds of attempts when he invented the light bulb. Creative thinking and style motivate. The best proof of this how we all react when something fun is in the horizon.



<http://creativethinking.net>

In order to develop further your creative thinking you can visit the web resource developed by Michael Michalko, an internationally acclaimed creative thinking expert and the author of numerous books devoted to the topic of creativity. Here you can explore creative thinking techniques, exercises, articles, and experiments.

Organisational Creativity¹

The driving force of every organisation is the human capital. Hence, if the management wants to improve creativity in their organisation they have to start from the people, the most valuable company asset of the company. In the previous modules this topic was already explored in detail. You can refresh your memory with the below short list of activities how you can foster creativity in your employees:

- Remove barriers and obstacles that hinder creativity;
- Encourage team work and pay attention to the social climate in your organisation. The social environment is of utmost importance;
- Provide freedom for your employees to pursue knowledge, experiment and improvise;
- Present every new task as though it's something really interesting and challenging for your employees;

¹ <http://icreate-project.eu/index.php?t=81>

- Teach your employees to approach every problem or idea from different angles. A key step in this direction involves placing employees in direct contact with the end users of their products and services;
- Consider using 'Socratic inquiry'² meaning that you should ask questions, rather than provide answers. Give your employees time to think through hypothetical situations, look at the bigger picture, and experiment with possibilities;
- Every employee needs to know that their work matters. Changing employee work tasks can bring about a nice change of pace, a sense of accomplishment and increased interest and motivation.

This module focuses on providing a toolkit, but you can read more about how to apply and maintain the above suggestions throughout the other InnoWork modules.

Part 2: Innovation

By contrast to creativity, innovation usually refers to the implementation of creative ideas in an organisational context, thus, individual and team creativity serve as the origin of organisational innovation. Creativity is typically used to refer to the act of producing new ideas, approaches or actions, while innovation is the process of both generating and applying creative ideas in a specific context. In an organisational context the term innovation is often used to refer to the entire process in which an organisation generates creative new ideas and converts them into novel, useful and viable commercial products, services and business practices.



"Innovation in the workplace" represents a process based on continuous feedback, learning and improvement. Innovation should involve employees and managers at all levels, and in all work areas.

Part 3: Tools for Creativity and Innovation

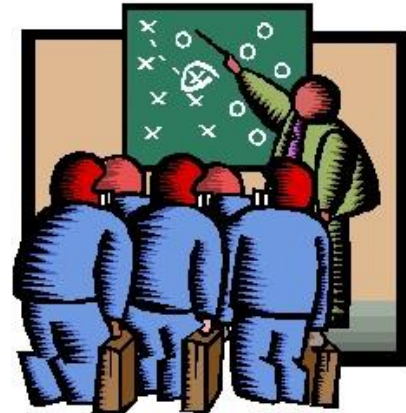
Although creativity is a cognitive approach often based on imagination, different tools (for example, idea generating sessions), can be used to enhance and assist it. However, tools should not only focus on idea generation – measuring, monitoring and continuous implementation of innovation and creativity should have their tools as well.

Part 3 presents selected tools for all these purposes. You can use these and also find more from the literature provided along with general research.

² <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/strategies/socratic-inquiry>

Creativity Audit Tool

Understanding the state of creativity, the creative potential of staff and the organisation is essential when planning which creativity tools to apply and to what extent. An audit tool can be used to support this at the beginning of the process for interim monitoring and at the end of the process (or 'cycle', as we should remember that creativity is not a one-time action but a regulated one). Therefore an end evaluation (audit) is rather an end evaluation of a cycle that iterates to other applications of the creative tools in this cyclic process. Herein is presented the I-CREATE Audit Tool.



[The I-CREATE Audit Tool](http://icreate-project.eu/index.php?t=81), available at <http://icreate-project.eu/index.php?t=81>

Many organisations have responded to competitive economic pressures with the conviction that creativity and innovation are the keys to success. To better achieve their goals of innovation, they should develop the personal creativity skills of individual members within the organisation itself.

The audit tool aims to investigate the organisation's creativity and innovation "health", to identify the factors and variables influencing the creative potential of the personnel at an individual, organisational, leadership and team level. An analytical tool (typically a questionnaire) can be developed tailored to, for example, the needs, personnel, culture, nature of work and activities of the organisation. With the Audit tool you can try to evaluate the organisation's creativity and innovation "health" and potential by developing suitable scales of measurement and quantification to analyse the data in order to identify the problematic areas requiring improvement. Finally, after a discussion with the management team, an initial set of actions can be proposed and the company can make an action plan and start taking the first steps to nurturing creativity at work.

Knowledge Management for Innovation and Human Resources competences

Knowledge Management (KM) for Innovation applies to the innovation process. It applies at every stage of the process. For example, in the following graphic the first three steps in the KM innovation chain are highlighted:

Analysis of Innovation Needs - Gathering information inside and outside the company, information sharing in the company.

Generating Ideas - buying ideas from outside, management of internal innovative proposals, creativity techniques, information sharing.

Evaluation of Potential Solutions - Decision making and transfer of the information on the decision, benchmarking...

InnoSupport, <http://www.innosupport.net/index.php?id=5988>, provides assistance for Knowledge Management. It provides tools to help determine the key points for your knowledge management.

Your company may have the newest and the most sophisticated *technology* but it needs skilled and creative employees to make it operational and ensure a competitive advantage on this basis. Human Resources (HR) help in this task. Three key elements of **Human Resource competence requirements for innovations** refer to important aspects of managing innovative employees: (A) Recruitment and selection; (b) HR development; (c) Motivation.

Read more about Human Resources and Innovation at <http://www.innosupport.net/index.php?id=2312>. The website also provides a [case study](#) that may provide a useful point of reference for you.

Tools for Creativity and Innovation

Creativity and innovation can be enhanced in many ways. As you have already learned, to cultivate both creativity and innovation at the workplace, certain leadership behaviours should be practiced:

- ✓ Focus on continuous learning
- ✓ Have an open attitude towards risk taking
- ✓ Use and share knowledge and information
- ✓ Conduct fair and informative evaluations
- ✓ Reward creative performance



I-CREATE

The I-CREATE library offers a full set of creativity tools to use, including a **creativity technique search engine** (<http://www.icreate-project.eu/index.php?t=40>) with several options that help to define your ideating conditions, aim and purpose in order to find one or more creativity tools that best fit your availability and needs.

Creativity techniques can be filtered by group size, approximate duration, equipment necessary, level of difficulty, innovation type and web tools. Thus, I-Create provides detailed descriptions and step-by-step instructions how to implement more than 25 creativity techniques.

Find a creativity technique

Classification of techniques

Group size - people needed	Approximate duration	Type of innovation	Web tools	Required equipment	Level of difficulty
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 to 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 to 7 <input type="checkbox"/> more than 7	<input type="checkbox"/> up to 15 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> up to 30 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> up to 45 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> up to 1 hour <input type="checkbox"/> more than 1 hour	<input type="checkbox"/> Product <input type="checkbox"/> Process <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Idea	<input type="checkbox"/> Blogs <input type="checkbox"/> Chat rooms <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail communication <input type="checkbox"/> Forums and blogs <input type="checkbox"/> Online surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Skype conferences <input type="checkbox"/> Social networks <input type="checkbox"/> Team building games	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper / Pen <input type="checkbox"/> Flipchart / Whiteboard <input type="checkbox"/> PC / Beamer <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Access	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

Creative Thinking.net

[Creativethinking.net](http://creativethinking.net) is a website that provides a library of **exercises about creative thinking**. It is available at <http://creativethinking.net/exercises/>.

Mycoted

Mycoted offers a wide range of **Creativity and Innovation Techniques** from A to Z. It is available at https://www.mycoted.com/Category:Creativity_Techniques.

This rich pool of creativity techniques provides an introduction to a range of tools and techniques for both idea generation (Creativity) and converting those ideas into reality (Innovation). They are all very useful, provided you pick the right tool (creativity/innovation technique) for each job.

Design Thinking

Design Thinking offers a method and a way of thinking which can be used to create ideas and implement them into practical, real products. While it is not a creativity tool, it can use creativity tools especially during the first phases of the process.



There are many tools of Design Thinking and they are also used for service design. Herein are provided a few of them:

Human Centered Design by Ideo



The Human Centered Design (HCD) toolkit is one of Ideo's design-thinking based toolkits for creative problem solving.

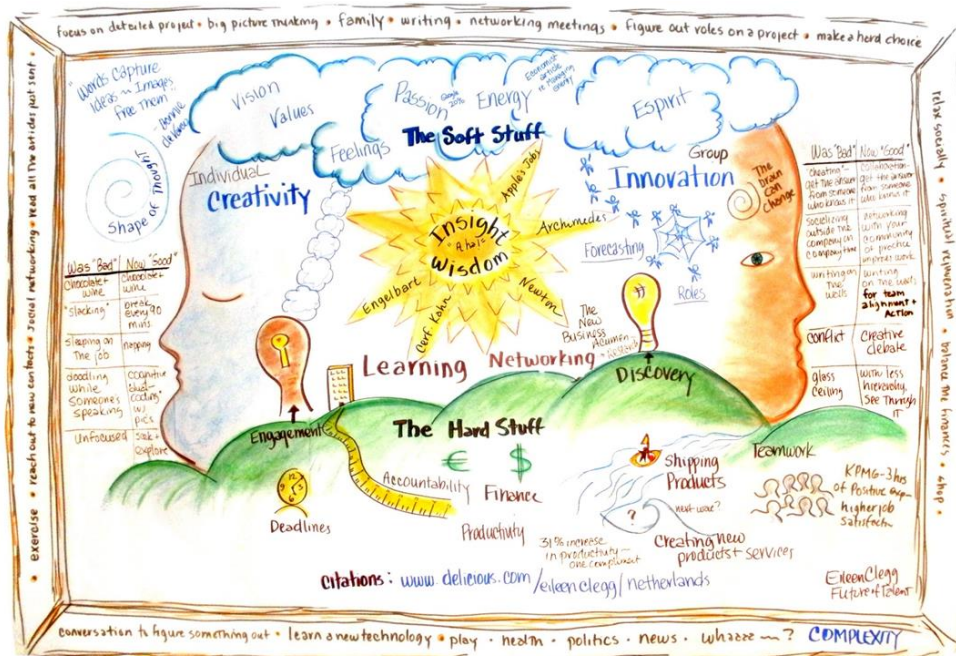
The process consists of 3 main phases: inspiration, ideation and implementation. A human being, understanding people, is at the

	<p>centre of the process.</p> <p>HCD is one of the existing Design Thinking and problem solving toolkits. Design Thinking is especially beneficial when solving ill-defined problems and it uses and enhances creative thinking.</p> <p>Read more at: http://www.designkit.org/</p>
<p>Collective Action Toolkit by Frog Design</p> 	<p>Frog Design's collective action toolkit is another Design Thinking toolkit. It invites people to target community problems in a group, collaborating to find solutions that can make a difference.</p> <p>Design Thinking is especially beneficial when solving ill-defined problems and it uses and enhances creative thinking.</p> <p>Read more at: http://www.frogdesign.com/work/frog-collective-action-toolkit.html and http://www.frogdesign.com/sites/default/files/pdf/frog_collective_action_toolkit.pdf</p>
<p>Service design Toolkit</p>  <p>Service Design Toolkit</p>	<p>Service design toolkit helps to create and improve service processes in a creative and human centred way. The design perspective can lead to developing services in an innovative way.</p> <p>More about Service Design Toolkit can be found at: http://www.servicedesigntoolkit.org/index.html</p>

III. Conclusion

Understanding what tools to select for creative and innovative activity is based on knowing what they are, how to use them in an organisation, what tools are available and how to select and use them, as well as what elements influence the implementation process, and how to keep the creative and innovation activity on-going, monitoring and renewing it continuously.

The overall aims of an organisation are crucial. Most individuals and organisations have similar goals regarding creativity. Organisations know that their ability to innovate lays in the staff and their skills and creative abilities. An individual needs to understand and adopt internal thinking processes that increase the potential for new thinking. Organisations have to do the same, but in addition, must recognise the creative members among their staff and provide the necessary environment and conditions for creativity. This may lead to increased innovation potential of an organisation.



IV. Additional reading

I-CREATE e-library

The e-library of I-CREATE provides plenty of information and tools for enhancing creativity in an organisation. The Creativity Development & Innovation Handbook and Audit Tool are especially useful and can be found at <http://icreate-project.eu/index.php?t=25>.

The tools and products of I-CREATE can help micro, small and medium sized enterprises to develop new practices to systematically manage their potential for creativity and innovation. Through practical guidance the managers of SMEs and other organisations will be able to identify, value, trigger, share and select the best means to develop their most valuable asset: creativity.

All materials are available in English, Bulgarian, Spanish, German and Slovak.



Culture for Continuous Innovation

Innovation (and creativity) should not be a one-time action. It is essential to keep these activities continuous. For example, the InnoSupport platform provides tools for this purpose.

InnoSupport is about Creating a Company Culture for

Continuous Innovation.

Within this well-structured resource (<http://www.innosupport.net/index.php?id=2321>), you will find out more about creativity and innovation from successfully accomplished projects like [InnoSupport](#), [InnoLocalSupp](#), [InnoCase](#), etc.

For specific further application of creativity at the workplace, please have a look at the other InnoWork modules.