

# The Creative Advantage

How the intersection of science and creativity  
reveals life's ultimate advantage

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## **Other books by this author**

*Sweet Spot Careers: A Practical and Creative Guide to a Successful Midlife Career Transition (2013)*

*The Creative Advantage Life Cycle: Enhance your creativity throughout all stages of your life (2020)*

*The Creative Advantage: Activity Guide (2021)*

# CONTENTS

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|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Preface and Dedication</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| Acknowledgments   | 9         |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>Section 1: An Introduction to the Intersection of Science and Creativity</b> | <b>11</b> |
| <b>Chapter 1: Is There a Secret to Creativity?</b>                              | <b>12</b> |
| About the Creative Advantage  | 15        |
| <b>Chapter 2: Understanding What's Defining the World Today</b>                 | <b>18</b> |
| Information overload and attention deficient                                    | 18        |
| The uncertainty of work   | 20        |
| Workplace trends  | 21        |
| The creative economy is shaping this century                                    | 22        |
| Future-proofing students  | 23        |
| The growth of artificial intelligence   | 24        |
| What does this summary of the dominant trends tell us?                          | 25        |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>Section 2: What is the Creative Advantage?</b>                               | <b>27</b> |
| <b>Chapter 3: The Creative Fundamentals</b>                                     | <b>28</b> |
| Defining creativity   | 28        |
| Is anything truly original?   | 30        |
| What type of creative are you?  | 31        |
| Why we need to be creative  | 34        |
| When did humans evolve to be creative?  | 36        |
| The brain's balancing act   | 37        |
| <b>Chapter 4: What's Going on in the Creative Brain?</b>                        | <b>39</b> |
| Dissecting problem solving  | 39        |
| Deliberate and spontaneous creative modes in action                             | 40        |
| The whole brain at work   | 41        |
| Let's not forget about the imagination  | 43        |
| The communicating brain   | 44        |
| Can the brain change?   | 44        |
| <b>Chapter 5: The Essential Elements to Creativity</b>                          | <b>47</b> |
| Introducing the four creative elements  | 47        |
| A labour of love: mindset and motivation  | 49        |
| Not all practice makes perfect: domain expertise                                | 52        |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| The top seven skills that make up a creative skillset | 55 |
| The influence of the social and work environment      | 56 |

## **Section 3: How to Create The Conditions for the Creative Advantage** **57**

### **Chapter 6: Becoming More Creative** **58**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Generating creative ideas                              | 58 |
| Where do ideas and creativity intersect?               | 59 |
| Social interaction, creating connections and diversity | 61 |
| “Chance favours the connected mind”                    | 62 |
| Apple’s creative chaos                                 | 65 |
| Creative problem-solving models                        | 66 |
| Capturing ideas for creative insights                  | 68 |

### **Chapter 7: Increase Your Brain’s Creative Capacity** **70**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| How to have more insights, aha and breakout moments | 70 |
| Slow-motion multitasking                            | 71 |
| The unexpected benefits of procrastination          | 73 |
| Rewiring our brain via visualisation                | 74 |

### **Chapter 8: The Power of Adult Play** **76**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| What does play look like when we’re adults? | 77 |
| Living a playful life                       | 77 |
| Playful versus serious workplaces           | 79 |

### **Chapter 9: Give Yourself Permission to Daydream** **80**

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| The benefits of boredom | 81 |
|-------------------------|----|

### **Chapter 10: Build Your Creative Practice Through Routine** **83**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Identifying and establishing creative routines                | 83 |
| Creatures of habit  | 84 |
| The neuroplasticity of habit                                  | 85 |
| The creative rhythm method                                    | 86 |
| Creating creative habits through frequency                    | 90 |
| Timing is everything  | 91 |
| Afternoons can be a dangerous time without restorative breaks | 92 |

### **Chapter 11: Overcoming Creative Barriers** **93**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| What’s holding you back?                              | 94 |
| The risk-reward ratio                                 | 94 |
| Building strategies to overcome what gets in your way | 96 |
| How failure can drive creativity                      | 97 |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Section 4: How to Enhance the Creative Advantage</b>                    | <b>101</b> |
| <b>Chapter 12: To Sleep – Perchance to Dream</b>                           | <b>103</b> |
| Why we sleep   | 104        |
| Sleeping on a problem  | 105        |
| What about the value of naps?  | 105        |
| Why teenagers need more sleep  | 106        |
| <b>Chapter 13: The Best Brain Exercise is Physical</b>                     | <b>107</b> |
| The brain and body connection  | 108        |
| Scheduling breaks into your day  | 109        |
| Walking and talking – a new way to multitask                               | 109        |
| <b>Chapter 14: The Value of Restorative Activities</b>                     | <b>111</b> |
| Solitude can feed the creative mind  | 111        |
| Meditate to create   | 112        |
| Creativity and natural settings  | 113        |
| <b>Chapter 15: Influence the Physical Design of Your Creative Space</b>    | <b>116</b> |
| <b>Chapter 16: The Brain That Changed the World</b>                        | <b>119</b> |
| <b>Section 5: Tools for a Creative Life</b>                                | <b>123</b> |
| <b>Chapter 17: Learn Creative Problem-Solving Tools</b>                    | <b>126</b> |
| From ideas to action – A tool for divergent and convergent problem solving | 127        |
| Selling the idea for broad acceptance                                      | 138        |
| <b>Chapter 18: Summary of the Creative Problem Solving Process</b>         | <b>139</b> |
| Do all problems need a creative solution?                                  | 141        |
| Searching for success  | 141        |
| <b>Chapter 19: Creativity as a Way of Life</b>                             | <b>144</b> |
| The bigger picture   | 145        |
| Do you want to gain more creative advantage?                               | 146        |
| <b>Chapter 20: Grow Your Creative Capacity</b>                             | <b>150</b> |
| Cheat sheet activity   | 150        |
| The creativity fitness assessment  | 153        |
| Part 1: Self-audit   | 153        |
| Part 2: Creative Fitness Challenge   | 164        |
| <b>Further Resources</b>   | <b>168</b> |
| Even more Creative Advantage   | 175        |
| <b>Endnotes</b>  | <b>177</b> |

# Preface and Dedication

I undertook the writing phase of *The Creative Advantage* in very turbulent times. After six years of research I was able to secure time to write this book in 2020. Over this period, I spent each day writing, reading and editing through the worst fire-filled summer Australia had ever experienced, resulting in a devastating loss of human and non-human lives, homes and communities. This was followed by the arrival of a worldwide pandemic to be known as COVID-19.

I was grateful every day to have this project, having established a daily routine, writing during my most productive periods of the day. I'd created a physical space filled with inspiration that enabled me to focus as I stood at my stand-up desk to remind me to move.

I took a break every ninety minutes to wander into the garden and just stare at the sky. Then I'd undertake a walk along a nearby beach, enabling me to restore my energy and even indulge in daydreaming.

I slept every night for eight hours, and if I woke during the night I would meditate to quiet and calm the chatter in my mind. I practised yoga and stretching daily and discovered the joy of deep-water running, until the COVID-19 caused the closure of the leisure centre.

I spent many evenings with my watercolours, playing with visual imagery with no particular objective other than to use my hands, get into a flow and be distracted by the beauty that blended watercolours can create.

I acknowledged the anxiety of this time, wrote in my journal to give voice to the insecurities.

I reflected on Maslow's theory, grateful that my physiological and psychological needs were being fulfilled, recognising at the peak of the hierarchy that self-fulfilment can only be truly met by extending out of the comfort zone, in my case through a writing project that in every way reflected who I am.

Foremost I reflected on the value of curiosity to follow trails wherever they might lead, and with routine I can create a habit of discipline required to take this exploration to a conclusion.

It confirmed that in times of uncertainty I rely on creative problem-solving skills to get to the other side, visualising where the completion of this book and subsequent program would lead me.

I reflected that on the creative elements of motivation, domain expertise, skills and environment, knowing I have these all working in my favour to ensure I would complete the manuscript.

I was confident that my neural networks were sparking off each other, pushing me forward and reinforcing every time I completed a sentence, that both my analytical and insightful creative processes were firing.

I knew that the advice provided, that I myself tap into every day in every way, would benefit and assist others in all aspects of life.

It was while writing this preface that the clarity of the dedication came to me. I decided to dedicate this book to what I saw around me during this challenging time. To the tenacity of the human spirit and the creativity in each of us that became evident as I watched family and friends, but mostly strangers, support each other during this dangerous pandemic.

So, I have dedicated this book to the strangers I have not met.

The medical professionals who went beyond to keep us safe and alive; the politicians and bureaucrats who found leadership that many may not have expected; to the manufacturers and tinkerers who, for example, swapped car manufacture for ventilators, distilled sanitiser instead of beer, and to the crafty seamstresses who sewed face masks.

To the people who offered to buy groceries, cook meals, walk dogs for the elderly.

To those who kept their distance, did not hoard and kept me laughing with delightfully silly self-isolation clips on social media.

Every day reinforced what we have evolved to be, creative and collaborative problem solvers rising to a challenge when a worldwide test was underway. That we can be kind, minimalist and adaptive.

So, I thank the challenges of 2020 for showing us what our creative spirit can achieve, in the moments of deep fear and duress.

As I finalise this manuscript, we are slowly emerging from the unprecedented period of our lifetimes.

I hope that together we can use this time to focus on the bigger challenge of this century, to flatten the curve of climate change. Let's use the power that happens at the intersection of science and creativity to create a sustainable and equitable earth for all.

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