

The Creative Advantage



Activity Guide
by
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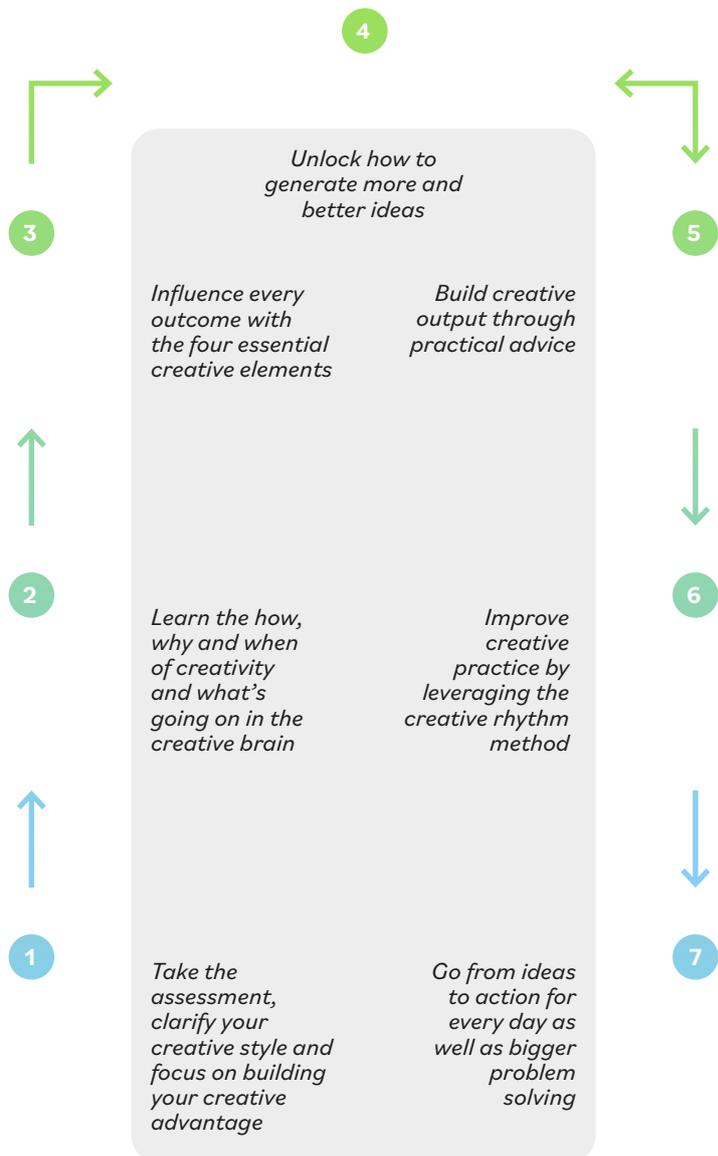
The Creative Advantage: Activity Guide provides practical activities to undertake as part of the accompanying book “**The Creative Advantage: How the intersection of science and creativity reveals life’s ultimate advantage**”, and available at www.thecreativecatalyst.com.au

You’ve done the reading; now transform this theory into practice by undertaking activities that apply this information to your own circumstances. This practical guide will assist you to uncover loads of fresh individual perspectives through self-reflection activities.

 **Get a notebook ready and work through these, taking notice of the both deliberate and random thoughts that arise through these exercises.**

These activities apply the relevant science, including the psychological and neurological, as well as strategies and tools to empower you to pursue new ideas drawn from the best creative thinkers. With new skills and renewed motivation, you can develop the confidence to pursue creativity in all aspects of your life.

The activities correspond to steps outlined The Creative Advantage Program Model and relate to the sections as outlined in the book.





Step 1: Clarify What's Your Creative Strength

How do you express your creativity? Undertake the Creativity Fitness Assessment and determine what your creative strengths are, then focus on building your creative advantage.



Step 2: Understand the Creative Fundamentals

Learn the how, what, why and when of creativity. How we define creativity, when did humans evolve to be creative, why we need to be creative and understand what's going on in the creative brain that can give you a creative advantage.



Step 3: Explore the Essential Creative Elements

Learn how to manage the four essential elements that influence every creative outcome. They are motivation, domain expertise, creative skillsets and the social and work environment. Understanding the science behind each element provides you with a means to leverage these to your creative advantage.



Step 4: Create the Conditions for Creativity

Learn where ideas and creativity intersect to unlock how to generate more and better ideas. Increase your brain's creative capacity to harness spontaneous insights, the power of play and be introduced to the benefits of procrastination and boredom. Then leverage visualisation to rewire your brain power.



Step 5: Enhance the Body - Brain Connection

Your creativity is dependent on your body and brain's health. Learn practical ways to enhance your creativity through the value of sleep, movement and restorative activities including solitude, meditation and being in natural settings. Then understand how the design of your physical space is crucial to your creative output.



Step 6: Build a Creative Routine

Build your creative practice by identifying and establishing a creative routine. Learn the 'creative rhythm method' to leverage the neuroplasticity behind habit. Then overcome barriers, capture the benefits of failure and create strategies to overcome what gets in your way to ensure your creative practice sticks.



Step 7: Learn Creative Problem Solving Tools

Expand your creative powers. Go from ideas to action with tools that you can use for every day and bigger problem solving. Be transformed by applying the information learned and make creativity a way of life.

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Clarify What's Your Creative Strength

STEP

1

Undertake a Creativity Self-Assessment

This activity is in two parts and aims to point to numerous qualitative elements that can influence your creative performance. Measure your awareness and assess your readiness to make adjustments to your approach to creativity in part one. The second part seeks to determine more quantitative elements that point to your creative fitness.

Both sections are included as elements for your consideration, remember there's no right or wrong answer.

All the topics in this assessment are covered in more detail throughout the book. You are also provided with another assessment activity at the end of the book that enables you to turn your growing awareness and knowledge into a practical and usable creative advantage.



Apply your learning to leverage the Creative Advantage

Part 1

Rate on a scale of 1-5



ASSESS CREATIVE READINESS

PERSONAL / PROFESSIONAL

RATE

Problem solving requires allocated time to enable clarity.	<i>Do I schedule in time for important creative tasks?</i>	
Creative thinking is assisted by diverse networks and social interactions.	<i>Can I benefit by extending my social and work networks?</i>	
Maintaining energy is a significant factor in the quality of creative output.	<i>How many hours sleep do I need verses how many hours I get?</i>	
Regular physical movement is associated with better brain function.	<i>Can I incorporate movement into my daily routine, particularly at work?</i>	
The quality of creative output is dependent on the quality of the inputs.	<i>What are my inputs? Are the apps, reading, social media I subscribe to serving my curiosity?</i>	
The quality of creative output is dependent on the diversity of inputs.	<i>Do I seek input from sources outside of my domain expertise?</i>	
The ability to motivate oneself is through a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.	<i>People with intrinsic motivation display self-direction, whereas extrinsic motivation is about external rewards. Am I aware of a primary motivational driver?</i>	
Pursuing creative endeavours and the motivation to continue point to the concept of mindset.	<i>Fixed mindset assume that abilities are static and can't change and growth mindset view setbacks as an opportunity. Am I aware which do I lean toward?</i>	
Time is a precious and finite resource that contributes to the quality of my creative response.	<i>Am I aware where I can free up time by designing a routine that includes advanced creative thinking?</i>	
Our circadian rhythms have a major influence on performance and mood.	<i>Am I aware when am I most productive during the day?</i>	
Building a creatively successful routine also includes capturing ideas.	<i>Am I aware how am I capturing ideas, reflecting and creating steps for idea follow up?</i>	
Practice, specifically deliberate practice enables us to get the most from the time allocated.	<i>Deliberate practice requires considerable, specific, and sustained efforts to do something you can't do well. Am I aware how I approach practice?</i>	
Creativity constraints can take many forms - individual, family, organisational, societal and cultural.	<i>Am I aware of barriers that are reinforcing a pattern or habit and limiting my creativity?</i>	
Failure can be a teacher towards achieving creative breakthroughs.	<i>Do I jump into solution mode too quickly, not allowing errors to become evident?</i>	
Daydreaming is a form of mind wandering and can be a tool for imagination.	<i>Do I notice my level of awareness to mind wandering and daydreaming?</i>	
Adult play encourages us to relax and move into an insightful creative states.	<i>Do I actively create an atmosphere that allows playfulness and improvisation in my life?</i>	

Part 2

Rate on a scale of 1-5



ASSESS CREATIVE FITNESS

PERSONAL / PROFESSIONAL

RATE

Problem solving requires allocated time to enable clarity.	<i>Am I spending too much time on non-productive tasks (eg social media) instead of creating? ('Too much' is measured in comparison to allocated creative thinking time)</i>	
Sleep provides a neuroprotective effect.	<i>Did I get 8 hours of good sleep consistently over the past 7 days?</i>	
Physical movement aids brain function, improves memory, reduces health decline and increases learning capacity.	<i>Is movement part of my daily routine?</i>	
Creating inner calm through tapping into solitude, meditation and being in nature enables us take advantage of restorative niches.	<i>Do I undertake meditation, deep and rhythmic breathing, regular short breaks or time outdoors (preferably in nature) into my daily routine?</i>	
The design of the physical space at home or the workplace can make a significant impact on the ability to be creative.	<i>Do I have a workspace at home or work that fosters creativity?</i>	
Hand based craft activities have a direct and quantifiable benefit activating brain areas that correspond to a sense of calm and an improved emotional state.	<i>Do I undertake any everyday little creative activities into my life?</i>	