



17: The Power of Creativity

13-16
ADULT

A Lesson on Innovation, Expression, and Building a Competitive Advantage Through Creative Thinking



Introduction for the Facilitator

Creativity isn't just for artists, designers, or entrepreneurs. It's for everyone: students, tradespeople, professionals, and lifelong learners. In today's world, creative thinkers are problem-solvers, innovators, and team members who bring fresh ideas and flexible thinking to the table.

This lesson helps learners in college and workforce development programs see creativity as a practical, high-value **professional skill**—one that expands their **personal competitive advantage** by helping them stand out, adapt, and contribute in powerful ways.

Whether they're building something with their hands or solving something with their minds, learners can use creativity to unlock new solutions, improve systems, and bring joy and originality to their work.

In this lesson, college students and workforce learners can deepen their understanding of creativity as a professional skill. This lesson includes:

- A relatable Scenario to show the need for creativity every day
- 8 Guided Group Discussion Questions with follow-up questions
- 8 Journal Prompts to consider how creativity isn't just about being artistic
- 8 personal Skill-Building Strategies
- A printable Action Planner for reflection and application



Scenario: Fixing the Fix

Luis, 27, is in a diesel technology program. During a class assignment, he notices that the repair manual solution isn't working on an older vehicle model. Instead of giving up, Luis starts sketching and problem-solving using spare parts and input from classmates.

He builds a working solution that his instructor says is actually more efficient than the original design.

Luis realizes his creative thinking doesn't just help him pass the assignment; it makes him a respected resource in the shop.



Guided Group Discussion Questions

1. **What does creativity mean to you in your own work, training, or school experience?**
Follow-up: How is it different from being "artistic"?
2. **What everyday situations require creativity, even when we might not think of them that way?**
Follow-up: Have you faced one recently?
3. **Why is creativity a competitive advantage in today's job market?**
Follow-up: What types of roles or industries benefit most from it?
4. **What stops people from seeing themselves as creative?**
Follow-up: How can we change that mindset?
5. **What's the connection between creativity and problem-solving?**
Follow-up: How do they support each other?
6. **How can teams encourage more creative thinking without judgment?**
Follow-up: What helps people share ideas more freely?
7. **What role does curiosity play in creative thinking?**
Follow-up: How do we keep curiosity alive as adults?
8. **What's one area of your life where more creativity could help?**
Follow-up: What's one small idea you could try this week?



Journal Prompts

1. **Describe a time you solved something in a creative way. What helped you think outside the box?**
2. **When do you feel most creative? What environment or mindset supports it?**
3. **What's a creative strength you bring to a group or project?**
4. **What limits your creativity, and how can you challenge that?**
5. **What's one part of your routine or work that could benefit from a fresh approach?**
6. **Who inspires you with their creativity, and what do they do differently?**
7. **What helps you turn an idea into action?**
8. **How could creativity help you achieve your lifestyle, academic, or career goals?**



Skill-Building Strategies

1. **Idea Journal:** Keep a small notebook or app where you jot down creative ideas, observations, or solutions.
2. **What-If Practice:** Ask "What if we tried it this way?" once a day in your learning or work.
3. **30-Minute Maker Session:** Block out time each week to create: write, sketch, build, brainstorm, or design something.
4. **Constraint Challenge:** Pick a challenge and solve it with a twist (e.g., solve it in 5 steps or with only \$5).
5. **Mind Map Method:** Use visual diagrams to brainstorm or organize thoughts and see patterns.
6. **Collaboration Circle:** Share your idea with someone in a totally different field and ask how they'd approach it.
7. **Reverse Brainstorming:** Instead of solving a problem, list all the ways to make it worse—then reverse those for solutions.
8. **Creative Confidence Booster:** Do something playful, imperfect, or new each week just to practice thinking differently.



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Your Action Plan for Original Thinking and Competitive Advantage

Action Planner

Reflect and Prepare

Name: _____

What Is Creativity?

Creativity is the ability to imagine, design, or discover something new. It shows up in problem-solving, communication, innovation, and expression and it builds your personal competitive advantage.

Why This Matters to Me

Why is creativity important in your training, work, or personal goals?

How I Create and Innovate

Where I feel most creative: _____

What challenges my creative thinking: _____

What creative habit I'd like to build: _____

Belief Shift

Circle or write a belief to support your creativity:

"Creativity is a skill I can grow."

"I'm allowed to try, fail, and try again."

"Original thinking opens new doors."

"My ideas bring value."

Other: _____



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Your Action Plan for Original Thinking and Competitive Advantage

Action Planner

Creativity Practice + Progress

Name: _____

My 28-Day Creativity Focus

What project, idea, or routine will you approach more creatively this month?

Where or when will this happen? _____

How will you reflect or track it?

☐ Idea log ☐ Journal ☐ Weekly recap ☐ Share with others

Restart Plan

When I feel stuck or uninspired, I will:

☐ Try a new location or tool

☐ Use my anchor phrase: "Let's try something different."

☐ Ask for input or feedback

☐ Other: _____

Weekly Reflection Prompts

1. Where did I think creatively this week?

2. What challenged my creativity and how did I respond?

3. What idea, solution, or moment made me feel energized?

4. What will I try differently next week?

28-Day Creativity Tracker

Focus habit or project: _____

Week 1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 1 go? Circle one word:

☒ Curious ☒ Inspired ☒ Stuck
☒ Playful ☒ Focused ☒ Growing

Week 3 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 3 go? Circle one word:

☒ Curious ☒ Inspired ☒ Stuck
☒ Playful ☒ Focused ☒ Growing

Week 2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 2 go? Circle one word:

☒ Curious ☒ Inspired ☒ Stuck
☒ Playful ☒ Focused ☒ Growing

Week 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 4 go? Circle one word:

☒ Curious ☒ Inspired ☒ Stuck
☒ Playful ☒ Focused ☒ Growing