

Title: **Just do it: supporting staff to think creatively about curriculum development**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to test assumptions about what creativity in the curriculum might look like; what creative behaviours are evident when individuals engage in creative thinking and what we as developers should ideally do to support development engaged in developing curricula creatively.

Session Outline

The changing landscapes of higher education will undoubtedly provide many challenges in the next few years but prime amongst them will be the need for closer scrutiny of programme portfolios together with more robust reflections by HEI's on whether creative and innovative approaches to curriculum development are being maximised.

From a higher education perspective three key strands have emerged in recent years surrounding creativity. Whilst the dominant, and historically most longstanding approach, has focused on giftedness and the 'unique' characteristics of creative individuals (Trefinger, 2004) more recent approaches take a slightly broader view of the universality of creativity including the benefits that arise from 'learning to be creative' (Jackson, 2005). A further approach emphasises 'creativity characteristics' (often referred to as the 4 P's) which emphasise the essence of creativity based on the broad but interweaving impact of 'place, product, people and process' (Runco, 2004).

The session will explore some notions of what creativity (or more specifically creative thinking) might look like in a variety of contexts focusing in particular on Runco's 4Ps. A personal reflection of Norman Jackson's characteristics of creativity in higher education will be explored together with a review of findings from a small-scale study exploring underlying organisational climate for creativity and conditions for effective creative thinking. A key focus for the workshop activity will be the consideration of optimal approaches, using a nominal group technique, to the support and fostering of creative behaviours.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

Focus / Activity	Timing
Introduction to creativity; Overview of Runco's 4P approach to defining creativity	10 minutes

Assessing the underlying culture for creative thinking; review of the optimal conditions for supporting creative thinking & exploration of what creative behaviours might look like when individuals and teams engage in developing curricula	30 minutes
Key workshop activity (using a nominal group technique) on how educational developers can help to foster creative thinking on curriculum design and development. Key questions for the activity will focus on what approaches (that maximise opportunities for creative thinking) should be used to support teams engaged in curriculum development & what can we do as developers with regard to aspects of organisational climate and culture that might inhibit creative thinking	40 minutes
Exploration of conditions for success & concluding remarks	10 minutes

References

- Jackson N (2005) Tackling the Wicked Problem of Creativity in Higher Education, Surrey Centre for Excellence in Professional Training and Education (SCEPTRE) University of Surrey, Guildford
- Runco MA (2004) Everyone has Creative Potential. In Sternberg RJ, Grigorenko EL & Singer JL (eds), *Creativity: From Potential to Realization* (pp21-30) Washington DC, American Psychological Association
- Treffinger DJ (2004) Research on Creativity. In Reis SM & Treffinger DJ (eds) *Creativity and Giftedness* pp87-89), Sage Publications California