Creativity and innovation for youth development

Born from the will to answer to the needs of youth in Europe

Edited by Ce.S.I.E
Creativity and Innovation for youth development

Youth in Action Programme
Action 4.3
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Annexes
1. Project presentation¹:

“Creativity and innovation for youth empowerment” born from the will to answer to the needs of youth observed in the diverse partner contexts and at European level. Even if each partner came from very different environments all belong to the broader European context that brought all together in probing to achieve a more integrated and equal society in which all youth (and population in general) are active actors and participants. At the same time the project permitted to reinforce the partnership between CE.S.I.E members in Europe and increase their cooperation.

Some of the observed needs through the direct contact with youth people were:

- the pessimism about the future and the difficulty to identify/create positive alternatives of action outside of the mainstream thinking
- the low active participation of youth
- the need to understand the other and to learn to communicate in a nonviolent way
- the low involvement in activities that promote creativity
- the lack of self-realisation in an artistic way to be able to express through non verbal communication.

These are just some of the needs observed. Other need reported in White paper of youth, November 2001, European Commission:

- Chance for education (high quality education) and self training: intellectual and even physical development
- A safe and normal family background
- Financial independence and safety
- Participation in the political, economical, social and cultural life of their country and of Europe
- To be integrated in the society
- Take part in the public life to be able to exercise their rights and communicate their needs
- To get the chance to find a good job
- To be more open-minded
- To be prepared for changes
- Positive aspects for their future
- Chance for self-realization

Together with partners were identified some values and competences that are resources for youth and that can be connected with the fulfilment of some of the needs identified: problem solving, openness to novelty, nonviolent response to conflicts, use of arts to improve self realisation and to express difficulties.

¹This section was elaborated with information extracted from:
- the Youth in Action guide
The main idea of the project was to promote these competences through the promotion of creative thinking. This was done working with youth workers and staff involved in youth work.

Moreover, this multi-measure action is strongly connected with the report 8935/08 (Brussels, 08/05/2008) of the Council of the European Union. We believe this project answered in an adequate way to diverse of the stated objectives in the Article 2, particularly:

c) raising awareness of the importance of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship for personal development, as well as for economic growth and employment; and fostering entrepreneurial mindsets, particularly among young people;

e) fostering openness to change, creativity and problem-solving as competences conducive to innovation which are transferable to a variety of occupational and social contexts;

i) developing creativity and innovative capacity through non-formal and informal youth activities.

“Creativity and innovation for youth empowerment” was an innovative project that aimed to bring creative thinking methods to the youth work field, contributing this way to promote youth empowerment and consequent social inclusion and personal fulfilment. The project developed in 3 main activities during a period of 18 months:

1. Partnership building activity (Italy, Palermo, 21—26 April 2009)
2. Training course (Apsuciems, Latvia, 24—31 August 2009)
3. Evaluation meeting (Bansko, Bulgaria, 10—15 April 2010)

The project was funded with the support of the Youth in Action Programme of the European Commission. It was an action 4.3, multi-measure.

**What is a Multi-Measure project?**

Through a Multi-Measure project, a promoter who aims to carry out several Activities under sub-Action 4.3 over a period of up to 18 months can submit one single application combining:

- either between two and five Activities of the same type (e.g. from two to five Seminars)
- or between two and five activities of different types (e.g. one Feasibility Visit, two Training Courses, one Seminar and one Evaluation meeting).

All Activities supported through Action 4.3 can be combined within a Multi-Measure project.

*In Youth in Action Programme Guide (p.105)*
Partnership-building Activity - An event organised with a view to allow participants to find partners for transnational co-operation and/or for project development. Partnership-building brings together potential partners and facilitates the development of new projects around a chosen topic and/or an Action of the Youth in Action Programme.

Training Course - An educational learning programme on specific topics, aiming to improve participants’ competences, knowledge, skills and attitudes. Training courses lead to higher quality practice in youth work in general and/or, specifically, Youth in Action projects.

Evaluation Meeting - A meeting planned with partners, aiming to evaluate past meetings, seminars, training courses. These meetings help partners to evaluate and discuss potential follow-up after undertaking a common project.

In Youth in Action Programme Guide (p.95)

The main general objectives of the project were:

1. To aware for the importance of creativity and innovation in the development of social cohesion.
2. To increase the quality of youth work and equip youth workers with new competences.
3. To give youth workers the necessary competences to work on stimulating creative thinking in youth.
4. To promote a reflection on the importance of creative thinking in the development of competences in youth.
5. To promote social cohesion and youth self-development.
6. To develop new Youth in Action projects and create new partnerships.

The first meeting - partnership building activity - aimed to create the team of partners that worked together for 1 year and a half.

The second meeting - training course - aimed mainly to facilitate the learning of diverse competences concerning creative thinking and creativity in youth work and to stimulate new Youth in Action projects inside the partnership. After the course participants had in their learning bag the capacity to organise youth projects that use creative methods and that promote creative thinking in youth.

Before the last evaluation meeting, partners were expected to develop projects in which they put in practice the competencies learned in the training course.

The last meeting - evaluation seminar - aimed to evaluate the impact of the project, to extract the good practices from the activities implemented by partners and to work on the realization of a 1.2 project “Trans-national Youth Initiative” and other follow up projects with a multiplying effect and a valorisation dimension.
The activities implemented during the meetings were several but we can summarise them in 4 main creative methods offered to participants:

I. simulation
II. forum theatre (Augusto Boal)
III. lateral and parallel thinking techniques (De Bono)
IV. open space technology (Harrison Owen)

As well participants had the opportunity to learn new contents (theoretical inputs) and participate in several other activities, such as team building, creative intercultural evenings, between others.

The project involved several participants from 20 European countries: Italy, Portugal, France, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Bulgaria, France, Norway, Denmark, Romania, Check Republic, Malta, Romania, Cyprus, Greece, Germany, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ireland, in a total of 31 partners.

CE.S.I.E, Palermo, Italy, was the coordinator of the project.

CE.S.I.E (Centro di Studi ed Iniziative Europeo - European Centre of Studies and Initiatives) EUROPEAN CENTRE OF STUDIES AND INITIATIVES

MISSION
CE.S.I.E is engaged in growth and development through the active involvement of people, civil society, institutions and the enrichment of diversity.

INTRODUCTION
CE.S.I.E –European Centre of Studies and Initiatives – is a non-profit and independent European non-governmental organisation. It was founded in 2001, inspired by the work and methods of Danilo Dolci. The organisation works towards the promotion of cultural, educational, scientific and economic development at both local and international levels through the employment of innovative and participative tools and methodologies. CE.S.I.E has 6 operative offices and coordinates an international federation.
METHODOLOGY
CE.S.I.E constantly seeks out new methodologies, acting as a bridge between research and knowledge.

The Reciprocal Maieutic Approach (RMA) and grassroots participatory planning methods developed by Danilo Dolci characterise CE.S.I.E’s work. Other methods employed include UNESCO’s Four Pillars of Education, Lateral Thinking and Learning by Doing.

OFFICES
The coordinating office is in Palermo with operative offices in Egypt, India, Malta, Nepal and Senegal. CE.S.I.E coordinates the CE.S.I.E Federation, composed of over 60 organisations around the world sharing our mission.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
- International NGO by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
  - University Association by the Università degli Studi di Palermo
  - European Voluntary Service (EVS) and Italian National Civil Service
  - Sicilian Coordinator of Anna Lindh Foundation Network
  - Organisation for the Promotion of Integration and Equal Opportunities
  - Accredited body by Sicilian Region for Vocational Training
  - Founder and member of local and international networks

DEPARTMENTS AND ACTIVITIES
CE.S.I.E is divided into five departments that work closely with each other.

1. European Cooperation
   Connects the local with Europe through educational, cultural, research and training involving a wide range of stakeholders and European citizens.
2. International Cooperation
   Enhances European participation in other regions’ development through the use of integrated projects that respond to actual needs.
3. Mobility
   Promotes the mobility of people of all ages abroad, enriching their personal and professional skills through experience.
4. Socio-Cultural Promotion
   Responds to the social and cultural needs in local contexts using international approaches.
5. Vocational Training
   Creates training opportunities preparing people for the world of work.

FUNDING RESOURCES
EC Directorate General (DG) Education and Culture
EC DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
EC DG Justice, Freedom and Security
EC DG Europeaid Cooperation Office
European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument
Council of Europe  
Council of Palermo  
European Social Fund  
European fund for Regional Development  
Foundation for the South  
Framework Programme Agreement with Sicilian Region  
President of the Council of Ministers: National Civil Service  

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<td>Euro mediterranean Network for Youth Trafficking prevention</td>
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<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Association POSITIVE MIND</td>
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<td>Grozio mokykla (Youth Leaders Club)</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Panevezys Margarita Rimkevicaite technological school</td>
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<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>NGO „Krantas“</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>The World Centre for New Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Kryptus Youth Club</td>
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The creative-educational approach during the project

The project was planned based on the assumption that creative thinking can be learned, and there are tools that can boost the creative thinking in every human being. The project aimed to introduce the group to some of those tools and to guide them in applying them to youth work.

This was not an easy process mainly because is a new road that is being walked. It’s usual to see arts used as tools to foster creative thinking, it’s very common in youth work as well. However the innovative aspect of the course was that we introduced a new element to promote creative thinking: lateral and parallel thinking techniques (de Bono).

The project educational-creative approach was the provocation, that is, the continuous introduction of new learning elements which might be at the first impact shocking and not directly applicable in a real context. For the group was very difficult to deal with this aspect as it brought them outside the comfort zone they are used to. However it was very effective and participants in general reacted in a positive way to it. Indeed, one of the main fundamentals in stimulating creative thinking is to offer the possibility to think about alternatives to the “normality” and to create new scenarios that make useless the ways of thinking and the solutions that are in general used, stimulating new one.
2. Results achieved:

The final evaluation of the project was done in the evaluation meeting. The evaluation aimed to evaluate the following aspects:
1. The relevance of the creative tools offered
2. Impact in the organisations involved
3. Impact in the participants
4. Impact in the target
5. European impact

The main evaluation instruments were:
- Group evaluation through group reflection
- Individual evaluation through questionnaire (in annex)
- Team-organisers evaluation through reflection group

The various dimensions of the impact (organisations, personal, target and European) were evaluated through the individual questionnaire. However in order to evaluate the impact of each creative tool offered there were organised 4 sessions following the steps described:

I. Introduction of the tool
II. Conceptualisation
III. Example (experience the tool briefly)
IV. Evaluation:
   a) direct feedback (feeling)
   b) short-term practical evaluation (I used it in my practice)
      - have I used these tools in my practice?
      - how was it?
   c) long-term feedback and evaluation of practicality of the tool in youth work
      - can these tools be used in youth work?
      - how can they be useful?

The results achieved concerning the creative tools are described on the next pages, after the introduction of each tool. The main results extracted from the questionnaires are the following:

Personal impact:
- New tools
- Became more tolerant
- New ideas
- Creativity
- Breaking stereotypes
- Understanding
- Networking
- New contacts
Impact in the organization:
- Increased networking capacity
- New projects
- More qualified human resources
- Increased capacity to develop projects/activities in the field of creative thinking

Impact in the target:
- It is important to make new generation to use their creative ideas
- Involvement in developing of new projects for society
- New ways to assess the needs of target group, adapt to specific conditions
- Active student participation in the forum theatre, to help them solve their problem
- Increased motivation, capacity to work with each other
- Became more responsible
- Forum theatre – as a tool in educational work, in youth club

Impact at European level:
- Increased European citizenship
- New partnerships
- Possibility to transfer the outcomes of the project to other contexts
- Increased intercultural learning
- Increased involvement of European citizens

3. Introduction to creativity²:

About creativity

Henri Poincaré, in 1905, defined creativity as the capacity “to unify existing elements with new connections that are useful”.

According to Chambers, creativity can be defined as a multi-dimensional process of interaction between an organism and its environment, which leads to the creation of unique (original) products or ideas (Chambers 1969).

According to Abra, the term creativity circumscribes the capability of creating or perceiving something unusual (Abra 1989).

²This section was elaborated with information extracted from:
- the article of Bullinger/Müller-Spahn/Röffler “Encouraging Creativity - Support of Mental Processes by Virtual Experience”
- the website of Daniele Brambilla
- the article of Lynda Curtin “A practical approach to innovation”
- the work of Erika Walker “Creativity thinking principles”
- the website of Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) Knowledge for Development programme
- the Draft conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on promoting creativity and innovation through education and training - 9207/08, Brussels 30/04/2008
- the article of Edward de Bono “The use of lateral thinking”
- the article of John Culvenor and Dennis Else “Parallel thinking for creative teams”
- the website of De Bono
Wermke points out that no uniform definition has been established so far and suggests that creativity should be investigated based on four groups of characteristics: characteristics of persons, products, processes and environment or surroundings (Wermke 1994). See figure below.

**Person**
To selectively promote the creativity of man, the characteristics of creative humans will have to be examined first. Basis of all creative processes is the knowledge memory of man which stores the knowledge of facts and methods, experience and remembrances, which are continuously updated and modified by learning processes. All thinking and learning processes can be assigned to one of the two brain hemispheres which are specialized in specific functions (Springer 1988). The table below reproduces the characteristics of the brain hemispheres:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Left hemisphere</th>
<th>Right hemisphere</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>not verbal, visual-spatial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sequential</td>
<td>simultaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporal</td>
<td>spatial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>digital</td>
<td>analog</td>
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<tr>
<td>logical</td>
<td>all-embracing</td>
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<tr>
<td>analytic</td>
<td>synthetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western thinking</td>
<td>Eastern thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>associative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>introverted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>imaginative</td>
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</table>

Zdenek describes the thinking of the right hemisphere as introverted, complex and perceiving symbolically, metaphoric, imaginative, closer to affective states, competent for spatial perception and Gestalt perception (Zdenek 1988).

Create, build, invent and act in a free way are the qualities of creative acting and of creative persons. However it’s not possible to say that there are creative people and non-creative people. Creativity is influenced by several factors, internal and external to people.
Brambilla says that there are 2 main cultural assumptions about creativity:

1) Creativity is a quality present in all people
2) This quality can be improved and developed

De Bono (Essere creativi, 1996) says that “creative thinking is not a talent; it’s a skill that can be learned. It empowers people by adding strength to their natural abilities, which improves creativity and innovation, which leads to increased productivity and profit”. Creative competencies have an impact in the quality of life, in professional competencies, in studying, in thinking, etc.

Creative process
At the beginning of a creative process there is normally a problem - according to de Bono this is the difference between something you have and something you would like to have (de Bono 1970).

In general, four phases are distinguished: preparation, incubation, inspiration and transformation (see figure below). In the preparation phase, the problem must first be analyzed, classified and defined. Relevant information must be searched and found. This phase may also call for ideas and inspiration. Problem definition can be equally difficult as actual problem solution.

The goal of the incubation phase is the "feeding" of the subconscious with data relevant to the problem on hand. In so doing, the effortless handling of the information will be useful. It is important that the problem is really "being experienced".

Inspiration is less a process phase, but rather a singular event, a sudden inspiration. Ultimately this is the unusual, but meaningful knowledge memory. Although it is not plannable by way of definition, which try to support the inspiration. alienation (adding, removing, recombination of elements. Schlick creativity techniques: brainstorming, methods/morphological thinking, Wermke 1994). In this context, it is a catalyst, which leads to the new combination of existing parts of ideas are retained, externalized, insufficient, they will be rejected. Characteristic of this phase is convergent, that is, purposeful thinking and acting, whereas divergent, flexible thinking is demanded in the inspiration phase.
The transformation phase accounts for a large part of the expenditure incurred in creative processes. Edison is quoted with the words that inventing was only 1 % inspiration, but 99 % transpiration.

In the majority of cases, the four phases are passed through in cycles several times in full or in part. The total process is just characterized by the change between conscious and unconscious states, between mutation and selection and between convergent and divergent thinking.

It is also interesting to note that inspirations and ideas mostly turn up in phases of relaxation (Abra 1989). This can be further developed to the technique of the "inner vision process" which permits new ideas to be produced from imaginations, free associations and dream-like remembrances. The figure below shows the performance of creativity dependent on the level of activation.

![Creativity and innovation for youth development](image)

**Characteristics of environment and surroundings**

What is the influence of the environment of man on his or her creativity? This question can be related to different levels: the socio-cultural environment, the work environment or the concrete spatial environment in which man is. The socio-cultural environment, which also includes the education of man, has a decisive influence on knowledge and behaviour. This also influences the possible associations and approaches to the solution of a problem. The work environment, among other things, determines factors like stress or motivation, but also synergy effects by the creative cooperation in teams. Imparting an atmosphere of safety and freedom has a positive effect on the creativity of man (Wermke 1994), but the design of the work place also plays an important role.

![Who says if something is creative or not?](image)

**Who says if something is creative or not?**

Whether the product of a creative process is in the end called creative or original – this solely depends on external assessment. Therefore, creativity is not an objective product property, but it is highly subjective and dependent on the situation on hand. In this respect, creativity as a product property is heavily dependent on the communication about the product.
Creative Thinking Principles

1. **Attitude**: attitude is a key component of success in any endeavor. If a member of the team has a negative attitude, it can affect the entire group.

2. **Challenge Assumptions**: Consciously and unconsciously, we have beliefs that prevent us from solving problems creatively. These beliefs block us from taking action. When solving any problem, it is very helpful to list all assumptions we make about the problem. Examine these and see which are not true and can be set aside.

3. **There is Always More Than One Right Answer**: In school we are taught that there is only one right answer. In reality, there are often many more than one and, often, the first answer discovered is often the least creative.

4. **Defer Judgment**: Prematurely judging ideas is a sure way to block creativity. It is important to separate the idea generation phase of creativity from the judging phase. Judging too soon kills the creative spirit.

5. **Break the Rules**: Of course, we can’t break all the rules, but in problem solving it is important to challenge the rules, especially when the rules represent our habit bound way of thinking. So we should examine the rules we follow carefully to see if some of them should be abandoned.

6. **Don’t be Afraid to Make Mistakes**: Much of what we teach our children is to find the right answer and stick to it. Discovery comes from risk taking, yet we discourage this in our children. This way a new motto could be "Take chances, make mistakes!"

Lateral thinking

De Bono divides thinking into two methods. He calls one “vertical thinking,” which uses the processes of logic - the traditional, historical method. He calls the other “lateral thinking,” which involves disrupting an apparent thinking sequence and arriving at the solution from another angle.

Lateral thinking is the process of generating alternative concepts and perceptions. It is non-logical, unorthodox, seeking solutions indirectly. Lateral thinking is another form of logic which compliments critical and analytical thinking. Looking for alternatives is one of the most basic operations of lateral thinking. Setting out to find them depends on the belief that there is another, better way of doing things.

It is also used the word “PO” which stands for Provocative Operation. It comes from words like - suppose, poetry, potential, possibility. They all represent the type of thinking we are setting out to do - “what could be”. The word “PO” sends a signal to our brains that we should not judge the statement. We should seek to see where we can move our thinking forward to.
Why was it necessary to invent the term ‘lateral thinking’? If it is to do with the creation of new ideas then why is the term ‘creative thinking’ not good enough? The two expressions are by no means synonymous, although both may have as an end result new ideas. Let us take the case of a highly creative painter. He sees the world in a way different from the rest of us. But though the perception of that artist may be different and most valuable, it may never change. The artist himself may be quite unable to look at the world in a different way. In fact, he may be rather, rigidly trapped within his own perception and for the whole of his life may work within that perception. This rigidity of perception is, however, quite the opposite of lateral thinking. The lateral thinker is able to change the way he looks at things. The possession of a different way of looking at things may be an example of lateral thought but does not necessarily indicate a lateral thinker.

Provocation is one of the fundamental principles of lateral thinking. Provocation is best summed up in the sentence: ‘There may not be a reason for saying something until after it has been said.’ This is quite contrary to normal reason, where there is supposed to be a reason for saying something before it is said. The purpose of provocation is to help us to move sideways from the established track to a new one. The process is shown in figure below.

![Diagram of lateral thinking](image)

We move from the main track to the provocation. There is no ‘reason’ for us to do so except our will to do so in the exercise of lateral thinking. Once we have moved to the provocation (in our thought-experiment), several things might happen. We might find ourselves drifting back to the main track. We might find ourselves unable to go any further. Or, we might find ourselves so near to the other track that it is now a simple matter to move to C. If this happens, then once we are at C we can see, in hind sight, that this new position makes sense. We can forget all about the provocation that helped us to get there. In this way the provocation acts as a ‘steppingstone’. We use ‘po’ simply to illustrate that we are offering a provocation.

Just as there are many golf-clubs in the bag and just as we choose the most appropriate one for the circumstances, so are there many types of thinking. Lateral thinking is one of them and we need to use it when it is appropriate.

**Parallel thinking**

Parallel Thinking is a method for creative thinking in teams. It is best understood in contrast to traditional argument or adversarial thinking. With the traditional argument or adversarial thinking each side takes a different position and then seeks to attack the other side. Each side seeks to prove that the other side is wrong. This is the type of thinking established by the Greek Gang of Three (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle) two thousand four hundred years ago.

Adversarial thinking completely lacks a constructive, creative or design element. It was intended only to discover the ‘truth’ not to build anything.
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With 'parallel thinking' both sides (or all parties) are thinking in parallel in the same direction. There is co-operative and co-ordinated thinking. The direction itself can be changed in order to give a full scan of the situation. But at every moment each thinker is thinking in parallel with all the other thinkers. There does not have to be agreement. Statements or thoughts which are indeed contradictory are not argued out but laid down in parallel. In the final stage the way forward is 'designed' from the parallel thought that have been laid out.

A simple and practical way of carrying out 'parallel thinking' is the Six Hats method which is now being used widely around the world both because it speeds up thinking and also because it is so much more constructive then traditional argument thinking.

Innovation

We can define innovation as the process of “lead change using the knowledge in the best way”. “Creativity is the prime source of innovation...” (Draft conclusions 9207/08, Brussels 30/04/2008, p. 4).

Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS)

We can define IKS as “The sum total of the knowledge and skills which people in a particular geographic area possess and which enable them to get the most out of their environment.” (http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/924). New ways of doing, new traditions, new ways of understanding the world can come from this knowledge system and that can introduce creativity in peoples’ lives. This assumption, that cultural exchange can stimulate creativity, is also stated in the Draft conclusions 9207/08, Brussels 30/04/2008, p. 5 “In face of evidence that diversity and multicultural environments can stimulate creativity...”.

European Ambassadors for Creativity and Innovation

Manifesto

1. Nurture creativity in a lifelong learning process where theory and practice go hand in hand.
2. Make schools and universities places where students and teachers engage in creative thinking and learning by doing.
3. Transform workplaces into learning sites.
4. Promote a strong, independent and diverse cultural sector that can sustain intercultural dialogue.
5. Promote scientific research to understand the world, improve people’s lives and stimulate innovation.
6. Promote design processes, thinking and tools, understanding the needs, emotions, aspirations and abilities of users.
7. Support business innovation that contributes to prosperity and sustainability.

4. Tools for creative thinking

During the project participants were introduced to various tools aimed to be used with youth people in the process of stimulating creative thinking. Those tools are described in this chapter.

Simulation exercise³

Description:
A simulation is an enactment of a real life situation.

Users:
1. Allows learners to experience decision-making in “real” situations without worrying about the consequences of their decisions.
2. A way to applying knowledge, develop skills and examine attitudes in the context of an everyday situation.

Advantages:
• Practical
• Learners are able to discover and react on their own
• High involvement of the learner
• Immediate feedback

Things to be aware when use this method:
• Time consuming
• The facilitator must be well prepared especially with logistics
• A simulation is often a simplistic view of reality

³This section was elaborated with information extracted from the manual “Methods and techniques used in international youth work”.
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Process:
1. Prepare the learners to take on specific roles during the simulation
2. Introduce the goals, rules and time frame for the simulation
3. Facilitate the simulation
4. Ask learners about their reactions to the simulation
5. Ask learners what they have learned from the simulation and develop principles
6. Ask learners how the simulation relates to their own lives
7. Summarize

The simulations used during the project were (see annex):
I. Game “about building roads”
II. Visiting the Albatross culture

Connection with creative thinking
- Not clear rules - creates the space for ambiguity
- Odd task - difficult to apply the rules of “normality”
- Conflicting situation
- Need for solutions - space for creative thinking to be activated
- Need for group work
- Time (time pressure functions as an inhibiting factor)

We can though say that simulation exercises that repeat these characteristics are good tools to boost creative thinking, creating the space for diverse perspectives and for strong brainstorming in the search for creative solutions not yet thought.

Feedback from participants
- How it was to put the tool in practice?
  “This tool worked very well in most of the cases; it is very useful, as participants began to reflect and enjoy it; it is very interesting to come up against a different reality and see how things can be exactly the opposite of what we think.”

- Can this tool be used in youth work?
  “It can be useful for opening the space for group discussions, active participation, role play, but there is a lack of information on the different types, situations that could be put into practice (this is a need identified by participants), it teaches not to judge things too fast, be open and positive to difference, it is a practical way to teach tolerance, it is useful to stimulate to think “out of the box”.”

- How can it be useful?
  “As a tool for solving conflicting situations, pointing out different perspectives, making people get involved in the discussions, get new insights and perspectives.”
Forum theatre

Description:
The main aim is to use interactive theatre techniques as a rehearsal for social change in reality, by throwing up possible coping strategies to assist a group in investigating possible solutions to particular oppressions and challenges.

Group:
15 to 25 people

Material needed:
flipchart, A4 papers, tapes, costumes and requisites (as much as possible - it can be improvised with clothes and things of participants)

Duration:
Half a day for preparation - 3 hours
One day for playing - 8 hours

Process:
CAUTION!: Theatre of the Oppressed technique is very powerful method and can provoke (often do) very strong and hard feelings. PLEASE DO NOT USE this tool if you are not experience enough and if you don't have adequate education in Theatre of the Oppressed. Theatre skills and psychotherapy skills are definitely welcomed for using the technique.

1. Choose topics for forum theatre - 30 min
Brainstorming on all kinds of oppression we can remember; it can be larger categories (sexism, racism, media manipulation, peer pressure etc). Now, we should come to 4 topics. Stand near the topic which you’ll like to work on. Should be 5 - 6 people in each group. We can change the groups around if they are not so equal.
Explanation of preparation of Forum theatre – going through the steps.

2. Forum preparation - 45 min – 150 min
Small group work. Depending on time given for the preparation, plays will be more or less complex and more or less applicable for using the technique (more time – better performances – more opportunity for exploring).

3. Explanation of Forum technique - 10 min
We’ll play one performance, do forum, do sharing, and then go to next one. Each performance last about 15 min. We’ll have 1 hour to practice forum or two different methods called STOP THINK and STOP COURT mode.

Method: STOP-THINK
Performance goes again but anyone from the audience can stop the play and ask some character
what he/she thinks in the moment. Someone from the audience shout: STOP THINK (says the name of the character, example mother)! then all characters freeze and mother (called character) should say anything that goes through her head in that moment, on sign of the trainer performance goes further with regular text, then again someone can call Stop think etc.

**Method: COURT**

Performance goes again but anyone from the audience can stop the play and ask any character questions about motivation (Why you did that? Why you go there? Why you’re shouting on him? What do you think about this/that? Etc) like the characters is on court and character should try to defend himself. Someone from the audience shout: STOP COURT (says the name of the character, example mother)! then all characters freeze and mother (called character) should answer all questions asked by the audience - the same as in a real court. On the sign of the trainer performance goes further with regular text, then again someone can call Stop court etc.

**Explanation of the technique:** You’ll see the performance. After it has finished, you’ll have the opportunity to come to the role of the protagonist (the person who is oppressing others within the play) and try to do something different as idea for better solution of the situation. All other characters will react spontaneous according to the character role. Be in your character, but if something causes your change then – change. If not, then don’t.

**Questions for the audience:** Could the protagonist do / react differently somewhere, so the situation ends differently? Where? Tell the spot – we’ll play the performance again. In the moment you want to go in shout “STOP” and change the protagonist.

**After intervention:** Was it a progress? Why? Why not? Is this a good tactics? Does anybody else go to try the same scene? Some other scenes, ideas?

If someone proposes something, which you find unrealistic, shout “STOP MAGIC”. We are not for magical solution.

**4. Playing Forum - 8 hours**

- **Structure of Forum play** (x4 plays)
  - 2 h 15 min
  - Playing the performance (15 min)
  - Practicing Forum (changing the protagonist) 1 h
  - Sharing of the feelings 1 h

**5. Deroling**

Stay in circle, everyone should say name, surname and where he/she is in the moment (example: Susie Taylor, and the training of Theatre of the Oppressed in Paris). Then do a circle of deep breathing (3 times, in and out).
CAUTION: All this process is very depending on the group you are working with and on trainer’s skills. It can last much shorter and it can need even more time. If you have free time that’s ok, just do something else. But always leave enough time for sharing – don’t try to do this in shorter time – you can be lucky sometimes for everything to go well but it will be really hard if you provoke feelings and then don’t have time to work on them.

Guidelines for participants:
See in annex the GUIDELINES FOR DRAMA PREPARATION

Connection with creative thinking
The forum theatre (A. Boal) promotes creative thinking in the sense that it does not present a close end to one story. The story is open to intervention from part of the spectators who can stop the scene and propose a different way of resolving one issue or a new way of behaving which may bring about a new and unexpected solution.

This is very important to promote creative thinking: the richness of alternatives and the openness to a potential range of solutions. Moreover this tool permits youth to practice solutions for real life problems, improving their creative thinking skills.

On the other hand creative thinking benefit a lot from the artistic expression and from the group work, both present in the forum theater activity.

Feedback from participants

- How it was to put the tool in practice?
“It is enriching and efficient; it gives practical solutions because everybody can see other people’s point of view.”

- Can these tools be used in youth work?
“Participants found it very useful for future projects, for both groups with experience and without experience; it can be an added value to youth work because it helps to explain different situations, express problems, exchange experience + solutions.”

- How can it be useful?
“To put the participants in the middle of the situation; to encourage them to find solutions and get involved actively; to stimulate lateral thinking.”
Creativity and innovation for youth development

Lateral thinking techniques

Alternatives: How to use concepts as a breeding ground for new ideas. Sometimes we do not look beyond the obvious alternatives.

Focus: When and how to change the focus of your thinking. You will learn the discipline of defining your focus and sticking to it.

Challenge: Breaking free from the limits of traditional thinking. With challenges, we act as though the present way of doing things is not necessarily the best.

Random Entry: Using unconnected input to open up new lines of thinking. Used to generate unique ideas. Great for product development and grass roots thinking. The trick of random entry is to develop the mental skill of making connections using unrelated input to think up new ideas. Random entry can be words, pictures, physical objects.
- Select a number and work with the corresponding word from the list.
- Place the random word underneath the subject.
- See where the random word leads your thoughts.

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*This section was elaborated with information extracted from:
- the report of the seminar of Edward de Bono on creativity and innovation
- the article of De Bono on “Creative thinking techniques”
- the article of Lynda Curtin “A practical approach to innovation”
* **Other ways to use this tool:**
Select any random stimulus (object, picture, sound) and use it to provoke new ideas.

**Random word:** This is a simple strategy that encourages creative problem-solving. Pick a word at random (from a dictionary or a picture card) and then apply it to an issue or problem. Perhaps you have a problem managing your time and completing assignments on time? Try applying one of these words to the problem: boat, fence, koala, elevator, peas, mountain. The unusual combination helps stimulate the brain to come up with some new problem-solving ideas.

**Provocation and Movement:** Generating provocative statements and using them to build new ideas. The idea is to disturb normal thinking patterns in order to move on. An illogical starting point may be followed by steps that don’t make sense in themselves, but interesting and useful ideas may spring from them.

**Harvesting:** Capturing your creative output. At the end of a creative-thinking session, we normally only take note of the specific ideas that seem practical and have obvious value.

**Plus, minus and interesting points:** This is a simple but powerful technique. Begin by listing the plus and minus points relating to an issue and then list some interesting points such as ‘It would be interesting to see what ...’ or ‘It would be interesting to know when ...’ This technique often gives us a much broader view of issues. It is a good technique to apply to controversial issues such as stem cell research.
Consequence and sequel: Our thinking often tends to be short term and this is an excellent technique to encourage us to take a longer term view and recognise that short-term and long-term consequences may be very different. (The time frames can be varied depending on the issue.) For example, look at the following consequences of introducing rabbits into Australia in the 19th century.

- Immediate consequences (up to a year)-good for hunters (the reason for their introduction)
- Short-term consequences (1-5 years)-good for a wider group of people, as they provided a cheap source of food
- Medium-term consequences (5-20 years)-bad, as the rabbits became pests
- Long-term consequences (20 years +)-disastrous for farmers.

Concept challenge: This technique involves examining accepted ideas and ways of doing things that we take for granted. For example, identify some concepts relating to advertising (such as the types of people used to advertise particular products) and decide if they need to be challenged.

Other peoples’ views (OPV): This technique is designed to encourage us to look objectively at issues from other people’s points of view. When looking at a new issue, start with a list of who is involved and what their point of view is. This is an excellent technique to apply to contentious issues such as where to dump nuclear waste.

HOW TO USE THESE TECNHIQUES IN YOUTH WORK?

It’s very broad the way in which these techniques can be used. Finally it is a decision of the youth worker him/her self. Some possibilities are to introduce youth to the concepts, helping them to learn and to use the concepts in diverse situations of their lives. It’s also possible to design a creative thinking workshop in which youth CT is stimulated through the use of these techniques.

Lateral thinking can be applied to any concept or perception. The way we look at the world determines the way we deal with it and react to it. The way we look at the world is made up of many concepts and many perceptions. We can apply lateral thinking to any of them. We can apply it to the concepts of money, earning, capital, industry, economics, education, teaching, productivity or anything else. But the application of lateral thinking is quite different from the application of dialectic attack. Lateral thinking seeks to change and improve through an insight or creative switching rather than through criticism and attack. At a lower level, lateral thinking can be used in problem solving; in opportunity development; in seeking further alternatives for action and decision; in the review and improvement of present activities; in design, and in future scenario construction. Since ‘the way we look at things’ pervades all thinking, so lateral thinking can be of use at many points.
Thinking hats

To persuade people to abandon their customary thinking patterns and think in parallel with others for more constructive results, De Bono devised the system of the Six Thinking Hats, each of which symbolizes a mode of thinking. Using colored pencils, he drew a white hat for information, facts and figures; a red hat for feelings, intuition and emotions; a black hat for caution, criticism and risk assessment; a yellow hat for value, benefits and opportunities; a green hat for creativity, fertility and new ideas; and a blue hat for organization, focus and objective. By using these imaginary colored hats to orchestrate the thinking of participants in a meeting, for example, a subject can be efficiently explored from every angle.

The six hats are metaphors for different ways of thinking.

**White Think of paper** → The white hat is about collecting data and information.

**Red represents emotion** → With this hat on we express our feelings and follow our intuition.

**Black** → This is the critical hat and is used to point out weaknesses in ideas and thinking.

**Yellow Think of sunshine and optimism** → With this hat on we look at the benefits and value in our ideas.

**Green Think of vegetation and growth** → The green hat is the creativity hat, wearing it we sprout lots of new ideas!

**Blue Think of the sky** → This is the 'thinking about thinking' hat. Wearing this hat we can plan which thinking techniques to use and in what order.
Feedback from participants

- How it was to put the tool in practice?
  “Most of the group have used the old method of brainstorming, but they believe that the 6 hats method is a more structured and useful tool mostly related to non-formal education.”

- Can these tools be used in youth work?
  “This is as a very effective tool for structuring the working process, for offering other perspectives, in creating projects and reaching decisions, in youth exchanges or any other kind of youth activities, organisational work, etc.”

- How can it be useful?
  “It is a tool that can be useful in school, business etc, as a creative way to get a clearer vision of things and develop in a personal way.”

Open space technology

Description
Open Space Technology is a methodology that allows, within any organization, to create workshops and meetings particularly inspired and productive. It has been tested over the last twenty years in different countries around the world, used in the management of groups of a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 2000 people, conferences lasting one, two or even three days. This is an innovative methodology as this way people tend to not get bored and, thanks to a pleasant climate in a relatively short time they produce a summary document of all the proposals / projects developed by the group, the instant reports. This document in addition to its practical usefulness becomes a witness and guarantor of the work done and the commitments taken.

Functioning
Harrison Owen, a pioneer of the Open Space Technology, noted during his experience in organizing conferences that people had much more enthusiasm during coffee breaks than in the working stages. This way he considered the possibility of structuring an entire conference in a way that participants feel free to propose topics and discuss them only if interested. If the working group is united by passion and interest, then it is able to self-organize and reach its goal.

Principles
The working method is free, but still is based on four "principles" and a "law".

The four principles are:
1. Whoever comes is the right people - reminds participants that they don't need the CEO and 100 people to get something done, you need people who care. And, absent the direction or control exerted in a traditional meeting, that's who shows up in the various breakout sessions of an open space meeting.
2. *Whenever it starts is the right time* - reminds participants that "spirit and creativity do not run on the clock."

3. *Whatever happens is the only thing that could have* - reminds participants that once something has happened, it's done—and no amount of fretting, complaining or otherwise rehashing can change that. Move on.

4. *When it's over, it's over* - reminds participants that we never know how long it will take to resolve an issue, once raised, but that whenever the issue or work or conversation is finished, move on to the next thing. Don't keep rehashing just because there's 30 minutes left in the session. Do the work, not the time.

**The law is:**

*Law of Two Feet or The Law of Mobility* – In this way, all participants are given both the right and the responsibility to maximize their own learning and contribution, which the Law assumes only they, themselves, can ultimately judge and control. When participants lose interest and get bored in a breakout session, or accomplish and share all that they can, the charge is to move on, the "polite" thing to do is go something else. In practical terms, Owen explains, the Law of Two Feet says: "Don't waste time!"

**Conditions**

Open Space Technology can be an effective tool, but should be used only if certain conditions occur. Otherwise, besides being ineffective, amounts to being wasteful of time and money. Works only in a situation that involves:

- A serious and real problem to work on
- High complexity
- Multiple views
- Conflict widespread
- Need to find a solution immediately

**Setting**

The ideal place to conduct a Open Space Technology session is a room large enough to accommodate all participants sit in a circle and other smaller rooms/spaces with easy access for the groups that are formed during working. The space must not be very structured, it is important however that it is comfortable. Physical elements, like tables and desks, are not necessary as use space and impede the movements of people.

In the central room there must be a wall where posters produced by the group can be arranged, which must be clearly visible and easily accessible. One side of the room should be dedicated to the computer area / copying machine, used for the preparation of instant reports, while another will be the area dedicated to coffee breaks.

It is important that the participants are seated in a circle on chairs that you can be easily moved, the center of the circle must be empty, so that everyone can look in the eyes of others and feel equal. Thus, the outset creates a feeling of equality and participation.

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*These are the best conditions but the work can be done also with few resources.*
The role of the facilitator

Facilitating an Open Space Technology is an experience unlike any other experience of facilitation, as the desire to have control over events should be put aside. The facilitator must first define time, space, launch the topic to discuss and explain the law and the four principles. When the group is arranged in a circle, he must "open space" entering the center. Take the floor to present the issue to discuss and explain that the blank wall in the central room is the work program and that it will be built on time by participants themselves.

The wall becomes a board and the group fills it with its proposals.

Then the facilitator must explain how to do this: every person who believes s/he has an issue on to write on a card, then get up and present it to the group. When themes are exhausted each promoter must stick its cardboard on the board, once you have done this everyone should observe the various issues identified and determine which group means to join. The groups will be formed and will be self-managed. Once exhausted the topics of discussion, a report that combined with those of other groups will be created in a final instant report.

At the end of the day there is the scheduled session closing, or update the work session if the Open Space Technology is divided into several days. This requires no particular formalities, we begin again all in a circle and the facilitator asks if anyone who wants to express the own opinion on the work done and /or on the follow up of the session.

The final phase consists of the preparation of reports. Each working group produces a report at the end of each session, using the data that emerged during the discussion of the issues raised. The respective reports are hung on the central wall, so that everyone can always consult them. Shortly before the end of the day the individual reports are combined into a single document and each participant will be given a personal copy.

Feedback from participants

- **How it was to put the tool in practice?**
  “It is very good to stimulate autonomy and discover real interests of participants. It is an innovative and democratic tool to generate new ideas however, too much freedom can bring chaos if there is not a "leader" to guide the groups. Another negative element pointed out was that it is not possible to be everywhere at the time so people can miss very interesting conversations.”

- **Can these tools be used in youth work?**
  “Yes, but there has to be motivation and real follow-up, because many people consider it just an exercise.”

- **How can it be useful?**
  “As a starting point for real projects if there is a real motivation, a chance for exchanging more ideas.”
5. Bibliographic references and resources:


* Daniele Brambilla - http://www.nume.it/creativita.php


* Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) Knowledge for Development programme - http://knowledge.cta.int/en/content/view/full/924


* John Culvenor and Dennis Else “Parallel thinking for creative teams” - http://www.creativethinkingnetwork.com/dmddocuments/Parallel%20Thinking%20for%20Creative%20Teams.pdf


* Methods and techniques used in international youth work, Life Foundation, Romania – http://life.org.ro


**Resources:**

* Eduardo de Bono on creative thinking - [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJSjZOjNIJg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJSjZOjNIJg)

* Cognitive aspects of creativity - [http://www.creativethinkingnetwork.com/dmdocuments/Cognitive%20Aspects%20of%20Creativity.pdf](http://www.creativethinkingnetwork.com/dmdocuments/Cognitive%20Aspects%20of%20Creativity.pdf)


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