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Workshop 21

Title: **Lessons learnt about creativity and innovation through a thriving collaboration crossing disciplinary and professional boundaries: Reflections on both process and product**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

Participants will engage in critical dialogue and debate and will be required to provide examples of creativity and innovation from their own practice/contexts. The session includes participation through prompts and questions designed to explore the value of the model in their own disciplinary/professional perspectives. Time will be given to consideration of the model's limitations and discussion of adaptations to improve its potential to enhance students' skills development. The intended outcomes are as follows. By the end of the session, participants will have:

- i) Engaged in an ongoing, collaborative research project on creativity and innovation
- ii) Been exposed to examples of creativity and innovation from a range of disciplinary and professional contexts
- iii) Provided their own examples, in relation to the model
- iv) Critically appraised the model and provided feedback on its further development
- v) Considered how the model may be used as a tool for deepening students' understanding and/or recognition of what creativity and innovation look like in their programmes of study

Session Outline

This project aims to improve understanding of “creativity” and “innovation” to enhance students’ confidence and skills in these areas, and inform pedagogical development. Objectives are to identify qualities and skills relating to creativity and innovation, and to develop a conceptual model capturing the interplay between them. We discuss the process and outcomes to date.

Process

The team comprised interdisciplinary staff from LSHTM, The Isle of Wight College, The Careers Group, University of London, and Pearson UK education company. Members are geographically dispersed.

The process was creative and organic. An unintended consequence was how much people with very different backgrounds learnt from each other. The process engendered critical debate about the assumed expectation that learners’ creativity and innovation will progress linearly as they move through the level descriptors from FE to HE.

Product

Drawing on literature (including Amabile 1998, Carter 1985, Churches 2008, Merx-Chermin and Nijhof 2005, Munzenmaier and Rubin 2013, QAA 2012, SEEC 2010, Tang 1998, West 2002), we developed a conceptual model (Figure 1). The model captures the creative character of four diverse examples: a seminar series, a game, careers support and an autobiographical book on breast cancer.

Reflections

We highlight the value of multi-disciplinary and multi-professional collaboration through the diversity of perspectives that, in themselves, breed creativity. The very process of undertaking this conceptual work is a case-example in itself of reflective, creative and innovative practice.

Lessons learnt and contributions:

- Interdisciplinary and interprofessional collaboration has broadened our mindsets and enhanced our own skills.
- Our model is structured as a visual tool that engages staff and students in reflective discussions, increasing awareness of the process of creativity/innovation and recognition of when these skills are being employed.
- The model highlights the value of lessons learnt from attempts rather than seeing attempts as failures.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

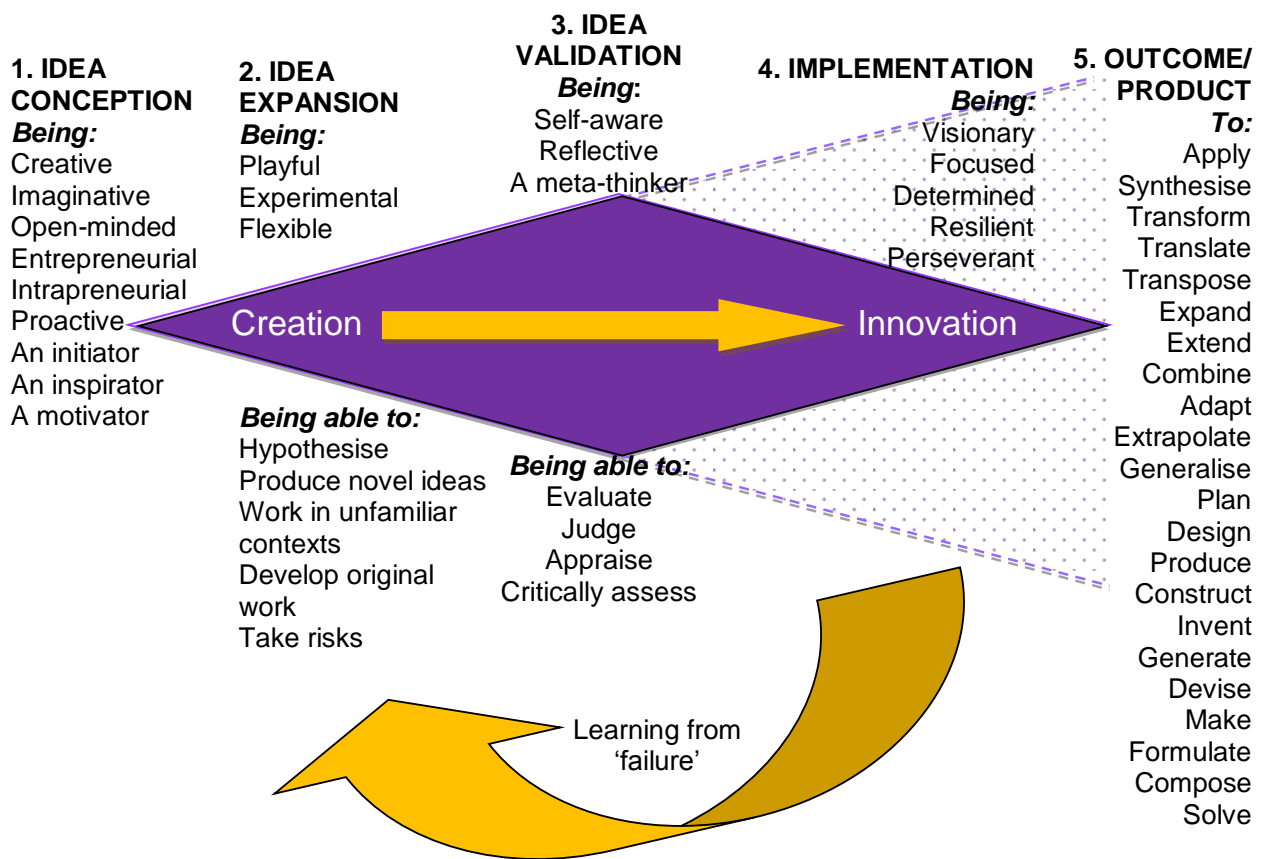
The outline of the workshop is as follows;

- 15 minutes - presentation of the model
- 15 minutes - small group discussions using the questions below as prompts
- 10 minutes - whole group plenary
- 5 minutes - drawing conclusions and action plans

Questions / prompts:

1. What do the terms “creativity” and “innovation” mean in your own professional/disciplinary contexts? Jot down one or two examples per group of your own creative/innovate practice.
2. Consider the model and discuss whether you can apply it to the example(s) you have provided.
3. What do you gain, if anything, from using the initial conceptual model (Figure 1) as a tool for enhancing pedagogy?
4. Can you make any suggestions for improving the model’s potential for empowering staff and students to better understand and/or recognise creativity and innovation?

Figure 1: Preliminary illustrative conceptual model connecting creativity, innovation and some related skills/qualities through 5 stages from conception to outcome/product



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