

LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



Life Skills

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Dr. M. J. Leo

**CULTIVATING CREATIVE THINKING:
EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS WITH A
FUNDAMENTAL LIFE SKILL**

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Introduction

Life skills are the qualities that people can use to demonstrate positive and adaptable behaviours. These abilities enable people to actively participate in today's dynamic environment and successfully manage many events and obstacles that arise in their everyday lives. These abilities support social relationships, emotional intelligence and regulation, and successful engagement in a range of social contexts.

Developing positive personal behaviours, social adaptation, citizenship, and a positive work attitude are further aspects of life skills. They consist of a range of social and personal skills required for effective and self-assured communication with others, oneself, and the neighbourhood. They also provide people the ability to make wise judgements, deal with issues in the social, personal, and developmental spheres, cultivate wholesome relationships, lessen the impact of crises, and get beyond roadblocks when they appear.

Problem solving, critical thinking, effective communication, decision-making, creative thinking, interpersonal connection skills, self-awareness developing, empathy, and stress and emotion management are the ten essential life skill strategies and techniques, according to NICEF, UNESCO, and WHO. This chapter describes the value of creative thinking in the classroom as well as strategies for helping pupils develop it.



Creative Thinking

Thinking creatively involves developing novel viewpoints and unconventional methods while seeing and understanding the world through new eyes. It makes possible for us to welcome unconventional thoughts and break out from traditional mental habits. Adaptability is the foundation of creative thought because it keeps us flexible and free from a fixation on tried-and-true approaches, regardless matter how successful they may be. Furthermore, creative thinking involves more than just recognising problems and coming up with solutions - it also involves coming up with novel ways to deal with problems that already exist. The power of creative thinking is exemplified by a number of ground-breaking discoveries and experiments that have transformed our way of living. Thinking about the potential to converse with people across great distances using a portable phone, for example, demonstrates the core of creativity.

Ability to think Creatively

The capacity to apply creativity to generate new ideas and to approach tasks or problems in novel ways are examples of creative thinking abilities. Developing these abilities entails producing original and practical goods and services by application, practice, and evaluation. Here are a few instances of creative abilities:

Inquisitiveness

People that are curious are eager to learn more about a subject and actively seek out new information. One may increase his/her knowledge, collaborate with others more effectively, and make wiser judgements by cultivating curiosity. Colleges can foster curiosity and learning by conducting conferences and workshops where staff members can share their ideas and gain knowledge from one another. Additionally, curiosity fosters a more welcoming atmosphere at work.

Openness and adaptability

Creativity requires openness to new concepts, viewpoints, facts, and information. Understanding other people's ideas and points of view may require embracing different points of view. Strong listening abilities, frequent idea sharing with co-workers, taking constructive criticism well, and demonstrating an openness to trying new things are typically part of this. Effectively resolving interpersonal or team conflicts can also be facilitated by flexibility.

Imagination

It takes imagination to develop productivity and creativity. One can envision several outcomes of a given scenario, foresee their implications, and consider their advantages by using his/her imagination. Imagination facilitates the integration of work experience and knowledge for employees in order to generate novel solutions to intricate situations. Professionals can think creatively to stand out from the competition and think differently.

Solving issues

Having the ability to handle difficult circumstances and intricate business issues at work is a sign of problem solving abilities. Solving problems calls for both analytical and creative thinking. One can contribute to increasing the effectiveness, expansion, and profit of the company by improving his/her creative problem-solving abilities. Most companies assess potential hires based on their ability to solve problems.

Compassion

Empathy with clients, customers, and co-workers is essential if one wants to properly comprehend their points of view. Empathy is a crucial creative and interpersonal talent that can help to strengthen network, create effective teams, and resolve issues. Additionally,

building meaningful professional relationships requires empathy. Asking open ended enquiries to clients, carefully listening, observing co-workers, and demonstrating fair concern and support for them are all ways to practise empathy.

Networking

For creative people, networking with others of different identities and experiences is a vital means of skill development. Working with people who have various opinions can help to enhance creative thinking and learn new ideas. Speaking with and collaborating with such individuals can open eyes to fresh ideas. Finding mentors and investigating worthwhile professional development possibilities can both be facilitated by networking.

The value of Creative thinking in daily life

Thinking creatively is essential to improving and enhancing many aspects of life. The following are important realisations on why encouraging creative thought is essential:

Value Addition

Thinking creatively has a positive influence on others in addition to enriching one's own life. Through the process of turning ideas into physical creations, people vividly convey themselves onto the world they live in and leave a lasting impression.

Confidence and Self-Reliance

Developing creative thinking increases confidence and self-reliance. Being able to come up with ideas on their own gives people more power and makes them feel stronger and more satisfied.

Authenticity and Self-Acceptance

Thinking creatively encourages people to accept who they are, which promotes self-acceptance free from criticism from others. It makes it possible to truly identify with one's authentic self.

Open-Minded Exploration

Thinking creatively fosters curiosity and a desire to learn about new ideas and concepts. Every morning turns into a chance for fascinating discoveries that give life meaning and enthusiasm.

Discovering Hidden skills

People can discover hidden skills that were previously unknown by using their imagination. Rather than moping over issues, it presents new chances just waiting to be taken advantage of.

Outside-the-Box Satisfaction

At every stage of life, thinking outside the box leads to a deep sense of contentment. Adopting non-traditional methods fosters a feeling of accomplishment and contentment.

Expression of Emotions

Being creative allows people to freely express their true feelings and become the people they want to be in the world.

Mastery of Challenges

People who develop their capacity for original thought become skilled at navigating the difficulties of life. Their ability to solve problems creatively gives them the confidence to face and conquer difficult circumstances. To put it briefly, encouraging creative thinking is not only beneficial but also necessary for promoting resilience, personal development, and happiness in life.

Ideas to Improve Creative Ability

Take part in brainstorming sessions both alone and with others. Ideation encourages people to openly communicate ideas and concepts, which makes it possible for people to get helpful criticism and trade insights. When brainstorming alone, one can get beyond mental

obstacles and come up with ideas on their own. On the other hand, group brainstorming sessions are highly effective in addressing intricate problems by utilising the varied viewpoints of team members. Accepting all ideas and encouraging candid communication among participants are key components of successful collaborative brainstorming.

Using the Investigative Power

Enhancing creative ability starts with asking relevant questions. By asking insightful questions, people open doors to addressing problems, explore new areas, and increase their knowledge base. 'How' and 'why' questions are great starters for critical thinking because they push the boundaries of surface inquiry into the world of deeper understanding.

Develop an Active Professional Network

Deep conversations with people who share their interests have creatives love. Interacting with colleagues provides an environment that is conducive to creativity by facilitating idea sharing, problem solving dialogues, and information exchange. Developing a strong professional network enables people to work with peers and business leaders, particularly on complex initiatives. Accept variety within the group to make new friends and learn from a range of viewpoints.

Make use of mind maps

Make use of mind maps as a visual aid for knowledge and concept organisation. Using keywords, visuals, and visual-spatial awareness, mind maps provide a dynamic way to represent linked ideas. Using mind maps to help identify key difficulties and gain a deeper grasp of challenges can greatly boost creativity.

Work together as a team

Working creatively together with others to achieve a common goal is the collaborative process. Through collaboration, team members can develop their relationships and work together to produce higher-quality work and more effective outcomes. In order to guarantee a fruitful creative partnership, each person must respect the individual strengths and preferences of each other by valuing their opinions and requesting their suggestions.

Develop persistence

The ability to remain committed to goals in the face of difficulties or in the absence of quick gains is known as persistence. It remains a basic characteristic of creativity, requiring constant drive and commitment to objectives. It usually entails recognising an issue, planning an approach, taking calculated chances, and aggressively requesting assistance and input from peers and superiors. It is common for creativity to be an iterative process that requires persistence in order to produce ideas and produce desirable results.

Regularly read

Developing a reading habit is just another useful way to improve creativity. Reading increases one's knowledge, develops one's skills, and provides a variety of viewpoints. Reading regularly can also help to communicate with more professionalism and confidence than peers. For example, reading fiction books gives one the chance to improve their articulation and expand their vocabulary.

Resolve puzzles

Playing challenging games is one method to improve one's imagination, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. Playing chess or any other strategic game can help people improve their analytical, decision-making, and mind mapping abilities. An additional method for

resolving cognitively taxing games and puzzles is to use an app on phone.

Make use of a sketchbook

By enabling efficient information processing, writing and sketching can enhance one's creative abilities. For instance, if someone wishes to bring up some ideas or queries during a meeting, they can jot down the most crucial terms or use creative sketching to represent their thoughts. This can help to communicate more clearly; keep in mind all the criticism one want to provide and raise the importance of their comments.

Thinking Laterally

The general concept of lateral thinking is that sometimes the solution lies beside the problem rather than in front of it. As a result, one can practise their creativity and make original plans. The method entails changing viewpoint and concentrating on less constrained regions. Team members can accomplish good outcomes by working together to change the course of events and adopt a new perspective. The ability to focus on topics that one would not typically consider is what makes this lateral thinking technique special.

Changing the perspective

Another excellent technique to foster creative thinking is reframing. It changes the emphasis to examine a problem or circumstance from a different angle. The meaning of the word is obvious. It entails adjusting or rearranging how objects are framed. As a result, one must approach a subject from a fresh perspective. This could lead to a novel, imaginative strategy. Additionally, this exercise has applications in a variety of fields.

Play a role

Roleplaying is an extremely useful approach for altering one's way of thinking. Possessing both creative and critical thinking abilities requires an open mind. As a result, those using this approach are compelled to take on the role of another person. It is a method, nevertheless, of reframing the creative thought process. It facilitates a shift from the conventional individual approach to problem-solving. Consequently, a new job will contribute to expanding the range of possible options.

Greetings from the "New"

Leaving the so-called "comfort zone" can be one of the most effective strategies. Put more simply, it refers to taking a chance on something new that one is unsure of. It can involve acquiring a new skill, utilising possibilities presented, working in a team, completing an internship, and picking up a new language. Additionally, this will be difficult and eventually improve one's capacity for critical and creative thought.

Social Beings

Humans connect more easily with those who have similar experiences and life perspectives. But conversing with such like-minded creatures can turn someone "lazy." Furthermore, it validates and protects one's opinions against criticism. There is no use of the creative potential. But in daily life, one should have meaningful conversations with a variety of people. It will lead to the questioning of long-held beliefs, a change in viewpoint, an increase in knowledge, an improvement in communication abilities, and a more critical and expansive way of thinking.

The Influence of Art, Theatre, and Music

Certain things encourage creativity in us. It can involve going to a play or museum, or attending a performance. Cultural activities are therefore excellent for inspiring creativity. This is as a result of their fresh viewpoint. Additionally, the arts can expand one's perspective.

Take in a variety of content types

Creative thinking can be considerably enhanced by consuming a wide variety of content. People are able to combine, remix, and rework concepts in creative ways in order to solve problems by investigating different kinds of information. Reaching out beyond one's comfort zone to access the wide range of content kinds on the internet, like blogs, YouTube channels, and social media profiles, broadens viewpoints and presents new ideas.

Follow the latest fashions

The current and next trends impacting the market can have a significant impact on creative thinking. Staying current with trends involves more than merely reading every article pertaining to one's industry. Gaining the ability to recognise what has the creative potential to go viral or not also requires developing a keen eye. Trends can be predicted without the use of a crystal ball. Rather, everyone should be aware of how the corporate sector functions and where innovation originates. Developing a problem-solving mindset is essential to generating unique and creative ideas.

Make an effort to produce something each day

When someone wants to get in shape, they devise a workout routine that calls for dedication and regular work. The same holds true for improving the technical and creative thinking abilities that are necessary to maintain proficiency. Thus, make sure to strive to produce something new every day with that objective in mind. It only needs to be

something fresh that comes from all the new references that one is learning; it doesn't have to be big or important. These kinds of inventions could potentially provide answers to common issues that the community as a whole face on a daily basis. The most crucial step in this process is to instil in everyone the habit of coming up with fresh ideas so that it becomes second nature.

The value of pupils possessing creative thinking abilities

Encouraging creative thinking is an essential skill that children should develop as they get older. This ability not only encourages creative thinking but also gives people the ability to come up with fresh concepts and come up with unique answers to problems. Encouraging students to think creatively is crucial to building a community of people who are ready to make a difference. Additionally, it gives students the tools they need to stand out in competitive settings by coming up with creative solutions.

Building Creative Thinking Capabilities in Classroom

Science Projects

One of the best ways to encourage pupils to think creatively is to involve them in science-related activities. Teachers can help students come up with creative solutions and ideas by encouraging them to take part in science experiments. Students also get to put what they've learnt in the classroom into practice, which improves both their cognitive and creative abilities. Schools can foster creativity even further by showcasing students' abilities and inventiveness through science fairs or exhibitions. These activities provide students a chance to express their creativity and explore with the knowledge they learn in the classroom. Students' learning experiences become more profound and their comprehension grows as they investigate ideas outside of the boundaries of textbooks. Acknowledging and recognising students who

the teacher might choose a selection of books based on the interests and reading abilities of their students. Students who spend a lot of time with books will naturally grow to love reading, which opens up a wealth of information and creative possibilities.

Classroom Decoration

Students can assist with the décor of the classroom. The teacher can decorate the classroom with student artwork or establish a theme for the space. They could feel proud of their creative creations and strive to improve them as the teacher gives them the chance to exhibit them in the classroom. Decorating the classroom is a fantastic approach to encourage students' creativity. Charts, graphs, and other visual aids can be used to artistically decorate. They would get knowledge from this and have the chance to utilise their ability in an instructive and imaginative manner.

Sessions of Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a great way to support the growth of imaginative thinking abilities. Students are divided into groups and instructed to concurrently record their ideas before presenting them to the group as a whole for input. It has been demonstrated that this cooperative learning approach increases students' creativity and productivity. Additionally, it gives students a priceless chance to express their opinions and participate in the group ideation process.

Classroom Crafts

Undoubtedly, arts and crafts are effective means of fostering pupils' creative abilities. Students who participate in artistic activities have an unmatched chance to reach their full potential. Students hone their dexterity via arts and crafts, learning new techniques for handling objects and applying their limbs in different ways. Less restrictions on pupils' artistic expression enable them to communicate their thoughts

clearly and effectively, which greatly enhances their sense of accomplishment and contentment.

In addition, engaging in craft activities improves pupils' hand-eye coordination, an essential skill set for performing a variety of tasks involving the synchronisation of muscular movements and vision. Increased productivity is made possible by better hand-eye coordination, which also provides a strong basis for learning a variety of useful skills.

Reading Exercises

Students' critical thinking and creative faculties are greatly enhanced by reading. It stimulates their creativity and improves their ability to visualise. Reading exercises help students understand the nuances of language, which improves their language abilities and helps them express their ideas more clearly.

One way that teachers can encourage reading among their children is by creating a classroom mini-library. This project acts as a spark to encourage reading routines and ignite a love of books. In order to make sure the books chosen are suitable for the students' grade level, sometimes unusual perspectives into people's lives and endeavours, so boosting their effectiveness and enriching their experiences. There is great potential for productivity gains with this creative way of thinking.

Conclusion

Everyone wants to develop innovative ideas and provide new insights, whether in the practical, business, or personal spheres. By exercising deliberate thought and strategic planning, people can avoid setbacks and adverse situations, which makes it easier to achieve their goals and dreams. To be creative means to come up with new ways to solve problems, solve tasks, and get over obstacles. It infuses new and shine during these exhibitions can make a big difference in their self-

confidence. They are inspired to further explore and develop their creative potential by this encouragement, which instils confidence in their talents.

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