

# 9 Creativity

This self-assessment is designed to help you learn more about your creative environment and how you operate within it. It will highlight barriers to being creative.

# Creativity self-assessment

Read each of the statements and tick the response which best reflects you and your work environment.

## *Section A: Your approach to problem solving*

	Yes	No
1 When I encounter a problem, I am open-minded about the best way to solve it		
2 I am not afraid of being seen as different from other people		
3 I am stimulated by free-thinking people		
4 I find it easy to look to the future		
5 I readily generate new ideas to solve a problem		
6 I like a sense of order in my life		
7 I enjoy working with detail		
8 I prefer to have all the facts before I make a decision		
9 I dislike having to meet new people or going to unfamiliar places		
10 I like to read instructions before starting something new		

## *Section B: Your work environment*

	Yes	No
1 I am encouraged to generate new ideas at work		
2 I can express my feelings to my boss		
3 When people have a problem, they ask others for their help and this is given freely		
4 Problems are solved as and when they occur		
5 My organization has a good track record of innovation		
6 Suggestions must be justified with paperwork		
7 The same problems crop up time after time at work		
8 My authority levels are strictly defined		
9 The organization likes to stick to well-defined procedures		
10 Whether an idea is accepted depends on who you are within the organization		

### How to score

For both section A and section B score as follows:

*Questions 1 to 5*

Yes = 4 points

No = 2 points

*Questions 6 to 10*

Yes = 2 points

No = 4 points

Total your scores for section A: Your approach to problem solving



Total your scores for section B: Your work environment



### Interpretation of your score

#### *Section A: Your approach to problem solving*

High score 30–40

You are predisposed to be a highly creative person. You will be a valuable source of ideas in the creative problem-solving process.

Medium score 20–29

You have creative potential but your tendency to be analytical and systematic in your approach inhibits your ability to ‘free-wheel’.

Low score 2–19

Your creative potential is being stifled by your need for order and familiarity. You will be surprised how much creativity will be released if you give yourself permission to let go!

## *Section B: Your work environment*

- High score 30–40      You work in an environment which encourages creativity and innovation. You will have opportunities to develop fully your creative potential.
- Medium score 20–29      It may sometimes be difficult to be creative in your work environment. This may hinder your problem-solving activity.
- Low score 2–19      Your work environment does not encourage creativity. It may be procedure bound and risk averse. This may lead to frustration and the stifling of ideas.

## *Comparing your scores for sections A and B*

- If your score for A is high or medium and you work in an environment where your score is low (section B), you experience frustration.
- If your score for B is high or medium and your score for A is medium or low, be bold! Your work environment will support you in taking a more creative approach. Form alliances with people who are more creative than yourself to encourage greater problem solving.

## **Creative problem-solving model**

- It is generally acknowledged that a combination of creative and logical thinking is required to solve problems effectively.
- If you have a preference for either creative thinking or you are logical in your approach, you need to work with other people who will bring contrasting patterns of thought when problem-solving.
- An effective problem-solving team uses a four-stage approach:
  - 1 Define the problem – what is the real issue, the heart of the problem? Be clear about what you are trying to achieve.
  - 2 Generate ideas – let your imagination go wild. This phase involves generating lots of ideas on how to solve the problem, no matter how ‘wacky’. It is important not to reject ideas out of hand.
  - 3 Evaluate the ideas – keeping the criteria for decision-making in mind, the team evaluates each of the options to arrive at the best solution to the problem.
  - 4 Gaining acceptance – this can be the hardest part. Considering the audience, the team decides how to present their solution in a way which will ensure acceptance and participation.

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

Rickards, Tudor and Moger, Susan (1999) *Handbook for Creative Team Leaders*, Gower, Aldershot

Townsend, John and Farrier, Jaques (1990) *The Creative Manager's Pocketbook*, Management Pocketbooks, Alresford