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Habits of Highly Creative People - and making them work for you!



"There is no use trying," said Alice. "One can't believe impossible things." "I daresay you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast." - Lewis Carroll

Many people believe that creativity is inborn and only a chosen few are creative. While the former is true, the latter is not. In fact, everyone is born creative. In the process of growing up, educating yourself and adapting to your environment, you slowly add blocks to your creativity and forget that you had it in the first place. The difference between a creative person and a not-so-creative person is due not to the creativity they were born with but the creativity they have lost.

By observing the habits of creative people, you can identify which ones will work for you. Here are 16 habits of creative people.

1 Creative people are full of curiosity - They are often wonderstruck, tickled by the newness of every moment. They also have lots of questions - asking what, why, when, where and how. A questioning mind is an open mind and only an open mind can be creative. Having a questioning stance sensitises your mind, and allows it to sense what others may miss.

2 Creative people are problem-friendly - When there is a problem, some people become upset or look for someone to blame. Being faced with a problem becomes the problem. Creative people are not "problem-averse" but "problem-friendly". They see problems as opportunities to improve the quality of life, and simply get on with the job. Frequently, problems come into your life to convey some message. Avoiding them may cause you to miss the message.

3 Creative people value their ideas - Creative people realise the value of an idea and often carry a small notepad to write down ideas whenever they occur. Many times, by having a notepad and looking for new ideas to jot down, they can spot ideas that they otherwise would have missed.

4 Creative people embrace challenges - Creative people thrive on challenges. They have a gleam in their eyes as soon as they sniff one. Challenges bring the best out in them - a reason good enough to welcome any challenge.

5 Creative people are full of enthusiasm - Creative people are enthusiastic about their goals. This enthusiasm works as the fuel for their journey, propelling them to their goals.

6 Creative people are persistent - Creative people know well that other people may initially reject their ideas. However, they do not get frustrated or take it personally. They understand it takes time for a new idea to be accepted. Often, the more creative the idea, the longer it takes for it to be appreciated.

7 Creative people are perennially dissatisfied - Creative people are acutely aware of their dissatisfactions and unfulfilled desires. However, this awareness does not discourage them. Instead, it stimulates them to realise their dreams.

8 Creative people are optimists - Creative people generally believe that most, if not all, problems can be solved. No challenge is too big to be overcome. This doesn't mean they are always happy and never depressed. They do have their bad moments but they do not generally get stumped by a challenge.

9 Creative people make positive judgment - The ability to hold off on judging or critiquing an idea is important in the process of creativity. Often, great ideas start as crazy ones. If critique is applied at the early stages, the idea will be killed and never developed further. Critique and judgment are important in the creative process, but creative people recognise that it has to be done at a suitable time and place.

10 Creative people go for the big kill - Creative people know the first idea is just the starting point. It is in the process of fleshing it out that some magical cross-connections happen and the original 'normal' idea turns into a killer idea.

11 Creative people are prepared to stick it out - Creative people who see their ideas come to fruition have the ability to stick with their ideas and see them through - even when the going gets tough. This is what sets them apart from others.

12 Creative people do not fall in love with an idea - Creative people recognise how dangerous it is to fall in love with an idea, because it prevents other ideas from emerging. They love the process of coming up with ideas, but not necessarily the idea.

13 Creative people recognise the environments in which they are most creative - Creative people do most of their thinking in an environment which is most conducive to their creativity. If they are unable to influence their physical environment, they recreate their 'favourite' creative environment in their minds.

14 Creative people are good at reframing any situation - Reframes are a different way of looking at things. Being able to reframe experiences and situations allows you to adopt a different point of view which may change your perception of the situation. Reframing can breathe new life into dead situations. It can motivate demoralised teams. It helps you to spot opportunities that you would have otherwise missed.

15 Creative people like the unexpected - Creative people expect the unexpected and find connections between unrelated things. This can evoke serendipitous events.

16 Creative people are not afraid of failures - Creative people realise that the energy that creates great ideas also creates errors. They know that failure is not really the opposite of success. In fact, failure and success are on the same side of the spectrum, because both are the result of an attempt made. Creative people view failure as a stopover on the way to success.

Article contributed by Shatu Wasu, Singapore based trainer and consultant.



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