

LESSON : Improving the Process of Generating Ideas

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EntreComp Competence Framework

Valuing Ideas

Introduction

A big aspect of the working world today is knowing and choosing where to invest one's energy, time, and money. The world is evolving continuously, and one has to keep up with it. There are so many options for every single thing in life nowadays, and information is so contradictory and affluent that one can be quite in a dilemma when making any kind of choice.

To add to that, there are already so many things possible that one might have issues knowing how and where to innovate. But what is the origin of all innovation? Ideas.

What constitutes an idea? Ideas are not as someone might think, a unit, something that just pops up suddenly in mind, in a Eurêka! moment. They are usually formed over long periods of time beyond the surface, deep in our minds, and are more akin to a hunch, or an intuition. And the moments in which they sprout fully are usually not during an intense intellectual exercise, but rather during a conversation with someone else or a moment of free time.

They are more akin to a network developing slowly between elements and connecting them in a new, unexpected way than to a well-rounded single element.

There are different ways to promote the development of ideas. Some companies even have special time off dedicated to personal projects and exploring new ideas, such as Google. Communication with others, as well as the opportunity for the mind to get out of well-known pathways, are essential to the development of innovative ideas.



While our current business culture promotes “business” as in “being busy” more than favouring being efficient, allowing the mind to wander is actually essential to have new ideas.

Creating environments and opportunities to develop ideas is thus crucial. But creating ideas is not the end of the road. While some people may struggle to have ideas, others are plagued with them. The point here is to be able to distinguish the “good” ideas from the “bad” ones. Or rather, recognizing the ideas that are feasible, that have added value, be it social, cultural, or economic value, and that seem motivating. The issue is to be able to evaluate the value of an idea to be able to choose the best one.

So, what is needed to evaluate an idea?

According to the EntreComp Framework Descriptors and Levels of Proficiency, the concept of valuing Ideas means to be able to judge what value is in social, cultural and economic terms, but also to recognise the potential an idea has for creating value and identify suitable ways of making the most out of it.

So what do you need to implement a successful process improvement?

First, allow some space to think. It is useful to devote a slot of time each week at least to think about how the process itself is going and what can be done to improve it. Or simply, let your mind wander, let the discussion flow, and see what you come up with.

Another useful thing to do is to **research other people in the field of action** and see what they are doing and how. It may trigger new ideas and thought processes.

Think about the following questions.

- How can ideas be generated? When do I usually get good ideas?
- How can an idea be ‘valuable’?
- What is ‘value’ in social, cultural, and economic terms?
- What is valuable to me?
- What is valuable to my work?

Once you have an idea, try to analyse it on different aspects:

- Does it solve a current problem/ how much is it needed?
- What does it bring socially, culturally, or in economic terms?
- What does it cost? (In time, energy, money, etc)
- How feasible is it? And in which time frame?

Bibliography and webliography

- **EntreComp. (2021). *EntreComp Certificate - Learning Resource - Valuing Ideas*. <https://www.entrecompcertificate.eu>. <https://www.entrecompcertificate.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Valuing-Ideas.pdf>**
- ***Leadership Concept / Valuing ideas - The Happy Manager*. (2021, March 29). *The Happy Manager*. <https://the-happy-manager.com/article/leadership-concept/>**
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Purpose and recipients

The Learning Unit aims to teach future professionals to effectively explore new ideas and ways to improve their professional activity.

This way, they can cope with the ever-changing professional market and accompanying economical market and learn to be ahead of the game.

The activity develops skills that are useful in any business sector or professional activity, therefore the learning unit is useful for several teaching environments (VET, professional training, public schools), the main recipients being adult learners (16-25 y.o.) receiving professional training.

Learning outcomes

Levels of Proficiency: Read and understand the following proficiencies. What kind of learner do you want to be?

- Learners can understand and appreciate the value of ideas.



- Learners understand that ideas can have different types of value, which can be used in different ways.
- Learners understand the overarching importance of allowing mental space to have ideas and to think about ways to improve their current practice
- Learners can apply effective ideas evaluation

Description of teaching and learning activities

The learning mediator introduces the general concepts of ideas in the professional context, underlining why it is important in any profession to think ahead of ways to improve in order to stay relevant in your professional practice.

The learners are then engaged in the Practical Activity:

“Evaluate your ideas”: learners analyze the positive and negative aspects of their ideas, their relevancy, and their feasibility.

Supporting resources

What is a valuable idea? A valuable idea is a good idea. But where do good ideas come from? Steven Johnson in his TED talk ‘Where good ideas come from?’ suggests a few ways.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0af00UcTO-c>

How can ‘value’ be measured? Watch the following video. It may make you reconsider what you think is valuable. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7S8jWh6AEs>

**4 simple ways to have a great idea by Richard St. John
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtn31hh6kU4>)**

**How To Come Up With Good Ideas by Mark Rober
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1kbrlZRDvU>)**

Duration: 1 hour

Competence level: EQF 2 - 3



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