The Creative Leadership Forum
Asia Pacific and Australia

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Is Australian management creative and innovative?

Analysis of survey responses from Australian management

collected between
August 1st 2007 to December 30th 2007

THE CREATIVE LEADERSHIP FORUM®
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Is Australian management creative and innovative?   www.TheCreativeLeadershipForum.com

ABSTRACT

How creative and innovative are Australian managers? The Creative Leadership Forum believes the answer to this question is critical to the future viability of the Australian economy. Creativity and innovation are the drivers behind the creation of value in organizations. This concept holds true for nations as well.

We surveyed Australian managers at all levels to determine how they see creativity and innovation in the workplace. Our results show that more needs to be done to harness the creative power of managers and their reports. We found that the majority of the managers see themselves as creative and believe their organizations have the capability to innovate. However, there is a disconnect between professional and personal creativity as *most managers are unsure how their individual creativity can best benefit their organisation and often do not feel empowered to apply their creativity at work.*

Creative leadership programmes are in place, yet they are not producing the results that most organisations would like to see. Managers feel they have the potential but lack the tools and environment to harness their creativity.

Australia needs to act now, if it wants to stay competitive in the future.

Government, educational and industry leaders need to put renewed focus and increased resources towards developing a culture of creativity in Australian management. By developing existing talent through creative leadership and skills training we can create a generation of creative and innovative managers that are competitive in today's fast-moving and rapidly globalising world.

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1.   About the Survey ©

1.1. Survey Design

Why creativity and innovation? Creativity and innovation have been identified as drivers behind the competitiveness of organisations and nations driving the creation of wealth. Countries that foster creativity and innovation in the workforce will attract increased capital flows from global investors because of the higher returns. The Creative Leadership Forum seeks to determine whether the Australian workforce's creativity and innovation is on track to compete in the global economy.

In August of 2007 The Creative Leadership forum launched a major nation-wide on-line survey. An unbranded anonymous URL link for the survey was provided to prominent organisations whose databases were compiled from people who expressed a personal or professional interest in creative leadership and creativity and innovation within organisations or as career options. The on-line portion of the survey was supported by 35 in-depth interviews with senior managers including CEO's, Marketing Directors and Managers and HR Directors, Managers and Coordinators. The survey was also made available to the general public through a link on websites of participating organisations.

The survey included 35 substantive questions about creativity and innovation and also included general questions to capture demographic, industry and sector data. The survey was available on-line to participating organisations from August 1st to December 31st of 2007 and yielded 329 respondents across all sectors of the work force.

The survey results are intended to provide:

- A clear understanding of how a good cross section of Australian management understands and experiences creative leadership, creativity and innovation both professionally and personally.

- A meaningful summary of the types and content of executive education and training programmes that the Australian workforce has experienced at the senior, middle and junior levels of organisations.

- An understanding of the perceived needs and requirements in the Australian economy for creativity and innovation executive education and training to meet future global investment needs.

- A blueprint for designing and developing executive education and training programmes on creative leadership, creativity and innovation that will have instant application for the common good and that will provide real value to the Australian economy in future years.

1.2　General Statistics

The survey intended to capture a broad picture of creativity and innovation in both the private and public sector work forces and therefore was not targeted towards any specific industry sectors or markets. Participants in the survey included some of the top 500 performing companies, peak industry bodies, academia and departments within the State and Federal Government. We feel that the survey responses were generally representative of Australian management as a whole.

Figure 1.1 Participants by Sector

Just over 45% of the companies represented were established for 13 years or less and that number jumps to almost 50% after dropping State and Federal government. The size of companies responding to this survey were evenly distributed with 49% employing less than 500 people and 51% employing 500 or more.

The survey results were also categorised by industry in order to closely examine trends. A little over half of the responses came from four industries; Public Sector, Creative Industries[1], Consulting/Advisory Services and Education/Training.

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[1] Creative Industries included in this survey include Arts and Entertainment, Media, Software Design, Architecture, Publishing and Advertising.

Males were slightly overrepresented in the survey as 58% of the responders. However, this sample is representative of Australian management as a whole since males represented 65% of the full-time workforce in February 2008. Additionally there may be some biases by age group and educational background; the respondents tended to be older and better educated. 78% of all respondants were older than 40 and 47% were in possession of a Masters degree while 32% had a Bachelor's degree.

Table 1.1 Participants by Age Group

Age Group	Percent of Total
20 to 30	6.5%
30 to 40	15.2%
40 to 50	40.2%
50 to 60	29.9%
Over 60	8.2%

An older sample also gave us more responses from high-level management. CEOs and Chairman made up 12% of the responses while upper-level managers accounted for 30% of respondents. Additionally, 38% of responses came from middle managers and lower management and project managers accounted for only 20% of all of the survey respondants.

Only 5% of the survey respondants categorized their job titles as either a Creative, Innovation or Artistic directors and managers. This may mean that these positions were merely underrepresented in the survey or that there are a currently few designated positions within the Australian workforce for creative/innovation directors. Additionally, when asked to describe their role within their organisation, only 12% of the respondants said that their role included creating, innovating or driving change. This is significant as it is indicative of a prevaling mindset. If managers do not see innovation and creativity as a key aspect of their job then they may be less likely to seek innovative solutions or to foster innovation in the workplace.

Throughout the analysis when referring to responses we are referring to overall responses. We also examined responses by gender, age group, industry, sector, position and company size. We only mention differences between these segments if they differ from the mean by greater than 10%. If an overall response to a survey question is discussed and there is no discussion on responses by segment, then it is safe to assume that there was little variation between the demographics. For example, we never mention differences by company size, since there we found no significant variation in responses between large and small companies.

2 Defining Creative Leadership

Is there a difference between creative leadership and creativity? What is a creative leader, what are their attributes and roles? What is creativity and are we creative? These are the important questions we attempt to tackle to gain a better understanding of Australian managements' perceptions of both creativity and creative leadership. The results from this survey give us a peek into the Australian managements' personal and professional life, displaying how creativity affects these areas. Looking at the responses, we are able to piece together the current perceptions on creativity, creative leadership, the differences, the perceived needs and the paradoxes there-in.

Overall Australians consider themselves to be both creative and creative leaders. However, there is confusion about where this creativity comes from and how it applies to leaders and at work. Australian managers do not want to limit the definition or role of creativity but they are quick to limit the roles of the creative leader. The majority don't divide professional and personal creativity, seeing no distinction between the two.

2.1   Who is a creative leader?

In order to understand the perceived level of creativity in management it is important to first define the creative leader. To paint a picture of the ideal creative leader we asked survey respondents to associate attributes with creative leadership and identify a public figure who leads creatively.

2.1.1 Creative Leader Attributes

The survey asked respondents to select from a list of different attributes that are typically associated with creative leadership. The top four attributes were identified by over 50% of respondents, suggesting that these attributes are Australian managements' defining attributes of a creative leader.

1) **Empowerment** (59.3%), **2) enlightenment** (57.1%), **3) enjoyment** (54.1%) and **4) risk** (50.5%) were the defining characteristics of creative leadership. **See Figure 2.1**. These responses suggest that a creative leader is a team player, is visionary, enjoys his or her work and is generally risk-seeking. The attributes least associated with creative leadership were fear (4.9%) and power (7.0%).
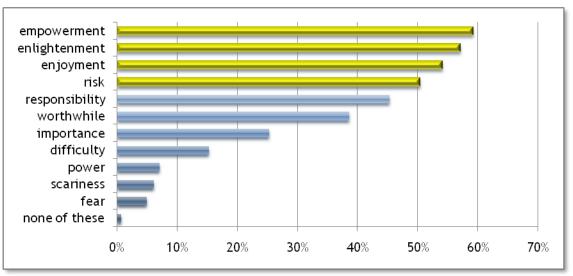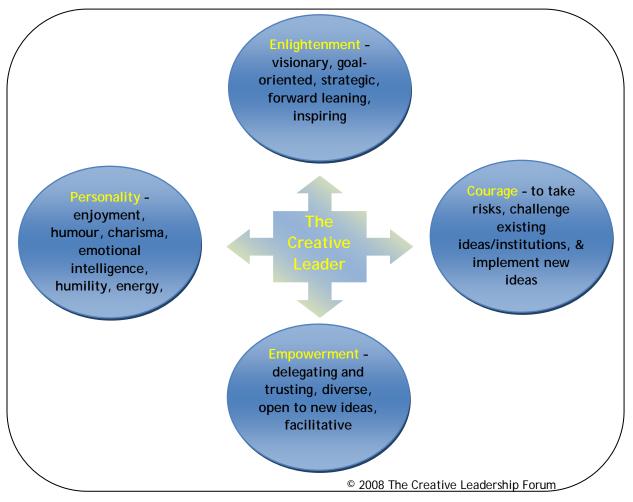
Figure 2.1 - Which of the following attributes are associated with Creative Leadership?

There were minimal differences in response by gender, age group, sector and industry. However, the younger generations, 20-30 and 30-40, tended to have higher response rates to attributes like "importance" and "worthwhile".

Respondents were also asked to enter their own attributes and the results were generally similar to the top four attributes selected above. The results gave us attributes of creative leaders can be defined along four main themes:

Enlightenment – visionary, goal-oriented, strategic, forward leaning, inspiring

Personality – enjoyment, humour, charisma, emotional intelligence, humility, energy,

The Creative Leader

Courage – to take risks, challenge existing ideas/institutions, & implement new ideas

Empowerment – delegating and trusting, diverse, open to new ideas, facilitative

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Above we have a portrait of the perfect creative leader as described by Australian management. These attributes are not very different from attributes described in current management literature, suggesting that successful business managers and successful creative leaders share the same basic qualities.

Name a Creative Leader

The idea that successful business managers are also successful creative leaders prevailed when respondents were asked to name someone in public life who they thought *leads creatively.* An overwhelming majority named Richard Branson, Chairman of Virgin Group. 22% of all respondents connected Richard Branson as a creative leader. Only 5% selected the next highest choice - Steve Jobs, Chairman and CEO of Apple Inc. No other public figures were named by more than 2% of the respondents. Many Australians freely associated two leaders of successful companies with creative leadership and half of all

respondents named business leaders, whilst another third named political leaders. Very few artists were named. **See Table 2.1 for more responses.**

Table 2.1 Name someone in public life who you think leads creatively – top 12 responses

Richard Branson **Chairman Virgin Group**	**Steve Jobs** **Chairman & CEO Apple Inc**
Oprah Winfrey **U.S. Talk Show Host, Entrepreneur**	**Nelson Mandela** **South Africa Politician, Nobel Prize Winner**
Tim Flannery **Professor, Global Warming Activist**	**Edward De Bono** **Physician, Author, Inventor**
John Howard **Former Australian Prime Minister**	**Al Gore** **U.S. Politician, Activist, Nobel Prize Winner**
Muhammed Yunus **Grameen Bank Founder, Entrepreneur**	**Dick Smith** **Entrepreneur, Philanthropist**
Anita Roderick **Body Shop Founder, Entrepreneur**	**Kevin Sheedy** **AFL Professional Football Player and Coach**

The choices of 'public figures who lead creatively' differed slightly by age. Though Richard Branson was the favourite in all age groups, he was the overwhelming favourite in the 20-30's group (64%). In the other age groups Richard Branson won between 21% and 9% of the popular vote. The top choices of each age group are highlighted in Table 2.2. The variety of answers between each age group also increased by age, intuitively confirming that experience adds a wider breadth of choices.

Table 2.2 Name someone in public life who you think leads creatively – responses by age group

Age Group	Public figures identified as Creative Leaders, percent vote per age group
20-30	Richard Branson, 64%[2]
30-40	Richard Branson 21%, Oprah Winfrey 16%, Tim Flannery 11%, Bill Gates 11%
40-50	Richard Branson 20%, Anita Roderick 5%, Edward De Bono 5%, Steve Jobs 5%
50-60	Richard Branson 9%, Steve Jobs 9%, Dick Smith 9%
Over 60	Richard Branson 15%, John Howard 15%

2.1.2 The role of the creative leader in the workplace

Judging from the results thus far Australians appear to define a creative leader as an entrepreneur – a world beater and a successful business leader who is visionary, takes risks, and creates successful companies by differing from the norm. Dick Smith, Mohammed Yunus and the late Anita Roderick, are known as successful public figures because they were enlightened enough to create a new idea, courageous enough to implement it, personable enough to lead the innovation and empowering enough to make

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[2] No public figures other then Richard Branson were mentioned more than once

it last. So far, this definition would lead us to assume that creative leaders have no bounds - they create, lead creatively and inspire creativity.

However, Australian managers did not see it that way. Almost all respondents (97%) agreed that a creative leader is one who *"leads people and processes creatively"* but only half (54%) agreed a creative leader is *"one who creates."* Women and respondents in the 20 to 30 age group were more open minded than the mean. Female respondents were more likely to agree (65%) a creative leader is one who creates- a small but notable difference. However, 100% of respondents aged 20 to 30 agreed that a creative leader is one who creates – demonstrating a broader definition of creativity.

Among industries there were varied opinions on whether a creative leader is one who creates. Surprisingly, only 42% of the Creative Industries and 38% of the ITC industry respondents agreed a creative leader should create. **See Figure 2.4**. On the other hand, 100% of the construction industry and over 80% of the consulting industry agreed that creative leaders create. This difference could be a reflection of industry structures. For example, in industries that disagreed, the subordinates likely do the majority of the creative work whilst the management gives overall direction. Meanwhile, in industries that agreed with the statement, creative work is likely done at the more senior level whilst subordinates implement the plans.

Figure 2.4 Percent respondents that agree, "A creative leader is one who creates," by industry

The survey respondents were also asked to define the roles of a creative leader. Overall managers overwhelmingly associated a creative leader's roles with narrow descriptors that are predefined as creative vice roles which were are more commonly associated with managing a business (driving revenue and decreasing costs).

 Over 98% of all respondents agreed that a creative leader should:

1) Increase innovation capacity

2) Develop creativity and innovation skills capabilities

3) Implement management strategies for creativity and innovation

The above roles all fall under one of the four main attributes – empowerment. This continually emerged as a central theme when selecting roles for creative leaders.

Also not surprising is that a majority of respondents agreed that a creative leader's role is to transform the organization (75%) and develop new products (62%). These roles are seen as innovative. What is interesting is that respondents were less likely to agree to these roles than the empowerment roles.

What was surprising is that no clear majority agreed a creative leader's role is to drive revenue or decrease costs. This is an odd juxtaposition since the primary goal of a business leader is to create profit, and entrepreneurs like Anita Roderick, Richard Branson and Steve Jobs would not be as well known if their creativity had not positively affected their bottom line. It may be that Australian managers see a clear distinction between the role of the leader as an *innovator* and the role of the leader as a *business administrator*.

The Role of the Creative Leader is to Drive Revenue

Legend: Retail & Manufacturing, Public Sector, Other, ITC, Health & Pharma, Food & Agriculture, Finance, Education, Creative Ind, Consulting, Construction
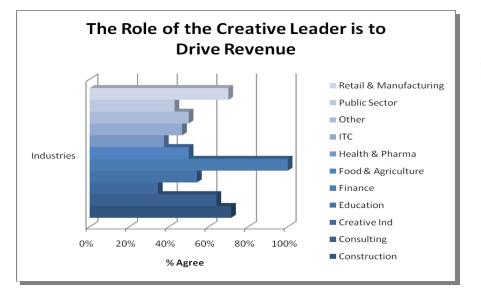
Figure 2.5 Percent responses that agree, "The role of the creative leader is to drive revenue," by industry

These sentiments were consistent across all sectors and industries. Intuitively, one would assume the public sectors' responses would not place as much value on profit generation as the private sector. However the public and private sectors did not radically differ; 57% of private sector respondents agreed that a creative leader's role is to drive revenue, compared to 45% of public sector respondents (overall response was 50%) - not a very significant difference. When asked if the creative leader's role is to decrease costs, 22% of all public sector respondents agreed compared to 27% of all private sector respondents.

In contrast to the sector data, there were significant differences between industry segments on the role of a creative leader in profit generation. **See Figure 2.5**.

100% of Financial Services respondents agreed that a creative leader drives revenue. The next highest responses were in Retail & Manufacturing (70%) and Construction (71%). In comparison, the creative industries only agreed by 35%.

The 20 to 30's age group again had a broader definition for the role of the creative leader. 70% of respondents aged 20 and 30 agreed that a creative leader's role was to drive revenue. However, 36% of the 20 to 30 age group agreed that it was the creative leader's role to decrease costs – more than overall respondents (25%), yet still not a majority. This

statistical difference suggests the youngest generation has a more open definition of a creative leader than the other age groups.

Managers overwhelmingly chose roles for the creative leader that fostered creativity and innovation in the workplace, and a majority chose roles linked with innovation (new products, transform the organization) - easy and obvious connections. However, in general, the workforce did not see a place for creative leadership in the basics of business - profit generation.

The theme of empowerment continued when respondents were asked to add their own role for the creative leader. Just over half the responses listed a role that fell under the empowering attribute, such as *"create an environment that encourages creativity"* and *"build open and trusting relationships"*. Less than a third added roles that fell under the enlightenment attribute, like *"develop a vision"* and *"plan for the future and build for it"* - areas that could increase profit generation.

The bias towards empowerment roles – creating a better environment for creativity and innovation - when defining a creative leader's roles is likely explained by one or both of the following:

1) Employees are dissatisfied with their management's ability to foster creativity.

2) Hierarchal structures prevent managers from achieving the freedom or autonomy to apply their creativity in a work setting.

Enlightenment suggestions:

"Depending on the current context of the organisation an important role of a leader is to understand which of the above mentioned roles to focus on."

"Go beyond existing frontiers"

"A creative leader is one who has a vision of what needs to be achieved and creatively resolves issues to attain the desired result"

Empowerment suggestions:

"Create an environment where mistakes are a precursor to innovation."

"Evangelise open thinking and deter resistive or conventional thinking"

2.1.3 Am I a Creative Leader?

Having built a picture of the roles and attributes of a creative leader, we then asked survey respondents if they believed themselves to be creative leaders. When asked, "Are you a creative leader?", an overwhelming majority, 81%, responded 'Yes'. There were no significant differences in responses by gender or age group, but there were some slight differences by industry. ITC and Retail & Manufacturing were below average (64-67% responding 'yes') and Construction and Food & Agriculture were above average with 100% of respondents marking 'yes'.

81% of respondents answered "Yes", when asked, "Are you a creative leader?"

Despite industry differences, the important point is that the majority of Australian managers feel they are creative leaders and thus see themselves as empowering, visionary, courageous and personable.

2.1.4 Summary

The majority of managers feel they are creative leaders and the main role of a creative leader is to *foster* creativity through empowerment. Although they primarily associate successful business leaders with creative leadership they do not necessarily connect the role of a creative leadership with the role of a business manager.

These responses suggest there is a demonstrated need for:

1) **Leadership training focused on building a better work environment to foster creativity an innovation and,**

2) **Functional skills training which ties creative leadership to everyday management.**
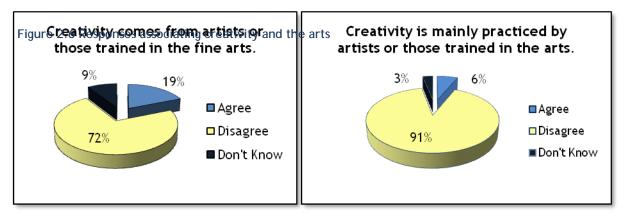
2.2   Defining Creativity

Australian managers are frustrated with the creative leadership at their organization. There is a bias towards empowerment roles – suggesting that is what they are missing. Also, there is a disconnect between the role of a creative leader and the role of a business leader - suggesting the workforce is conflicted on how to apply creativity at work.

Perhaps looking deeper at Australian definitions of creativity could help.

2.2.1   What is creativity and where does it come from?

Overall, respondents agreed that creativity is not constrained to the artististic community. 72% of all respondents disagreed that creativity came from artists and 91% disagreed that creativity is mainly practiced by artists. This statistic suggests *the workforce does not put limits or bounds on where creativity comes from or who uses it.* They realise creativity

Figure 2-8 Responses associating creativity and the arts

can be used anywhere and by anyone.

There were no differences in responses between men and women and only a few differences by age group. The over 60 group is the only group that seemed to differ from the mean. The over 60's were more likely to agree and less likely to disagree that creativity mainly comes from artists and is mainly practiced by artists. Thus over 60's seemed more inclined to associate creativity with the arts

If creativity is not necessarily artistic creativity then what is it?

The survey also asked respondents if creativity was mainly problem solving. Respondents were split fairly evenly in their answer. 46% agreed creativity was mainly problem solving, 44% disagreed and 10% did not know.The younger generations were more likely to agree that creativity is mainly problem solving. The 20-30's agreed by 55% and disagreed by 36% and the 30-40's agreed by 64% and disagreed by 29%. Three sectors, not-for-profit, universities and publicly held companies, were more likely to agree that creativity is mainly problem solving, 78% of the not-for-profit sector respondents agreed, 67% of the University respondents and 59% of publicly listed company respondents.

Who do you think is creative?

Australian managers were also asked to name a public figure they think is *highly creative*. The responses to this question were much more varied than when asked to name a public figure who *leads creatively*. The *leads creatively* question had a 58% variation in its responses and the *highly creative* question had a 75% variation, there was less agreement on who is highly creative and more industries were represented. In addition the *highly creative* question produced many more entertainers and artists than the *leads creatively* question. For example the actress Cate Blanchett tied Edward de Bono in responses and many more artists and entertainment personalities from every possible area were mentioned: e.g. the actor Geoffrey Rush, the chef Maggie Beer, the musician Paul Kelly, Pablo Picasso, the director Steven Spielberg, the late TV personality Steve Irwin, the novelist Tim Winton and (though not an individual) Working Dog Productions.

Table 2.3 Highly Creative Public Figures

Name a public figure you think is *highly creative*
Richard Branson, 6%
Paul Keating, 3%
Cate Blanchett, 2%
Edward de Bono, 2%
Steve Jobs, 2%

What is surprising is that Richard Branson still retained the most mentions. 6% of all respondents named him as a public figure who is highly creative. Twice as many as the next closest mention, Paul Keating with 3%. Steve Jobs and Bill Gates were also mentioned, but not as often.

Given the responses it is safe to say that Australian management does not limit creativity to the arts but still associates it with the arts. Artists and entertainment personalities were named just as often as business personalities, politicians and famous problem solvers (like Edward de Bono) when asked to name a highly creative public figure.

These responses help confirm that Australians acknowledge that creativity can be used by anyone for anything.

2.2.2 My creativity

The survey also asked the Australian workforce whether they thought they were creative.

Here's what respondents said:

70% agreed with the statement: "People say I am creative."

88% agreed with the statement: "I am creative." And only 1% disagreed![3]

79% agreed with the statement: "I recognize when I am being creative."

Though there were no distinct differences by age group, gender or sector, there were few differences by industry. Only half of the creative industry respondents felt that other

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[3] 11% were unsure.

people say they are creative (compared to 70% overall), yet 100% felt they were creative. This result could be a function of being surrounded by other creative people.

The above answers on 'my creativity' could reflect the wide uses of creativity.

The majority of respondents (62%) agreed there was no difference between work and personal creativity, suggesting that the majority of managers do not segment creativity.

Though 88% agree they are creative, it is unclear whether this creativity manifests itself at work.

This lack of clarity could mirror the split between those who agree creativity is mainly a problem solving skill and those who don't. Two-thirds of respondents who believe creativity is mainly problem solving also believe there is no difference between work and personal creativity. Intuitively it is more likely the artistic camp feel there is a difference between work and personal creativity and we find that is mainly true.

What makes me creative?

To discover more we asked respondents to list attributes that made them creative. We divided the respones into four groups, attributes that defined a functional or problem solving view of creativity, attributes that defined a softer view of creativity, attributes that could be categorized as either and attributes that could be categorized as neither.

Functional answers were perceived as attributes that seemed objective and directed at solving problems, like "lateral thinking", "synthesis" and "thinking logically and clearly about shaping possibilities." Softer creativity attributes were more artistic, personal and emotive such as "passionate", "intuitive", and "imaginative". Attributes that described both fell into the 'courage' and 'empowerment' arenas. Attributes that applied to neither were those that weren't necessarily supportive of either, like "tenacity" and "endurance".

Table 2.4 – Name your creative attributes

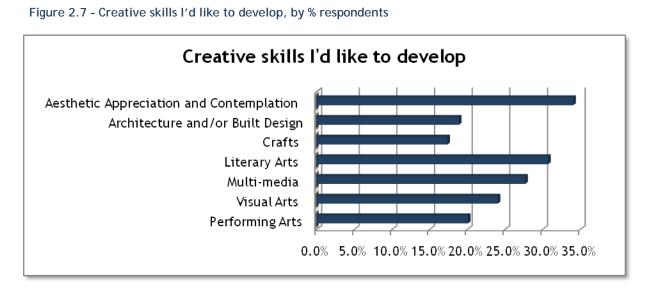| Functional (objective) Attributes	Softer (emotive) Attributes
"Thinking Laterally"	"A sense of humour"
"Clearly identify the overall objective"	"Getting into the 'flow'"
"Dissecting problems into variables"	"My Inner Child"

Just over half, 56%, of all respondents used functional or problem solving attributes to describe their creativity compared to 20% who used softer attributes, 21% who used "either" attributes and 2% who used "neither" attributes. However, only 52% of the respondents who used functional/problem solving attributes to describe their creativity agreed that creativity is mainly problem solving. Thus even if someone uses problem solving attributes to describe their creativity it does not mean that they deny creativity has many uses and manifestations, i.e. it is not just for problem solving. Again confirming that Australians believe creativity can be used by anyone and anywhere.

Improving Creativity

Most respondents listed functional attributes as their creative attributes, thus one might think they would want to improve their artistic attributes in order to become more creative. However, when given the choice of which creative skills they would choose to improve no single skill was chosen by more than 35% of the respondents. **See Figure 2.7**.

Figure 2.7 – Creative skills I'd like to develop, by % respondents

Creative skills I'd like to develop

Even though the Australian workforce has a broad definition of creativity, the fact that they did not choose artistic skills when asked what creative skills they would like to develop supports the theme that the workforce desires more *functional* creative training vice *artistic* creative training.

2.2.3 Summary

Australian managers have a broad definition of creativity – it can be used by anyone, anywhere – and the vast majority feels they are creative.

However, the fact that management does not connect creative leadership with business basics could be reflected by the majority who divide professional and personal creativity. Thus it is impossible to tell if a member of the workforce who identifies themselves as creative is able to manifest this creativity at work.

One tell-tale sign is that a majority of respondents who feel creativity is mainly problem-solving do not see a difference between professional and personal creativity. Possibly then, if more functional creative problem solving skills were taught, managers would start to see how they could harness their creativity at work.

The need for more functional creativity training was confirmed when participants were asked what artistic creative skills they would like to develop. No skill was chosen by a majority of respondents.

These responses help confirm there is a demonstrated need for functional skills training on how to apply creativity and innovation to the job. Creativity is a broad topic which by definition has many uses. Australian management is looking for skills training in order to harness this broad topic and direct it towards something useful.

> *Though Australian management has a broad definition of creativity, the fact that they did not choose artistic skills when asked what creative skills they would like to develop supports the theme that the workforce desires more functional creative training vice artistic creative training.*

3 Innovation and Creativity in the Workplace

The scene is set. Australians closely associate creative leadership with other leadership ideals and see successful business leaders as public figures who are both highly creative and who lead creatively. But Australian management limits the role of the creative leader, avoiding critical business management aspects like increasing efficiencies through decreasing costs. Paradoxically, management refuses to limit the definition of creativity, seeing it both as a personal, artistic endeavour and as a functional, problem solving skill. These differences lead us to believe that managers are looking for greater functional skills training and an environment where they can harness and apply creativity at work.

The next section examines how managers experience creativity and innovation in the workplace and what makes organisations creative and innovative. Through this we expect to test our existing theory and build a better picture of the sophistication and design of creative development programmes that currently exist. Additionally we hope to identify the reach of existing programmes through different levels of management and where there are gaps that may need to be filled.

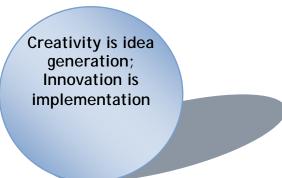## 3.1   Innovation vs. creativity in the workplace

82% could not describe the differences between creativity and innovation directly. Yet, they seemed to be able to do so intuitively when asked to describe experiences of creativity and innovation in the workplace. This distinction was demonstrated when respondents were asked to give examples of their experiences with creativity and their experiences with innovation. When asked for an example of personal creativity in the workplace a majority of respondents described *what they did*. Terms that were frequently used were, 'designed', 'created', 'performed' or 'wrote'. Responses varied from designing a nation-wide ad campaign to creating a theme for a staff Christmas party. On the other hand, when describing personal innovation in the workplace, a majority of the respondents replied with *what they achieved* and clearly focused on tangible results. Common responses included 'reduced costs', 'enhanced quality', 'created value, and 'streamlined processes'. Again, responses varied from developing a process that "saved $55 million in recurrent expenditures" to developing a new filing system that made accessing files more efficient.

Table 3.1 Creativity vs. Innovation

Creativity	Innovation
Performed → skits, theatre, role-playing	Reduced costs
Wrote → pamphlets, articles, stories	Implemented change
Designed → campaigns, workshops, programs	Enhanced quality
Created → products, services, websites	Streamlined processes
	Added value

One respondent likened innovation in the workplace to "turning ideas into opportunities." This response captures the essence of how most Australian managers regard the relationship between creativity and innovation. Creativity is idea generation, Innovation is implementation.

Creativity is idea generation; Innovation is implementation

Creativity can be an end in itself, but innovation requires taking creativity to the next step to achieve results which will propel the organization forward. This distinction helps explain some of the paradoxes we saw when managers tried to define creative leadership vs. creativity.

The survey results show that the overall perception of individual creativity and innovation in the workplace is positive. Despite these statistics, there is a clear distinction between how the individual perceives his or her own creativity and how he or she perceives the creativity of the organisation. Approximately 80% of survey respondents believe that they are both innovative at work and that they are able to apply creative thinking at work. This is compared to the 88% who feel that they are creative in general. However, when asked if they agreed that their organisation was creative, only 55% replied positively while a slightly greater amount (64%) believed that their organisation was innovative. One of the largest disparities was from respondents in financial services; only 50% believed that their organisation was either creative or innovative but almost 100% believed that as individuals they were creative and innovative at work.

Not surprisingly, survey respondents from the Creative Industries had the most positive view of their organisations; over 90% felt that their organisations were both creative *and* innovative. Three-quarters of respondents from consulting firms also agreed that their firms were both creative and innovative. Respondents from the public sector, on the other hand had the most negative view of their organisations with only 22% agreeing that their organisation was creative and just less than one-half agreed that their organisation was innovative.
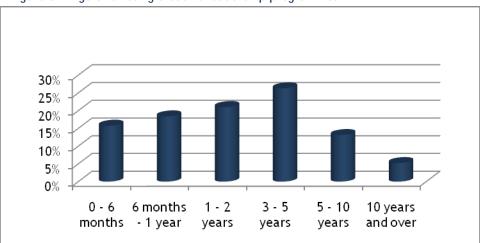
It is interesting that Australian managers have a more positive view of their organisation's ability to innovate vice the organisation's inherent creativity. Building on the earlier distinction between creativity and innovation it would suggest that firms are equipped to transfer ideas into action but perhaps have limited capabilities when it comes to generating ideas. The bias towards empowerment in the managers' responses to the roles of a creative leader also supports this idea – suggesting that empowerment is what is needed. The negative impression of creativity in the public sector supports this conjecture as it could be reflective of organizational structures/bureaucratic practices that are not conducive to creative empowerment. Thus it is important to examine the existing creative leadership and skills training programmes within organisations to try and determine what could be holding back idea creation.

3.2   Creativity and innovation training in the work place

An encouraging sign is 81% of the respondents said creative leadership should be part of a leadership program. Disappointingly only 18% of organizations currently have such a programme in place. Approximately half of the existing programmes in place were designed in-house, and a further 25% of the programmes were designed by senior management with the assistance of an external consultant.

In most cases the CEO was responsible for initiating existing creative leadership programmes although Leadership Steering Committees and Professional Development Staff were also credited with kicking-off new programmes. Approximately one-third of the respondents said the CEO was responsible for implementing and managing existing programmes while a further 20% said programmes fell under the responsibility of the HR Director. Surprisingly, very few programmes, less than 5% respectively, fell under the purview of the R&D or Marketing Director. Only 6% of the programmes were managed by the Innovation Director. This may be because a designated position for an Innovation Director is a rarity.

Figure 3.1 Age of existing creative leadership programmes

Since the average programme is only three years old, many of the creative leadership programmes are relatively new within their organisations. The lack of time for a programme to evolve and be evaluated may account for the fact that nearly half of the respondents think that the programmes objectives are *not* communicated well throughout the organisation or are unsure if the objectives are being communicated.

Although the survey evidence points to a top-down approach to the management and implementation of creative leadership programmes, the actual training does seem to penetrate different levels of management. Just over half of the respondents reported that delegates for these programmes are drawn from across all areas of the workplace. While there is still room for improvement these statistics suggests that leadership training programmes are reaching a broad employee base within at least half of the organisations.

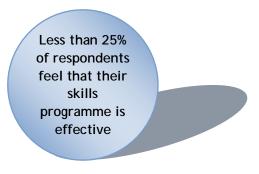Table 3.2 Creative leadership programmes in the workplace

Sample topics for a creative leadership training programme
1. perception, thinking and judgment
2. habits of excellence
3. kinesthetic and stress management
4. diversity as an asset
5. the hero's journey
6. emergent from groups

As well as primarily being designed in-house, a majority of the existing creative leadership programmes hold at least part of their training in-house. Retreat venues such as conference centres and hotels are also commonly used. Academic institutions are rarely used as training venues. One respondent from a Non-profit organisation reported their creative leadership training was held entirely on-line. The duration of programmes varies. They are commonly held once a month and rarely last for more than two days.

3.3 Creativity and innovation skills development in the workplace

Creativity and innovation *skills* development programmes appear to have achieved more acceptance within organisations than creative leadership programmes. Just over 49% of respondents reported their organisation *has hand* an existing skills training course compared to 81% without creative leadership programme. Senior and middle managers are disproportionately the recipients of these types of skills development programs. Less than a quarter of respondents felt

> Less than 25% of respondents feel that their skills programme is effective

their organisation's creativity and innovation skills programme were successful, and just over half were unsure whether they were successful or not.

Skills training programmes tend to differ from leadership programmes in that a majority of the training and workshops are held in off-site venues. This may impact the perceived effectiveness of the programmes if the skills developed in a retreat environment don't necessarily translate when brought back to the existing office culture. For instance, a retreat venue could create a "safe" environment which could encourage more open and creative exchanges, whereas hierarchies within the office could suppress creative impulses upon return from the retreat.

The difference between the permeation of creative leadership programmes and creativity and innovation skills development could explain differences in the perception of individual creativity vs. creativity at work. If the creative leadership workshops are generalist, managers may come away with a stronger sense of personal creativity but may not see the productive applications of this new-found creativity in the workplace. Targeting creativity skills training to the specific needs of the organisation, on the other hand, could help managers harness their creativity and use it to benefit the organisation.

3.4　Summary

Examining creative leadership and skills training in the workplace confirms our earlier theories. Australians recognize creativity and are able to apply it at an individual level in the workplace. However, lack of proper creative leadership programmes suggest senior management lacks the confidence, knowledge and understanding to empower managers to lead creatively. As a result, managers don't believe their individual creativity is being utilized effectively by their organization. These responses suggest there is a greater need for functional skills training tailored to the specific needs of the organisation. Additionally, creative leadership programmes fostering creativity and empowering employees would help enable managers to both apply their creativity at work and see it as a basic business function.

4 Improving creativity and innovation training ©

There clear deficits in creativity training programmes, particularly for creative skills training programs. These deficits are likely impacting the perceived successfulness of organisations in achieving creativity and innovation. The next section examines some of the topic areas management thinks would be beneficial in future training programs. It will use respondent preferences to build an idealised design for creative leadership and creative skills workshops.

4.1 What is important?

Survey respondents were asked to select what they considered to be the most important topics from a list of those which are often included in creativity and innovation training programmes. Respondents chose topics for both creative leadership programmes and creativity and innovation skills development programmes. Creative problem solving ranked number one on the list for both leadership programmes and skills development programs, while Strategic Thinking also ranked in the top five for both types of programmes.

Table 4.1 Name the most important creativity leadership and skills topic

Top Five Creative Leadership Topics	Top Five Creativity Skills Topics
Creative Problem Solving: 84%	Creative Problem Solving Methodology: 80%
Creative Thinking Skills Models: 81%	Brainstorming: 75%
Visionary Thinking: 72%	Communications Skills: 72%
Change Management Processes: 65%	Mind-Mapping: 69%
Strategic Thinking: 64%	Strategic Thinking: 69%

Survey respondents were also overwhelmingly in favour of creative leadership programmes, with 88% agreeing that creative leadership training should be a core part of any management leadership programme. The positive response to the "Visionary Thinking" topic reinforces the premise that many Australians look for "vision" as a defining attribute of a creative leader. The least selected topics, on the other hand, were Rational and Analytical Decision Making Processes (29%) and Diagnostic Thinking (30%). Additionally, when given the option to fill in an additional selection for leadership training, a number of respondents included new thinking topics like Web 2.0 social networking, complex adaptive systems, facilitation skills, understanding group dynamics and the natural capitalism model. This suggests that functional topics and holistic approaches are generally

Which topics do you think would be important in a creative leadership programme?

- *"Sustainability training based on the Natural Capitalism model"*

- *"Group dynamics issues which can impact change and innovation"*

> The workforce wants training that lets them harness their creativity and put it into action.

preferred to softer topics when it comes to leadership training.

One respondent pointed out that "Rational and analytical [foundations] need to be there to underpin creative momentum."

Also interesting to note is that Executive Coaching (or "Business Coaching") which has gained popularity in recent years was selected by less than half of the respondents as an important leadership training topic.

For creativity and innovation skills development programmes, many of the respondents were in favour of training in different creative problem solving techniques such as Mind-Mapping and Ideation. Receiving lower rankings were topics such as Negotiation Skills, Presentation Skills and New Product Development.

Topics that are limited in scope like 'negotiation skills', 'presentation skills' or that sounded too structured, like 'Analytical Decision Making Processes' were avoided as we would expect -managers resist limiting the scope of creativity. Nevertheless, these answers confirm our theories on what is missing. Managers understand creativity and think they are creative but want to know more about applying it to their roles in the workplace. Choosing training topics that are functional fills this void.

Edward de Bono - Innovation Guru

Throughout the survey, many respondents mentioned being exposed to Edward de Bono's work through training courses in creativity and innovation. De Bono, a physician, author, inventor and consultant pioneered the concept of lateral thinking in his 1967 book "The Use of Lateral Thinking" and is the founder of The World Centre for New Thinking in Malta. One of de Bono's concepts that many respondents experienced through various training programmes was "The Six Thinking Hats". The hats represent six different thinking strategies - emotional, positive, critical, factual, creative and process control. De Bono suggests that most people only use 1 or 2 of these strategies while successful innovation often requires the use of all strategies.

4.2   What is the ideal design?

The survey respondents were asked how much they would be willing to pay per participant for a program on creativity and/or innovation skills development depending on the length of the programme. Eighty percent of the respondents to this question expressed interest in a 1-day programme, followed by 69% for a two day program. Less than half of the respondents were interested in longer programs (3-days to one week), and only about a third of the respondents expressed any interest in paying for a training program that lasted two weeks or longer. Additionally only a little over a third would be willing to pay a standing fee for once-monthly or year-round training.
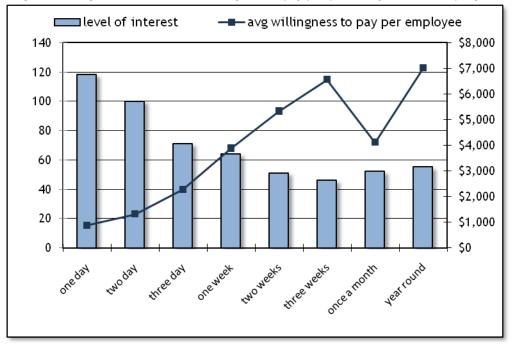
Figure 4.1 Degree of interest and willingness to pay per person by duration of programme

On average, most respondents were willing to pay from $500-$1000 per person, per day for innovation skills development programs. For standing programs, most respondents were willing to pay from $3,500-$5,000 per person for a once-monthly program and around $7,000 per person for yearly enrolment in a training program. The Not for Profit sector averaged the lowest willingness to pay for programs. However the government and universities willingness to pay was on par with the private sector. In the consulting industry average willingness to pay at about $1500 per person was higher than the total average which makes sense as people vice capital are the revenue generators in consulting firms and we would expect to see higher investment in people.

Respondents were also asked about the importance of various qualifications of the training provider in a training program for creativity and innovation. Over 95% of the respondents said that it was important that the training provider was an acknowledged subject expert. Local recognition as a subject expert was seen as more important than international recognition as 86% viewed local expertise as desirable but only 26% believed that it was important that the provider was recognised as an international expert. Additionally, only

3% of the respondents considered it important that the training provider had academic qualifications. However, 84% thought it was important that the provider was a designated facilitator or trainer suggesting that firms should either create an internal position for a training facilitator or that they should source this type of training to an outside consultant.

4.3   Summary

There is substantial industry-wide demand for creative leadership and skills training programmes within the Australian workforce. Although there is not an ideal design *per se*, the majority of the workforce would like to see programmes that are short-term and use local subject-matter experts who have experience conducting training events.

As predicted from earlier survey responses, many people would like to see more functional skills topics being incorporated into programme offerings. Ideally the presentation of these skills within a programme or workshop would be tailored to meet specific needs of the organisation.

The desire for empowerment which emerges early on in the survey suggests that creative leadership training should not only develop the leader's individual creativity but should also build the leader's ability to foster creativity in the workplace.

5 Conclusions and the way forward

5.1 Conclusions

Managers hold creativity and innovation in high regard. Almost the entire workforce considers themselves to be creative, to be creative leaders and to work creatively. However, managers are confused on how to apply creativity at work and there appears to be disconnects between the definitions of personal and professional creativity. While many believe that their organisation has the capability to innovate, they do not see enough promotion of creativity within their organisation. Those creative leadership programmes underway are well developed and well received, yet there is still uncertainty as to the actual success of these programmes. Creativity skills programmes appear to be underdeveloped and generally ineffective. The survey results suggest that existing programmes are helping managers tap into their creativity but doing a poor job of teaching employees how to turn that creativity into something beneficial for the firm. Managers recognize the difference between having an idea and putting it into action. They are ready to use their creativity to benefit the organisation; they may just need to be pushed in the right direction.

One theme that emerged throughout the survey was empowerment and this may go a long way towards shifting office culture and changing attitudes towards innovation and creativity in the workplace.

The main role for a creative leader in the workplace was not necessarily to *be* creative but to *foster* creativity. This goal can be achieved in two ways:

1) **Encouraging creative skills and leadership training through all levels of management in the organization.**
2) **Using creative leadership training to help managers build a culture which is open to creativity and innovation in the workplace.**

To improve creativity and innovation in the workforce, organisations should focus on areas with the largest deficits. Skills' training is one of these weak areas and there is substantial demand for programmes in this area. The programmes do not need to be lengthy or led by an internationally-recognized subject expert, but should be tailored to the individual needs of the organisation. The skills developed in the program should be able translate into the office environment. This may mean incorporating on-site training along with the sometimes more popular 'retreat' programs or it could also just mean training leaders to build a better office culture for creativity.

The skills programmes should teach skills that are useful and tailored to the work environment yet broad in their application, for example presentation skills are too limited to be seen as valuable but creative problem solving skills and strategic thinking are both applicable to the office yet broad enough to handle almost any situation.

5.2 Recommendations

Australia needs to act now if it wants to stay competitive in the future. Government, educational and industry leaders need to put renewed focus and increased resources towards developing a culture of creativity in the Australian workforce.

We recommend three areas to focus on – Education, Industry and Government.

5.2.1 Education

In order to build a workforce that is able to compete in today's fast-moving and rapidly globalising world it is important to start from the ground up. It is thus increasingly vital to bring creativity and innovation training into our entire education system. Universities should be looking at ways to incorporate creative skills training into their curriculum in order to better equip future leaders to compete internationally.

5.2.2 Industry

Hiring

Business leaders and company websites often proclaim how much they value "innovative and creative" applicants, yet their HR practices punish those with diverse backgrounds. The average job description will list creativity and innovation as a necessary requirement followed by x years industry experience in the very next bullet.

The ability to create new ideas, adapt to new environments, innovate and efficiently out perform peers is in direct correlation to the ability of an organisation to avoid 'group think'.

The diversity of the workforce enables organisations to embrace new ideas and break the 'group think' trap - specifically academic and professional diversity which have been proven to be more effective than cultural diversity.

Thus truly successful creative organisations embrace cognitive diversity.

Australian business leaders need to empower their organisations to be less risk averse when welcoming employees with varied backgrounds and teach the ethos that *it is easier to teach an intelligent and creative employee your industry than an experienced employee to be creative and intelligent.*

Training

Business leaders cannot rely on hiring creative managers to drive their business. A creative and innovative organisation must be continually encouraged and recharged. Continual training programmes that evolve with the needs of the business and employees, as well as creative leadership that focuses on empowerment will stress to managers how valuable these skills are, creating a flywheel effect, building innovation and creativity into the very fabric of the organisation.

5.2.3 Government

Finally, the Australian government needs to continue to look towards the future of the Australian workforce in terms of competitiveness through innovation. By developing existing talent through creative leadership and skills training we can create a generation of managers as innovators who can capitalize on R&D investment by taking creative ideas from the initial concept through to implementation.

We recommend that a focus group be established to review the results of this survey and to find ways in which the government can most efficiently dedicate its resources to improving creative leadership and skills in the workplace.