

# Creativity – does this involve thinking?

for Managers of Projects (and their teams)

by

**Tom Taylor**

principal of dashdot  
founder of Buro Four  
vice-president of APM

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# Project Features







## “Problems” needing Creativity



- real live problems – that are part of the project.
- problems that arise during the project.
- problems with people on or around the project.
- problems which managers set themselves
  - by thinking ahead
  - or just thinking

# The P.M. Fees and Resources

- Some for administration, bureaucracy, route
  - “costing” as an on-cost, overhead
- Some for creativity, thinking, leadership
  - “saving” by creating better project value, lower costs, fewer extra costs.

## Some Problems – for this exercise



1. Traffic is getting quite congested in your town especially on market days.  
Some people think it is a **problem** and will get worse.
2. It looks like the electricity to your offices will be cut off next Thursday and Friday.  
Some people are alarmed and are in **crisis** with this situation.
3. The wheels on the new chairs in the I.T. room are still falling off when they are picked up.  
Some staff who have been injured think it is a **defect** that needs fixing permanently.

## Some Techniques

- Some techniques for managers of projects to consider while they are waiting for the solution to come along or the problem to just go away.
- 0 plus 1 to 18



- add it to “To Do” list ✓
- ignore it / forget it ✓
- register it and report it ✓
- reject it ✓
- blame someone else ✓
- assume others will resolve ✓
- go on holiday ✓

# Write Down the Problem

- as the question that needs an answer
- as the problem that needs a solution
- as a crisis that needs resolution

Now change the words until it looks better

And again

And again



- ask 5 different people for their responses
- write down and analyse their replies
- think about their answers
- pick one or none
- OR refine the definition of the problem / question



- add to an existing meeting, forum or group
- OR devise a new one
- brainstorm the options available
- ask for recommendations
- facilitate – don't lead



- write down five sensible solutions which are probably predictable, safe and dull.
- write down five silly solutions which are probably off-the-wall, out-of-left-field and a bit silly.
- eliminate those which are inappropriate



- find out who asked the question or raised the problem
- ask them to state it and explain it
- write it down
- and agree it with them

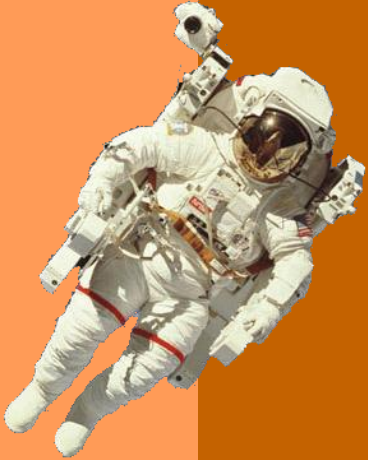


- find out who is interested in the answer or solution
- find out why they are interested
- and how they are to be told, where and when



- ask if this problem or similar has occurred previously – on this project or elsewhere
- what was the solution last time?
- where did the solution come from?
- was it correct?





- identify if this topic is likely to arise again
- establish the pattern
- resolve to suit the pattern



- how long is the duration?
- halve it and double it
- provide the solution early! – a lot, or a little
- then see what happens



- write down the final problem and the current solution
- (1) expand to provide the fullest, longest problem definition and the most extensive response with supporting material
- (2) now write down the most succinct problem with the shortest solution explanation
- or do the second one first



- offer a recommendation
- offer a choice of three or four
- include sensible and silly



- don't take the sticky stick
- find someone more suitable / available
- provide them with a clear problem / good question and explanations (Ws)

- recognise the creative people
- and for which type of challenges, difficulties, problems, issues
- ask them / follow them / learn from them



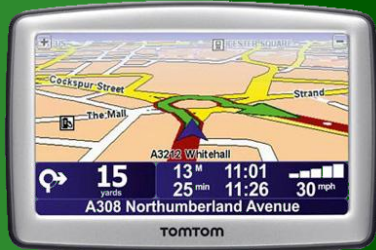
- when and where do you think best and most creatively
- night / day, pressured / unpressured, travelling / stationary, with others / alone, logged on / spaced out
- replicate circumstances, expect change
- be a thinking person – surprise them – say “I’m thinking.”



- maintain a time line of experience
- keep records
- look to your record and contacts for inspiration



- find a mentor, guru, advisor
- keep in contact
- involve them in problems, challenges, difficulties
- don't waste their time
- be a mentor



- what is the most appropriate route or process to get to the solution
- define the route
- set off on the route
- find the solution

= Voyage of discovery

- recognition of “creativity”
- nurturing of “creativity”
- time and space for “creativity”
- recognition of “creativity”
- celebration of “creativity”
- reward for “creativity”?

## Some Definitions in this Context

### **Creativity:**

inventiveness, imagination, innovation, originality, individuality, artistry, expressiveness, inspiration, vision, creative power, creative talent, ingenuity, enterprise, cleverness, smartness, quick-wittedness, wit.

### **Thinking:**

reasoning, ideas, theory, thoughts, line of thought

# Conclusions

- There is a range of techniques
- Most are to avoid being “Creative”
- Or to provide space to delay having to “**Think**”
- Or to “**Think**” sparingly
- But “**Thinking**” might NOT be the answer to being “creative” in the management of projects and teams
- It might be more about “**Wisdom**” .... now that is a different approach again! Which would need thinking about.

Best wishes  
Good Luck  
Tom Taylor



41 Sherard Court  
3 Manor Gardens  
London N7 6FA

Tel: 07831 675484  
[www.dashdot.co.uk](http://www.dashdot.co.uk)

[www.tomtaylor.info](http://www.tomtaylor.info)



300 St. John Street  
London  
EC1V 4PP

Tel: 020 7833 8663  
Fax: 020 7833 8560  
[www.burofour.co.uk](http://www.burofour.co.uk)



Ibis House  
Regent Park  
Summerleys Road  
Princes Risborough  
Buckinghamshire  
HP27 9LE

Tel: 0845 458 1944  
Fax: 0845 458 8807  
[www.apm.org.uk](http://www.apm.org.uk)