CREATIVITY IN VET

Lene Tanggaard, Ph.D, Professor, Department for Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University
“Imagination is central not only to the human mind in general, but also to science and research endeavours specifically, as it enables researchers to imagine what is not yet there. In this sense, imagination carries an innovative potential and plays a key role in making new insights available to the human mind.”

From Tanggaard & Brinkmann, 2018
Why do we need creativity and innovation?

- Newsweek, juli 2010 "The creativity crisis": 1,500 CEOs: "Creativity as the No. 1 “Leadership competency” of the future”.

- Creative thinking promotes metacognitive capacity, inter- and intra-psychic abilities, problem-solving and writing (Beghetto, 2010; Plucker et al., 2004; Smith & Smith, 2010; Torrance, 1959; National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE), 1999).

- A correlation between personal growth, academic and job success (Long & Plucker, 2014).
Learning that leads to creativity entails actual work. Creativity builds on the ability to see clearer and to (re)discover what we know but seem to have forgotten (Vera John-Steiner, 1997, p. 52)

"Creativity is no longer a luxury for the few but a necessity for all". Csikszentmihalyi
Creativity – a result of learning

If you think creativity is all about yellow Post-It’s, brainstorms and creative thinking you are lost in the woods. Creativity is more about mastery, craft and recycling. It’s a lot more ‘business as usual’ than you might think.
What do we need?

• Synteses (combination of opportunities)
• Analytical sense (what and why is this good?)
• Practical intelligence (ideas don’t sell themselves: SELL THEM!)
From creative potential to creative action

- "The poet, sculptor or architect works with his/her entire body, not primarily through intellect, theory or acquired professional qualifications. In fact a lot of what we have learned must be un-learned to be useful”
- Juhani Pallasmaa
Well, creativity for me has a lot to do with trying to fit what we’re working on into daily life as lived every day by the customers we’re making it for, so creativity has to be used to almost rethink the value that appears out there where the customers are. Where the space for it hasn’t really been created yet. Of course we believe that it’s there, and that we can create it, and we can redefine how people do certain things, but it needs a certain openness, and perhaps that’s a good word, too. An openness towards how these systems are.
A model of creative learning in VET

- Experiments and ‘fooling around’
- Resistance
- Immersion
IP: Well, you know, it’s... I think my own creativity is maybe based mostly around problem solving of one sort or another. It’s about finding one solution or another to a problem, whether it’s this one or that one... whether it’s the design of a widget or... It think, typically, at least when I’m trying to be creative, it’s about bringing your whole background to bear. Whether it’s something that fits right in with the sector you’re working in, or whether it’s something completely unconnected. It’s really about making some associations back to something you might be able to use.
We have placed too much focus on individual talent, the 'recluse' and the exceptional rather than on working communities, the development of all employees' potential and the inventiveness of everyday work. This does not mean that we should not celebrate the achievements of individuals. We should however develop a clearer understanding of how those achievements come about.
Future needs

If the image of the light bulb moment was the universal symbol of creativity under the old framework, then craftsmanship is the appropriate banner for the type of training methods, the educational ideal and the creativity practices and innovation that the companies and organisations of the future need.
We need intelligent actions and organisations that understand what really makes people more creative. New ideas are not the product of a vacuum, but emerge gradually and cumulatively. For this reason we must also settle the account that is forever pitting creativity against innovation, the generation of ideas against implementation, body against consciousness.
Teaching creativity

- Vocational education must respond to the new challenges relating to creativity and innovation by daring to highlight the importance of expertise in a field and mastery.

- Creativity must not be thought of as a detached 'meta-competence' but as something that develops when a practitioner immerses him- or herself in, experiments with and encounters resistance from the material being worked with.

- Creativity is not new. It inheres in all of us, and needs only to be discovered and cultivated.
‘Instant’ creativity

- "a result of a peculiarly American trust in gadgets and the injection of energy to speed things up"
Thanks!
lenet@hum.aau.dk