

Issue 4: Creativity in Japan

Hi Dr Kenichi Yumino,

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Creativity in Japan

We are delighted to showcase a series of articles by our esteemed Japanese colleagues which provide a valuable insight into creativity development in Japan, guest edited by Emeritus Professor Dr Kenichi Yumino. This includes a fascinating account of creativity at the Sony Corporation, how to rapidly generate a wealth of creative ideas, the role played by serendipity in creativity, and actions currently being taken to augment creative production in the Japanese workplace, higher education and in Japanese schools. Complementing this series, is an article on the popular Japanese KJ Ho (method) of creative problem solving by Professor Dr Toshio Nomura and we thank him and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation (GBSF) for their support.



Guest Editor - Dr Kenichi Yumino

Dr Kenichi Yumino is an Emeritus Professor at Shizuoka University, Japan and the former President of the Japan Creativity Society. In high-school and college, he studied Electricity & Computer Science and proceeded to a doctoral course of Educational Psychology at Kyusyu University. His current interests are creative problem solving, how to foster pupils' creativity in school, creativity training for



Human-centric innovation - lessons from Sony

This article provides a fascinating insight into the significant role played by creativity development in the success of Sony. The authors' account of the 'Ibuka Way', developed by Masaru Ibuka, the founder of Sony, provides valuable learning for all managers who are wondering how to embed creativity in their organisations. The article goes on to describe his contribution

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the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation (GBSF) for supporting this special series of articles. You may also be interested in a related article by artist, Alexander Devereux, whose recent visit to Japan is inspiring his work. Our links with Japanese creativity experts began in 2000 when I was commissioned by a government body to review creativity development programmes internationally, with a special emphasis on certain countries including Japan. This led me to our guest editor, Professor Kenichi Yumino. Since then our links have been strengthened through our collaborations and research visits between our two countries which are continuing today. It has been a most valuable experience for us to learn about Japanese creativity development and to experience this at first hand.

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now to roster pupils' creativity in school, creativity training for pre-service teachers, and the use of praise words for encouraging creative attitudes and behaviours. Of his own publications, the one that he most values is 'Creativity Education in the World', published in 2005, which includes creativity education in the United States, Canada, the UK, Germany, Finland, China, Taiwan and Japan.

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Generating Creative Ideas

Do you find it difficult to generate creative ideas? If so, this article is for you. In this paper Dr Takeo Higuchi, who established the Idea Marathon System (IMS) describes how you can use this process to significantly increase the number of ideas you can generate. According to Professor Sidney Parnes, quantity breeds quality – in

Enabling More Effective Creativity Development

As these authors point out, creativity development is not new in Japan but it is being increasingly regarded as essential in education and training. Yet there appears to be a problem in that many people still find it difficult to exercise their creativity in practice. The authors suggest that the problem may lie in the lack of a creative mindset and they test this proposition with a series of sample groups – high school students, researchers working for a manufacturing company and members of the general public. The results are very interesting and point the way to future actions which need to be taken.

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Is Creativity Transferable?

This issue has long been the focus of debate in educational circles. In this paper Professor Yumino addresses this issue with particular reference to Japanese education today. He illustrates his argument with a series of lesson plan examples.

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Fostering Individuality and Praise in Japan

This article highlights the importance of ensuring that any interventions aimed at increasing creativity are appropriate to the culture concerned. It focuses on one aspect of motivation, namely praise, which Professor Yumino regards as essential for

other words the more creative ideas you generate the more likely it is that your list will include some valuable ones. The rest of this article is devoted to examining whether or not training in IMS (which is gaining in popularity in Japanese universities and elsewhere) increases participants' capacity to be creative. Dr Higuchi employs the Torrance Tests of Creativity (TTCTs) to assess this.

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KJ-Ho - a Japanese



On the Use of the Serendipitous Phenomena

Does chance favour the mind prepared for the unexpected? And might this lead to more creative solutions? The aim of this article is to investigate the mechanism of serendipitous discoveries and to develop a training method to use it. H. Walpole coined the term 'serendipity' and indicated that the two factors of accidents and sagacity are essential in discoveries. R. K. Merton pointed out the importance of serendipity for the progress of

promoting individuality and creativity amongst Japanese children and young people, as well as raising their levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy. As he points out, Japan is a group-oriented society and it was only after the Second World War that the concept of individuality emerged. So it is hardly surprising that not everyone has an extensive repertoire of praising words they can use with children and young people. To address this issue, he reports on work in which the idea-generation technique, Brain Writing, is used to increase different groups' repertoires of praise words.

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KJ-Ho - a Japanese problem-solving approach

The KJ Ho (Method) is a creative thinking and problem solving methodology, which was originally invented by Japanese cultural anthropologist, Professor Jiro Kawakita (1920-2009). It has gone through over half a century's development and refinement as a result of applications to many kinds of complex and unique problems in Japan. This article is an up-to-date presentation of the current state of the KJ Ho by those who have contributed to its recent developments and improvements.

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