CREATE

MAIJA FAST

CRACK THE CAST –
BECOME THE CREATIVE LEADER
YOU WANT TO BE

Workbook

Dear Creative You,

I crafted this CREATE workbook for you to guide you on your journey towards becoming a creative leader. You may have read my book, CREATE Crack the Cast – Become the Creative Leader You Want to Be, or at least parts of it. I wrote the book to give creativity and creative people the value they deserve in business life. I am glad you are on this journey with me.

What's the story of your life that you want to create? The CREATE book, accompanied by this workbook, will be your guide to utilising your unique approach to creativity.

You can become an inspiring leader in all areas of your life: work, family, friendships and community. Creativity helps you navigate uncertainty and embrace opportunities. The brave leader of today is compassionate, vulnerable and inclusive.

Together we can change the leadership and give creativity the respect it earns. Thank you for letting me guide you on your journey. I am grateful to share this path with you.

- Maija

Fast Creative

THE CREATE WORKBOOK

This workbook collects together the tasks that I have created for you to move forward on your path towards becoming a full-blooded creative leader. This version also includes some additional elements that are not available in the CREATE book. In the CREATE book, you find stories and examples related to the tasks that deepen the journey forward.

C-R-E-A-T-E consists of six elements: Curiosity, Respect, Ease, Attitude, Take Opportunities and Enable. The first four steps are internal steps, while steps five to six are external steps. I am breaking down each of these stage sets into seven elements. You will find all these sub-segments in this workbook too. These steps are, however, not necessarily chronological but the needs differ from person to person. To gain a deeper understanding of the process, you should read my book.

This workbook focuses on tasks that you can do to become aware of your strengths and your kind of creativity. Please do not copy or sell any of the content. The CREATE® framework is design registered and Fast Creative has the copyright of all the content.

The following picture shows the core of the CREATE® framework. Doing these exercises on your own will support you to move forward on your journey. You can find out how to work with me further at https://www.fastcreative.ninja. Good luck on your path.

THE CREATE® FRAMEWORK

Picture 1. The Create® Framework

CURIOSITY

Curiosity
Respect
Ease
Attitude
Take opportunities
Enable

I am breaking down Curiosity to the areas:

A. **Wonder – be in awe**

B. **Belief in wonders – anything is possible**

C. **Wander – go to places, don't plan everything**

D. **Imagination**

E. **Creative mindset**

F. **Be agile – test – redirect – find the way – repeat**

G. **Creative energy.**

HOW TO BE CURIOUS

Curiosity is the base for creativity. Curiosity starts with wonder, belief in the wonders around us and the need for wandering. Open up your eyes and see the world anew. Let your shoes take you into new places and see your most familiar surroundings and those closest around you with new eyes. It requires some playfulness, but if the thought of playfulness feels uncomfortable to you, just think of it as observing your surroundings with a scientific mind – be endlessly curious.

Each chapter has a trust your intuition question. You may not be able to answer them right away. It might require deeper exploring and doing other tasks before it. Also reading the CREATE book helps you to open up your creative mind and answer them.

Trust your intuition question

Curiosity: What are the creative things in my life that I do not see?

Gift yourself

When you find new things in your surroundings, you start having ideas. To remember your insights and build on them further, it is important to write or draw notes.

It is important to have a tool that you are going to use and is ready at hand. For example, get yourself a notebook that looks and feels good in your hand and a pen that feels good to write with. The key is to have something that you will actually use and that gives you pleasure. This notebook will accompany you on your journey towards creative leadership.

Task 1.0 What kind of notebook will serve my purposes and look and feel good to have with me on my journey?

When you have your notebook in use, you can use it in many ways. You can have it as a journal on your journey towards leading the creativity of yourself and others. Open your mind and curiosity and imagine what kind of leader you will become. You can also use this workbook as a tool on your journey.

Task 1.1 Letter to self: Write a letter to yourself to be read a year from now.

1.1.1 Where will I be, physically and mentally, on my path towards becoming a creative leader?

1.1.2 How will I feel?

1.1.3 What will people think of me?

1.1.4 How will I thank myself for taking myself this far?

Remember to thank yourself for having taken yourself so far internally and externally. The length of the path might not be measured in the kilometres you travelled but rather in the impact you made upon your own life, with your family and friends, community and work. You may as well have travelled or moved far from where you are now. The primary target is to make the internal change that will make you a creative leader.

Trust yourself

You will know what is good for you. You will feel what is right and you will get more tools for that when we go further on into this workbook and the CREATE book.

Task 1.2 Be agile in your way of working.

Be ready to try things without planning them too much. If you test out ideas and you find that they don't take you in the right direction, re-direct, adjust and move on. You may need to repeat the process. It is not a bad thing. In today's flux world, where everything is insecure and you need to adjust to changes repeatedly, it is important to be able to be comfortable with ambiguity. If you like change you are more likely to succeed and thrive in today's world.

1.2.1 What project or task could I start in an agile way without planning it all through before kick-starting, instead learning and redirecting on the journey?

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

As a creative leader, you need creative energy. I will now describe to you an exercise where you can define where you are on your path towards becoming a creative leader. The point of this exercise is to help you to see where you stand now and where you want to get to.

Task 1.3 Be curious about yourself: who am I?

1.3.1 My strengths as a creative leader (write a list of your strengths, as many as come spontaneously to your mind)

1.3.2 Where do I come from? (my home of origin, what I studied, where I lived, what I like...)

1.3.3 Where am I now? (How do you see your development phase as a creative leader?)

1.3.4 Write yourself a metaphor:

This describes what kind of creative leader you want to be in the future.

As a creative leader, I am like… (example: a particle accelerator, a unicorn, a rhino, a pool table, a tower block, the sea, the sun, a rainbow, the Statue of Liberty…). Do you notice how the different choices give a different vibe to the image of what kind of leader you are?

1.3.5 Be curious about the future. Where am I going? (What would be the dream target for you?)

1.3.6 Be curious and aware of your needs. What do I want? What do I want to be, have, feel? Remember the different senses.

My CREATE Workbook...

CURIOSITY Notes...

Gift Myself...

Trust Myself...

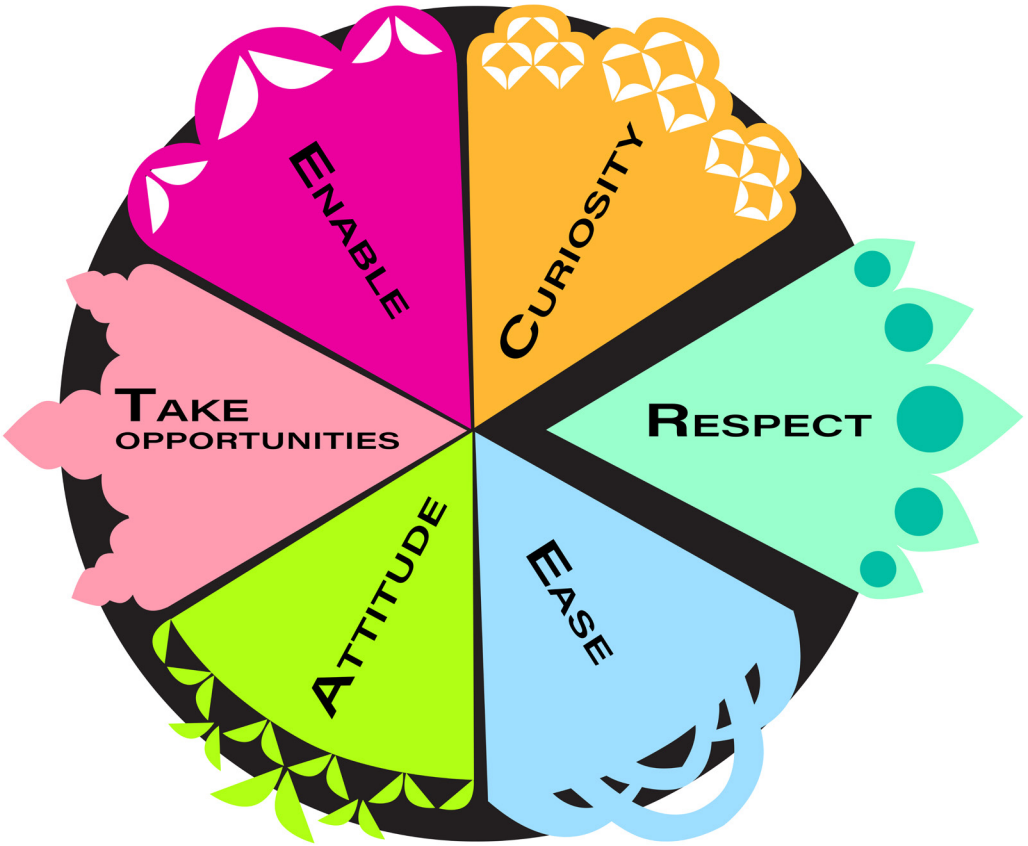
Challenge Myself...

Colour in the hearts and diamonds, 1-5

How do I feel after these exercises?

Where do I stand as a creative leader?

RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS (WILL TOO)



I am breaking down Respect Yourself and Others (Will Too) into:

A. **Be genuine and transparent**

B. **Value self-knowledge and self-development**

C. **See your gifts – what is easy for you is not easy for others**

D. **Value yourself**

E. **Maintain your humble pride**

F. **Respect different skills and people**

G. **Together we are more.**

HOW TO RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS (WILL TOO)

How do you learn to respect yourself and others? It starts with being genuinely you. Getting there requires a whole lot of self-exploration, self-development, self-knowledge and self-leadership. Even if you are already far on your self-awareness journey, you can always learn more. Being aware of how you are perceived by others helps you to navigate your journey. However, acceptance is a huge help.

Trust your intuition question

Respect yourself: What is easy for me that is not easy for others?

Gift yourself

Accept yourself. Accepting yourself doesn't mean that you can act however you want. The better you know yourself the deeper understanding you have of your developmental needs. Leaders tend to be their own worst critics. We demand a lot from ourselves and feel that we could always do better, do more, and do it more efficiently.

How you feel about yourself shines through to people, either as insecurity or positive self-esteem. Everyone who has tried to accept themselves with their flaws knows that it is easier said than done. But try to see yourself with the eyes of someone who loves you. If you feel good in your skin, it will radiate out as someone who knows what they are doing. As a real professional, you will give a good impression in different situations when you can accept who you are and work with those cards you were dealt. You can sell your ideas better, you will convince people around you, and you will end up feeling happier too.

The best gift you can give yourself is self-acceptance. That will make you a better leader too.

Task 2.0 **What do I like about myself? What am I satisfied with? Write or draw in your notebook.**

Trust yourself

Imposter syndrome is very common among leaders. You feel that you are not enough and fear that someone will catch you out for not knowing it all and not being on top of it all. You may feel that you might not even be suited to being a leader. The bigger the role, the bigger the imposter syndrome can feel.

It takes a lot of energy to try to look like you have it all under control all the time, because you don't. No one does. When you realise that no one has it all under control and dare to be genuinely you, expressing also your development areas, you can finally be proud of yourself. That is the humble pride you carry in you. It is humble because pride involves also the thought that you need to evolve further every day and that you couldn't do it all without accepting help from others.

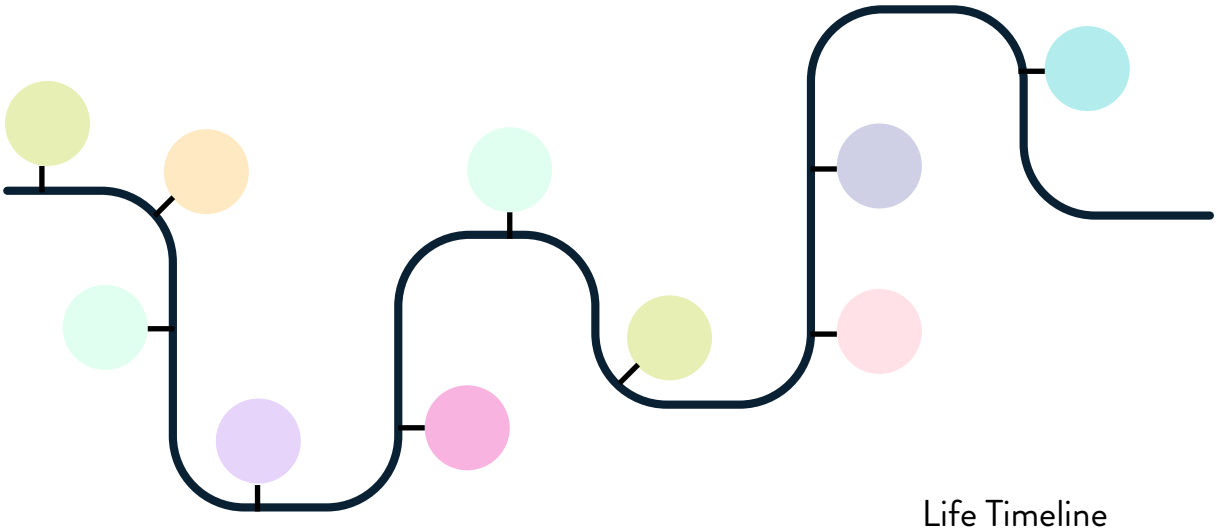
Task 2.1 **Draw your life timeline for you from your birth until today.**

2.1.1 What are my “normal” key points, such as birth, the start of school and jobs? Highlight them on the timeline

2.1.2 What are the highlights of my life? Highlight them on the timeline with another colour. They can be anything from learning to ride a bike to getting into art school, getting your first leadership role or becoming a parent.

2.1.3 **Look at your life timeline from a creative perspective. Ask yourself: what creative things have I done so far during my life? What could be seen as creative that I maybe did not even consider to be creative before?**

Did you organise a big seminar? Do you make handmade Easter decorations each year with your children? Do you love cooking? Are you great at organising parties? Did you manage to push through a complex project at work which required collaboration with different parties and communication with the employees? Are you great at envisaging strategic changes in your business? Start to see the creativity in you. It is in there. You may not have realised how creative you actually are. The timeline below displays one way of drawing your timeline. Use different colours to highlight different kinds of highlights. Use your imagination. Make it look and feel like yours.



Life Timeline

Challenge yourself

Explore who you are. Get a deeper understanding of yourself and also of how you are perceived by others. You may have done different personality tests, like MBIT, Disc, Enneagram or Big Five, and all of these tools help you to understand yourself better through self-evaluation. With 360-degree tools, you also get a view of how you are perceived by your colleagues. If you want to explore further, you can have a personality test done for you.

You can explore your personality on your own and in collaboration with other people by becoming aware of your behaviour. What we think when we express ourselves isn't ever received 100 per cent as we intended to share it. Instead, it is perceived and understood through the knowledge, experience and personality of the person hearing us. Communication is hard, and organisations usually do not have enough or good enough communication.

Task 2.2 What do I look like in my colleagues' eyes? How am I perceived?

2.2.1 How can I practise my communication skills to build respect?

Task 2.3 Active listening:

By practising active listening, you can try to really hear what the other person is actually saying. Not only trying to listen but listening to hear. You can practise with your team or with your friends so that you take turns.

2.3.1 First, the other one talks for a minute about an agreed subject and you do not say a word. You only listen. A minute feels surprisingly long when you cannot say anything in between. How well did I manage to only listen? Did I have the urge to solve the problem? Did I forget that I was supposed to only listen? Was I good at listening and how did the listening feel?

2.3.2 After you have listened for a minute, you rephrase with your own words what the person has told you and then you change roles. Did I manage to hear what the other person was saying? Did I give an accurate summary of what they were telling me?

2.3.3 How am I as a listener naturally?

2.3.4 What do I need to focus on to become a more active listener?

Task 2.4 Empathetic listening:

Another listening task for you is to practise empathetic listening. You listen to the other person so that you try to understand them through their perspective.

To do that you need to have:
the WILL to

a. listen to understand
b. respect the other person, and
c. give them space.

the SKILL to

a. reflect feelings and words
b. give supportive answers, and
c. not give advice.

Most leaders like to give advice and ready answers. It is surprisingly difficult to just mirror what the other person is saying and give supportive answers without giving advice. Mirroring means repeating what the other person is saying. It feels funny if you are not used to it, but you would be surprised how effective it is in making the speaker feel heard and also getting your own insights about what they are saying themselves.

Active and empathetic listening is also a feature of coaching leadership. A coach doesn't give the answers but helps the coachee to get the insights themselves. It's known to be much more impactful than giving direct answers and suggestions. Coaching leadership is not a pure form of coaching and can be a mixture of mentoring, coaching and managing. Having the coaching mindset supports respectful communication and develops both people and teams.

2.4.1 Practice with a colleague or team member to listen to each other. Practise only giving supportive answers and mirroring what they are saying. Did I manage to not give advice? Did my colleague feel supported after the conversation?

2.4.2 Turn around the roles and let your colleague practise supporting you without giving advice or trying to solve your problem for you. Did they do well? How did I feel after the exercise?

2.4.3 What do I need to focus on to become a better empathetic listener?

When you have explored yourself and tried to see yourself from other people's perspectives, and also practised listening to people from their perspective, you are a long way along the path towards respecting yourself and others.

Task 2.5 Time and space

Give yourself time and space.

2.5.1 What kind of space helps me think and be creative?

If you do not know yet, this is important to explore. If you feel stuck or in a bad mindset for getting the things done that you have set as a target for yourself, take a break. Even a small (sometimes only a couple of minutes long) break can give you the time you need to get back on track and do your thing not only much more efficiently but also more creatively.

2.5.2 **In a moment of feeling stuck, move to another room or make a cup of tea for yourself. How do you feel after changing space or taking a break?**

Giving yourself time and space is at the core of respecting yourself.

2.5.3 **Write or draw your thoughts on a notepad instead of writing on the computer. Did I notice any difference in thinking when I didn't do it as I would normally do it? Did I get insights or think more deeply if I was drawing on paper instead of focusing on emails and to-do lists at my computer?**

Respecting yourself also includes respecting your own energy. As a leader, parent or colleague, it is important to take care of your own energy to be able to give energy to others. Basic things, like sleep, food and exercise, are needed, but it doesn't always require a long run or something very physical to move on with your tasks. Micro-breaks during the day are as important as bigger breaks. You can't only live for your holidays and hope that you will recover then. You need to find ways to recover in everyday life. You have to find a way to retain and reinforce your energy.

Mastering the second step, Respect, you will notice yourself truly respecting different personalities and skills and understanding that you are much more together with people who have complementary gifts. Once you are confident and respect yourself you will notice that your surroundings do that too. You do not need to agree about everything but being calm and confident builds respect for you. Respecting yourself includes also respecting your time and finding ways to work that work for you.

My CREATE Workbook...

RESPECT Notes...

Gift Myself...

Trust Myself...

Challenge Myself...

Colour in the hearts and diamonds, 1-5

How do I feel after these exercises?

Where do I stand as a creative leader?

EASE AND EFFORTLESSNESS

I am breaking down Ease and Effortlessness into:

A. **Know your strengths – strive towards effortlessness**

B. **Mindfulness – listen to your body**

C. **Trust your intuition (gut) – if it feels light = right; if it feels heavy = wrong**[1]

D. **Just do it – if you fear mistakes, a lot of brilliant things get undone**

E. **Do things that you burn for – love what you do and do what you love**

F. **Live in the now for the future**

G. **Happiness – joy – freedom.**

HOW TO CARRY OUT THINGS WITH EASE AND EFFORTLESSNESS

To be able to go with the flow and do things with ease and effortlessly you need to know your strengths and listen to your inner voice. In the previous CREATE step, you learned to respect yourself through self-knowledge and self-value. This step, Ease, guides you into doing things effortlessly. Remember that what is easy for you is not easy for everyone. Effortlessness and doing things precisely, thoroughly and mastering something to perfection are not mutually exclusive. Mostly, the things that you want to master feel right and light for you and you want to work on it further. The point is that you should try to find where your flow lies. Find out what feels effortless for you.

With the following tools, you can become aware of what feels light for you.

Trust your intuition question

Ease and effortlessness: what's the gift I have to give the world
which is so light and easy for me that I do not recognise its value?

Gift yourself

Praise yourself for what is effortless for you. Remember that what you do with ease is not easy for everyone. As leaders, we tend to be very critical of ourselves. Gift yourself when you notice that you have done something lightly, quickly and with joy and the result is brilliant. What you just did with ease might be something that someone else feels is impossible to do. I am encouraging you to find where your spots of effortlessness are.

1 Dr Heer: Being you. Changing the World.

Task 3.0 What have I done lately that was easy and light for me? What have I done that was very successful and gave me plenty of joy and excitement?

3.0.1 How can I gift myself today?

3.0.2 How will I gift myself within the next three months?

Trust yourself

[2]"What feels light for you is right for you. What feels heavy for you is wrong for you."

I am adding: what feels effortless for you is your core.

Task 3.1 Listen to the signs from your body and trust your gut.

We tend to analyse and try to rationalise, but your body is smarter than you know. Have you sometimes had a very uneasy feeling in your stomach when you were in a meeting? Have you felt an awkward atmosphere when you were in a room where there was fighting or disrespectful behaviour? If you noticed the awkward energy probably everyone else did too, but we can practise our senses and be more aware of the nuances. Some people are better at noticing different energies and also better at trusting their feelings. You can be one of them.

3.1.1 When did I notice awkward energy in the room?

2 Dr Heer: Being you. Changing the world.

3.1.2 Did I do something about the situation? Should I have reacted or acted upon the situation?

Task 3.2 Mindfulness is a very powerful tool for life in general, as well as occupational and business life.

There are a lot of apps and simple tools available. I have used Calm and Headspace. You can use them both for peace of mind and better sleep. Sleep also influences how you feel about things. You can look for help from apps, courses or tools, but you can also just start to be aware of what is going on around you.

3.2.1 Do I feel that I could benefit from a mindfulness app or course? Which tool will I potentially look into?

One simple tool to use in everyday situations is using the word "Interesting"… to give your brain a pause.

Your brain takes you to the fight or flight mode at work when someone accuses you, misunderstands what you said or interprets you in a way you didn't intend. Fights or disagreements at work can be exhausting. We also have very different ways of reacting to things

Changing the way of thinking to "interesting, why did he react like that instead of taking it personally?" takes us further. The message is never going through to the receiver the way the sender thought it would or should. Everyone is reading things from the perspective of their own experiences and understanding.

3.2.2 What moments do I remember from my life when I would have benefitted from pause – breathe – interesting...?

3.2.3 How will I start practising it (e.g. at work, with my children, with my parents)?

Task 3.3 [3]Byron Katie has a very powerful tool in her book Loving What Is where she tries to help people to overcome their assumptions and challenges with a few questions. She tells people to ask themselves: "Is this really true? How would I feel if it wasn't true?"

Very often we assume things that make us feel bad and it might have been an assumption in the first place. It sets you free to understand that a lot of what you think is really only made up of assumptions.

3 Byron Katie: Loving What Is.

3.3.1 **Ask yourself in a situation where you assume e.g. that someone is against you or has been talking rudely or disrespectfully about you at work: Is this really true? How would I feel if it wasn't true?**

With these small tips and tricks, you can do things with ease. You are no longer burdened by assumptions and heavy burdens. It is of course easier said than done. We are human beings after all, and our thinking patterns are deeply rooted. But, if you become aware of your thinking patterns and ways of working, then you can listen to and trust your gut more often. That helps you to move towards things that make you thrive. It is a process and therefore you need to challenge yourself.

Challenge yourself

We all know that it takes time to transform, but baby steps can be taken every day. We have explored above some practices that can set us free to do what we love. The next step is to dare to do what we love.

Ikigai is a Japanese concept that means "a reason for being". Ikigai connects a) what you are good at, b) what you love, c) what the world needs, and d) what you can be paid for. In the sweet spot where all of these meet is Ikigai. It is a target that you can strive towards

but isn't always reality. Finding your Ikigai is one way of finding your spots of Ease. Ikigai is explained more deeply in the CREATE book.

Picture 2. Ikigai

Task 3.4 **What am I good at? What do I love? What does the world need that I can also get paid for? There I will find my ease-spot, my Ikigai. What is that for me?**

Careers do not look nowadays like work once did, from eight till four and then home and stepping vertically on the career ladder year by year. For some people it does, but what brings joy to you?

You can be the change in your life, surroundings and organisation. You can create your kind of career, a creative CREATE career.

3.4.1 What brings me joy?

3.4.2 What does my CREATE career look like?

If you fear mistakes, a lot of brilliant opportunities will be missed. Psychological safety helps a great deal with empowering you to do things that you fear. Bravery doesn't mean that you don't have fear, but instead that you do things even if it feels scary. And if you wouldn't feel any butterflies in your stomach, it wouldn't be a big enough challenge for you anyway. Dance with your fear.

By modelling brave and open-minded behaviour, your team and collaboration partners start to dare more too.

Picture 3. The Circle of Influence

Task 3.5 Draw your circle of influence in your notebook.

3.5.1 What can I influence in my personal life? What can I influence partly? And what elements can I not influence?

3.5.2 What can I influence in my work/career/organisation? What can I influence partly? What are the elements that I cannot influence?

Focus on what you can influence. If you use energy in things you cannot influence, it feels like dragging a sledge of stones behind you and you will feel frustrated when you cannot improve things. When you focus on what is within your sphere of influence, you can build up more energy to take things forward.

With these tools, you are already far along your path towards becoming a creative leader. We will check your attitude with the following tasks and, after that, we will get to the external steps.

My CREATE Workbook...

EASE AND EFFORTLESSNESS Notes...

Gift Myself...

Trust Myself...

Challenge Myself...

Colour in the hearts and diamonds, 1-5

How do I feel after these exercises?

Where do I stand as a creative leader?

ATTITUDE

ENABLE
CURIOSITY
RESPECT
EASE
ATTITUDE
TAKE OPPORTUNITIES

I am breaking down Attitude into:

A. Accepting what is – gratitude

B. Bravery – vulnerability

C. Ability to look at yourself in the mirror
(see your strengths, but be honest about the development areas)

D. Being comfortable with ambiguity

E. Stand out (don't fit in) – shine your light

F. Being a cultural addition (not cultural fit)

G. Win-win.

HOW TO HAVE THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

In the chapters about Respect and Ease, we explored our core values and what brings us joy. That is a great base for knowing how to act in challenging situations with your best features. The attitude of accepting the situation and finding solutions is the core of the Attitude step.

Accepting the situation means, in this Attitude step, that you accept that certain things are happening around you, and so you focus on what you can change within those circumstances to make the best out of it for you and your surroundings.

Trust your intuition question

Attitude: What am I grateful for today?

Gift yourself

Give yourself the gift of being genuinely you. It requires bravery, but when you show up as you are, you will be the best version of yourself. Dare to be you and live and work using your strengths whilst understanding your weaknesses. When you dare to be yourself, you see your maturity level and strive towards being the best version of yourself. You also accept that you cannot have it all in you and you are better off when you collaborate, ask for help and create (unofficial) teams around you.

Task 4.0 How will I gift myself in a way that encourages me to be myself and to build on my strengths?

4.0.1 What are the things in my life that will show me the value of myself? How can I be proud of myself?

Trust yourself

Sometimes we need an external nudge to give us permission to behave differently than the surroundings, or how we would naturally do. People who are very committed to their work rarely take a proper break for themselves, and modelling sustainable work would be important not only for your own well-being but also for the people around you. How could you give permission to yourself to do things in a different way than you learned from your family or community?

What are the learned thought patterns in your life that are harmful to you? Did you learn to accept that you were talked over? Did you learn to hide the real you and build a hard surface that requires a lot of energy to maintain? Did you learn that you need to show that you know everything and therefore you are not ready to listen to others? What makes you feel that you need to have the answer to everything? What pattern did you learn from your parents, your grandparents, early teachers or supervisors that might not be productive for you?

Task 4.1 What is the thought pattern that I need to crack to be able to crack the cast and create win-win situations in my surroundings?

Create a definition for yourself that helps you out of that pattern, and then start to follow it. There are examples and ideas in the CREATE book on how to do this.

What is the thought pattern that you need to establish to be able to create win-win situations in your surroundings?

4.1.1 My cast cracking definition is...

Trust yourself and rewrite the thought patterns you have into something that is taking you forward. Write a definition that sets you free from ancient roles, myths or family-learned expectations. Write your definition in the beautiful notebook that you gifted yourself earlier. Writing things down is very powerful, even if you don't get back to what you have written regularly. Many times, if you get back to something you wrote a year ago, you will notice that you already did that, or started living it, even if you had forgotten about writing

that. Don't try to be someone else; instead, be active in creating and writing your own story. By being you, you do not need to target being a cultural fit in your organization; instead, you can proudly be a cultural add.

Challenge yourself

As a creative leader, you will be comfortable with ambiguity. Having the ability to live in a constantly fluctuating world and the capability to deal with ambiguity is a must. When everything is uncertain around you it helps to have simple routines that help you to feel grounded. You can also accept more uncertainty when other parts of your life are in balance and you feel good about yourself.

One tool to finding meaningfulness in your life is to map what is meaningful to you and then funnel down your targets from what you want to achieve in three years to the targets for today.

Task 4.2 What is meaningful for me?

4.2.1 First, write a list of people and things that are important to you.

4.2.2 What do I want to reach within three years?

4.2.3 What do I want to reach within a year?

4.2.4 What do I want to reach within a month?

4.2.5 What are my priority targets today?

Check at the end of each day whether you have reached your daily targets and evaluate how meaningful it felt.

4.2.6 Draw five diamonds after each priority task, and fill in or colour them on the basis of how well you completed them. How well did I reach my targets? You can also view the diamonds and hearts drawn out at the end of each chapter in this workbook as a model for you.

4.2.7 Draw five hearts after each priority task, and fill in or colour them on the basis of how meaningful your accomplishments of the day have been. How meaningful are my results today?

If you write down your main targets daily, then you will notice that you have achieved a lot, even if you haven't done everything that you planned. Colouring in all the five hearts for that day will make you feel that you did something meaningful, even if you didn't succeed with everything you did.

This is a very merciful tool that shows you what your priorities are. Having a structure for the day and a list of your priority tasks gives you the patience and resilience to take the ambiguity around you. When you feel focused and calm, then you get the space to create new things and lead people through uncertainty.

Task 4.3 Using your creativity makes you a stronger leader.

Challenge yourself to not fear your own light.

4.3.1 How do I dare to be openly me with all my strength and creative energy?

Work from the perspective of your strengths, trying to understand your opponents. Strive always towards collaboration, which brings win-win situations. Competition brings win-lose situations, avoidance means both parties lose, accommodation means that you lose and the other party wins. To build creative leadership we target win-win situations. Listen to the other parties. Create together and both parties will shine.

Task 4.4 The Mirror

It is bravery to dare to look at yourself in the mirror and admit your flaws. It is much easier to see development needs in others than yourself. To motivate you and challenge you, get pens that you can use to write on a mirror, and write messages to yourself that you see every morning or every time you go to the bathroom. Change the notes regularly so that you won't only pass the text by but instead pay attention to it.

4.4.1 What are the areas in me that I can develop further?

4.4.2 What kind of skills and personalities do I need around me in my team(s)?

4.4.3 What does my bathroom mirror tell me? (Write a message for you with pens intended for writing on glass.)

Now you have reflected on your internal world already quite a bit. Attitude is the last of the internal steps and, in the following chapter, we will move towards taking opportunities. Open your eyes to your surroundings and you will start seeing an endless flow of opportunities around you. You are ready to take other people with you on your journey.

My CREATE Workbook...

ATTITUDE Notes...

Gift Myself...

Trust Myself...

Challenge Myself...

Colour in the hearts and diamonds, 1-5

How do I feel after these exercises?

Where do I stand as a creative leader?

TAKE OPPORTUNITIES

I am breaking down Take Opportunities into:

A. Trust

B. See opportunities

C. Be active

D. Every encounter is a possibility for something new

E. Next level: personally – professionally – financially

F. Your way – not the traditional way

G. The creative CREATE career.

HOW TO TAKE OPPORTUNITIES

Taking opportunities is about trusting them to come to you. Having the attitude of bravely seeing and taking opportunities will make it look easy for you. It looks easy because you are active and have your sensitive antennas up all the time. You connect with people, see opportunities instead of obstacles and are brave enough to take on new things. You do not only see opportunities but also create them, both for yourself and others. That's why people like to be around you. Magic happens in your presence.

Trust your intuition question

Take Opportunities: what opportunities do I see in my life now (at work, in my community and in my personal life)?

Gift yourself and others

Dare to have an attitude that giving to others will in turn give to you. I am convinced that by giving without asking for anything in return you will receive back in different ways. By supporting others you will notice that you will be supported too.

Task 5.0 How can you spin the wheel of good deeds in your professional and personal life?

5.0.1 How can I support the people around me?

5.0.2 How can I see and take opportunities around me and create possibilities and opportunities for myself and others?

TRUST YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Even if you are in a place on your path that doesn't feel fulfilling for you, trust that what you are doing now is the step you need to move forward on your journey towards something that feels more like you.

Task 5.1 How do I define myself if I do not define myself through my work or career?

Answering the above question gets you to another level in your process. You may not immediately get job offers that feel like dream career opportunities, but they can be significant steps on your path. Trust that your way is the way for you. You do not need to walk the path of someone else or a path that you assume would be beneficial. Your career can be built of many different blocks that take you to the next level in your career, personal life and, eventually, also financially. How do you get there?

Task 5.2 What are the elements that build my CREATE career?

Challenge yourself and others

We talked about giving and trusting. What more is needed to nail it? Every encounter is a possibility for something new. When someone offers you an opportunity, be brave, take it and make it yours. Sometimes, when you face opportunities they are so big that the fear overwhelms you. It is said that if an opportunity doesn't frighten you, then it is not big enough for you. Don't give in to the fear, but dance with it. Bravery is not being fearless – it is fearing something and doing it anyway. How can you say yes to inspiring opportunities? How can you build a CREATE career that looks and feels like your own?

Task 5.3 **How can I get elements of my dream tasks into my life while working with what I do now (if you are not in your ideal role or organisation, or if that doesn't feel enough for you)?**

5.3.1 **How will I create such circumstances that I dare to jump outside my box or comfort zone?**

Do you have some long-awaited dreams?

Task 5.4 What is holding me back?

The things that mostly hold us back are time, money, insecurity and procrastination. It may also be a lack of some skills that are required for the thing that you are dreaming of. Maybe you would like to found a company but fear the accounting. Or you would like to be a board member but do not have the legal skills.

5.4.1 First, ask yourself: do I need to have all the skills myself or can I partner up with someone, buy the service or learn new skills?

5.4.2 Second, ask yourself: do I need more time or money, or could I start doing something alongside my current job?

5.4.3 Third, ask yourself: what if I am enough? What if my skills are exactly the ones needed to fulfil a leadership team, board of advisors or something else that I am targeting?

You can use your beautiful notebook to write down your dreams and start keeping your eyes open for possibilities or you can use this workbook as a guide on your path. Once again, look into what is easy for you. Find what you are good at and which parts you need to find support with. You can also implement smaller dreams of yours. Something that introduces a spark to your life and career but doesn't necessarily change the whole package. Everything you do advances you, either professionally or as a human being.

Whatever you do, do it like you. And believe in you!

The ideas above support you on your path towards taking opportunities, but you might need a professional coach to support you further in your development. A coach can help you find the insights you need on your path.

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ENABLE – BE THE CREATIVE LEADER

I am breaking down Enable into:

A. **Be humane**

B. **Be present**

C. **Be a connector**

D. **Create (unofficial) teams**

E. **Excite**

F. **Energise**

G. **Encourage**

H. **Enable (I break down the four last Es further in this chapter).**

HOW TO BE AN ENABLER

Today's business world is not about hiding your ideas and products from your competitors; instead, it is about collaborating with different parties. We talk about ecosystems and networks that are created to make an impact together. The impact can be improved by aligning organisations and people. It is about supporting and leading people with different professional and cultural backgrounds. How can you build networks and ecosystems around you to support growth and creativity? See the possibilities and encourage the people around you to create the change with you.

Trust your intuition question

Enable: how can I encourage people around me to use their creativity?

Gift yourself and your team

The Enable step is not only about you anymore. That suits you because you know that to make a change you need to have the people with you. You are driven by a desire to make an impact and the impact is created together with people. The team doesn't necessarily mean an official team from your organisation. It can also be a group of friends, your family or a loose network or ecosystem of people who share a common goal.

Task 6.0 What unofficial teams do I have around me (or can I create around me)?

We have worked on all the previous steps before this. By now, you will feel more confident that you have things to give the world by being yourself. You do not need to try to copy others to be respected. When you respect yourself, others will too. Show yourself and your team the value of each individual. Celebrate what each of you can bring to the table. Be grateful for your gifts and thank the people you work with.

Task 6.1 How can I show the value of my team members?

6.1.1 How can I thank my team members?

People want to be heard and seen. The easiest and cheapest way to gift people is to say thank you. When you believe that your unofficial or official team can do miracles, they will.

Trust yourself and your team

As a leader, it is your obligation to create a space for growth. Showing up as you, honestly and openly, creates a trusting space with psychological safety for the people around you. You can bring that to your team even in organisations where psychological safety is not the norm. Be part of the team.

A lot of resources are underused when we only look at the balance sheet and income statement but do not give value to what skills and knowledge the employees have. Creativity can be led in organisations. It is very important to get to know not only yourself and your strengths but also the people around you. Trust that everyone has a lot to give. You just need to see them for what they are and they will carry out more than you expected.

Task 6.2 How can I create psychological safety with the people and teams that I work with?

Challenge yourself and your team

When you have the creative energy of the change maker, you will, most probably, excite people in the beginning. People will be impressed. You bring a positive breeze of freshness. People want to be in your sphere of influence, and they want your energy until it starts to frighten them. Can this influence my role? Can this change the status quo? Can this make me move away from my comfort zone?

After fear comes resistance; the resistant people will start to put either you or the project down. Usually, the resistant people are also very loud and try to get affirmation and they collect a crowd of critics around them.

How can you and your team get over that? This process is described more in detail in the CREATE book.

As an enabler, you need to be ready to face resistance. You need to equip yourself and your team with tools to handle the difficulty of the process of change.

Task 6.3 How can I equip myself and my team to take the resistance?

You can be the change. And you can bring your creativity to any organisation. It requires patience. It requires belief. And it requires people who will make the change with you. Have a big vision. Be realistic that it will take more time than you would like. Take things forward step by step. Keep the spirit up despite resistance. What are your ways of dealing with moments of frustration whilst also keeping the focus of the target clear?

6.3.1 How can I equip myself and my team with the resilience to push through despite resistance and delays?

6.3.2 What kind of energy do I bring to the office? First thing, when I come in the morning, while walking in the aisles, whilst interacting in meetings? Do I greet the people, smile, or nod? Or do I walk in my thoughts without acknowledging the people around me?

6.3.3 How can I celebrate the successes together with my team?

And when you succeed, celebrate the successes together. Whatever is your way to celebrate, you should do it! At the end of the day, we need to feel the highs to take the lows better. And life is much more fun with celebration. Celebrate often enough. Enjoy what you do.

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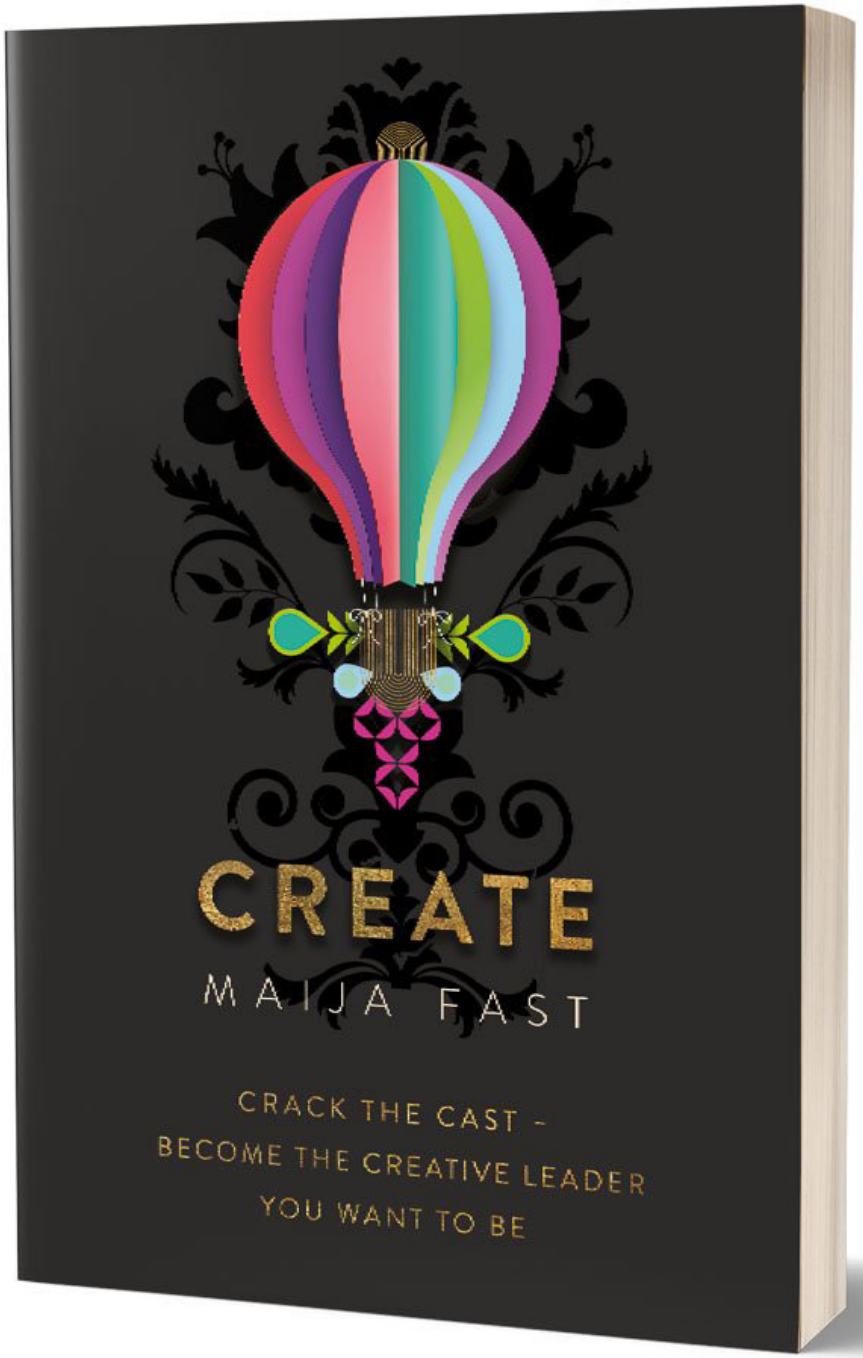
Dear Creative You,

I hope you have enjoyed this CREATE workbook. I am proud of you for wanting to develop yourself and for burning for creative leadership. With a creative mindset, you will be more and so will the people around you. You are the change, and together we will drive a creative revolution which changes people and organisations.

You can find out how to work with me further at ***https://www.fastcreative.ninja.***
Good luck on your journey!

- Maija

Author of CREATE: Crack the Cast – Become the Creative Leader You Want to Be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