



Why You Need To Be More Creative

How To Be More Confident Being You

Rik Leaf

By Rik Leaf

Creativity has something to do with everything from problem solving to conflict resolution, team building and resiliency. It's a mindset that allows you to recognize how your unique talents, gifts, abilities, experience and education empower you to face the challenges in your life.

Imagine the difference it would make in your life right now if you could be 10, 20 or 50% more creative. What problems could you solve, what challenges could you face with confidence?

We're living in what many describe as the 4th Industrial Revolution; The Exponential Age of Change. In a recent article, Robert M. Goldman (MD, PhD, DO, FAASP) describes the speed and scope of the disruption we're experiencing.

"Uber doesn't own any cars, but are the biggest taxi company in the world. Airbnb is the biggest hotel company in the world, and they don't own any properties. Artificial Intelligence provides legal advice within seconds, with 90% accuracy compared with 70% accuracy when done by humans. It diagnoses cancer 4x more accurately than human nurses."

Autonomous Cars. Solar production. 3D Printing. Goldman's conclusion...any idea designed for success in the 20th century is doomed to failure in the 21st century.

Eric Hoffer said, "In times of change learners inherit the earth; while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

So let's agree right now. You are not destined to be beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists. You're not an old dog. You don't have to take all the new tricks off the table. You are capable of learning and adapting and rising to face the challenges in your life today, tomorrow and every day for the rest of your life. But to do that...you need to be creative. You need to be more creative than you've ever been.

That's why you're here...and I honor you for your commitment to being a lifelong learner and investing in your creative skillset. The lessons I'm going to share with you I developed over the last two decades of working at the highest levels of creative productions, from classrooms to conferences, recording studios to TV shows.

I'm going to be 100% honest. For these lessons to transform you and your situation it's going to require doing the work. You need to learn to see your creative strengths and skills with new eyes, and take actionable steps to experience the process.

These are tools of creative development that I use personally and professionally. These principals are the foundation of my mentorship programs that have helped over 50,000 students. I've worked with hundreds of teachers, in schools, communities and education conferences across Canada.

This free lesson is your guide to creative excellence that will open the door to the world of possibilities and opportunity. You are unique. You are capable. You have every reason to be confident as you face the challenges in your life. Let's do it!

The Big Problem - Your Lack of Perception

One of the biggest problems people have with change is that it challenges the way we've always done things. The way we think about things, and most importantly, the way we think about ourselves. This is particularly true for someone who has been successful within the existing structures and systems. If that describes you, then you know that change can often feel like an attack. If you're a taxi driver, Uber feels like an attack. If you're a lawyer, Artificial Intelligence feels like an attack. If you've been teaching for 20 years, all these energetic grads straight out of uni with new ideas can feel like an attack.

Because suddenly, the way you've always done something is being critiqued and criticized, and in that situation, it's pretty hard not to take it personally. But it's not. It's a system. A structure. A formula. It was probably the best answer anyone could come up with to a problem at the time. But that doesn't mean it's the best answer to that problem for *all time*.

Have you taken it personally? Have you found yourself fighting to defend an outdated system or idea? We are able as individuals to change and adapt much faster than the systems and structures that we create. As problems change...so do the solutions.

On the flip side, have you had a moment when you realize your success didn't depend on keeping everything exactly the way it had always been? Have you ever flipped the script? Told yourself a different story about yourself and what you're capable of? Taken a risk, tried something new and discovered something about yourself that you never knew?

Becoming a *'learner in times of change'* comes down to changing your mindset. Creativity is a mindset, and an openness to learning through all the stages of life.

The Solution is learning to see yourself and the world differently. I'm going to share an exercise our organization uses to help our team members see their creative skill set with new eyes. We've found it to be a really helpful first step to connecting ourselves to solutions, rather than just seeing the situation as a problem that 'someone' should do something about.

I want you to sit down right now and start a list. This is an exercise in self assessment. So often we compartmentalize ourselves. We view certain abilities, roles and responsibilities as relating only to work while others we relegate to hobbies and others to relationships with family and friends. This exercise is an opportunity to approach yourself and your creative capital differently.

List your Gifts. Talents. Abilities. Education. Experience. Strengths/Weaknesses. What are you naturally gifted at? The gift of gab? Multitasking? Are you great at starting things? Are you great at completing tasks? Are you a visionary and love talking about the Big Picture? Or are you a details person? Are you administrative, organized, maybe even a bit neurotic? An extrovert, introvert, generally confident or are you plagued by fear and doubt?

Get everything down. From driving heavy machinery to riding a motorbike, knitting, being a strong swimmer or someone with a natural sense of rhythm and a great dancer. Do you remember trivia? Are you good at puzzles? Put down everything. Don't worry about where or how it fits.

Let me share a couple quick examples, because I'm constantly surprised when I do this exercise. I grew up on a farm in the Canadian prairies driving grain trucks and tractors and lots of heavy machinery. It was a world away from the musical world I live in and none of those experiences seemed relevant to my career as a musician. Until the day we booked our first national tour and couldn't afford a driver for the gigantic motorhome. Suddenly, all those hours driving grain trucks was a super relevant skill I was able to provide to my band.

A few years ago I became a professional sommelier and wine educator. The process of evaluating a wine involves focusing all of the senses. What does the wine smell like, look like, taste like. Being a Somm didn't seem like it had anything to do with creative mentorship projects in schools, until I walked through the door and realized I was using the same process to discover the story. Paying attention to the inspirational posters hanging on the walls, listening to the conversations in the staffroom and the classroom and in the halls. So many of us sort of loiter our way through life, it is a game-changing revelation when we start paying attention.

So I encourage you to write down anything and everything that comes to your mind. Get it out of your head and onto a piece of paper or onto a screen where you can see it. You can add to this list over the coming days and weeks as more things come to mind.

The benefit to compiling this list is that it allows you to see the wealth of resources you bring to the table. Blurring the lines between the ways you compartmentalize yourself will also help you see that you are capable in ways you never recognized. This is the first step in the journey of discovering that you are more powerful than you've ever given yourself credit for.

If you're interested in learning how you can use this info to take the next step, join our creative community and get access to the next module. As a member you'll have opportunities for more courses and modules.

Members receive inspiring and instructional videos Monday - Friday that will focus your creativity and keep you motivated and moving forward, along with some great resources you can use in your classroom.

All the best!

Rik

About Rik Leaf

Rik Leaf is the Poet Laureate for Tribe of One, a National Collective of Indigenous & settler artists. Rik's an Arts in Education specialist who has spent 16 years providing creative development mentorship programs to schools across Canada. Over 50,000 students and hundreds of teachers have learned to express themselves creatively through these programs.

As a leading Arts in Education specialist, Rik provides professional development sessions for school districts and education conferences. Rik draws on over 20 years of experience as a professional recording artist, songwriter, slam poet, published author, TV host, event producer and video editor to provide creative support services to schools.

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