



THE HEART OF CREATIVITY

Research Briefs and Reflections

What Creative Educators, Leaders, and Innovators Do Differently

True innovators approach their work differently. In *The Innovator's DNA*, Dyer, Gregersen, and Christensen identify 5 key skills that describe what innovative, creative practitioners do differently. These skills are:

- **Associating** which involves crossing disciplines and leveraging learning and perspectives from divergent disciplines.
- **Questioning** which reflects an innate curiosity and spirit of inquiry about everything.
- **Observing** their environments and the world at large – knowing that the best ideas often come from the trenches and the deeper understanding that comes from observing those who are directly impacted by decisions.
- **Networking** to ensure that they are exposed to the thinking and ideas of others.
- **Experimenting** or tinkering, exploring, and trying out potential solutions, learning along the way and making course adjustments.

These five traits of innovators are equally relevant to the classroom as well as to the leadership of educational organizations. When leaders approach their work with a curious mindset that is grounded in deeper ways of knowing, context-building, and inquiry – we supercharge our work!

Reflection Questions:

- How can you incorporate the 5 principles into your daily practice? Which ones come easiest for you? Which principles may require more focus and work?
- How can these principles be woven into arts learning as educators and students consider multiple perspectives, the experiences of others, and develop a natural curiosity and experimentation mindset?

Key Points to Remember:

- ★ When networking and collaborating with others, observe and honor different perspectives and disciplines to expand ways of thinking.
- ★ By embracing a deep curiosity about our world, the people that our decisions impact, and the ideas of others, we expand our capacity for creative thinking and innovation.

Learn More:

<https://blog.hypeinnovation.com/the-5-skills-of-the-innovator>

https://www.creativitypost.com/article/5_principles_of_creativity

<https://www.creativehuddle.co.uk/post/clayton-christensen>

Dyer, J., Gregersen, H., Christensen, C. (2011). *The Innovator's DNA: Mastering the Five Skills of Disruptive Innovators*. Harvard Business Review Press.