



The virtuous cycle of innovation and wellbeing

How creative were you yesterday?

Pause for a moment, and really think about this...

Did you engage in any creative activity, or come up with an innovative idea or solution? Did you contribute to something completely new and different, or think about an innovation to improve a process or service in your work?

Maybe you designed a new image, page or visual to represent your ideas, work or proposed

solution, collaborated in a brainstorming session or wrote a blog about something new you have discovered?

If your answer is 'no', you are not alone. But new research suggests that creativity can play an important role in wellbeing and innovation.

Creativity: The cause and consequence of leadership wellbeing?

We have known for some time that organisations who do a good job of implementing health and wellbeing programs can expect to see an uplift in creativity and innovation among employees by as much as 50%. This is an important metric to demonstrate the benefit of, and return from, investing in wellbeing (and there are many more – just ask!).

But there is more to the story.

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That's right – you will feel more positive and put a spring in your step if you do something innovative!

The research comes from Otago University in New Zealand, where 650 participants in the

study reported a significant increase in positive emotions and wellbeing after engaging in creative activity. Of note was that this mood shift was reported the day after the creativity took place – creating today brings enhanced wellbeing tomorrow! The participants also rated their social relationships as more supportive and rewarding after their creative activity.

This was a self-report study, which seems even better – as long as you think you've been creative you will experience more positivity and enhanced wellbeing. You don't actually have to win a Nobel prize, you can just believe you are good enough to!

In summary:

- Boosting wellbeing encourages innovation;
- And engaging in creative activity boosts your wellbeing.

These findings are exciting because they reveal another approach to enhance our own wellbeing – another way to boost our mood and reap the benefits.

Perhaps use this as a prompt to think of how you can build more creativity into your life – through art, music, writing, cooking, designing, building, making – even gardening. What is one thing you can introduce this week?

And, for leaders in organisations, this is a 'win-win' situation. With the right approach, they can encourage fresh, new and different thinking from their people and get the extra payback of greater happiness and positivity in the workplace.

To get our 10 leader's tips for enhancing innovation and wellbeing, you will have to purchase the e-book!