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9

Creative thinking

It is a well known fact that all inventors get their first ideas on the back of an envelope. I take a slight exception to this, I use the front so that I can incorporate the stamp and then the design is already half done.

Roland Emett

Genius is one per cent inspiration and ninety-nine per cent perspiration.

Thomas Alva Edison

What do we mean by creativity?

Most people would describe design as one of the most creative of human pursuits. The so-called creative arts include musical composition, painting, sculpture and the various forms of two- and three-dimensional design. However, creativity and creative thought can be applied just as much in science, medicine, philosophy, the law, management and many other fields of human endeavour. In the creative arts, including design, the whole point of the business is to create something which other people will experience and which is in some way or other original and new. No book on the thinking processes involved in design could be complete without some examination of the fundamentals of creativity and creative thought.

There is now a huge body of literature on creativity which has been studied extensively not only by psychologists but by philosophers and, more recently, by cognitive scientists and computer scientists. Some of our most profound insights into creativity also come from some famous and outstandingly creative people who have described and reflected on the processes involved. Then there are those who write about how to enhance or increase our creativity offering us techniques to use either as individuals or in groups.