



MODULE 4

CREATIVITY

Lesson scenario with tips for a lecturer concerning 4-hour classes



I. GENERAL INFORMATION

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- Recipients of the classes
- Number of participants
- Methods / techniques of work
- Materials needed to carry out the classes
- Purpose of classes

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- Introducing a lecturer/lecturers
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- Establishing group rules

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Class duration:

- 4 hours

Recipients of the classes:

The recipients of the classes are adults, employees of the administrative and financial industry.

The scenario of the classes can be used by others from other professional groups interested in the topic of creative developing and creative thinking.

Number of participants:

Class group for 12 people of both sexes. It is also possible to conduct classes in a smaller group of at least 8 participants, depending on the conditions of the premises or the size of the team.

Recommended methods of work:

- Brainstorming
- Active ways of conducting classes: working in groups
- Active ways of conducting classes: working in pairs
- Individual work
- Relaxation techniques
- Psychoeducation
- Mini lecture

Sample materials needed to carry out the classes:

- Worksheets
- Pens
- Crayons
- Markers
- Sticky notes
- Flipchart
- A4 sheets of paper
- Pens
- Certificates
- Evaluation survey





Purpose of classes:

The main goal is to strengthen the competence of creative, out-of-the-box thinking, build space for innovative practices and make changes in non-functional patterns.

Mini lecture: (30 minutes)

Who wouldn't want to be creative?

It is no longer just scientists, writers and artists who need creativity, but it seems that everyone treats it as something that can be successfully presented to an employer.

Creativity, innovation, ingenuity - these are some of the synonyms that are used to describe the ability to invent new things, non-standard ideas and solutions, or works of art. However, is it a talent, an innate predisposition to a certain behavior, or rather something that can be learned, at least to some extent, and if so, how?

Creativity as originality vs. creativity as a value

Creativity can be understood in two ways.

In the former, the main weight lies on novelty as a key aspect of creativity. No one can be considered inventive (in this sense, the word is a close synonym) if they mostly copy the ideas of others.

Originality is a value itself. This approach has some justification in less "life" areas, i.e. in art and science.

In both of these areas, sometimes completely innovative ideas are needed to make a breakthrough. Therefore, the criterion of value happens to be in the shade.

"Do not be afraid to express eccentric opinions, because any opinion accepted today was once considered eccentric"

Bertrand Russel

However, originality alone is not always enough to consider an idea creative. It may be necessary to apply an additional evaluating criterion to the assessment. A work of art can be creative when it is original, but also beautiful.

A philosophical or scientific idea is innovative when it is also surprisingly innovative and brings us closer to the truth.

Creativity would therefore require an interplay between spontaneous, creative thinking (brainstorming style) and controlled consideration of ideas. In other words, you need to be able to come up with different ideas, but at the same time be able to determine whether they are worthwhile.

What is creativity? Theories of creativity

One of the earlier attempts to understand creativity was made in the frames of psychoanalysis.

According to followers of Freud, creativity is the result of trauma (is this surprising?). Suppressed negative memories and emotions are replaced with original ideas and creativity. A work of art or an innovative idea is therefore the result of a conflict between the subconscious (id) and the conscious sphere (ego and superego).





Maslow's classic pyramid of needs shows that our needs are arranged in a certain hierarchy. First, we satisfy physiological needs, then social needs, and only at the end we deal with our desire of creation and self-realization.

Another theory is based on Maslow's pyramid of needs, which ranks human needs from the most urgent needs, such as food, security, and shelter, through the need to belong to a group, to the need for esteem, recognition, and self-actualization. Creativity is born at these higher levels, so it is the result of securing the foundations of material and social existence, which enables us to think in a more abstract, unearthly way, in the horizon further than the tip of our nose, and then deal with satisfying the higher orders of the pyramid.

Self-actualization often consists of creating a work (writers often say that they sit down to write because of a strong, internal need), which, in turn, enables recognition. The investment theory of R.J. Sternberg also seems to be interesting. He states that creative thinking is a conscious decision of a creative person. Creative people operate in a peculiar "market of ideas", where they can "produce" their eccentric idea cheaply, and if accepted and spread, it achieves high capitalization, i.e. it is "sold high". Thus, it may be considered as some kind of competition.

Therefore, the greatest obstacle to creativity is often the lack of limitations, resistance or opposition from others (against an innovative idea), or rather the limitations imposed on one's own thinking.

“Creativity is determined by six distinct but interrelated resources: intellectual ability, knowledge, thinking styles, personality, motivation and environment”
R.J. Sternberg,



This scientist also distinguishes different types of creative thinking. Some of them result from the acceptance of the already existing state of knowledge or ideas.

They are: duplication, looking at the problem from a different angle (redefinition), increment (add-on) and advanced increment. Other types of creativity are based on the rejection and replacement of current ideas - we are talking about redirection, reconstruction and re-initiation (new opening). The last type is integration or synthesis, which combines the new with the old, combines different ideas.

Creativity from the neuro-scientific view

Is the ability to think creatively more similar to sexual orientation or to the ability to play chess? In other words, is it almost strictly determined by brain structure and genes, or is it the result of proper exercise and enough exposure to stimuli? Adopting the first view would mean that there is a special structure in our head, miraculous neurons which activated parallelly with others, like their shadows, and which would throw original ideas into the "ordinary" current of thought. Such a claim is untenable. Admittedly, we can intuitively believe that creativity is similar to language skills (in particular, learning foreign languages), because there are indeed large differences in this ability in the population - from geniuses who know a dozen languages to people who struggle hard to learn even English. This, however, is at least partly a false analogy.

Language abilities are special, they are separated from others in the brain (they are located in separate brain modules - Brocki's area and Wernicke's area) - there are people using the language completely normally, and at the same time with impairments in other intellectual skills. In the case of creative thinking, this is not necessarily a full mapping, because it is difficult to study something like creativity, it is difficult to parameterize it.

In 2013, a meta-analysis of works based on various research paradigms by Gonen-Yaacovi was created, which sheds some new light. Namely, it turns out that there is a certain area of the brain that is characteristically activated during the exercises used in the analyzed studies - these are different parts of the prefrontal cortex and regions associated with memory. However, this is not analogous to language modules,

, because damage to these parts of the brain can increase creativity - unlike in the case of language. This should come as no surprise to people who have been in close contact with people affected by Alzheimer's disease - the degree of creative confabulation about almost any aspect of life and facts about the world in such patients is remarkable.

Although scientists understand the workings of our brain better every year, it is very difficult to study this organ. And yet it influences so many of our behavior!

So what can biology tell us about creativity? It is certainly an evolutionary adaptation that gives an advantage. Perhaps it was not the opposable thumb or tongue that allowed a man to build a civilization, but rather non-standard ideas regarding the use of objects around us. However, the question remains open: is it the need to survive that makes us think creatively making our brain develop, or rather by having a sufficiently large brain (evolutionally developed) we can be creative? It's probably not to be decided.

II. INTRODUCTION

1. Introducing the subject of the classes – (5 minutes)
2. Introducing the agenda.
3. Introducing a lecturer.
4. Greeting – (5 minutes)
 - name, surname,
 - education,
 - professional experience
 - interests
5. Ice breaker- classes participants introduce themselves (15 minutes)
 - Talent chain.
 - Finish the sentence:
 - My name is.....
 - I like...
 - My talents are...
 - I feel strong in
 - My strengths are...

The most creative idea I have implemented.....
My favourite colour is...

6. Group rules - (15 minutes)

The lecturer distributes two sticky notes to the participants and asks the participants to write down on one of them what they can do and what they cannot do during the class to ensure a nice and safe atmosphere. Participants are given 2 minutes for this task.

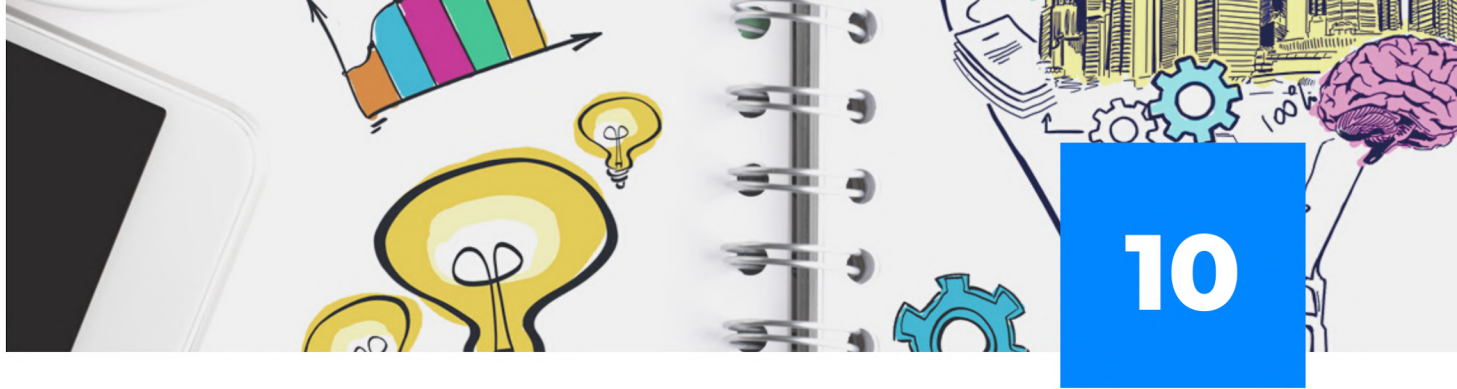
What we do	What we don't do
We are kind to each other We respect each other We communicate the need for breaks	We don't criticize each other We do not use mobile phones We do not judge other people's opinions

The educator collects the notes, reads them aloud, asks if everyone agrees to the presented rules. Then they are stuck in a visible place.

Next, the lecturer suggests that each participant shall write their name on the second piece of paper and stick it in a visible place on their chest.

The question is what we expect after the classes. Verification of expectations - (10 min)

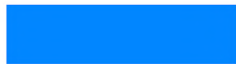
The lecturer distributes one sticky note to each participant and asks them to write down their expectations in relation to the classes. The participants are given 3 minutes to do this. Then the lecturer collects the notes, reads the questions/statements and discusses them.



Garage - (5 minutes)

The educator takes out a previously prepared A4 sheet / flipchart with the inscription "GARAGE" and a marker and informs the participants what "Garage" is.

"Garage" - during breaks in the garage, each of the participants can anonymously write down a question about the content and course of classes. The questions will be answered after the break.



III. THE CONTENT

Task 1 . (20 minutes)

Stimulating creativity. What activities develop creativity?

Work in groups of 5. The lecturer divides the group, counting to 5.

Each group creates its own poster: **How to develop creativity.**

Educator says: Brain research, combined with various theories of creativity, allows us to find some ways to stimulate creativity. **How to do it?**

20 minutes to complete the task.

Groups present their works.

The lecturer provides additional content:

- **get some sleep** - nothing kills creativity more than the state in which our eyes close by themselves. However, it's not just about getting a good night's sleep. Sometimes it is very beneficial to take a nap long enough to enter REM sleep (more than an hour). The apparent loss of time sleeping during the day will be compensated by much more creativity in the minutes after waking up.
- **use paper and pen** - the traditional way of taking notes has the advantage over the computer and smartphone that it engages more areas in our brain. It requires, among others better coordination of movement with thought, and also allows the shape of the handwriting to release emotions. By the way, while thinking about the next sentences, one can draw something in the margin or doodle, which gives us a chance to come up with something new. What is more, notifications from Facebook will not be displayed on the card.



- **look for inspiration among people** – it's easier to do something in a group, and one can meet interesting people. That is why it is worth joining social organizations, becoming an activist, doing something that makes sense and something that is motivating. In this way, one can come up with ideas that will be useful in other areas of life.
- **choose music** - although in general something like ambient is recommended, not too loud, serving rather as a pleasant noise in the environment, in fact everyone should test different genres and subjectively choose it to their taste. However, it is known that silence does not help creative thinking.

Speaking of music, jazz is interesting choice in this context. It is said that this genre is the creativity in its purest form. This is due to the fact that there is a lot of improvisation, instead of memorizing notes. This style of playing does not require control - which is deadly to creativity - but allows you to "flow"

Task 2. (20 minutes)

The lecturer invites participants to a less standard exercise of coming up with strange, non-obvious and absurd ideas.

An example is an attempt to find a cause in the correlation of two completely unrelated phenomena.

In other words, we are trying to come up with a cause and effect chain between, for example, a **decrease in the number of students of administration in Poland and the population of kangaroos in zoo parks in Argentina** - the more intermediate links the better.

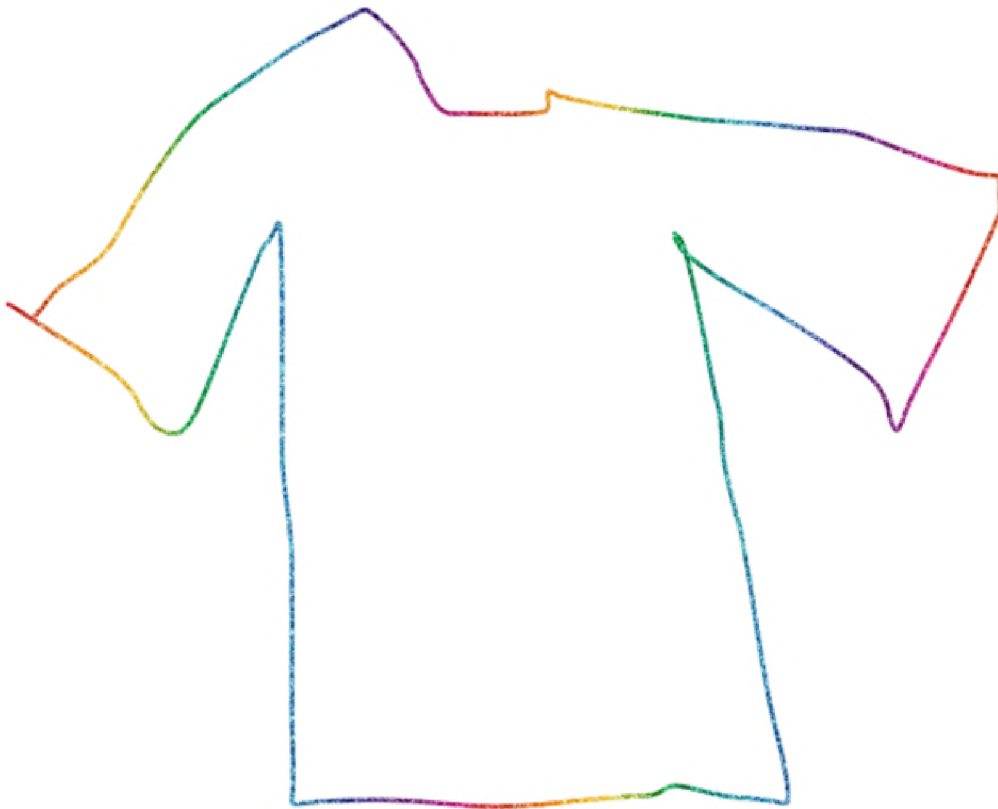
Ideas:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Task 3 (20 minutes)

The lecturer asks the participants to draw their dream t-shirt for sale. It is to be an absolute masterpiece that every administration employee and economist will proudly wear.

As it happens with T-shirts, the text on them can be ironic, but not offensive to anyone.



Drawing of a T-shirt

After the participants have drawn a T-shirt, ask them to promote their product and sell it to the group. Evaluate how creative the idea is and ask the group for feedback.

Task 4 (20 minutes)

The cult of creativity

When browsing through job offers, one can sometimes fall into consternation. In almost every advertisement an employer claims that they are looking for an ingenious, innovative employee who shows their own initiative.

It seems that nowadays such requirements are imposed even on candidates for completely routine, repetitive and schematic positions.

Is it really such a universally needed ability?

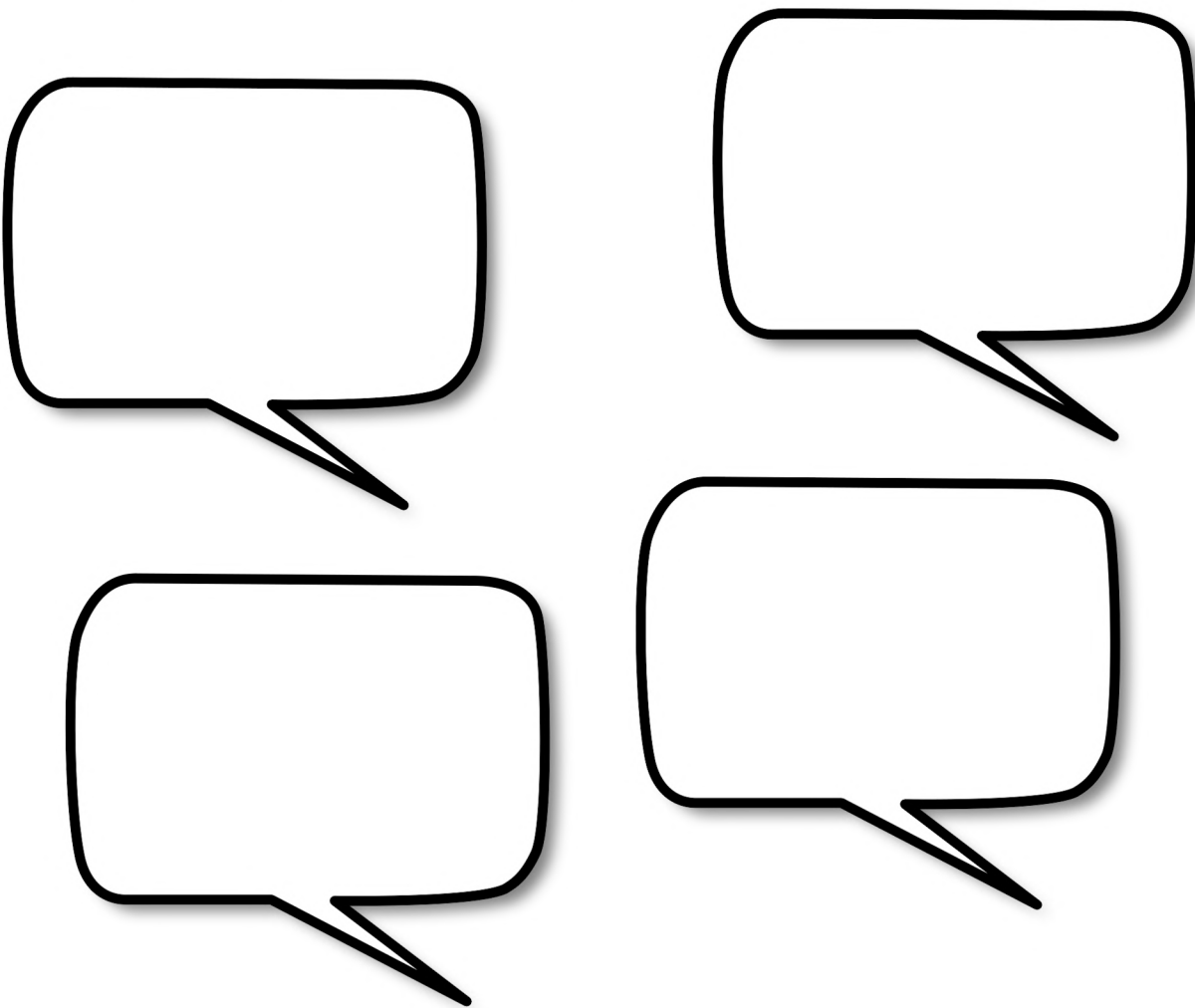
It certainly does not bother you, but from an individual point of view, such a constant desire for creativity can be harmful - after all, not everyone is able to always be creative, it can be compensated by diligence.

Is it always worth spending time and effort to become a little more inventive or innovative when one doesn't have the aptitude for it, instead of developing the talents they actually have?

Well, if there is indeed a peculiar cult of creativity nowadays, perhaps it is simply fashionable to pass for creativity, but ultimately verification of this ability is done by others, including employers.

It is definitely worth trying to create and invent things independently, because it develops the intellect in a general way. However, it is better to do it due to one's own internal motivation

It is known, however, that constraints and stress, often associated with work - deadlines in particular - kill creativity, because they prevent creative relaxation. Write down what qualities from the cult of creativity you have in yourself.



Task 5 (20 minutes)

WHAT IS CREATIVE THINKING?

The term "**creative thinking**" is most often defined as thinking about a given situation or problem in a new way, adopting a fresh perspective that helps to find new, unconventional solutions.

Creative thinking is the process by which new ideas are generated. Like other thought processes, creative thinking starts with asking questions. The main difference is that the next stage is the use of imagination - it is the signpost leading to finding answers. The essence of creative thinking is to look for new and adapt existing solutions.



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In this process, one uses inspiration, improvisation, intuition, and tries to avoid judging.

Creative thinking is most active when one is engaged in cognitive processes such as imagining, contemplating, daydreaming, and when one's thoughts are allowed to run free.

Have a clean sheet of paper and something to write with. Close your eyes and draw a lot of arbitrary dots on a piece of paper.

Then open your eyes and try to complete the drawing by connecting the dots to represent a recognizable object.

After completing the exercise, the participants present their suggestions.

Task 6 (20 minutes)

Fluency of thinking is to a large extent the ability to generate many solutions in a short time. This exercise will greatly improve this skill.

Try to list the names of all items that are:

- durable and cold,
- short and expensive,
- delicate and green,
- orange and round,
- shiny and funny,
- hot and tasteless.

The game continues until the participants run out of ideas.

Task 7 (20 min)

Creativity is extremely important nowadays, both in the business world and in the life of every human being. If you've ever been disappointed in your creativity, you should use this guide and spend at least a few minutes a day practicing creative thinking.

Maybe soon you will need an idea for a future profitable business, and your creativity will be ready for action.

Divide the group into 2-person teams and ask them to generate ideas for:

1. business ideas for young people
2. passive income ideas
3. business ideas in the countryside and in a small town

When you learn to think creatively, you will be able to steer your life and career in the direction you want. This will allow you to create original and imaginative solutions, needed not only at school or at work, but also in designing your own life.

Good luck!

At the end, the groups present their ideas. We reward ideas with applause. The more interesting, the louder.

Closing the classes – (10 minutes)

The lecturer asks the participants to sit in a circle and each answer the question:

- What did you like the most?
- What will you get for yourself?
- What are you leaving with?

After the participants answer, the lecturer thanks them for their participation in the workshop.



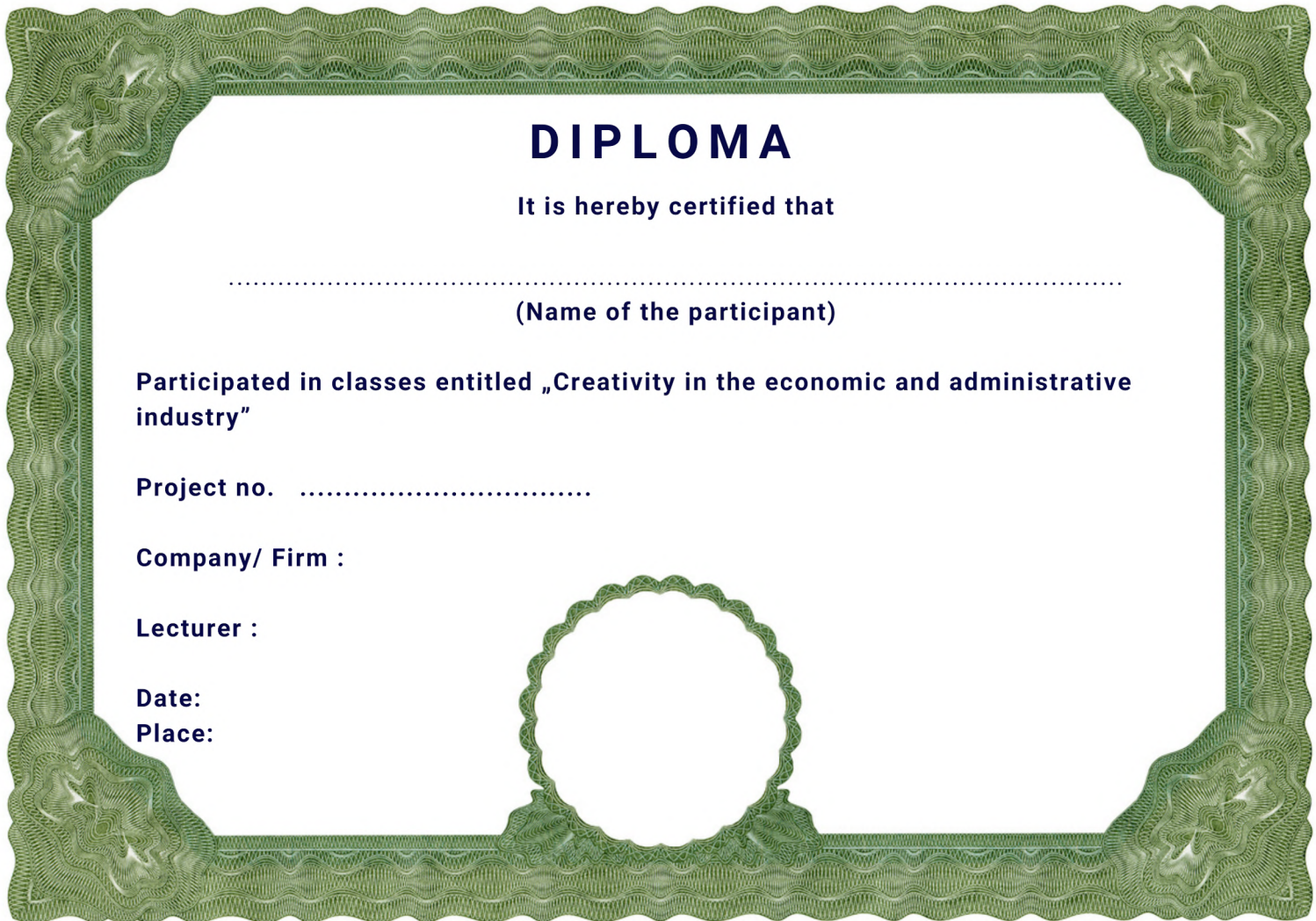
6. If YES, please list topics that would be of interest to you.

.....
.....

7. Additional comments

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for completing the survey!



DIPLOMA

It is hereby certified that

.....

(Name of the participant)

Participated in classes entitled „Creativity in the economic and administrative industry”

Project no.

Company/ Firm :

Lecturer :

Date:

Place:

