FOSTERING CREATIVE THINKING IN THE MARKETING CLASSROOM: 
SHARING AND ASSESSING PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

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ABSTRACT

In his classic book *The Marketing Imagination*, Levitt (1986) stated that organizational success is 
predicated on the use of the marketing imagination and generation of creative ideas. As creativity is a 
sine qua non for organizational growth and success, a recent *Harvard Business Review* article, 
“Managing for Creativity,” states that an organization’s most important asset is its “arsenal of 
creative thinkers whose ideas can be turned into valuable products and services” (Florida & 
Goodnight, 2005, p. 2). Recent business press has also emphasized the importance of creativity in 
fostering organizational revenue growth (Coy, 2000) and discussed the increasing attention given by large 
corporations to fostering creativity (Nussbaum et al., 2005).

Naturally, marketing educators are focusing their 
attention on methods for developing creativity in their 
students and across the marketing curriculum 
(Anderson, 2006; Gilbert, Prenshaw, & Ivy, 1996; 
McIntyre, Hite, & Rickard, 2003; Ramocki, 1994, 
antidote 1996; Titus, 2000, 2007). Recent empirical research 
on marketing students’ perceptions suggests that, 
from their point of view, creativity is an important skill for marketing majors and one that can be learned. 
Marketing faculty are encouraged to provide “imaginative assignments” to foster creativity, create a classroom environment in which risk taking is encouraged, and reward creativity (McCorkle, Payan, Reardon, & Kling, 2007).

The purpose of this contemporary issues (table 
topics) session was to provide interested participants with examples of use of poetry as a tool for 
developing creative thinking (Sherry & Schouten, 2002). As a hands-on session, participants learned about the use of poetry both as an engagement tool and as a learning tool in several undergraduate and graduate marketing classes, and participated in a 
poetry exercise. Examples of how poetry has been used in the undergraduate and graduate introductory 
marketing and marketing seminar courses, as well as in an advanced personal selling and sales 
management class, were shared. Participants were invited to provide their insights on poetry as a 
creative thinking and creative writing exercise, discuss poetry’s potential use in marketing, and 
provide examples of their approaches to fostering creativity in the marketing classroom.

REFERENCES


