YOUR MOST IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP QUALITY

In a recent issue of BusinessWeek more than 1,500 CEO's responding to a survey by IBM's Institute for Business Value said that "creativity is the most important leadership competency for the successful enterprise of the future." For a lot of people, that's disappointing news, because so many believe (wrongly) that they're "not very creative." Well, how do you identify the qualities that add up to creativity?

1 **Talking your walk**—Albert Einstein once said: "If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough." If you have the ability to help teenagers understand complex truths in simple ways, you're creative.

2 **There is no try, there is only do**—True creatives are judged by their ability and willingness to act on their ideas, not on their background or experience.

3 **A knack for solving problems**—If you treat problems as the catalysts that bring out the best in you, and you enjoy the feeling you have when you solve a problem in a nontraditional way, you're a creative person.

4 **An insatiable curiosity**—Voltaire said: "Judge a man by his questions rather than by his answers." If you're a habitually curious person, you're also most likely an habitually creative person.

5 **A propensity for risk-taking**—We all know that failure is a prerequisite for true success, but we hate it anyway. No one's saying we have to love failure—but creative people can point to lots of failures strewn along their path.