

# Prolific

## The Four Creative Questions

Lee Spano



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## About the Author

Lee Spano is an entrepreneur and writer. He has built several innovative businesses over the years, and is the founder of Creatness International, [www.creatness.com](http://www.creatness.com), which provides education, coaching and networking opportunities for other entrepreneurs and like minds. Lee's passion and speciality are in the areas of Mindset and Innovation. He sees these as the key overarching domains of coming decades.

Lee's knowledge and experience over the past twenty (20) years is extensive and diverse. He has worked in several fields, including: law, property, finance and technology. This diversity gives him an insightful macro perspective, and allows him to spot disruptive and long tail opportunities.

In finance, Lee has specialist experience in stocks, futures and foreign exchange markets, where he has built robust investing and trading systems. In property, Lee has developed property, particularly medium density residential property in Australia. In tech, Lee pioneered innovative online B2B networking models for professionals in the early 1990s.

Lee started out as a commercial lawyer in 1990 in Sydney, Australia. He holds several degrees and other awards from leading institutions, such as the *University of Sydney*. Most importantly, he is committed to lifelong learning and growth through innovation, business building, and engaging with other entrepreneurs and business leaders. As a consequence, creativity, integrity, excellence, persistence, and an ethos of service or contribution, have become enduring values.

Lee has written widely over the years, and his latest book is '**True Wealth – Principles and Practices**', <http://amzn.to/2rPMVzc>. Here a new paradigm of thought for lasting prosperity and success is presented. It is based on extensive research and experience, drawing on many fields, ranging from science to philosophy, business and economics. He helps us to re-define what we mean by wealth and success, and then empowers us to achieve so much more in business and in life. Lee's writing has been featured on several blog and other websites; his current main blog can be found at: <http://creatness.com/blog/>.

On a personal note, Lee has a keen interest in, and a commitment to: family, community, landscape, books, personal growth, the creative mind, philosophy, chess, art and landscape photography, and ambient music.

## **Dedication**

*This book is dedicated to my daughter, Ally.*

## Forward

This work, *Prolific- The Four Creative Principles* is my second major public work after *True Wealth – Principles and Practices*. It flows naturally from its predecessor. True Wealth is like the golden thread running through all of our works now.

Prolific is a book I wish I had when I was in my youth. When we are questioning, searching, yearning for something more in life, there seems so much confusion, particularly in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We are moving fast to an age where institutionalism is making way for fervent individualism coupled with community.

Technology has largely enabled what we are calling, Renaissance 2.0. I believe technology and globalisation together have the potential to create the future we all want. However, the future starts from within.

Prolific hopes to be your lifelong companion to help you ask the very hard questions, such as-

What should I be doing with my life?

What can I do that gives me meaning?

What can I do that gives my work and my organisation meaning and significance?

How can I live a life that has substance?

How can I do the things I love, and truly thrive?

How can I change the world, even if just in a small way?

What simple formula or approach can I follow to achieve these things?

How can I then take positive action immediately to live the life I envisage?

How can I do my life's work each day and constantly improve?

How can I take my highest purpose and instil this into my work or enterprise?

How can I marry the power of my creative mind with the analytic mind?

How can I create a culture of culture and innovation in my work or my business?

These are questions many of share. We are living in a time of transition between the Industrial Age of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries and the Information Age of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and beyond. Yet most of us were educated and socialised in ways that will not equip us in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In Prolific we hope to help you answer these important questions. We hope to help you and all of us build a bridge to the Information Age. It may even evolve into The Wisdom Age. This is not 'New Ageist' thinking. We are very pragmatic people. Like Jung we have our heads in the clouds but our feet firmly planted on the ground. We seek out universal principles, tools, templates and methods that are based on reason and evidence. We dream the vision and then find pragmatic, realistic ways to make it happen. This is the genius of enterprise.

Our mission is to do this in our own projects, and then to teach universal principles and methods, so all people can Rise and achieve what we call True Wealth.

The democratisation of knowledge, rare knowledge and insights through technology and globalisation is like the printing press of the Renaissance 1.0 (1300-1600). Technology was and is again, the enabler.

However, there is a lag. We, our mindsets, social conditioning and our often unsubstantiated opinions and ideologies do not serve us well. Perhaps unlike any other time in human history, we need creative, adaptive, flexible minds that can think 'and do' at a much higher level. This needs to be grounded on evidence, reason and universal principles of thinking.

The complexity of modern problems and the fast pace of business and social change in the early years of this century have already made this very clear- we need to use higher level thinking and processes to continue to grow.

In Prolific, we give you important universal principles. One key principle is what we call the **You Formula-**

**You<sup>LTSM</sup>**

You can keep this simple formula nearby in your paper or digital journals, intranets, noticeboards, phone or iPad. Perhaps as a background, or a note or reminder in one of your key files. It summarises this entire book. It is both a life and work formula that has withstood the test of time. We see it as the 'tilly lamp' guiding all of our journeys through this challenging century.

We thank you for reading this book. By putting you and service first, we hope we can all Rise together. Our *interdependence* is the seed of our humility and our greatness. Our highest purpose has always been in the humble service of others. This has the potential of being multiplied to the nth degree in this century- *if we know and if we so choose*. We hope to give you this knowledge, help you make this choice and inspire you to take this action.

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*“A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

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Lee Spano  
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## **Book 3.0**

This work is an example of a vision we have called, Book 3.0.

The future of the book is something we are very much a part of. Book 1.0 refers to the traditional paper or analogue book most of us grew up with. Book 2.0 is the eBook which came to the fore in recent years. Its best example is the ePub or like book file we read via Amazon Kindle.

Today most of my private and business libraries are Kindle Books. They are vastly superior to paper books not just because you can carry around many books, but you can highlight, note and annotate your books. These annotations can later be exported and kept, say in a Word document. This then can be linked or exported to a database or knowledgebase. This means your reading, your ideas, actions and insights are never lost.

The vision we have in Book 3.0 was borne out of science fiction. Some of you might recall in books or movies a few decades ago, the idea that people, androids or cyborgs (part human, part machine) can quickly master a discipline by plugging themselves into a knowledge source. We are not alone in being informed by yesterday's science fiction. Elon Musk is doing the same with his vision of colonising Mars in our lifetime through SpaceX.

In our generation we will see many more examples of science fiction becoming science fact. It is evidence of the analytic and creative minds working in unison.

We believe we have the building blocks already in place to move to Book 3.0. That is, a platform, app or digital interface where humans, perhaps coupled with AI partners or bots, can become masters of knowledge domains in a matter of minutes.

Think about what Wikipedia and Google together have done to the world's knowledge in only the last few years. Today we already have near total recall of all of humanity's knowledge in the palm of our hands.

However, we are not quite there yet. Book 1.0 and Book 2.0 still lag and are disjointed. Most of us still get our important knowledge, insights, ideas and creative stimulation from these books or close equivalents. The close equivalents include, what we call Specific Information Products (SIPs). As the internet becomes seamless, we hope to integrate text from such SIPs and other sources with multimedia through a universal platform we can simply plug into and rapidly learn.

This is only the first step of such a platform's capability. The second will be synthesis of information, and the third will be evidence, value based actions.

In this work, Prolific, we want to slowly continue this march to Book 3.0 and beyond. It will therefore have the following characteristics-

1.  **Succinct.** Relatively short is size, approximately 50 to 150 pages. We want our work to be succinct so it can be digested, learned and applied quickly.
2.  **Multimedia.** It will give hyperlinks to other key recourses on the fly, particularly multimedia content. One of our favourites are the TED video clips and podcasts ([www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)). These other references will aid, speed up and re-enforce learning. They will also provide additional motivation and inspiration. Importantly they can build teams and community.
3.  **Structured.** Good chapter or sectional structures will be used with sufficient room for creativity and reflection.
4.  **Stopping Cues.** We have retained the traditional chapter format of Book 1.0, and use them as stopping cues. They have been carefully selected so you can pause, reflect and allow the creative mind to get to work on the material. This is **important**. Ideally you should only read one chapter per day. If you speed read the book in a couple of days you will not allow the subconscious mind do its work. You will miss this important learning-then-creating experience.
5.  **Conversational.** Direct conversation and engaging language and tone will be used. We want our work to be like a personal conversation with you. We want to challenge you, motivate you, engage with you, and inspire you to take immediate and significant action in your life or your business, or both.
6.  **Templates and Checklists.** Templates and checklists will be provided to also encourage action, action that is focused and significant.
7.  **Holistic Learning.** Intellectual content will be accompanied with emotional and motivational content to marry mind, heart and soul. We call this Holistic Learning and our methodology will be drawn across formal and informal domains.
8.  **Knowledge + Motivation + Action.** Flowing from an Holistic approach, we want our work to provide knowledge, motivation and life or business changing action.
9.  **Humanism 2.0.** Our methodology covers several domains or disciplines. However, an over-arching principle is an evidence based, rational framework. This evidence will cover the different domains we draw from. Insodoing, we want to create a sound art and science foundation for the still emerging domain of Personal Development (PD). In this way, we want to take PD to a new level. We hope to move PD to the mainstream, so everyday people can dream and then devise a methodology to make their dreams real. These dreams can serve people and change the world, even if just in a small way. Enterprise and technology already enable this today. We call this Humanism 2.0- seeking to move to higher levels of humanism in life and in work. Moving beyond just money. Money is returned to its correct place as a means to a higher purpose. These principles were gifted to us by the giants of the first Renaissance.
10.  **Community.** We want you to be engaged with the content, us and our community. We will encourage readers to join our and the trusted online networks of others, so we can find kinship and community. Community can further aid learning and its implementation. Community can let ideas multiple and can build teams. Digital and non digital communities can be the meeting place of the enterprises of the future.
11.  **Feedback Loops.** From this engagement we want to provide to you a feedback loop on your application of the knowledge and tools in our work. Similarly, we hope you can do the same for us, so we too can constantly improve. Constant improvement or *Kaizen* is a core value for us and our organization. We also hope it will be a core value for you.

12.  **Multi Formats.** Various formats can be provided for those either with difficulties with language or who prefer other formats, eg audiobooks via Amazon. This is already easy to implement.
13.  **Living.** We want our work to be a living work. Today we read too many things and often they lie idle on our shelves or on our hard drives or other devices. We want our work to be a vital resource, a living resource you can read, re-read and come back to time and time again.
14.  **Readily Available.** Our work will be readily available in whatever format the vision of Book 3.0 takes. For the time being, it will be paper books , eBooks or digital products. But they will ready for the new learning platforms of the future. Being readily available will help us continue the democratization of knowledge and facilitate Enlightened Entrepreneurship.

We appreciate this checklist may seem like a tall order. Yet we believe if the idea of Book 3.0 can tick these boxes, in whatever form it or a platform takes, then we believe, together can make a mark. This is enough, more than enough for now.

As we mentioned, Book 3.0 can continue the **democratisation** of the world's knowledge. Not just general knowledge, but rare knowledge, important insights, and practical methods. We want Book 3.0 is be readily available to all people, particularly in the developing world. This will enable technological and perhaps countries 'leap-frogging' problems. For instance, those in India or Africa might leap-frog direct into renewable energy within a few years because of their understanding of Enlightened Entrepreneurship and the Four Creative Questions. At present, this is especially true for female entrepreneurs in both the developing and developed worlds. If we can facilitate this movement, even if in a small way, this will be enough.

Perhaps, our collective focus is to pass on the torch of the human spirit. Some may carry it a short distance, others a great distance. Each of us are essential in the chain. Each of us are essential in the journey.

If follows- 'when you rise, we *all* rise.'" This more powerful, multi-way dynamic view of the word rise, we write more formally as, 'Rise'. It is part of our philosophy of True Wealth. Like the democratisation of knowledge and ideas, it is available to all of us.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century will be more about human potential than anything else.

If you are interested in collaborating with us and others in this vision of the Book 3.0 or learning/ collaborative platforms of the future, then we would be very glad to hear form you. No matter what your expertise or interest area, please contact us at: <http://creatness.com/contact> .

## Bonus: Guiding Principles and Template For The First CQ, Love What you Do

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*“Don’t think about why you question, simply don’t stop questioning. Don’t worry about what you can’t answer, and don’t try to explain what you can’t know. Curiosity is its own reason. Aren’t you in awe when you contemplate the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvellous structure behind reality? And this is the miracle of the human mind—to use its constructions, concepts, and formulas as tools to explain what man sees, feels and touches. Try to comprehend a little more each day. Have holy curiosity”- Albert Einstein.*

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From my own experience and the study of the many entrepreneurs and others I have studied over the last three decades, it is possible to distil some guiding principles to help you find what you love. I will again use questions rather than statements, because they are a powerful tools for the creative mind.

1.  **Before Formal Education.** What did you love *before* formal education? What did you love before at least high school? Write these things down quickly, without editing or judgment, let them come from your creative mind. State them as simple tasks or even broad areas, e.g. “I loved to read”, “I loved words”, “I loved food”, “I loved aircraft”, “I loved making things with timber”.
2.  **Fascination.** What fascinated you, particularly as a child or in your youth? What were you *naturally* curious about? What did you want to pull apart and find out how it worked? What thing did you want to know about in *minute* detail? Did people say things like: ‘I cannot understand why you are so interested in... well if it make you happy...’
3.  **Inspired.** Who inspired you, particularly in your youth or in your 20s? Create a shortlist of people you either met, worked with, or you read about. What do they have in common in terms of traits, their chosen work? What fields did they come from? What did they dedicate their lives to?
4.  **Do for Free.** What would you do if no one paid you? What would you do if you could *not* ‘make a living from’ this activity? What would you do if you could not make a living from it *for the rest of your life*?
5.  **The Washing Toilets Test.** What would you still do during the day if this meant washing toilets at night? Many great entrepreneurs, artists and creatives did quite ordinary jobs to give life to their creative work. There is no shame in this, just clarity.

6.  **What you don't Love.** If you are stuck, then list what you do *not* love. Do this in a simple table, say in a Word document. Then on the right hand side, write down what you do love. You will see them slowly emerge from what is left over, or the opposites of what you don't love. This is a very simple yet powerful technique.
7.  **Limited Time.** If you turned 50 or some other scary age (if you see it that way), or time was limited because of a health or other issue, what would you do each day in the time you had left? Limited times forces the mind to find importance.
8.  **Flow.** What did you do where you experienced flow? Flow is where the task came naturally, it was easy, you enjoyed it intrinsically, it made you feel happy. You did it often through the power of your sub conscious mind.
9.  **Deep Time.** If you experience 'time flying' as you do something, this is the universe telling you this work is what you love. When you do this you are experiencing Deep Time.
10.  **Talent Fit.** What would you do that fits with your natural talents (more below). Answer this quickly, creatively. Again do not judge it or question your talents or say 'I have no talents'. Just write it down. This allows the creative, sub conscious mind to find what is natural quickly.
11.  **Meaning.** What would you do that has the greatest meaning for you? How does this meaning come about? Does it involve a grand idea, such as walking on mars, or inspiring a generation of children, or sportspeople, or mums, or indigenous people? How does this vision or meaning concept link to your values or core beliefs? Again, do this quickly and creatively, do not filter or judge it. Just write.
12.  **Growth Mindset.** Adopt a Growth Mindset, not a Fixed Mindset. That is, your mind can grow and become more capable through vision and training. Your capabilities are not fixed. Neuroscience has already proven this proposition. When you have a Growth Mindset, you can more easily uncover what you love and realize you and your work have no preconceived limitations.
13.  **Mastery.** The work you love usually involves a desire to master it. You will not want to 'just get by', or 'just pass', or 'just get 75%'. If we want to master something, intrinsically for its own sake, this is a very strong clue. It tells you this is an area you love, and an area likely to be your life's work.

Below I have given to you the: **Finding What you Love Checklist and Template** to use:

Rank	Principle	Answer
	Before Formal Education	
	Fascination	
	Inspired	
	Do for Free	
	The Washing Toilets Test	
	What you Don't Love	
	Limited Time	
	Flow	
	Talent Fit	
	Meaning	

The Rank column is there for you to use a ranking system, such as 1-3, or I prefer simply: \* to \*\*\* . This allows you to find the top three or so areas, and their answers quickly.

As you engage in this process, remember it is a creative process *first*. Let your creative mind run free when you first do it. Then afterwards you can undertake some analysis. You can see where answers **cluster** or repeat. You can rank them. You will then see the one or two things that you really love. It will significantly inform your life's work.

Hopefully as you do this exercise, you will see something very special from the clustering of your answers. You should start to hear yourself say things like:

- "That was always there....that was always the thing I ....."
- "Where did this thing I loved go?"
- "How did I lose sight of it?"
- "What got in the way?"
- "I can do no other."

The last one is a very important- "**I can do no other**". This will be the *ultimate* conclusion you reach from The Four Creative Questions. However like a small light, you should start to see it become clear at this early stage. It is like polishing a diamond, or looking for gold- you can begin to see the glimmer. There is more work to do, more polishing or dirt to remove, but the glimmer should drive you forward.

You may also start to track your life to date. See the shape of the years. Do this in a simple time line in a spreadsheet or a Word document. There are plenty of templates online if you need them.

You may realise you have drifted. Or your life to date has been shaped by the views or concepts of others. Particularly others who taught you the 'safe option.' Now is the time to not be reactive. Now is the time to be proactive. As you polish your diamond, this will give you a sense of power to proactively begin to create. Create and design the rest of your life. You might realise poor decisions, poor concepts, such as "I have just chased money and most of it has

slipped through my fingers.” Or “what I once valued or was taught does not matter any more.” Do not be alarmed if these thoughts crystalize. The creative questions are doing their job. All questions deliver a chain of thoughts that can facilitate growth.

You may also come to the very important realisation- **time is worth much more than money**. Money you can make again. Money can come and go. But time, once lost can never be found again. How we spend our time on the planet depends on our mindset and the choices we make. Strangely, these are the very things we often neglect. Say to yourself as you reach this point- “ I must make a change, I must take a stand, I must take charge of my life now....If not now, when?”

As you say or realise these things, accept peacefully, powerfully- *you are now in charge*. The diamond you are polishing, the light that is emerging is your **authentic self**. It was there all of the time. You are returning home. This is liberating. Once you make this turn, it is likely to be permanent. An important step in your journey.

This is an important **breakthrough moment** for you. Now let us continue with the other Four Creative Questions.

**Notes, Ideas and Reflections**

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*“How we spend our time on the planet depends on our mindset and the choices we make.”*

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## Contact Us

May we kindly thank you for your purchase of this educational resource. Naturally if you have any questions or enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us. We would welcome your **feedback** about this work, and if we can provide feedback for you, please do not hesitate to contact us. This is best done through our website's contact page: <http://creatness.com/contact>

*May I take this moment to wish you all the very best in your business and life journey. The road is often unclear and difficult. We hope, even if in a small way, to help and serve you through inspiration, education, and by providing a little light for the Tilly Lamp to make the narrow path clearer.*

Further information and useful resources can be found at the Creatness website: [www.creatness.com](http://www.creatness.com) .



Kind regards,

*Lee M. Spano*

Creatness International, Founder & CEO.



**CREATNESS INTERNATIONAL**

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