**2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side. (350 words)**

According to Google, creativity is “the use of original ideas to create something”. I conformed to this definition of creativity until last year, when I entered the DIDI Project Design Space Competition.

Together with a team of 5, I was challenged by Dettol Arabia to create a product that would reduce the water usage during handwashing while promoting correct handwashing techniques. With a thick black marker in our hands standing in front of a blank whiteboard, we started the brainstorming session. “Mini tank beside sink to temporarily store unused water”. No, I thought- too simple. “Sensor attached below tap”. Already exists, I continued. These ideas on their own were not ‘new’ enough. I was fixated on creating something entirely new that no one had ever thought of.

While staring at the board, I was reminded of my daily dose of Youtube two nights ago, where I watched ‘Alex the French Guy Cooking’ build a croissant-dough-roller-machine from planks of plywood. His mechanism to adjust the thickness of the croissant sheet intrigued me. It consisted of 2 rods that lifted up and down by altering the angle it protruded from.

Aha! I can use a similar mechanism to adjust the height of the tap’s lever, thus opening and closing the tap. If I could find a way to attach it to the bottom of the tap… Another *aha!* moment. I could combine my initial brainstorm ideas!

The rod itself doesn't have anything to attach to; solely a wide body placed below the tap’s aerator wouldn’t be very effective, but when merged together, we could create a more effective product. Over the next 3 months, we brought our idea to life, and while each idea wasn’t a completely ‘new’ idea, the combination of the two earned us gold.

I learned that innovative thinking sometimes doesn’t come from conventional places; for me, it came from a video on how to make a croissant machine. I no longer conform to the standard Google definition of creativity; creativity doesn’t always have to come from an original idea- it can be eyeing what others have overlooked, and seeing it as a silver lining to create innovative solutions.