Creative Research:
Is there a Recipe?

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How do I know?
I am not really creative ...

But here are some thoughts gathered from observing creative people ...

1. Be a sucker for elegance & beauty in everything around you

How would you design the next generation refrigerator?
How would you do an ad for a karate school?
What would have been a good title for this paper?
2. **Power of analogies**

Look outside research papers ... into real life. 
The problem and the solution both exist in a different form.

Example: I got inspired to solve wireless problems by thinking about RedBox.

3. **Don't work too hard ...**

Laziness, in moderation, can lead you to elegant solutions.

4. **Not elegant enough if it's not easy to convey**

Will Steve Jobs pick your project for the WWDC talk?
Will a VC get moved by your pitch?
Run it by others ... pay attention to everyone's reaction.

5. **Don't close your office doors to focus on research**

You will not realize when the world has changed outside ... 

[See Richard Hamming's "You and Your Research"]
6. Read less papers …

And among those that you read, distill it down to the one important idea … the real take away
Do the same with start-up ideas, apps, movies …
Once you are in the habit, do the same to your own papers.

7. You are not needed if you said 2+2=4

Try to say 2+2 = 1 in modulo 3 arithmetic …
Constantly ask yourself, in every aspect of life … are you being able to say something different?

To sum up …

If you are inherently creative, you are truly lucky.

For the rest of us:
All we need to do is acquire a taste for creativity …
and then keep generating ideas until we meet that taste.

Analogy: Digital photography for the common man
(keep taking until one of the photos is brilliant)

A final thought …

Reward

PhD Quality
Enjoy grad school to the fullest ...

Cheers!