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Magazine

Building a Creative Business Culture

By Steve Bannister
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Success in business today demands constant innovation. Businesses are continuously surveying the competitive landscape in search of any way to carve out their own unique niche. Ultimately, success comes from finding the hidden connections and insights which will eventually lead to the next must have product or service. In essence, business is a creative activity which relies on the creative ability of its people.

Creativity is not reserved for only a few gifted individuals. Everyone has creative abilities. We all lie somewhere on the creative continuum. The following are some suggestions to foster a creative spirit.

Surprise!

Too much routine is a sure creativity killer. Make efforts to surprise yourself by changing things up now a then. This includes little things such as changing your daily commute, trying something different for lunch and changing your usual office habits. Go further and surprise a co-worker by saying something that you wouldn't normally say or asking a question you wouldn't usually ask.

Getting it Write

Most creative people keep a diary, or notes to help them remember interesting but fleeting thoughts. Carry a notebook around with you for a week and write down different ideas that pop into your head. Don't worry about screening the crazy ideas; the key to great ideas is

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quantity not quality.

Excelling at Everything

Anything done well becomes enjoyable and so the more things you do with excellence and style, the more rewarding your life becomes. Take your daily routines and do them to the very best of your ability by staying completely in the moment. Make it a challenge to get more enjoyment from doing such things as brushing your teeth, taking a shower and eating breakfast. This habit of excellence will spill over into any new challenges that present themselves at work and at home.

Getting the Goal Going

Creative individuals are usually quite excited about starting every day because they are focused on a meaningful task which they want to accomplish. Start your enthusiasm the night before by deciding on what you want to accomplish the next day. Choose something that is relatively interesting and exciting; start small and visualize it happening. Slowly work yourself up to more complex goals.

Taking the Time

Being busy has become an obsession. Creative people know the importance of taking time to let life unfold as it should. This doesn't mean doing nothing or watching TV. Activities to get your unconscious creative mind going include those which require a physical component such as walking, showering, swimming, driving, and gardening. Take time in your day, week and year to reflect on your life.

Satisfying Surroundings

As the old saying goes, "A place for everything and everything in its place". Creative people are well aware of their surroundings. This doesn't necessarily mean that they are all neat freaks. In fact, they are sometimes stereotyped as the opposite. What is important is that you organize your environment so that you don't waste time looking for things and thereby interrupting your train of thought. You can also help build creative energy by including the following in your office: cherished objects to remind you of your goals and to keep you focused; trophies, diplomas, pictures and books to remind you of who you are and what you have accomplished.

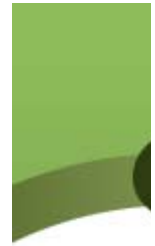
Tuning in to Life

Becoming more creative means first finding out what works for you and what doesn't work for you. Then comes the hard part: start doing more of what you love and less of what you hate. This may mean small changes such as spending more time with your spouse and children or it may mean much greater changes such as redefining your career. In order to reach your true creative potential it's important to maximize your experiences in everyday life.

Author Information

Steve Bannister is a positive change catalyst. He motivates people and organizations on how to get from planning to performance.

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