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Tap the Creative Inside You

By Shery Ma Belle Arrieta-Russ

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Imagination is the source of creativity. It's a place where unlimited possibilities reside. It's where pure energy lives.

People are innately imaginative and creative. However, most people are simply not conscious of their imaginative and creative selves.

Creativity is the cognitive process of developing a novel idea or concept.

Teresa M. Amabile, a creativity expert, argues that creativity is not a quality of a person. Rather, it is a quality of ideas, behaviors or products.

According to her, creativity has 3 basic ingredients:

1. Domain-Relevant Skills – These are skills associated with expertise in a relevant field (e.g., artistic ability, technical ability, talent, etc.).
2. Creativity-Relevant Skills – These skills include a cognitive style or method of thinking oriented towards exploring new directions, approaches that can be used to generate new ideas, and a work style conducive to developing creative ideas.
3. Task Motivation – Recent evidence suggests that a genuine interest in a task for its own sake, rather than for achieving external rewards such as money, enhances creativity.

So how can you develop your creativity? Here are 2 ways:

1. Provocative Operation, coined by Edward de Bono – This involves disrupting your thought patterns. It works with the premise that the more you are used to something, the less stimulating it is for your

thinking.

Application: Insert "interruptions" into your day. This can be writing in a different room or area, reading magazines you wouldn't normally read, tuning in to a different radio or television station, cooking and eating something different.

2. Forced Analogy – This method forces you to compare a concept, idea or problem with something else that it has little or nothing in common with. The results are new insights.

Application: Compare an emotion (e.g., elation, excitement, anxiety) with a tangible object (e.g., pen, chair, door). How is anxiety like a door?

When you need to tap the creative inside you, use these 2 techniques. Tap into your imagination and you enable yourself to create new things, come up with ideas you have never thought of before. Tap

into your imagination and you awaken your creativity.

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Shery is the creator of WriteSparks! – a software that generates over 10 *million* Story Sparkers for Writers. Download WriteSparks! Lite for free –

Unlock the Hidden Creativity of Your Employees

By Chuck Yorke

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To release creativity in employees, managers must get involved in their employees' work. Look at each employee as if he or she is the expert on the job and tap into their creative energy.

We've learned that we can use the energy of the wind and the sun. We've also learned to harness energy stored in the form of coal and oil. Creative energy, like any other kind of energy, can be harnessed and managed.

When we engage our employees and tap into their creative energy, they can show us ways to improve. All employees can be thinking about how to reduce costs, looking at safety issues, reducing wastes, and improving the environment, while at the same time developing skills to identify, articulate and communicate those kinds of things.

What can people do with their creative energy?

Michael took some wood, cardboard, and tape and made a 'flipper' to close boxes, eliminating the work he was doing.

Tap the Creative Inside You

Omar used a cardboard box to protect coworkers from a hot pipe. Later the box was replaced by a plastic coated wire guard.

Claudia designed a fixture to hold bubble wrap she used for packaging.

Physicians at UCLA Medical Center created software for storing medical images on Apple iPods, making the results mobile.

Hyman Lipman took an eraser and put it on top of a pencil. I know you've used the result of his creative energy.

So go out and ask your employees, "What can you do to make your job easier, more interesting, build your skills, and help the company save some money, improve safety, reduce defects, improve customer service, and reduce the time it takes us to deliver our products and our services?"

Involvement is demanding and requires listening. Any process, any product, any service can be made better in some way, somehow. So involve your people and tap into their creative energy.

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Chuck Yorke is an organizational development and performance improvement specialist, trainer, consultant and speaker. He is co-author of "All You Gotta Do Is Ask," a book which explains how to

promote large numbers of ideas from employees. Chuck may be reached at ChuckYorke@yahoo.com

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