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The Five I's Of Innovation

Each of us have great ideas, but we get stuck in the process of taking them from idea, to implementation and ultimately, to achieving results. Here are some tips, techniques, and strategies that may help spur creativity and assist you in implementing your ideas - getting results quicker and with more ease.

Five I's of Innovation: Inspiration, Incubation, Illumination, Invest and Implement

Stage 1: Inspiration

Faced with a variety of challenges today, how can we stay inspired and how do we inspire others?

From the first discovery of a problem, or challenge, to the discovery of a solution our brain naturally goes through a series of stages. The first stage 'Inspiration' is where we discover a challenge or problem and decide to look for solutions. At this stage we begin exploring ideas and options, but we have not yet solved the problem.

If we are not inspired we will not perform at our best. To succeed in today's economy we need to fire up that right half of the brain - the artistic, creative, big picture thinking, or inspirational side. We need to put it to work along with the left side - the logical, linear, bottom line side - the one that has ruled the business world so long. If we want to get ahead in today's business world we should be recruiting new business leaders from schools of fine arts. The MBA of today should be an MFA - someone who is capable of using both sides of the brain -whole-brain thinking.

Successful businesses and successful people are the ones that nurture creativity and provide the investment of time and resources to implement ideas. Creative thinking and problem solving is admired and (in principle) generally encouraged in organizations. Although interpersonal and organizational changes can help unleash creativity, psychological barriers can arise during each stage of the creative process.

These barriers often stem from our uncertainty about ourselves - we feel, to some degree, insignificant and/or incompetent. These uncertainties typically distort our creative abilities since they lead us to try to avoid being ignored, humiliated, embarrassed and rejected. Recognizing, and acknowledging, these

feelings is the first step toward removing the barriers to creativity, and ultimately, toward feeling empowered to generate and implement great ideas.

In the Inspiration stage, avoid judging the ideas; and even more important, avoid judging your teammates during the process. It's like driving a car; if you simultaneously put one foot on the gas pedal and the other on the brake you won't get anywhere. If you judge the ideas while generating them you risk killing the ideas. While in the process of generating ideas you will have greater success by giving yourself and/or your team, an idea quota and a time limit. Then as quickly as possible generate as many ideas as you can. When you reach your destination (the time limit and or the quantity of ideas) put the brake on and review the ideas.

Focus on Your Passion:

Researchers followed a group of 1,500 people over a period of 20 years. At the outset of the study, the group was divided into two groups.

- Group A: 83 percent, who were embarking on a career chosen for the prospects of 'now' in order to do what they wanted later.
- Group B: 17 percent, who had chosen their career path for the reverse reason; they were going to pursue what they wanted to do now and worry about the money later.

At the end of the 20 years, 101 of the 1,500 had become millionaires. All but one 100 out of 101 were from Group B, the group that had chosen to pursue what they loved! The key to success is loving what you do. When you love what you are doing getting paid for doing it seems like icing on the cake. You are more motivated, you have more energy, you feel more creative and daring, and you end up doing it better.

As a speaker I invite audiences to "look for the catalysts in their life that ignite creativity and fire up their imagination!"

What are the catalysts in your life that keep you passionate?

"Ignite Innovation! The Art of Turning Ideas Into Action."

If you would like to find out more about finding Inspiration join me on September 21 I will be conducting a complimentary 55 minute tele-seminar. In this session I will explore the 5I's of Innovation.

(Details of the tele-seminar will follow in the next issue of "Igniting Ideas").

To your success,

David Saxby

David Saxby, President of Spark Communications, Inc. David delivers presentations on innovation, sales and marketing . He is a co-author of four books: Sales Gurus Speak Out, Customer Service Goldmine, Quantum Success and Foundational Success.

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