

News and Views on Creativity and Innovation

creative4business

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Dear Dave,

Here is an opportunity to air alternative suggestions that might help or even solve some of our issues. Although called 'Dear Dave' because of our Prime Minister you can send your suggestions for your own country.

A topical gripe just now. The UK is an island surrounded by sea and battered by wind. We still have lots of coal buried underground. Why is it that in a few months time we will have to import most of the energy that we use? Where is the clear policy on this?

Please send in your suggestions and they will be published in future

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first edition of **Innovation Matters** for 2013. Keen readers will realise that it is a while since the last issue hit their Inbox. This is because from now on the newsletter will be published in the last week of each month rather than the first.

The first article this month looks at the **difference between serendipity and luck**. We also take a look at a new kind of **leadership**, something I have tagged as **Entrepreneurship** and there are 12 phrases to avoid, especially if you are trying to foster a **climate of creativity**.

A new keynote has been developed and was given its premier in January. It went down well so if you think '**Zen and the Art of Creativity**' might be of interest to your organisation then please get in touch.

There is currently a New Year offer on workshops. Just £100 plus expenses for a half day workshop for up to 15 people. This offer will end by the time the next issue appears so the message is 'use it or lose it'.

Don't forget that previous issues of Innovation Matters can be viewed by visiting our website and navigating to the [archives](#) page.

Happy Reading,

Derek Cheshire



editions along with any other ideas that we stumble across.

Luck Or Serendipity - What Is The Difference?

In a nutshell, serendipity is Luck Plus. Some people say that you can make your own luck, you can't. What you can do is increase the potential of Serendipity. Here is a good example which I frequently use.

A simple but powerful example of the power of the serendipity comes from Japan Railways. During the construction of a tunnel through Mt. Tanigawa, engineers encountered many problems with water. Just as they began to design a traditional draining solution enter an enterprising railway worker. He thought that the water tasted so good it ought to be bottled and sold as a premium brand mineral water rather than simply pumping it away.



And so "Oshimizu" was born. It became so popular that Japan Railways installed Oshimizu vending machines on every one of its platforms. Marketing material emphasises the purity of Mt. Tanigawa's snow which is the source of the water and also the slow percolation through the rock which adds minerals. The product grew to include juices as well as iced and hot teas and coffees. By 1994, sales of Oshimizu branded drinks had risen to \$47 million.

So Luck or Skill? Well as we can see from the Japan Railways example an unexpected event is nothing on its own. We need luck and an ability to react appropriately in a corporate environment.

So what does serendipity add? 'Luck' was having unwanted water in the railway tunnel and a railway worker who thought he would sample it. The 'Plus' is having a company culture that allowed the railway worker to put forward his idea and for Japan Railways to examine the possibilities and act accordingly. Japan Railways did not manufacture luck but were able to profit from unexpected situations due to being prepared.

Entrepreneurship - Leadership for Today

Entrepreneurship is a term that I have invented to describe the qualities and behaviours required for the type of leader that all organisations need NOW. This is why I strongly believe that in calling it Leadership for TODAY not tomorrow. Who wants to wait for something that is going to improve the fortunes of their organisation?

So what are we talking about? Borrowing Entropy from the second law of thermodynamics we have the concept of chaos or randomness which always increases. I am not suggesting that we make our organisations become ever more chaotic. I would like to give you two ideas to think

about for now.

Firstly, you may remember a science experiment at school that introduced you to Brownian motion. Particles within smoke were shown to dart around like the lottery balls on a Saturday night Lotto draw. We also know that when people are allowed to interact then ideas tend to be created, modified and come to life. By increasing the 'organisational temperature' we can increase the likelihood of of people interacting (rather like our smoke particles). This means more ideas (and also an improved culture).

out-of-the-box
issue transparency
empowerment
unique
iconic
passion
role

Secondly, we cannot let chaos or ambiguity increase indefinitely, nor should we waste our time trying to control it completely. Let us use another metaphor here. Imagine we have a flammable material in a barrel with no openings in the barrel. Once ignited, the barrel will explode unless we spend more and more energy trying to contain the fire/explosion. What if we do try and contain the flammable material but leave an opening for combustible gases. We are not now expending so much energy but we have now built a rocket!!

Metaphor is the best way to express the ideas but they do translate readily into business. We do not want traditional constraints (managers) but want visionary leaders who will allow a certain degree of organised, focused and healthy chaos. The leaders will set the direction but the organisation will actually be run by those at the sharp end.

Your comments are welcome!

12 Phrases That You Should Not Use At Work

You come up with good ideas at work and take them to the boss. Do you here any of these phrases in reply? Even worse, do you use these phrases when talking to your colleagues? They tend to kill ideas and have a nasty effect on organisational culture too.

- #01 : yes but...
- #02 : we have no time for that
- #03 : can't be done
- #04 : let's be realistic
- #05 : that's not logical
- #06 : we need more research
- #07 : not my responsibility
- #08 : that is a MAJOR change
- #09 : the market is not ready yet
- #10 : we will consider the option
- #11 : that's in our future plans
- #12 : since when are you the expert ?



There are more 'baddies' out there and you will know them when you hear/use them. Beware anything that dismisses ideas prematurely or prevents collaboration.

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