

Jan / Feb 2014



Welcome to our New Year Edition

"Become the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily, even if you had no title or position"

This edition is all about maximising your effectiveness for 2014. By starting on a good roll, setting goals and encouraging creativity, the year will take off to a strong start and power along. Over the page I hope you enjoy the tips on brainstorming and encouraging innovation. Wishing you successful growth through 2014.

7 Ways to Unleash Ideas in 2014

How can you shorten those times when creativity seems to have gone? The key is unlocking your "Rainforest" -- an ecosystem of innovation - where new concepts can grow and businesses can thrive.

1. **Get your own self together** - Take leadership training. Meditate. Ask friends how you can do better.
2. **Bring influential people together** - You need to foster a similar connectivity in virtual space, because influencers are the most diverse
3. **Focus on process, because process equals substance** - As a leader, your goal is to instill creative confidence by making your team comfortable enough to stretch outside their comfort zone.
4. **Make it fun** - Shared joy builds bonds and fuels the creative process.
5. **Write down your social contract** - Get the members of your team to develop a social contract and then have everyone sign it. Rituals unite people and help them remember their promises.
6. **Give people toys to play with** - Team members fill each section with questions. If convened the right way, the results can be powerful.
7. **Bridge social divides** - Ask yourself, who on your team isn't collaborating with whom, what's blocking the collaborations and how would you encourage those conversations? Perhaps modifying incentives can foster greater communication.

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3 Tips for Getting your Creative Brain Muscles Maximised

"You are fully responsible for everything you are, everything you have and everything you become."

It's possible to boost your brain power constantly and on-the-go, by incorporating brain-boosting and creativity increasing activities into your daily routine. Here are 3 activities recommended for busy entrepreneurs:

- 1. Give your ideas a home.** There are simple tools that make noticing and collecting fresh ideas and inspiration easy when you are out and about, reading newspapers and magazines or surfing the web. Give yourself 30 minutes to an hour each week to review what you've collected and you might be surprised by what ideas you've come up with.
- 2. Travel by foot.** We all need to go places during the day. Why not make one trip on foot, if possible? Research shows that even a 20-minute stroll can clear your head and make room for fresh ideas. Many of our most productive ideas come not while we're trying to force them out in the office, but when we're away from our desks.
- 3. Interact with stimulating people and places.** Happy hour drinks may seem like a trivial part of office culture, but it's a great way to interact with other people in a causal, low-stress setting. If you work for yourself, you might even consider setting up your own happy hour where you visit a local cafe or bar around 5 or 6 p.m. for 45 minutes or an hour with the sole purpose of engaging with others.

Brainstorming: the Richard Branson Way!

"Dream big dreams!

Only big dreams have the power to move your mind and spirit."

Here are 8 tips on how to get the most from your brainstorming sessions.

- 1. To think outside the box, avoid getting into one.** You and your staff should try to be innovative in every aspect of your work, every day.
- 2. Choose a creative environment.** Diversions like exercising or listening to music might help everyone to relax and then go back to work refreshed.
- 3. Define the Problem, not the Solution.** Remind everyone about the problem you're trying to solve, and keep working toward that objective.
- 4. Keep the ideas fresh.** You just might find that employees elsewhere in your business have great ideas.
- 5. Make sure everyone is heard.** The quiet guy sitting in the corner may have excellent suggestions, but unless you give everyone the chance to speak, he won't be heard over the person shouting at the top of his voice.
- 6. Write it all down.** Any ideas that may come up during your session should be recorded so not forgotten.
- 7. Make the best ideas a reality.** Remember to say yes to potentially good ideas that come out of brainstorming sessions.
- 8. Listen and follow through-- then lead.** You sometimes have to trust your ability to lead your company to achieve things that others may think are impossible. This does involve risk, but on the whole, you should pay close attention to your gut reaction about how to solve a problem and forge ahead.

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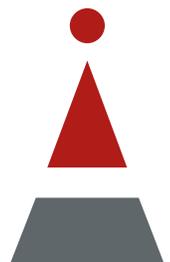
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