

News on Creativity and Innovation related topics

January 2007

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first edition of Innovation Matters for 2007. In this edition we have a bit of a dig at **best practice** specifically with respect to innovation. Next is an ice breaker with a difference that you can use in many different ways, and finally there is our usual selection of trivia.

Finally, a big thank you to Michael Corbett of [Product Box](#) for drawing my attention to the next item.

Sir Ken Robinson spoke about Creativity and Education at last year's TED forum. If you feel passionately about Creativity and in particular about how we remove it from children at school, then this is the video for you. Even if Creativity does not float your boat, take the time to listen to an incredibly entertaining platform speaker. Ensure that you have 15 minutes to spare and then [click here](#). You will not be disappointed.

Do you need some great ideas for new products or services in the New Year? If so, then this might be the workshop for you. Delivered jointly by **PRD Partnership** and **In Press PR**. Put **March 13th 2007** into your diaries and **book now**. Get further details from [their website](#).

Happy reading

Derek Cheshire



Innovation why best practice could be bad for you

Even though Quality is no longer the buzzword that it was in the 1980s, its offshoot, Best Practice

unfortunately lives on. In the private sector this does not have a huge impact because many organisations try and keep their cards close to their chests and often reinvent the wheel . In academia or public sector organisations, the sharing of Best Practice is widespread. In some cases, the accompanying knowledge is also transferred, but the dangers of doing this are great.

If someone tells you to do something but without telling you why, you would think twice about doing it, particularly if it might hurt. Often, organisations adopt working practices and tools simply because someone else is using them successfully and they have no idea why that course of action should work in a new situation or what the side effects might be.

For instance, I have a classic car which occasionally has a problem with a sticking carburettor float. The remedy is to tap it gently with a small hammer. Someone else might deduce that the way to fix a car which has stopped without explanation is to hit it under the bonnet with a hammer. I have made use of some knowledge that was transferred with the Best Practice . This is just one of the reasons why knowledge transfer is an important part of any Innovation Programme.

If we look at the world of Literature or Art, then copying what someone else has created is known, rather bluntly, as plagiarism. This is quite rightly frowned upon. Even if the originator gives you permission to duplicate the work, the original soul or emotion that went into the work is lost.

Next time you adopt Best Practice, think about what else you should be transferring into your organisation to make sure that it works.

[Read the full article here ...](#)



Still Life Ice Breaker

When you take part in a workshop, do you cringe when the facilitator suggests creeping death i.e. where you each take it in turns to tell the other group members your name, what your job is etc? Well this is a technique that you can use in a workshop, appraisal or coaching/mentoring situation.

If you have read Charles Handy's latest book, The New Philanthropists, you will see that this is familiar.

Give the group some time to come up with three objects each such as a flower, an object from childhood and an object from their current life or job. These can be drawn, modelled or painted and should be

arranged so that the most important object is at the front (and hence larger and in focus), least important behind.

At the end of the allotted time period, ask for volunteers to describe their still life. Not only will this break the ice, you will find out information that would not ordinarily come to light, as well as information that will guide how you conduct the rest of the session.

You can also do this yourself, but be honest about the objects that you choose and the way you arrange them.

[Find more techniques the YES you can! ebook series ...](#)



Business Trivia

Here is just a small selection of business trivia to start off 2007:

- If Ralph Lauren hadn't changed his name, his self-titled brand would be known as Ralph Lifshitz
- 7 Up originally contained the tranquiliser Lithium (it was removed in 1950)
- Children under 5 consume 23 percent of all Cheerios sold
- Residents of Hawaii consume more Spam than residents in all other states
- Somewhere in the world, a Tupperware demonstration starts every 2 seconds

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