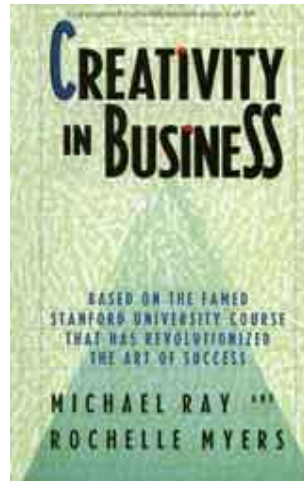


Creativity In Business

**Based On The Famed Stanford University
Course That Revolutionized The Art Of
Success**



By
Michael Ray and Rochelle Myers

Doubleday New York, 1989
ISBN 0-385-24851-2
222 pages

BusinessSummaries.com is a business book summaries service. Every week, it sends out to subscribers a 9- to 12-page summary of a best-selling business book chosen from among the hundreds of books printed out in the United States. For more information, please go to <http://www.bizsum.com>.

Official Web Site of the Book

<http://www.michael-ray.com/creativity.shtml>

Official Web Site of the Authors

<http://www.michael-ray.com/>

The big idea

“Live your life like a work of art”.

Business is actually a very creative form of art. It integrates creativity and imagination (business plans and ideas) people skills, organizational skills, and requires a focus and drive that many artists possess. This book guides you to reach down to your core Essence - your inner creative resource that can fuel your personal and professional life.

The Qualities of Essence**Intuition**

Great business leaders, scientists, inventors, artists, designers, and even the ordinary person on the street have experienced Intuition, the inner voice or gut feel that tells you something will work out or not. Learn to listen to your intuition. It's a very essential quality of your creative essence.

Will

Take responsibility and action. When you have a compelling vision and mission, you must also have the execution or will power, the necessary drive to see things to fruition and follow through on your ideas. If you live up to this quality you are among the great businesspeople who use their strong will to make their visions a reality.

Joy

The simple truth is, if you enjoy what you do for a living, you don't feel like it is a chore or a job. When you have balance within yourself and all other aspects of your life, you experience the joy of the flow of creativity.

Strength

Creative business people take appropriate risks. Do not be afraid to be different and swim upstream. The road less traveled is sometimes the better way for you to find yourself and the right kind of business that lets you get in touch with your real nature. Great companies like Apple, Dell, and Microsoft would not have come about if it weren't for the strength of character of their founders.

Compassion

Operate from compassion and nurture other's inner creativity and see how your whole business life and personal life works in harmony.

To summarize, the five qualities of Essence will bring a corresponding reaction:

Intuition = design

Will = unity

Joy = balance

Strength = contrast

Compassion = harmony

If at first you don't succeed, surrender.

Your creativity flows from the Essence if the outcome is not so planned, and allows for modification during the creative process. Just like a painter who keeps modifying his painting until he feels it is finished, so should you find the best way to unleash your ideas.

A fine example is how Steve Jobs of Apple Computer designed the Mac product with his partners. They started out with nothing, and built the system for people who could not afford the ones available at the time. Their market: friends and themselves. They peddled the design; finally they found one customer who ordered based on a prototype. The idea was to deliver fully assembled, pre-sold computers – by convincing suppliers to provide parts worth 10,000 dollars on 30-days credit, they shipped 50 off, got paid cash, and paid off the debt in 29 days. You can actually start from nothing and end up with something if you just modify your business plan as you go!

The easiest way to surrender is to simply do the work that is in front of you.

Four general pathways to surrendering:

1. Drop mental striving
2. Apply yourself to a task
3. Maintain a spirit of inquiry
4. Acknowledge that you don't know how it's going to turn out/practice detachment from outcome and focus on enjoying the creative process

Turn off your ego!

Surrender could also be described as maintaining a kind of subconscious energy/urgency about the situation, while avoiding beating your conscious mind to death thinking about it. In other words, don't try so damn hard. Just let things go and let things happen. There will always be things you cannot control that will change situations and maybe delay your plan, but maybe there is a hidden reason for whatever happens.

"The world is ruled by letting things take their course." – Lao Tsu

Shutting up the big bad VOJ

What is the VOJ? It's what the authors' students coined the Voice of Judgment. We are sometimes too hard on ourselves and judge ourselves whenever we suffer a temporary setback or failure. Then we add even more negative energy when we allow others to judge us for these failures. Stop judging yourself and others and set your creative spirit free.

Managing life without the VOJ

Maybe if you ask yourself “What’s the worst possible thing that could happen to me if I screw this up?” you’ll find out the answer is not so bad. Let’s say you lose your job, so you end up selling off your car and belongings and taking that long holiday you’ve been aching for! Go live in that little beach cottage for six months and write that book you’ve been scribbling down on pieces of napkins during your lunch breaks. Who knows, maybe losing your job will force you to finally open your own business, change your career, go back to school, or concentrate on your family life – all the things you’ve been putting off for later. Well, maybe you shouldn’t wait until it’s too late!

How to destroy judgment:

1. Pay attention to your thoughts. Listen to your innermost needs.
2. Saying the judgment out loud over and over makes it lose its effect on you and shows just how ridiculous it is.
3. Practice your curious nature and try to avoid judging everything! When we immediately label or judge something, we leave no opportunity for learning about it.
4. Exercise is a good way to keep your mind focused away from the VOJ
5. Try yoga concentration/mediation techniques
6. Get a piece of paper and in the center of a circle write down your Goal. On one column underneath, write down all the things that are blocking you from achieving it: your fears, insecurities, excuses, and judgments. This will show you in black and white how ridiculous they are!

Pay Attention!

Talk less and listen more. Everybody hates the boss who loves to listen to the sound of her own voice. At your next meeting, encourage others to talk and practice your listening skills.

See as an artist sees the world.

Be observant of the people and things around you. “There is so much beauty in the world...” as the young filmmaker in American Beauty tells us. Capture it on that little video camera inside your head.

Look at a photograph for a long time and let this moment pass without interruption. You will begin to notice things that you didn’t before.

Ask dumb questions.

“Ask questions. The stupidity of people comes from having an answer for everything. The wisdom of the novel comes from having a question for everything.”

-Milan Kundera

Understand the creative nature of questioning:

- A question is an opening to creation
- A question is an unsettled and unsettling issue
- A question is an invitation to creativity
- A question is a beginning of an adventure
- A question seductive foreplay
- A question is a disguised answer
- A question pokes and prods that which has not yet been poked and prodded.
- A question is a point of departure
- A question has no end and no beginning
- A question wants a playmate

Why question?

-Remember the tale of the emperor's new clothes? A child's honest question revealed the truth and opened people's eyes to it. Be like that innocent child.

-Questions allow you to look at old things in a new way.

Work for clarity.

- What is it I don't yet understand?
- What is it that I'm really feeling?
- What is it that I'm not seeing?
- What voice is speaking? Is it Me or the VOJ?

A sample of ruthless questions to ask yourself:

1. At this moment, what is my aim?
2. What's really going on?
3. What is the VOJ saying?
4. Is this who I am, or who I'm attempting to be?
5. What is it that this person provokes in me?
6. What is the objective reality?
7. What is the emotional truth?
8. What pain am I avoiding?
9. What stubbornness am I holding on to?
10. Is this choice the same as my real choice?

Inspiration and implementation

Do only what is easy, effortless, and enjoyable.

"It is your work in life that is the ultimate seduction." – Pablo Picasso

Everyone wants to find quality and love in their work. The best way to find your purpose is to avoid distasteful, depressing and difficult work. Find a job you love, and pour your heart and soul into it. The most important thing is to be yourself.

It also helps to take the long view of life. Try to imagine yourself in your sixties and seventies. Look back on your younger years and discover what you wish you could've done. Most elder people regret the things they were not able to do. This is how you come to realize your time is borrowed. Why waste it doing things that do not reflect your real goals and dreams?

Drawing a Mandala

This is an exercise that will help you concentrate and focus your life. Mandala is the Sanskrit word for circle or center. You will see that everything in nature can have a mandala form, be it the atom, the orbits of the planets around the sun, the shape of the earth, your daughter's eyes. We recommend you use a compass and ruler to draw your mandala. Be totally focused on this exercise and do not listen to music or doodle while on the phone. Drawing a mandala lets you see the joy of creating. Heidi Roizen the head of the company that developed ClickArt (a program that uses graphic images for Apple's Macintosh computers) was probably helped by this course's stimulating mandala exercises.

How do you live out your life purpose?

- Rank tasks in order
- Break tasks into small pieces
- Do one thing at a time!
- Change your attitude/learn to love your work
- Know when to quit
- Be good to yourself. Treat yourself /reward yourself for every task accomplished.
- Make a game of it
- Use a mantra
- Do what is convenient, what you want to do, and what is true to your nature.

Don't think about it!

Just like Albert Einstein said, the best ideas come when you could be shaving, or perhaps in the shower. Breathe easy and take a walk during your lunch hour. The answer to your business problem may reveal itself in the park, at the grocery, or in a baseball game. You never know...

Stop worrying!

Don't bring your work home with you. If you delegate properly, trust the people around you, Allow enough time to do the important things, and don't forget to give yourself a break.

Do what is in front of you

“The personal and professional parts of your life become balanced when you are aware of your purpose and consider the aspects of your personal life worthy of total attention.”

Address your spectrum of stress

It helps to write down what your current problems are and what requires action. List down problems that need greater clarity (usually personal) and which stressful situations call for development of a new attitude.

Yes or no?

When faced with a major decision, ask yourself to make a choice, yes or no? There really is no wrong or right answer; it's just the answer that feels best for you. Use your intuition.

Be ordinary

You don't need a lot of wealth to have inner peace. Do you have inner peace while you are performing a certain activity? Did Martin Luther King leave a lot of money to his heirs, or did he leave a legacy of peace? Which is more important?

Rethink your approach to money

Money will come when you are doing the right thing for you.
Money doesn't exist in certain worlds.

Take a good look at yourself.

It takes courage to admit what you can do and what you can be. Use the clustering exercise to see how you visualize things. From one word, “money” you can freely associate other words like “basic” “want more” “travel” etc

Bring your personal creativity into the business world

Four states of mind will show you the way:**To Be**

Live in tune with your environment. Live life to the fullest. Who do you need to be?

To See

Observe and understand in the purest possible way. Sharpen your powers of perception. Allow yourself to see things more clearly.

To Detach

Try to live in this world but do not become of this world. The ego will trap you into thinking you will always be a banker, a polo player, a secretary, an artist. Don't

be trapped in your role, it is not the inner you. You are not your job. You are not your company. You are not your product.

To Love

Be concerned for you co-workers. Let people work with you and not for you.

When you practice all these states of mind, you will not have to work so hard at creativity in business, you will already Be creative.

Enough said, now practice.