

Exciting News:

Innovation Book Club

Book: "One" by Lance Secretan

Facilitator: Professional business coach and local entrepreneur Ray Savage

12 week program running February 15- May 3

Kings CED Upstairs Boardroom, 35 Webster Street, 2nd side door

Cost \$50.00 for entire program.

Coffee and snacks provided.

To register reply to Marianne Gates, marianne@kingsced.ns.ca, 678-0393

Limited numbers of seats available so please register early to avoid disappointment! Deadline February 1, 2007.

When registering please indicate your preferred time:

Thursday at either 7:00am-8:00am or 8:00am-9:00 am

(Decision based on majority.)

Survey Says:

Did you read the book "One" given to all Innovation 101 Participants?

Please email back YES or No

Quote:

"Organizations are living systems, not machines, because they are made up of people. As innovators in a living system, we must learn to think more like gardeners than mechanics. When we view the organization as a living system, our perspective becomes one of how to provide the right environment or context for the organization to fulfill its purpose."

-- Andrew Papageorge, in GoInnovate!

Interesting Website:

<http://www.thinksmart.com/>

Feature Article:

Jumpstarting Innovation in Your Organization

From above website

Do You Have GRIT? Innovation doesn't just start at the top. You don't have to wait for the CEO or the Executive Management Committee. Most of the best innovation initiatives we've seen were grassroots innovation teams

(GRIT) and came from ordinary people in the middle of the organization ... people who somehow came to understand the importance of innovation and wanted to do something about it.

Recently, members of the Innovation Leaders Community, a group of innovation leaders from around the world (for more information: www.thinksmart.com), gathered in an online brainstorming session to generate ideas about what could be done to jumpstart grassroots innovation. They came up with about 120 ideas ... many pretty ridiculous, of course ... but many that you could do today in your organization.

Here's the best of those ideas ... followed by some that were pretty "stupid and ridiculous"* but might stimulate some additional thinking. "Stupid and ridiculous" is a terrific technique for stimulating new ideas. Just have people think of 3 really stupid and ridiculous ideas. That releases a lot of inhibitions, energizes thinking, prompts a lot of laughter and usually pulls up some great ideas.

Ideas YOU Can Use Today

- Hold a "dump old ideas" brown bag lunch. Ask, "What's one thing we can stop doing so we have more time for innovation?"
- Always ask "What else could we do?" when thinking about projects or problems.
- Always ask: does this support our vision? Does this create value for our customers?
- Invite customers to come in for a "What Bugs You?" session. Listen.
- Ask people three things they know that few people know they know - match people at random, compare their lists, ask "Using this new information, what breakthroughs could you come up with?"
- Become an "idea matchmaker." Gather new ideas and create mini-personal ad newsletter. "Great idea in search of champions..."
- Hold a "Blue Sky Day" - Have people build models or create graphics of their craziest ideas. Display them in the halls or the cafeteria and have sticky notes or index cards available so people can make suggestions or comments.
- Bring in an outsider who's good at seeing the "essence" of things - to help find a fresh perspective.
- Build a model of the challenge to be able to look at it, touch it, etc.—this will prompt more ideas.
- Build a graffiti wall or an idea collage wall.
- Constantly communicate innovation in corporate newsletter or email...recognize innovators, post innovative articles, etc.
- Create a badge system where people get stars for the contribution to the innovation system.
- Create a new "Safety for Ideas" campaign. Post the number of days (minutes?) your department or organization has gone without a premature negative judgment of a new idea.
- Create a Perfect World wall graphic that is created by employees. Use it to stimulate conversation about how to make the work environment a more perfect world.
- Create a typical public school classroom type office
- Create a Whoopee Cushion award ... give to employees when they come up with ideas.
- Create an "innovation coffeehouse" in your company - a relaxed place where people can go to gather in informal groups & solve the world's problems
- Create an email brainstorm on intranet.
- Create an idea fund: Company puts a buck into a fund for every idea contributed...funds could go to charity or be used for parties, etc.
- Create an idea gift exchange. It's always easier to solve someone else's problem. Have people generate ideas for each other's opportunities, projects or problems.
- Create an idea slot machine.
- Create an Innovation Faire where people create posters or displays of innovation projects that have been completed or that they are working on and would like help with.
- Create an innovation flag that flies from the top of the building.

- Create an internal idea team that will help managers creatively solve their everyday problems.
- Have a "Failure Party" where everyone shares their worst idea or biggest failure. Make sure management participates. Make it fun.
- Create an internal version of ideas.com for your intranet.
- Create Learning Circles where people come together to share their insights and the lessons of the day/week.
- Hold teleconferences or electronic brainstorms with a bunch of customers.
- Declare a purple idea day where people generate really far-out ideas. Or, declare a red idea day—for those ideas that are too hot to handle. Carry the color scheme throughout.
- Develop a "metaphor of the day/week" process where everyone goes back to that metaphor when thinking about opportunities, projects or problems.
- Do a financial analysis of the potential \$\$\$ value of the un-realized ideas people have.
- Do an Open Space session as a demo of the technique and to get ideas on "what innovation means to people."
- Hold a "What could we do to PREVENT creativity and innovation?" brainstorm. Then do the opposite.
- Form Idea teams--groups that meet for one coffee break per week to generate ideas on specified topics. This could also be a way to get people to work with people outside their normal work group.
- Give a prize for the best "bad idea."
- Give crayons to everyone and let them write on the boardroom table.
- Give examples of innovative ideas related to your business and get innovators on same page.
- Have a "Gong Show Idea Fair" -- employees put on performances and demonstrations of their ideas.
- Have an Idea Day and put blank paper on walls throughout environment, hand out toys, have purple food in cafeteria, etc. Make sure the ideas get processed and some are implemented.
- Have an Innovation Story Hour where people tell stories of innovation processes they've been involved in. Identify the principles behind these stories and talk about how to create an environment that supports innovation.
- Help your CEO be a better champion of innovation. Send him or her articles about innovation, stories of innovation efforts in other organizations, and reports on the results of your GRIT efforts.
- Hold an Idea Olympics.
- Idea Game Show in Cafeteria once/week
- Have a customer of the week program where people can see and hear real customers.
- In a meeting, carve out a "total agreement" time - all ideas must be agreed with and built upon to find the "greatness" in them - no negativity!
- Show a movie ... Apollo 13, Star Trek, Chocolat and others can stimulate conversations around innovation.
- Invite your friends to come out and "play"--invite friends from other companies to an idea generation party.
- Make a provocative poster that says, "Rumor has it that our competitor is making time for innovation."
- Make creativity such a high priority that every staff person needs to attend a far-out conference or event 3x a year.
- Offer free short Creativity Techniques Workshops during working time. Make people practice there.
- Create an idea piggy bank where people not only put in an idea, but they also put in a coin. Proceeds go to a charity or employee activity.
- Play idea charades.
- Do a scenario planning session - where one scenario involves a future with no new ideas.
- Post a "What Bugs You" place (whiteboard or intranet) and use the comments as stimulus for brainstorming sessions.
- Post InnovationDNA posters everywhere.
- Post white boards in every coffee room - post a topic and ask for ideas.
- Publicize successful innovations and the "collaborative" stories behind them ... quit focusing on individual "heroes" so much.

- Put a paper table cloth (like the butcher paper used in restaurants) on meeting room tables and ask people to write ideas there as they get them...collect the tablecloths once/week or month. You could put the topic in the center.
- Send an email with the start of a story line of a success in the organization and have people add to it
- Take your group on a field trip to a museum, zoo, amusement park - ask each person to generate three ideas on a work topic as inspired by the trip.
- Talk about the vision and values of the company every day.
- Think of all the everyday "great ideas" we take for granted (e.g., "Ambulance" spelled backward so visible in rearviews) - think of "obvious ideas" that are sitting there now waiting to be discovered
- Use company PA system to send unexpected messages or music to stimulate people's thinking
- Use existing corporate structure to embed innovation into...make it a topic on every meeting agenda.
- Use improvisational theater techniques in an informal "brown bag" format.
- Write your idea on a whoopee cushion and put it on the CEO's chair.

Stupid and Ridiculous Ideas

- Brand innovation on the CEOs forehead.
- Bring an electric cattle prod to the next staff meeting.
- Find a way to implant an innovation chip in each person's head.
- Find a way to remove the fear chip in each person's head
- Take everyone to Tahiti and they have to "innovate" how to get back.
- Have an Army of Nerf gun innovation warriors challenge people to submit ideas!
- Have someone wear a sandwich board: What's your new idea today?
- Hire an alien from another Galaxy to tell us how they solved this problem.
- Put lipstick in the bathrooms so people could write ideas on the mirrors
- Relabel a box of ex-lax so it reads, "For constipated imaginations."
- Run screaming through the halls screaming BE INNOVATIVE...SHARE YOUR IDEAS

Note:

If you know someone who would like to receive the Kings Innovation Council Innovation Update, please send me their email and I will add them to our growing list. If you don't want to send their email, please forward this message to them and they can send me their email address should they wish to continue receiving updates.

Thank you,

Marianne Gates

Project Coordinator

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Kings Community Economic Development Agency

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"Innovation is the successful implementation of a creative idea." Kings Innovation Council

