

## THE LEADERSHIP LENS Newsletter

March 2005, © Mark Sincevich, Staash Press, LLC

*A monthly resource providing insight, opinion & practical information on creativity, balance, leadership & personal development*

### The Press for Creativity

It seems that creativity will flourish when we increase our chances for seemingly random events to occur. The best way to work this randomness into our thought patterns is to develop the habit of being exposed to new ideas, people and concepts on a regular basis. If we take the time to plan for this randomness by limiting our distractions, we can increase our ability to solve problems, allow for more innovations and achieve a more fulfilling life.

One big distraction for me this past week was staring at over 100 e-mails every time I opened my in-box. Each time I sent another message, I was reminded of all that I had left to do. All of a sudden when I opened my account, my screen froze as if in the midst of a shudder like one feels while getting out of the neighborhood pool as a cool wind blows. And then everything was gone. I had no in-box, no sent messages and no folders. I was upset at first and then I felt free. A freedom similar to the feeling described in the Pablo Neruda poem, *La Poesia*, where he says, "my heart broke free on the open sky." Instead of working on more doing, I could start increasing my chances of 'being' more creative by getting out of my office on a more regular basis.

The press for being more creative might involve purposely exposing ourselves to a new magazine, to a restaurant with food we might not normally eat, or to working in a new environment such as a coffee shop with character. When we do this, we increase the chances for new ideas and innovations to occur. Another powerful way to increase our chances for creativity and innovation is to form a group of masterminds. This idea was first espoused by Napoleon Hill in his classic book, *Think and Grow Rich*. In the book, Napoleon says, "No two minds ever come together, without, thereby creating a third, invisible force, which may be likened to a third mind." A group of masterminds meets on a regular basis and allows us to be exposed to other people who have different backgrounds, cultures and professions than our own. Even in the same profession, forming this type of group will allow you to tap into the diversity of fellow employees and get to know people beyond their job titles.

When I present my program, "The Art of Seeing" to organizations, I give concrete examples of how the participants can increase their creativity by introducing more random events into their lives. My first suggestion is to go somewhere different for the midday meal other than one's desk. If your lunch choices are limited, then I suggest participants bring a personal journal to record their thoughts, observations and aspirations after they finish their sandwich in a place away from their office. Making time to write in a journal is an excellent way to allow our thoughts to form unique and interesting combinations. Other examples include taking a walk around the block to a new destination, forming a camera, food or wine tasting club, adding art in some way to a project in which you are working, and taking in at least one new class after work each month. All of these activities serve to focus our attention in another area for a period of time. This is of paramount importance if we are trying to come up with a new approach to solving a problem, to create a new product, or to have a more complete and fulfilling life. We need to make the time for the random nature of creativity to work its magic.

When I was hired to photograph President Bush's second inauguration this past January, I had to capture photographs of luncheons, balls and the inaugural parade as it drifted down Pennsylvania Avenue. This meant waiting in the cold wind for a long period of time on the ledge of the Ronald Reagan Building for Internal Trade. As the first large triangle of motorcycles started coming towards me, I began snapping away. However, before the President's limousine was set to come into my field of view, my digital camera went totally dead. There wasn't any explanation at first. I took a deep breath and then remembered a hiking expedition I had taken to Bhutan. At high altitudes it can get pretty cold and this greatly lessens battery power. I quickly popped the four AA batteries from the camera into my mouth, careful to be in full view of the Secret Service Agent standing next to me. I didn't want him to think I was going to power a hidden destructive device in my stomach. After 30 seconds, I put the batteries back into my camera and was able to get great close up photographs of the President's limousine and the rest of the parade. If I hadn't been exposed to high altitude hiking, I would have not been able to apply this lesson.

Author Frans Johansson describes the ability to solve a problem by combining two or more diverse situations or professions like photography and high altitude hiking as being at the intersection of ideas. In his book, *The Medici Effect*, he says, "If increasing random combinations is at the core of generating intersectional ideas, it would make sense to intentionally introduce randomness into our thinking pattern. Intersection hunting means that you search for connections in unlikely places and then see where those connections lead." A recent cover article by *Forbes Magazine* with the title, "Why Companies Need Your Ideas" drives the point home. In order for organizations to increase their ability to solve problems, develop new ideas and to have employees who feel a high degree of accomplishment, they must provide the space for random events to occur. Instead of working overtime, taking that class after work now seems like an even better idea. When people and organizations make time for random combinations to occur, their creativity can't help but break free on the open sky.

### About Mark Sincevich:

Mark Sincevich taps into the creative power of the individual to enhance people and organizations. This allows organizations to develop passionate and balanced employees, generate new ideas and increase profitability. Through his photography expertise, he brings a unique angle to his professional speaking programs on creativity, balance, leadership and personal development. In addition, Mark works to recharge and strengthen his customer's focus and direction through his meeting facilitation services, offsite teambuilding events and presentations skills programs. He is an active member of the National Speaker's Association and brings over 17 years of experience in high technology sales and marketing and public accounting into his programs. Mark has also been practicing photography for over 21 years and continues to sharpen his skills as an instructor at the Washington School of Photography. He is the author of two books and numerous articles. When he isn't speaking professionally or taking photographs, he can be found keeping balanced by writing in some of the finest coffee shops. For more information on Mark's professional speaking programs, photography, books and CDs contact Staash Press at (301) 654-3010, [info@staashpress.com](mailto:info@staashpress.com) or [www.staashpress.com](http://www.staashpress.com).

**Make your next meeting productive, educational and enlightening by booking Mark Sincevich as your speaker.**

We will never sell or give away your personal information, and you can remove yourself from our list at anytime by replying to one of our messages with "Remove" in the subject line. If you would like to reproduce this article, please contact [newsletter@staashpress.com](mailto:newsletter@staashpress.com).