

THE LEADERSHIP LENS Newsletter

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A monthly resource providing insight, opinion and practical information on creativity and balance

Practicing Creativity

This past Tuesday on October 28, 2003, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that, "More Employers Ask Job Seekers for SAT Scores." Are you kidding? With the unemployment rate hovering around 6%, it seems that companies are having a hard time figuring out how to further qualify the flood of applicants. Some employers are telling applicants not to even apply for a particular job if their combined SAT score is under 1350! What comes next, asking for my second grade report card? Sorry, you were turned down for your position because you got a C in Reading.

If you think about it, SAT scores, along with GPA and company-sponsored applicant tests are usually focused on left-brain or analytical thinking skills. At my past job interviews, the hiring manager was very keen to know how much, how soon and how often. This related to sales and customer contacts. Once I was hired, they always wanted to look at projections and forecasts, but usually nothing on creativity or right-brain skills. I should have included a creativity forecast with the facts and figures. But that might have seemed a bit ridiculous.

Yet, creativity isn't something that can be forecasted. If your employer asks you to be creative for the next 30 minutes, do you think that you would be able to come up with something truly remarkable or different? Creativity isn't something that can be put on a balance sheet or measured on an SAT test, unless you were thinking about the three additional choices to the ones that were already given for each SAT question.

Creativity is a habit that needs to be nurtured just like working out or giving to charitable causes. Do you know that low-income individuals who give to charity on a regular basis are three times more likely to continue to give when they have more money? It is all about instilling good habits. A major reason why I enjoy the practice of photography is because it keeps reminding to be creative as I approach my next subject. Once I take the photograph, my mind immediately starts to think of other ways or alternatives to record the scene or event.

Organizations need alternatives too. If a company gets manufacturing pressure to move jobs out of the USA, maybe an increase in creativity by asking the right questions will keep those jobs close to home and in the community. It also takes creative leaders who recognize the value of alternatives that are suggested by their staff. Creativity Consultant and Former Grateful Dead Rocker, John Perry Barlow helped Kodak realize that they aren't in the sliver halide on paper business, but in the business of making emotions portable. This bit of creative vision might explain Kodak's recent foray into digital photography.

How do you practice your creativity? You can start by picking up a disposable camera and taking a few photographs around town or in your office. It is through the eye of the lens that you start to see the world in a different and more creative way. The next time you are asked what you got on your SAT test, pull out a camera and start taking some pictures instead. Isn't the creative approach to diffusing a difficult situation more valuable?

About Mark Sincevich:

Mark Sincevich is a photography expert who speaks professionally to organizations on creativity, balance, leadership and personal development. Mark has been practicing photography for over 21 years and continues to sharpen his skills as an instructor at the Washington School of Photography. He is an active member of the National Speaker's Association and brings over 17 years of experience in public accounting, and high technology sales and marketing into his programs. He has written two books and numerous articles. For more information on Mark's professional speaking programs, photography, books and CDs contact Staash Press at (301) 654-3010, info@staashpress.com or www.staashpress.com.

Remember to book Mark Sincevich as a professional speaker for your next function.

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