

LEADERSHIP TIPS on the *GO!*

Thinking Outside the Box

Innovation is the spark that keeps organizations moving ever onward and upward. We innovate to

- (1) improve products and services,
- (2) find a new way to do something,
- (3) make a task easier or faster,
- (4) save money,
- (5) enhance our jobs, and
- (6) increase our promotability.

Tips to Think Differently

- Look for new combinations.
- Ask "what if?" or develop "what-if" scenarios.
- Consider approaches you've never thought about before.
- Brainstorm with others.
- Be a champion of new ideas — the old ways aren't always the best ways.

Unleashing Creativity*

1. Take the mystery out of creativity: define expected outcomes so that everyone in the organization understands where employees should direct their efforts.
2. Discover how individuals are creative: every person has his or her own approach to generating new ideas. Ask for input, but remember that people have different work styles.
3. Define challenges specifically: focus on areas where creative solutions are needed instead of wasting time on areas that generate little or no return to the individual or organization.
4. Minimize fear of failure: find ways to absorb risk. Regard mistakes as learning opportunities. Rewarding employees who take prudent risks will encourage them to innovate even more.
5. Take personal responsibility: develop an organizational climate for innovation. Start with yourself and the people within your personal sphere of influence.
6. Encourage active communications: set up hot lines among groups for quick, ongoing interactive idea exchanges.
7. Enhance your own creative skills and behavior: set an example.

- Grace McGartlan, president of GM Consultants, Toronto, Ontario

Secrets to Managing UP

1. Make your boss look like a hero. The better job you do, the better your department-and your boss-will look to corporate higher-ups.
2. Don't be shy. Tell your boss what's on your mind — don't make him or her guess.
3. Be proactive. Anticipate problems and solve them at your level, before they become bigger problems that only your boss can solve.
4. Be your own best advocate. Learn how to present a clear and compelling case for what you want, whether it's a raise or a promotion, an increase in responsibility or authority, or something else you want your boss to do for you. Support your case with hard facts and evidence, not emotion.
5. Enlist others to help. There is strength in numbers. The more people you can bring around to your point of view, the better chance you'll have to see it implemented.

Put Yourself in Your Customer's Shoes

Pay attention when you're the customer:

- Pay attention to how you are treated as a customer.
- Who gives you undivided attention and makes you feel welcome?
- How do you react to such treatment?
- When possible, ask others who provide exceptional customer service how they are able to do it.
- What keeps their approach to dealing with customers fresh?

Think about what would be of value if you were the customer.

- As you deal with customers, try to put yourself in their situation.
- When possible, ask customers what they think you should do to help resolve their problems.
- If possible, try to identify multiple solutions to increase the chances that you can meet their needs.
- Experiment with different potential solutions and scenarios by being proactive.
- As you learn a customer's problems or needs, imagine doing something that you have never done before to help them.
- Try to follow through and meet that need.

Have fun with the customer.

- Focus on enjoying your job and enjoying your interaction with customers.
- Vary the way you go about your job tasks whenever possible.
- Be in the present as you focus on and deal with others