

Roger!



Fall 2001

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Creativity That Gets Results™

Be Creative Naturally!

Creativity comes naturally.

But it doesn't come *easily*. Even geniuses have to work at it.

That's because **creativity is a skill as well as a talent**. It can be learned and improved. How? By making a few easy changes in your everyday habits.

Throughout this issue, you'll discover exciting ideas to boost your creativity and

productivity. Some ideas are brand-new. Others are tried-and-true, used by innovators from Immanuel Kant to Admiral Byrd. But they all have one thing in common.

They work!

Have a request or suggestion for future issues? Email me at roger@rogerfirestien.com.

Let's be creative . . . naturally!

12-Step Creativity!

In the last issue of *Roger!*, we shared six simple tips to improve your creativity – and help you foster creativity in others.

Here are six more creativity tips and insights you can use every day. Integrate every one of these dynamic dozen into your daily life and you'll be on the way to a creative new you!

(Missed the last issue? Email me at roger@rogerfirestien.com, or visit our website to read it online.)

Tip #7: Develop personal support systems.

Once you reach the top of that corporate mountain, don't be surprised to find yourself thinking "Hey, it's lonely up here."

According to Dr. Perry Buffington, a nationally known psychologist and lecturer, the old saying is actually a huge understatement. Leaders need people, too. Personal and professional relationships help immensely when the going gets tough.

The solution? Nurture your support systems.

Reach out to friends and family. When you reach out to others, you solve human problems – and that's creative problem solving.



After initial resistance, Glenn learned how to "just sit there."

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Tip #8: Stop the action.

Here's a new method for productivity and creativity. It's called "*just sit there.*"

Creative people need "time out" for themselves. The best ideas can get lost in the shuffle of an overworked mind. Just as important, the renewal time you need requires solitude. Here's a tip on *slowing down* to *speed up your creativity*.

Spend 30 minutes sitting quietly . . . alone. Don't read – listen to music, fall asleep, eat, watch TV. In short, "*veg out.*" By stopping the action, you'll create room for new ideas to come in.

Tip #9: Create an environment that encourages creativity.

Immanuel Kant cut down trees so he could see a tower while he worked. Johann Schiller loved the smell of apples, so he filled his desk with rotting ones. Eccentric? No. They just knew that to be creative, you have to create the right environment.

Continued on page 5

Divine Inspiration

Vicki Baxter always dreamed of joining her church's mission to Africa. But on a teacher's salary, the \$2,000 cost was out of reach – until Vicki started thinking creatively.

Each year, I ask the students in my graduate course in Creative Studies at Buffalo State College to offer the class a real-life challenge. Vicki's was just the thing to get our creative juices flowing. We made up 700 solutions in one class period!

Suggestions ranged from a bake sale to selling all her worldly possessions. But the idea that really inspired Vicki was so extraordinary – and simple – it just *had* to work. Vicki decided to ask 2,000 people for one dollar.

Crazy? No. Creative? Definitely.



The idea hit warp speed when Vicki's teenage daughter suggested using email to ask ten friends . . . to ask ten friends . . . and so on.

Within days, Vicki received checks for \$1, \$5, even \$40 and \$50. Encouraged, she expanded her efforts. She sent letters. She went on college radio. She asked everyone she knew.

With a request so small and a cause so worthy, people were happy to help. Vicki was overwhelmed by checks and kind words from Maryland to Missouri – and amazed that people she'd never met helped her visit a place she'd never seen.

Creative thinking *does* work. One person *can* make a difference. All it takes is a dollar and a dream.

Patterns in the Grass

This summer, while visiting my parents in Colorado, I decided to pitch in and help out around the homestead. My chore? To saddle up the old riding mower and take it for a spin.

Even though I hadn't mowed that lawn in twenty years, I gradually noticed something. I was doing the job the exact same way I had two decades before! The same patterns, the same directions – I went around the obstacle course of trees and flowers on autopilot.

That made me think. What other areas of my life am I mowing the same old way?

That should get you thinking, too. What are you doing unconsciously in your life or work that, although it's working just fine, isn't doing much for your creativity?

Next time you find yourself in the same old pattern, try these simple steps to get a bit more creative, and possibly increase your productivity and profit.

1. Notice. Just notice. Notice the patterns that work for you and those that don't. Are you exercising regularly? Taking time out to think and develop new ideas? That's a good pattern. Now look at the patterns that aren't working. Do you always react to a certain person or project the same way? Is there a

consistent bottleneck in your work? That's a pattern that needs changing.

2. Step back. Get some distance from the situation. Imagine what you would really like the situation to become. What would you ideally like to see happen?

3. Change the pattern. Now ask yourself, "How else can I do this?" "What if?" "How can I use something that doesn't fit with this problem at all?" At first your responses may be a little vague, so play with those ideas a bit.

4. Check the results. Like what you're getting? Great! You've changed the pattern for the better.

5. Adjust as necessary. If you're still not satisfied, keep adjusting what you're doing until you get the results you want. Remember – there's no final step in the creative process.

That's what creative thinking is all about. Noticing – and changing – the way things have always been done. To paraphrase Socrates, "When you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got."

How much difference can changing a pattern make? It can literally *change the world*.

A Golden Idea

Way back in 1959, Bruce Goecker saw a pattern that wasn't working. Every day, he found himself waiting to pay a toll on the Golden Gate Bridge. Twice.

The problem was that tolls were collected on both ends of the bridge – once going into San Francisco, and once going out. That meant motorists had to wait in line. Twice.

Bruce's great idea? Eliminate one set of toll booths and collect both tolls at once. Now that's creative thinking!

It took eight years, new bridge management, and a tremendous leap of faith by the San Francisco government, but finally Bruce convinced them to try his "crazy" idea. On October 19, 1967 Bruce paid the tolls, but this time, he only had to wait once.

One-way toll collection not only eliminated bridge congestion for Bay area commuters, it *revolutionized toll collection around the world* – all because Bruce Goecker noticed a pattern that wasn't working.

So next time you find yourself getting stuck as a mower, a motorist, or a manager, remember that *sometimes creativity isn't coming up with new ideas. It's eliminating old ones!*

Hi, Ho! Roger!

Thanks to the Internet, I can share the latest news and insights into creativity with you almost instantly. How? By emailing you *Insights From The Road*.

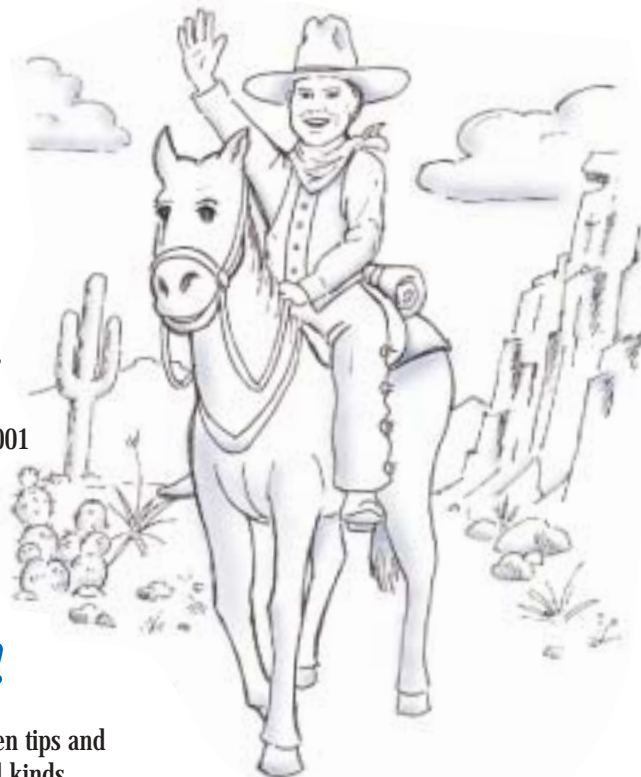
An e-newsletter, *Insights From The Road*, offers FREE updates on creativity training, tips and techniques. It also lets me share the wonderful things I learn from the many groups and individuals I meet as I travel across the country, giving



seminars and helping others make the most of their creativity.

Get a FREE Creative Problem Solving Guide!

To receive Insights, email roger@rogerfirestien.com. Include the word "Insights" in your subject line or email text. Respond by December 28, 2001 and we'll send you a FREE laminated Creative Problem Solving Guide.



Bottom-Line Creativity FREE!

Want to see how Roger's Creative Problem Solving presentations can bring bottom-line results to your organization? Catch the excitement with a FREE video featuring

Roger presenting practical, proven tips and techniques to organizations of all kinds.

Call 716-631-3564 now for your FREE Sneak Preview videotape.

Graham Cracker Cookies Yield \$4.5 Million

When Janet DiClaudio, Director of Medical Records, joined Candler Hospital, 300 records were backlogged, and doctors weren't coming to the Records office to sign them – preventing the hospital from billing for millions of dollars in healthcare services. To overcome this challenge, Janet held a Creative Problem Solving session and asked employees, "How can we get MDs to sign their records?" During that session, employees observed that Medical Records

PROBLEM SOLVED

was far from where doctors typically congregated – the lounge. The solution? Put a desk outside the lounge and reward MDs with graham cracker cookies for signing their records. By moving a desk staffed with one Medical Records employee outside the doctor's lounge, the hospital billed \$4.5 million in backlogged records and has regularly reduced receivables by \$3.5 million a month!

"Applying Creativity" Offer Extended to 12/28/01

Time's running out on a very special offer.

Call 1-800-840-8174 before 10/1/01 to schedule Roger's liberating 2-day seminar "Unleashing the Power of Creativity" for your organization or group, and we'll give you the

acclaimed 12-volume "Applying Creativity" video series – a \$599.95 value – **absolutely FREE!**

To receive your free videos, be sure to mention this *Roger!* article when you call.

Who's New?

Welcome to these new *Roger!* readers:

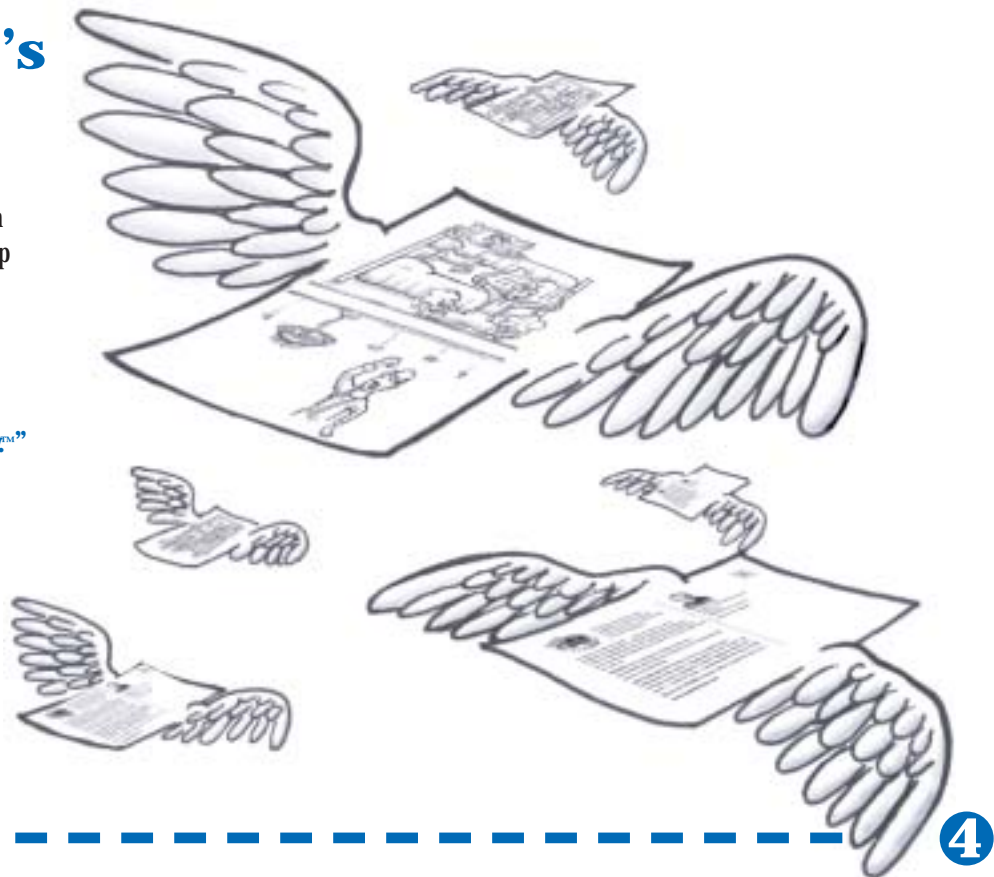
- SC Johnson
- Miller Brewing Company
- US Department of Health and Human Services
- The Humor Project
- USAID
- Saint-Gobain
- UBS PaineWebber
- Leadership Erie
- Erie Insurance
- General Mills
- New York State Directors of Volunteer Services
- Rule Leadership, Pennsylvania
- US Department of the Treasury
- University of Cincinnati

The Creativity's In The Mail

Regular *Roger!* readers also receive our occasional Creativity Tip postcards. Each one offers a simple, effective creativity tip to boost your productivity.

Right now, each postcard also includes a limited-time offer on Roger's exhilarating 2-day seminar "Unleashing the Power of Creativity."

Want to receive Creativity Tips and special discounts? Email me at roger@rogerfirestien.com.



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Please use street address. We cannot ship to a P.O. Box.

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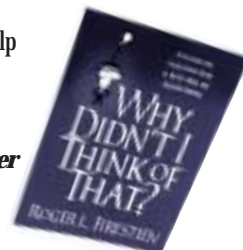
Why Didn't I Think of That?

In about an hour, you'll learn ten new tools to help you become *deliberately creative*. Learn how to develop more options, enjoy more effective teamwork, and evaluate ideas positively.

"Why Didn't I Think of That? puts the power of creative problem solving to work for you from the first page . . . Great ideas in an easy-to-read style that's fun!"

Todd W. Smith, Editor-in-Chief
Outdoor Life

73 pages.....\$10.00



Unleashing The Power of Creativity

A video and manual offering specific, practical guidance for conducting a successful Creative Problem Solving (CPS) session. Roles for both participants and facilitator are defined, guidelines established and questioning techniques explained.

Includes interviews with people successfully using CPS in industries from heavy manufacturing to health care.

41-minute video with facilitator's manual.....~~\$90.95~~



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Leading On The Creative Edge

Teaches organizational and team leaders how to redefine problems, generate new ideas, put mistakes to creative use and much more. Includes numerous real-life examples of extraordinary results created by those who are "leading on the creative edge."

"You will be inspired by the bottom-line results that have been achieved through these techniques."

Cindy Moeller, Vice President of Human Resources
Baldwin Piano & Organ Company

200 pages.....\$20.00



“12-Step Creativity!” continued from page 1

To make sure your environment enhances your creativity, ask these questions:

- Am I a morning person or a night person?
- Do I work better with the radio on or off?
- Is my office generally cluttered or neat?
- Do I usually eat/drink something while I work?

Make your surroundings work for you, and you'll work more creatively.

Tip #10: Create a healthy lifestyle.

It's no longer “Live better, feel better.” It's “Live better, *think* better.” Simple adjustments in diet and exercise can pump up your productivity and cut back on your creative blocks.

Why? Because your brain uses neurotransmitters to function. The more you have, the better your brain works.

Complex carbohydrates like grains, legumes and whole vegetables are *brain food*— the building blocks of neurotransmitters.

Exercise also affects your brain power. According to Robert Eckert, Senior Partner with New and Improved Consulting Group in Paul Smiths, New York, regular exercise releases neuropeptides. And neuropeptides help you to think clearly.

Powerfully Positive!

“... *your dynamic delivery was the perfect opening...*”

“*The response was overwhelmingly positive...*”

“*The gold standard of creativity training*”

These are just a few of the accolades Roger Firestien has received from satisfied, even delighted,

The gold standard of creativity training!

Fortune 500 clients across the country.

President of Innovation Resources, Inc. and Associate Professor at the world-renowned International Center for Studies in Creativity in Buffalo, Roger Firestien is the author of numerous articles, books, audio and video programs.

With his unique brand of creativity training and his infectious enthusiasm, Roger has opened up an exciting new world of

The response was overwhelmingly positive.



“Looks like Jim's pretty excited about his promotion to team leader.”

Tip #11: Reawaken your sense of humor.

Creativity and humor have a lot in common. Both are a new way of looking at the same old thing. That's why developing your sense of humor is nothing to laugh at. Here's how to do it.

- Develop your comic vision — look for humor in ordinary things.
- Model a sense of humor — laughter is contagious.
- Be true to yourself — don't force your humor.
- Keep your humor positive — use it to build, not tear down.
- Be serious about your goals — but don't take yourself too seriously.

Remember, humor is just another way to create a relaxed and open forum for ideas. So have fun while you get your work done.

Tip #12: Be passionate about your vision.

According to Barry Sudburry, former vice president of research and development at the Clorox Company, his role as a leader is “pointing the arrow toward the future” and then allowing his people to get there.

Countless studies support the value of having a *plan* and *specific goals*. Of course, just as important as having a

plan is *sharing* it with the people who'll help you get there. Express your vision in:

- The value you want to give your customers.
- The products and services you want to be known for.
- The ways your staff works together.

When you set out to solve problems, *have a plan*. Have a *better plan* when you outline your lifetime pursuits. If you know *where* you're going, you'll get there.

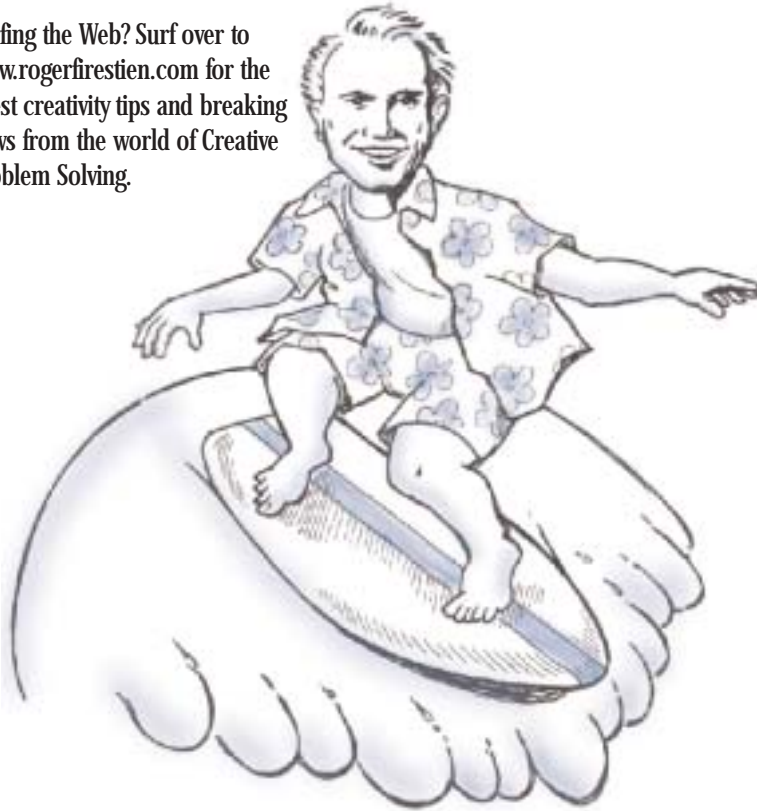
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Want Roger to share his practical and proven creativity tips and techniques with your organization? Call 716-631-3564 or email roger@rogerfirestien.com.

Your dynamic delivery was the perfect opening!

Catch The Wave!

Surfing the Web? Surf over to www.rogerfirestien.com for the latest creativity tips and breaking news from the world of Creative Problem Solving.



Coming Soon: *Creative Pest Control*

Last issue we promised a look at how creative thinking led to a multi-million dollar potential breakthrough in pest control. But a bug in our schedule delayed us. So watch for that exciting story, plus more creative tips and techniques in future issues of *Roger!*

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