

Roger!



Winter/Spring 2002

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Creativity That Gets Results™

Creative Changes!

The times, they are a'changin'!

We often think of the New Year as a time for change. But now more than ever, every day brings changes.

The secret to success in our changing world? **Managing change creatively.**

Throughout this issue, you'll find new ideas to bring creative change to your business and personal life. We'll share techniques and

insights to help you make managing creative change an everyday affair.

Creative change is fun . . . exciting . . . and best of all, it can **boost your productivity and profitability.**

Want to see changes in future issues? Email your suggestions to me at roger@rogerfirestien.com.

So let's keep on changing . . . creatively!

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A Change For The Better!

Our world has changed in the last several months. Today, some organizations are struggling, and some are actually thriving in the face of this change.

Basically there are two types of change: *radical or revolutionary change*, and *incremental or evolutionary change*.

Every day most of us experience incremental change as we try to make our world just a little bit better. However, since September 11, we've all experienced radical change.

The best way to deal creatively with change, whether it is radical or evolutionary, is to be *innovative and flexible*.

Innovation and flexibility are the most important factors in determining whether your organization continues to survive and thrive or perish.

Taking The Stretch Test

What distinguishes an innovative and flexible organization that has a greater chance of surviving from those organizations that will cease to exist?

In the 1980s, Swedish researcher Goran Ekvall developed an organizational

assessment method to measure the creative climate of an organization. Ekvall's *Creative Climate Questionnaire* identifies 10 dimensions of organizational climate:

- Challenge
- Freedom
- Support For Ideas
- Trust And Openness
- Dynamism And Liveliness
- Playfulness And Humor

- Debates
- Lack Of Destructive Conflict
- Risk Taking
- Time To Develop Ideas

Using the questionnaire, Ekvall surveyed 15 organizations, some labeled "innovative" and some "stagnated." He asked organization members questions about how open they believed the organization was to creativity; working together as teams; freedom to try new ideas; and dealing effectively with conflict.

The 10 innovative organizations he surveyed were successful in developing new products that have done well in the marketplace. The five stagnated organizations needed to upgrade their product programs, but either had not tried or had tried with few or no results.

The innovative organizations scored much higher on the climate for creativity than the



Continued on page 5

Bug Off!

How do you find a new, more effective way to solve a pesky problem?

That was the challenge for Mike Fryan, Section Manager for Home Cleaning and New Products at S.C. Johnson. Mike's team was



tasked with developing a new area repellent to keep annoying mosquitoes away from consumers' decks and patios.

Part of the problem – and the eventual solution – was that Fryan's company already offered a widely used line of area repellents such as OFF!® citronella candles, the OFF!® Mosquito Coil and OFF!® Yard & Deck Aerosol, plus a complete line of popular personal insect repellents such as OFF!®, Skintastic® and OFF!® Deep Woods.

How could they develop another winner to join this successful lineup? Finding the answer was simple – but it wasn't easy.

It's Time For "Combine-tivity"

The obvious solution – to create a candle with a new, more effective insect repellent in the candle's wax – didn't work. In test candles, the active materials were either trapped in the candle wax or consumed by the heat of the candle flame.

Using Creative Problem Solving techniques learned from Roger's seminars, Mike and his team rephrased the problem from "How might we make citronella candles more effective?" to

"How might we develop a product that combines the ambiance of candlelight with the efficacy of mosquito coils?"

Mike says, "Through working with Roger, I've come to believe that creativity is simply combining things in a unique and useful way." Working with the technique of forced connections, Mike and his team used random objects or pictures to spark new connections and generate more creative ideas.

The team then extended this technique, combining things that already existed separately within the company in unique and useful ways. The practice soon became second nature, leading the team to coin the term "combine-tivity" to describe their creative process.

If At First You Don't Succeed

Just as important, the team almost never stopped with the first answer. By continuing to ask "How else might we do this?" the team identified many additional solutions that improved on the first answers they'd discovered. Many of these subsequent solutions led to patent filings.

The search also led to improvements on earlier research. An earlier solution placed the repellent on a pad, then suspended it horizontally above a candle flame. Unfortunately, the pads overheated and once again, the repellent simply burned off. That's when Mike asked "How else might we suspend materials above a flame?"

With the problem correctly stated, the solution was simple. Mike suspended pads containing repellent *vertically* above the flame and *voila!* The new OFF!® Mosquito Lamp was born.



Godfather Knows Best

According to Mike, these breakthroughs came through making creativity techniques "a way of life." Used every day, techniques such as rephrasing the problem and "combine-tivity" really do become second nature, shortening product development cycles and leading to exciting new insights.



After participating in Roger's *Leading On The Creative Edge* seminar, Mike says, "Ideation isn't a noun. It's a verb. It's the way you do your work."

He also endorses the "Pluses, Potentials and Concerns" technique to gain management buy-in for new ideas. "By listing the concerns of management as questions, you're able to work productively on solutions. Addressing questions from someone with a different perspective on the problem will help improve your original idea," says Mike, adding "As a bonus, you're likely to gain a supporter for your idea. Hearing the concerns of others posed as questions is a great way to develop your ideas into successful consumer products."

According to Mike, "Roger Firestien is the godfather of creativity!"

To learn more about the new OFF!® Mosquito Lamp and other S.C. Johnson products, visit www.scjohnson.com. And to learn more about how Roger can help you develop your next product, visit www.rogerfirestien.com.

PROBLEM **SOLVED**

Slick Solution Saves \$40,000 Weekly

A GM Forge Plant in upstate New York had a sticky problem. During production, ring gears often stuck in casting dies, resulting in an expense of nearly \$40,000 each week to replace the broken dies. A Creative Problem Solving session identified a slick solution: use a non-stick solution similar to everyday cooking spray to lubricate the dies. Now the

plant spends about \$1.50 each week on spray, virtually eliminating broken dies – and costly work stoppages – for a savings of up to \$2 million each year.



Keep On Truckin’

Ever get stuck solving the wrong problem?

When a big truck got stuck under a train trestle, engineers began dismantling the trestle. Then a little boy watching asked a really big question: “Instead of raising the

trestle, why don’t you lower the truck?”

Restating the problem led to a simple, quick solution. The engineers let some air out of the truck’s tires – then simply drove it out from under the trestle.

That was it. A simple solution to the *right* problem.

Sometimes we all get stuck on big problems. But once we learn to ask the right questions, it’s much easier to cut big problems down to size.

Get The Right Chemistry

Got a problem? We can help you cook up great solutions with the Creative Problem Solving Lab.

This new service gives you creative solutions to specific problems, including:

- Creating a strategic plan
- Developing and naming new products
- Organizing vision and mission development
- Restructuring your organization

Roger and his creative team will organize a breakthrough lab for you and your co-workers, help you define your problem,

mediate and facilitate your brainstorming, and manage group dynamics. With expert creative guidance, your sessions will go faster, produce more “out of the box” ideas and, best of all, get everyone involved!

Ideal group size and duration of the labs depend on the size and scope of your project.

For more information, or to schedule a Creating Problem Solving Lab tailored specifically to your project, call 1-716-631-3564 or email roger@rogerfirestien.com.



Sneak A Peak At Success!

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

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



Call 716-631-3564 now to receive your Sneak Preview videotape.

Dynamic Delivery!

"... your dynamic delivery was the perfect opening ..."

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"The gold standard of creativity training."



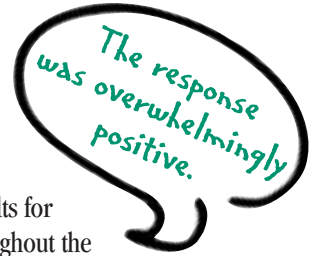
These are just a few of the accolades Roger Firestien has received from satisfied, even delighted, Fortune 500 clients across the country.

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 creative

problem solving that creates real bottom-line results for companies throughout the United States, Europe and South America.

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



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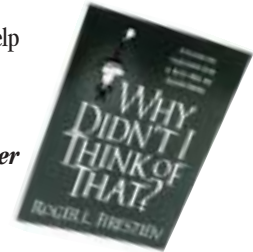
Why Didn't I Think of That?

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 \$99.95



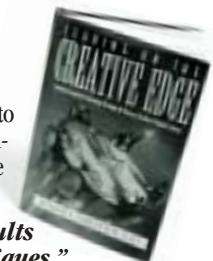
Leading On The Creative Edge

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



stagnated organizations. Are you surprised?

Even more important, five years after Ekvall's initial assessment, none of the stagnated organizations was still in business. However, when he visited the organizations that were deemed innovative, they were all thriving!

Flex For Success

The thriving organizations were flexible. In fact, some were so flexible they were even in different businesses than when they were originally measured. But the important thing is they were surviving.

Business history provides some wonderful examples of this kind of flexibility.

Here are two:

Brewing Creative Change. In the 1920s the Adolph Coors Company operated a successful beer brewery. Then came Prohibition – a radical change. Coors had no choice but to get creative.

First, they began brewing non-alcoholic beer. Then, they did something really creative. They capitalized on their bottle-making ability and became one of the nation's leading producers of ceramic products.

Today, Coors is still a leading producer of sophisticated ceramic products. And, thanks to their flexibility in the face of radical change, they survived to become the third-largest producer of beer in the United States.

The Power Of Change. Another example of flexibility is Dr. Wilson Greatbatch, the inventor of the implantable cardiac pacemaker. Tired of overseeing an organization that had grown larger than he was comfortable managing, he sold the pacemaker manufacturing company and went into the battery business.

Why batteries? The biggest problem with the early pacemaker was that it needed an external power source – a battery. Greatbatch's breakthrough in inventing the pacemaker was that he also developed a battery that lasted years and worked in a hostile environment, the human body. His pacemaker battery was small enough, and safe enough, to be used internally.

In his new company, Greatbatch extended this innovative battery technology to other demanding environments. Now his batteries are used on the moon, in satellites, and in submarines. Greatbatch's flexibility not only made the pacemaker possible; it also made his battery company thrive.

The lesson? *Be flexible!*

Radical Resolutions

We've recently entered the New Year. How will your organization move forward? Following are some suggestions adapted from my online newsletter *Insights from the Road* that I wrote soon after the radical change that occurred in our world on September 11. (Interested in receiving this newsletter? Email roger@rogerfirestien.com and include the word “Insights” in your subject line or email.)

1. Look for ways to remain flexible.

After September 11, Susan Saba, Manager, Trade Education and Development at the New York State Department of Economic Development and her staff took on different assignments and lent the “I Love New York” phone lines to merchants near the World Trade Center.



According to Susan, the creative problem solving techniques she's learned from my seminars made her and her staff more flexible, and yes, more creative.

2. Be open to new ideas. There's a saying in creativity studies that every act of creation is first an act of destruction. Seek out the acts of creation, even re-creation. There are new ideas out there. Notice and use them.

3. Keep your personal vision of the future strong and alive. If you haven't written down your vision for the future, do it now! The power of our founding fathers' vision built this nation, and it's your personal vision that has taken you this far in life.

Finally, be sure to take action on your vision. Get moving now. As Joel Barker said in his video *The Power of Vision*: “Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes time. Vision with action can change the world.”

Be flexible in this time of radical change. And use your creativity to transform our world into a better place!

Who's New?

Welcome to these new *Roger!* readers:

- General Mills
- UBS PaineWebber
- New York State Leadership Classroom
- US Department of Education
- US Department of the Treasury
- US Department of Health and Human Services
- Leadership Galesburg, Illinois
- Edison International
- SC Johnson
- University of Cincinnati



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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*.

Insights From The Road offers FREE updates on creativity training, tips and techniques, including exciting new insights I've gained 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.

To receive *Insights*, email roger @rogerfirestien.com. Include the word "Insights" in your subject line or email.



Get a **FREE Creative Problem Solving Guide**

Respond by March 31, 2002 and, as an added bonus, we'll send you a FREE *Creative Problem Solving Guide*. Send us your email request today!



Coming Soon: *Creating Opportunity!*

Want to learn how a not-for-profit agency is using creative problem solving techniques to help people literally create new lives? Watch for the next exciting issue of *Roger!*

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Creative changes inside!

Roger L. Firestien, Ph.D.

P.O. Box 615

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