

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 23

You can borrow ideas from other industries, how can you do that systematically...?

Use Ideas From Other Industries...

"When a thing is funny, search it carefully for a hidden truth" George Bernard Shaw ~ Playwright



"I am searching carefully"

How are you getting fresh ideas in to your organisation?

Have you ever booked an airline ticket online? In my worst experience I clicked on the wrong button and closed the screen. When I went back a minute later, the fare had increased £15. It happened again this week; check the fare, book it an hour later and the fare is up £20. Finally you reach the last page and they tell you there is a £40 surcharge for fuel, airport tax and £5 for emergency oxygen.

I was aggrieved (mainly because, by now I should have learned to book when I look) and the experience must have stayed in my subconscious because this morning I awoke with the wicked thought for how I could offer my Teaming with Llamas course to all of these airlines.

In the first paragraph I would offer the course at £75 per head if they book now.

By the second paragraph it would be £150 and by the salutation it would be £450.

In the postscript I would inform them that refreshments must be paid for and that there is a surcharge for use of the field; ("Let's take a comfort break now. Premium Class... facilities are in the house, Standard Class... please avoid the llama pellets when using the field").

Humour apart, there is the germ of a creative idea here. Major training companies with online booking facilities could offer really cheap places. As they are booked, the price increases. (This is different to early booking discount because with that system you can end up with all places sold cheaply).

Tom Peters call this process of taking ideas from other environments "Creative Swiping".

SO

This idea came to me after:

1. Having an experience
2. Time for it to cogitate
3. Playing with the idea

It was ad hoc, random and fun. I suggest many ideas come to entrepreneurs and businesses in this way.

But what if you had a systematic process to swipe creatively from other industries? How many good ideas could you get then?

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ACTION

- The above example could be used in any industry where there is a "use by" date. How might you apply the airline seat booking concept to yours?
- If you work in an organisation, think about how you might have people systematically scan for ideas from other industries. Three ideas are:
 - Subscribe one person from your team to a magazine from a different industry
 - Schedule half an hour a week for all on your team to scan the internet looking for ideas from other industries (you might preclude certain sites!)
 - Arrange for individuals to visit different trade exhibitions in your local vicinity on a regular basis

To apply some discipline you could hold a monthly short meeting where they share the most interesting ideas and seek to apply them to your industry. The ideas may be about ways to market, products and processes, anything that might give you an edge.

If you don't work in an organisation, how might you adapt the above ideas for your business or hobby?

TO CLOSE

I was out running in Ruislip Woods today, the first time since last summer. Musing about this article, I lost my bearings. The forest had grown, trees fallen and some reference points were gone.

Spotting the worn, gun pellet riddled "No Shooting" sign led me to the track and it occurred that the experience is a good metaphor for business life.

The business environment is constantly evolving and we have to keep on top of what is happening "out there" if we are not to lose our way.

Adopting systematic methods for finding ideas is a good way for you to keep on top of what is happening outside your industry and can provide you with a useful focus when reading business magazines and newspapers.

May your week be full of scavenged ideas!

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