

CONCLUSION



Kids have got it right. They explore and play, have fun and come up with ideas. In the children's book *Not A Box*, by Antoinette Portis, a rabbit is asked why he is sitting on, or standing on, or spraying or wearing a cardboard box, and drawings show what the questioner sees ... a rabbit and a box. 'It's not a box,' he insists each time. To him it's a racing car, a mountain, a burning building or a robot, and simple lines added to the illustrations reveal how in his mind the box has been transformed.

Business Playground is about how us grown-ups can rediscover the magic of creativity that we all lived and breathed every day as children, and apply it to business.

Creativity is not just a nice to have; in a constantly changing world in which a business is only as good as its latest innovation, it has become an absolute necessity. But, it can be scary. Developing and executing new ideas requires taking leaps into the unknown and is often hit and miss, and creativity doesn't always easily fit into a corporate environment where efficiency is king and mistakes must be avoided at all costs.

It may be tempting to outsource it, or to keep it quarantined off in a separate part of the building where only people with special clearance can go, but the very nature of creativity means that it's

unpredictable and we cannot know when it might have an impact. So we need to make it a part of everyday business. Luckily, help is at hand.

Business Playground is full of examples of how highly creative people think and includes techniques and games that can help get our creative muscles trained and ready for action.

Throughout the previous chapters ...

We learned that when we allow ourselves to move outside the expected, creative brilliance is possible and, although education and work stifle our natural creative talents, they remain and can be brought out to play once more.

We realised that size really does matter and that how many ideas we can come up with – *idea spaghetti* – makes it more likely that some of them will be good ones, and that we need to think divergently to stimulate the creation of lots of ideas.

We looked at how not accepting the status quo is a great starting point for innovation, how there are always things to improve upon – whether it's the design of a product or the way a whole industry works – and about the value of being constantly curious.

We wondered how asking the right questions might give us a better chance of coming up with the right solutions. We need to question the assumptions we're making about a business problem and get rid of the ones that don't hold true, and we need to explore different ways of framing a problem and break it down into manageable chunks.

We uncovered a lot of scientific evidence about the conditions in which the creative thought process works most effectively, and how temporarily taking our minds off problems we're trying to solve creatively can actually help. Music, exercise and playing games put us in a positive mood and this has a positive effect on our creative abilities.

We saw that visualising can help free up creative thinking that might otherwise have been restricted if we had relied solely on words, and that there are wonderful techniques, including drawing sketches, taking photographs and using similes and metaphors to spark ideas.

We embraced the idea of playing with others in a collaborative way and the importance of having leaders that have clear visions which they communicate well and who will help the team members understand their individual roles in making it happen.

We made ourselves think BIG in order to break free of expected ideas and saw how evocative language is a powerful way of bringing a problem to life and focusing creative energy on it.

We tried on some other people's shoes to see what they felt like and how looking at a problem from fresh perspectives can prevent ourselves being limited by what we already know.

We conducted a little orchestrated chaos and randomness to connect things together and create something new and unexpected, and saw how humour can change the direction of our thinking when it's getting a little stale.

We murdered any ideas that weren't worth spending time and effort on to focus on those that were, by looking at practical considerations and also by using our gut instincts to pick winners.

And, lastly, we explored what it takes to put our ideas into orbit, how it takes perseverance and self-belief and being surrounded by great people working in a creative culture to encourage experimentation and risk.

So, we hope you've enjoyed the journey and have had a chance to play some of the games dotted throughout the book, and we hope you have been inspired to put some of your creative skills to work in your business. Please visit us at www.businessplayground.com



We're going to finish with a song
courtesy of Bob Dylan.

*May God bless and keep you always,
May your wishes all come true,
May you always do for others
And let others do for you.
May you build a ladder to the stars
And climb on every rung,
May you stay forever young,
Forever young, forever young,
May you stay forever young.*

*May you grow up to be righteous,
May you grow up to be true,
May you always know the truth
And see the lights surrounding you.
May you always be courageous,
Stand upright and be strong,
May you stay forever young,
Forever young, forever young,
May you stay forever young.*

*May your hands always be busy,
May your feet always be swift,
May you have a strong foundation
When the winds of changes shift.
May your heart always be joyful,
May your song always be sung,
May you stay forever young,
Forever young, forever young,
May you stay forever young.*



Dave & Mark, May 2010

Answers to the Scavenger Game

The treasure is buried at grid reference I, 9 and here's why:

One: There are 6 Fs, so move 2 spaces anticlockwise to number 9.

Two: The green traffic light is at the bottom, so move 4 spaces anticlockwise to number 5.

Three: There are 3 curves on a paperclip, so move 1 space clockwise to number 6.

Four: It's in her right hand, so move 5 spaces clockwise to number 1.

Five: They rotate clockwise, so move 8 spaces clockwise to number 9.

Six: There are 6 sides, so move 3 spaces clockwise to number 2.

Seven: They are on the left hand pages, so move 7 spaces clockwise to number 9.

Eight: It is red, so move 3 spaces anticlockwise to number 6.

Nine: There are none on the 1, so move 2 spaces clockwise to number 8.

Ten: It's the left, so move 1 space clockwise to number 9.

Eleven: It's the ace of spades, so move 2 spaces anticlockwise to number 5.

Twelve: There are 5 differences, so move 9 spaces anticlockwise to number 9.

Space number 8 leads to the 'X' located at grid reference I, 9.

List of common suggestions for what to do with a paperclip

- Use it as a key-ring.
- Push the reset button on electronic gadgets.
- An emergency toothpick.
- Making snakes.
- Linking them together to make a necklace or bracelet.
- Voodoo paperclip dolls.
- Hang cards from a chain of them.
- Use to clean fingernails and toenails.
- To clean ears with.
- For picking locks.
- Magnetise them together to make sculptures.
- Clean up the grout between bathroom tiles.
- Pop balloons.
- For making cheese and pineapple sticks.
- As tiny chopsticks.
- For a replacement fuse.
- As a hair clip.
- Do-it-yourself ear piercing.
- Hang decorations or Christmas ornaments from them.
- As curtain hooks.
- Make fake specs for stuffed animals.
- As a replacement zipper puller.
- A bookmark.
- An emergency wedding ring.
- For unblocking plug holes.

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