

## CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

**The Creative Leader** makes a different set of assumptions(essentially positive) about human nature. Creative leaders have faith in people, offer them challenging opportunities, and delegate responsibility to them. When people perceive the locus of control to reside within themselves, they are more creative and productive, and the greater their achievement.

**The Creative Leader** accepts as a law of human nature that people feel a commitment to a decision in proportion to the extent that they feel they have participated in making it. Creative leaders, therefore involve their staff, board and community in every step of planning.

**The Creative Leader** believes in and uses the power of the self-fulfilling prophecy. They understand that people tend to come up to other people's expectations for them. The relationship between positive self-concept and superior performance has been demonstrated in numerous studies.

**The Creative Leader** highly values individuality. The sense that people operate on a higher level when they are operating on the basis of their unique strengths, interests, talents, and goals than when they are trying to conform to some imposed stereotype and tightly defined set of assigned responsibilities.

**The Creative Leader** stimulates and rewards creativity. They understand that in a world of accelerating change, creativity is the basic requirement for the survival of individuals, organizations and societies. They exemplify creativity in their own behavior and provide an environment that encourages and rewards creativity in others.

**The Creative Leader** is committed to a process of continuous change and is skillful in managing change. They understand the difference between static and innovative organizations, and aspire to make their organization innovative.

**The Creative Leader** emphasizes internal motivators over external motivators. They understand that achievement, growth, fulfilling work, responsibility and advancement are essential and that organizational policy, supervision, salary, status, are non essential to high performance.

**The Creative Leader** encourages people to be self-directing. They sense intuitively what researchers have been telling us for some time--that a universal characteristic of the maturation process is movement from a state of dependency toward states of increasing self directedness.

To even attempt to be a creative leader one must put to rest the myth that great leaders are born. The ability to be a leader is the result of a lifetime of effort constantly improving communications skills, reflecting on personal values and aligning one's behavior with those values, learning how to listen and appreciate others and their ideas. Individual discipline and organizational progress go hand-in-hand. As the leader develops and evolves, so does the organization. Organizations do not move forward on their own. They may move, but with little promise that the momentum will be toward the vision.

Reprinted from Malcolm Knowles, *The Adult Learning; A Neglected Species*, 1983.

John Kao, director of the Idea Factory and author of *Jamming, The Art and Discipline of Business Creativity*, argues persuasively that for individuals to feel they are truly responsible for their own decisions, they must be imbued with a

## **Creativity Bill of Rights**

1. Everyone is Creative.
2. All ideas are welcome and deserve hearing
3. Creativity is part of every job description.
4. Premature closure and excessive judgement are cardinal sins.
5. Creativity is about finding balance between art and discipline.
6. Creativity involves openness to a wide range of inputs.
7. Experiments must be encouraged.
8. Noble failure is honorable, poor implementation or bad choices are not.
9. Creativity involves mastering a process of continuous change.
10. Creative results involve a balance of intuition and facts.
11. Creativity can, and should be managed.
12. Creative work is not an excuse for chaos, disarray or sloppiness in execution.

It's quite simple, really. Form follows function. We work in support of creative people and our job is merely to be creative and insist others do the same.