

10

TIPS TO BOOST

# *Creative Thinking*

INSPIRED BY THE GENIUSES AT  
CIRQUE DU SOLEIL®



BY DAWN NICOLE BALDWIN



What can nonprofit leaders learn from Cirque du Soleil? *(For starters, it frequently feels like we're running a three-ring circus...)*

**And we know coming up with new ideas is critical to stay ahead of the curve, but often feels like a steep hill to climb.**

Thankfully, Cirque's exec vice chairman, Daniel Lamarre was recently interviewed on Harvard Business Review's *The New World of Work* series.

**He had some great tips on how to leverage creative thinking that leaders need to know**

*Here's my Top 10 Takeaways*



#1

## **Creativity Isn't Just for Artists**

It's also finding new ways to solve problems.

So let go of the, **"But I'm not creative"** excuse and change your perspective

*Fostering a creative mindset throughout your organization is the key to really thrive.*



#2

## Hold Off On the “How” for Now

Focus on **“What *COULD* we do”** FIRST,  
saving “How it might happen” for a little later

Otherwise, great ideas can be strangled by processes & procedures before they have a chance to take shape

**So be sure the right people  
are in the right meetings**



#3

## Habits Can Intercept Ideas

The brain goes into autopilot when we get in a routine

**The key is to intentionally expose ourselves to new experiences, people, and points of view**

*Stretch beyond your comfort zone—  
You'll begin to think differently & new ideas will emerge*



#4

## Risks Can Result in Failure

Create a culture that learns from losses,  
& nurtures new thinking across the board

**This can reduce your team's fear of trying something new because it might fail,**  
which can unlock uncharted territory



#5

## Ideas Are Found Everywhere

So always be on the lookout

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**Listen to your audience, team, & partners**

*Be open & receptive to feedback + insights*



#6



## **“Be Curious, Not Judgmental”**

Learn from those who inspire you as well as those you may not agree with

**A different perspective may be just the spark you need**





#7

## Measure What Matters

Determine what is **MOST** important for your organization to succeed + the metrics needed to ensure things are on track

**This is especially important for nonprofits**

Perhaps it's paying attention to things like:

- How many new people asked for info
- Number of new donors
- Number of new volunteers, new projects, people served, etc



#8

## **Beware of Shiny Objects**

By itself, a new idea or opportunity may seem fantastic

**But knowing what's critical** to your organization's success (*Hint: #7*)

**makes it easier to evaluate new ideas** & opportunities with a disciplined eye

***This focus builds momentum to help you get further, faster***



#9

## **R&D is Essential**

Keep an eye on what's happening today  
+ where things might be headed

**Turning to your team regularly  
can help you stay connected**  
with what's happening on the front lines



#10

## **Mobilization is Most Important**

Creative thinking  
**IS USELESS**  
*if it doesn't motivate*  
**PEOPLE TO ACT**

*The road to success is a lot smoother  
if people are invested in what you're doing*





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