creativity

the use of the imagination or original ideas

Quick! Think about a place where creativity would be encouraged and nurtured. Did you envision an art studio, a theatre, or maybe a child's playroom? All those places come to mind pretty easily, but I'm willing to bet there's one place that didn't, and that's the workplace.

The traditional office life-what many of us see as the 9-to-5 grind at a cubicle, endlessly dreaming about Fridays and weekends-doesn't always leave a lot of space for creativity. After all, you generally have a set amount of tasks you need to accomplish, and you'd rather not try something new when it comes to completing them, right?

Being creative at work generally means taking risks, which might make you hesitate. Fear of the unknown is a powerful thing, especially when it means you might fail. But here's the thing: Creativity in the workplace is absolutely important. If you can apply creative thinking to your everyday work life, you'll find that not only will the day stop feeling like drudgery, but you'll be unlocking more meaningful results. Let's take a look at why creativity is necessary for optimal work:

Creative Thinking and Creative Problem Solving Being creative in the workplace goes far beyond making the prettiest spreadsheet or the most colorful PowerPoint presentation. Instead, there are two main ways that creativity is absolutely needed in the workplace: creative thinking and creative problem solving.

Creative thinking is pretty simple to define, but a bit harder to implement. Basically, if you're a creative thinker, it means that you come up with ideas that are entirely unique. It's easy to come up with the same rote concepts for a project or a new campaign, especially if you've used them before. But when you start thinking creatively and getting a little daring, you may be surprised at what your brain can come up with. It's this "throw everything to the wall and see what sticks" method that creative thinkers truly shine at.

An additional bonus to being a creative thinker is that you understand the success in failure. I know this sounds a bit strange, but hear me out: creative thinkers know that one's talents are best used to make results that might come from unordinary circumstances or out-of-the-box methods.

To get these results, you may need to take a risk-something that can be frowned upon in the workplace. This can also be a bit scary, because it means you might fail. If you're forever trying for success (because failure is not an option), then you'll be reticent to step out of your bubble. You'll be using your creativity in ways that guarantee safe and secure results, and that's not what creative thinking is for. Shaking up the status quo is the modus operandi of creative thinkers, and is one of the biggest reasons why creative thinkers are valued in the workplace.

Creative problem solving comes into play when trying to fix an issue that has many possible resolutions. While a lot of problems in the workplace have one or two clear solutions, creative people have the ability to look at all sides of the issues, and many times can come up with solutions that might be completely new and interesting. Employees and managers benefit from creative problem solving because it can take them-and sometimes the company itself-in a whole new direction. It pays to stray off the beaten path.

These days, creativity has become more important than ever in insuring that a workplace runs happily and produces innovative concepts. It's no joke that both employees and managers should be using creativity to come up with new, brilliant ways to view projects and problems.

Whether staff or boss, once you learn to embrace the fear of failure and the joy of stepping out of your tried-and-true methods, you'll find that a whole avenue of creative ideas and solutions will become open to you.

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