



Finding your creative potential

By Tania de Jong AM

Creativity is necessary to the future of business and society. We have become adept at rational thought but we need to be “artful humans”. Creativity is needed in business to solve the serious problems we face.

Many organisations today have turned to workplace innovation programs in the conviction that creativity is one key to competitive survival. And organisations know their ability to innovate lies in the creativity and abilities of their people. Individuals need to understand and adopt internal thinking processes that increase the potential for new thinking. Organisations have to do the same. Creativity will be the strategic issue for the 21st Century.

The music workshops we run under the banner of Creativity Australia enable participants to communicate and present more effectively by helping them to free their natural voice. Through the exercises, people become more aware of the sounds they make when they communicate, and the sounds others make. They come to discover their own natural voice.

The voice is fundamental in presenting, influencing others and being heard. Participants sing in harmony and find that their team is transformed through the power of music. Teams even write their own song and sing it together.

Organisations that have run workshops for their employees include Macquarie Bank. An employee said, after the workshop, “It brought the group so much closer together – the room

was tingling with our combined energy.”

The Committee for Melbourne Future Focus Group also participated, and a member commented, we were challenged and inspired to think beyond the usual bounds of leadership style by taking a journey of breath, chant and song. It affirmed for many that if allowed, creativity can and will ‘create’ great leaders.”



Sofitel Melbourne staff members in the Melbourne SINGS Choir with Creativity Australia founder and soprano Tania de Jong AM

Employees from normally somber industries find another side to themselves, as one employee from a management consultancy observed: “I could not stop my lips from turning upwards and smiling during the session! It made me feel so happy and alive!”

In order to make things different at work, you have to transcend the business world. You have to develop qualities such as compassion, understanding and resilience, because adversity is part of life. I say you

should look for the music in your life, let your dreams soar and let your voice sing.

When you find your potential through self-expression, you are then capable of being creative in ways you may never have imagined possible. You go beyond your previous limitations, and this is joyful.

Creative expression can assist in improving all aspects of a business, irrespective of its field of expertise. It heightens well-being, emotional expression and self awareness. ■

Tania de Jong AM is a leading Australian soprano and social entrepreneur. She founded Creativity Australia and Creative Universe to improve well-being, engagement and innovation in organisations and communities. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2008.

Through Creative Universe and with the support of ANZ, the **Creative Innovation 2010** conference will be held in Melbourne on 8-10 September. World-changing innovators, futurists, inspired thinkers and curious souls will explore creativity and innovation, war and peace, technology, leadership, communities and the future of work. See www.ci2010.com.au