

Growing Creativity at Camp How to Increase Creativity with Camp Staff

How do we encourage our counsellors and programmers to stretch their imaginations and use their hidden skills?

This session will explore how the camp director/supervisor can encourage and grow creativity at camp with their staff and campers.

We will look at specific ways to encourage and grow creativity at camp with your staff. They will be able to take specific ways back to camp to grow creativity this summer. We will explore five ways to encourage Creativity at camp:

1. To grow creativity at camp you must be creative.
2. The environment must welcome creative thinking.
3. You must encourage those who show creativity.
4. The campers, as well as the staff, should be included in your plans for creativity.
5. You need to start to grow your creativity today.

Getting started on growing your creativity and learning how to help other grow theirs is important - this session will help everyone learn more about creativity and creativity's roll at camp.

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When we talk about leadership and training we often talk about the skills of problem solving, teamwork and communication. One component that is often left out may be the most important - Creativity.

How do we help our staff become more creative? Let's find out:

1. To grow creativity at camp you must be creative.

You show leadership at camp - to help your staff become more creative, you must be creative. Help your own creativity grow by doing activities that encourage you to think outside of your comfort zone.

2. The environment must welcome creative thinking.

Make sure that you think before you speak - I know that we all know this, and hopefully we practice it. You must welcome creativity and you can do this with kind words, an open mind and by letting others try things their way.

3. You must encourage those who show creativity.

When you see creativity - encourage and reward it. If you see someone try and new idea - if it fails or succeeds - encourage them. We need to show our staff what creativity looks like so that they know what to aspire to.

4. The campers, as well as the staff, should be included in your plans for creativity.

Run a session on creativity for your campers - like arts and crafts - a puzzle session, or a discovery session. You can incorporate it into your already existing programming with simple ideas.

5. You need to start to grow your creativity today.

It can be easy to introduce creative thinking to camp and you should start doing it as soon as you can. Encourage you staff to come up with something creative to show that they want to return, or have them come up with an idea for a session that they can lead.

Creativity can be difficult to put your finger on. I have included a list of creative quotes, books and principles that will help you on your journey.

Many people do not consider themselves creative - we need to train ourselves to think like a young child and believe that we can do anything. We want to get our staff to believe that they can succeed at trying new things. Creativity is the missing link in many leadership programs; creativity can make the difference between a good leader and a great leader.

There are many activities that you can do to grow creativity. We will now cover a few, use this section to make notes on these activities:

Creative Quotations

- A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.
- A life lived without fantasy is a seriously impoverished life.
- You have to free yourself of rules, restrictions, and restraints, in order to make discoveries.
- When you say something is impossible, you've abandoned the winners and joined the losers.
- It doesn't matter how you get there, when you don't know where you're going. *The Flying Karamazov Brothers*.
- Intelligence is the ability to see many points of view without going completely bonkers. *Douglas Adams*
- Conformity is the jailer of freedom and the enemy of growth. *John F. Kennedy*
- Someone who tries to do something and fails is a lot better off than the person who tries to do nothing and succeeds.
- Great innovators and original thinkers and artists attract the wrath of mediocrities as lightning rods draw the flashes. *Theodor Reik*
- The obscure we see eventually. The completely obvious, it seems, takes longer. *Edward R. Murrow*
- Argue for your limitations and sure enough they are yours. *Richard Bach*
- Persistence is what makes the impossible possible, the possible likely, and the likely definite. *Robert Half*
- Seriousness is the only refuge of the shallow. *Oscar Wilde*
- There ain't no rules around here. We're trying to accomplish something. *Thomas Edison*
- Creativity doesn't rely on magic, it is simply a way of life.
- Most people surround themselves with arbitrary and artificial limitations, and then blame life for them.

Principles of Creativity...

1. Creative thinking isn't always easy.
2. Creative thinking takes time.
3. Creative thinking isn't just the bright idea
4. Sometimes the obvious is the creative.
5. Your "comfort zone" can be a dangerous place.
6. Boundaries are often imaginary.
7. Never settle for just one solution.
8. No problem is impossible - some just take longer to solve.

Creative Thinking -- Book List

Here is a list of some of the books that were used for the Creative thinking workshop. If you have any questions about any of the books feel free to get in touch with me, my number is at the bottom of the page.

- *1. Creative Growth Games - 75 fascinating games to expand your imagination and unleash your originality. Eugene Raudsepp with George P. Hough, Jr.
- 2. Don't Just Do Something, Sit There - New maxims to refresh and enrich your life. Richard Eyre.
- 3. Five Star Mind - Games and puzzles to stimulate your creativity and imagination. Tom Wujec.
- 4. The Joy of Not Knowing It All - Profiting from creativity at work and play. Ernie J. Zelinski.
- *5. Pumping Ions - Games and exercises to flex you mind. Tom Wujec.
- *6. The Puzzle Arcade - for people who like lots of hints. Jerry Slocum.
- *7. Puzzlegrams by Pentagram. Elan press.
- 8. More Puzzlegrams designed by Pentagram. A Fireside Book publised by Simon and Schuster Inc.
- *9. World'd Toughest Puzzles. Charles Barry Townsend.

This list is a collection of books that has accumulated over the course of 10 years. They can be found in most book stores, but many were also found in little out of the way used bookshops. The books with a star mark are the ones that I find the most useful for myself, but try out some of the others also.