Chapter 8

Messaging and Media Strategies
1. Describe characteristics of great creative minds.

2. Contrast the roles of an agency’s creative department and its business managers/account executives.

3. Discuss how teams manage tensions and promote creativity in integrated marketing communication.

4. Evaluate your own passion for creativity.
Why Promotion Needs Creativity

• How we recognize and define creativity in marketing rests on our understanding of the achievements of acknowledged creative geniuses from the worlds of art, literature, music, science, and politics.

• A look at great creative minds—such as Picasso, Gandhi, Freud, Eliot, Stravinsky, Graham, and Einstein—reveals shared sensibilities including a strikingly exuberant self-confidence, (childlike) alertness, unconventionality, and an obsessive commitment to their work.

• However, self-confidence at some point becomes crass self-promotion, and an unconstrained childlike ability to see the world as forever new eventually devolves into childish self-indulgence.

• In spite of creativity’s downside, it is essential. In today’s world, without creativity there couldn’t be successful brand promotion.
Exhibit 8.1 Seven Creative Geniuses

Albert Einstein
Sigmund Freud
Pablo Picasso
Martha Graham
Igor Stravinsky
Mahatma Gandhi
T.S. Eliot
Agencies, Clients, and the Creative Process

- The significant effort required to get the right idea, coupled with the client’s apparent ease in dismissing that idea, underlies the contentiousness between an agency’s creative staff and its account executives and clients.

- Creatives provoke. Managers restrain. Ads that win awards for creative excellence often make clients uncomfortable and it is one of the manager’s jobs to help keep the client at ease.

- All organizations deal with the competing agendas of one department versus another, but in advertising agencies, this competition plays out at an amplified level.

- The difficulty of assessing the effectiveness of brand promotion only adds to the problem. Advertising researchers are in the unenviable position of judging the creatives, pitting “science” against art.

- In spite of these tensions, creativity is essential to the vitality of brands. Creativity makes a brand, and creativity reinvents established brands in new and desired ways.
Coordination, Collaboration, and Creativity

• There are many sources of conflict and tension in the creation of a promotional mix. Many organizations attempt to address this challenging issue through systematic utilization of teams.

• Teams, when effectively managed, will produce outputs that are greater than the sum of their individual parts. Individuals, however, can still perform to their best abilities and cognitive style while benefiting from others’ input and guidance.

• Teams need to be managed to promote creative abrasion but limit interpersonal abrasion. They need guidance from a maestro (like a Lee Clow) who will carefully select and guide the team, while also contributing to the work.
• Use of a creative brief can get teams headed in the right direction and preempt many forms of conflict.

**Exhibit 8.2 A Creative Brief**

- **What is the product or service?**
  - Simple description or name of product or service.

- **Who/what is the competition?**
  - Provide a snapshot of the brand situation including current position in the category, brand challenges, competitive threats, and future goals.

- **Who are we talking to?**
  - Clear definition of who the target is. Both demographically and psychographically. Be as specific as possible in defining the target so the creative can connect target and brand in the most compelling way.

- **What consumer need or problem do we address?**
  - Describe the unmet consumer need that this product or service fills or how this product addresses a need in a way that's unique.

- **What does the consumer currently think about us?**
  - Discover target insights to get at attitudes and behaviors related to broader context as well as specific category and brand. Determine whether insights currently exist or whether new research needs to be conducted.

- **What one thing do we want them to believe?**
  - Be as singu-lair-minded as possible. Write in a habitual (functional, emotional, or self-expressive) language. Should differentiate us … no other brand in the category can or is currently saying it.

- **What can we tell them that will make them believe this?**
  - Not a list of available support but the few things that clearly support the 'one thing we want them to believe.'

- **What is the tonality of the advertising?**
  - A few adjectives or phrase that captures the tone and personality of the advertising.
Harvard researcher Teresa Amabile has identified what she refers to as the six keys of creativity in any organization. According to Amabile, the foundation for creativity is setting people up with just the right amount of challenge and then giving them the freedom to choose a path for meeting it.

**Exhibit 8.3  Keys to Creativity**
• Brainstorming and alien visitors can be a powerful way to generate creativity in a team.

**Exhibit 8.4 Eight Rules for Brainstorming**

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<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Build off each other.</td>
<td>Don't just generate ideas; build off them.</td>
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<td>2. Fear drives out creativity.</td>
<td>Be sure no one is teased or embarrassed.</td>
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<td>3. Prime individuals before and after.</td>
<td>Give everyone a chance to prepare and learn.</td>
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<td>4. Make it happen.</td>
<td>Put ideas into action.</td>
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<td>5. It's a skill.</td>
<td>Use a skilled facilitator.</td>
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<td>7. Listen and learn.</td>
<td>Focus on learning and building trust.</td>
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<td>8. Follow the rules.</td>
<td>If you don't, you're not really brainstorming.</td>
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Your Commitment to Creativity

- Self-assessment is an important part of learning and growing.
- Now is the perfect time to be thinking about yourself and your passion for creativity.
- If marketing, especially brand promotion, interests you, then improving your own creative abilities should be a lifelong quest.
- Yale psychologist Robert Sternberg has developed a series of ten advice statements to help people develop their creative abilities:

  To make yourself more creative, decide now to:
  
  Redefine problems to see them differently from other people;
  
  Be the first to analyze and critique your own ideas, since we all have good ones and bad ones;
  
  Be prepared for opposition whenever you have a really creative idea;
  
  Recognize that it is impossible to be creative without adequate knowledge;
  
  Recognize that too much knowledge can stifle creativity;
  
  Find the standard, safe solution and then decide when you want to take a risk by defying it;
  
  Keep growing and experiencing, and challenging your own comfort zone;
  
  Believe in yourself, especially when surrounded by doubters;
  
  Learn to cherish ambiguity, because from it comes the new ideas;
  
  Remember that research has shown that people are most likely to be creative when doing something they love.