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Flying in the face of disaster

In the 1980s and early '90s, Continental Airlines was a disaster. The organization had gone bankrupt twice and was on its way to a third (and final) catastrophe. It had gone through 10 presidents in 10 years, and employees mistrusted management.

Then in 1994 Gordon Bethune stepped in. Instead of running around willy-nilly trying to stamp out the various raging fires, Bethune took a step back to return to the basics. He identified Continental's key goals so that employees' efforts would be concentrated on them rather than diffused by the disaster of the moment. One of his areas of focus was creating a corporate culture. Without the commitment of the employees, the other goals would be impossible.

Drawing on the organization's history of excellence in service, he rallied the workforce. Bethune discovered that the employees weren't bad—they just worked in a dysfunctional organization. So they were quick to get behind his new leadership.

Senior management was a different story. Bethune knew he had to make wholesale changes, and that meant getting rid of the bureaucracy. In a couple of months, Bethune and his top executives replaced 50 of the company's 61 officers with 20 top-notch people.

The changes were dramatic. In one year's time, Continental went from being ranked the worst in customer satisfaction among major airlines to first.

The birth of 'excellence'

Tom Peters didn't exactly give birth to excellence, but he did establish the idea that companies can achieve excellence under the inspiration of a management guru—like himself.

It all began in the spring of 1978. John Larson of McKinsey's San Francisco office was set to give a presentation to a client. But his computer crashed and took with it his notes. He turned to another consultant, Tom Peters, to throw together a presentation that would satisfy the client.

Peters had just returned from traveling the world to compile research on best practices in business. Up until then, his research had been collecting dust after he had presented it to the McKinsey powers that be. With an opportunity to present his findings again, Peters gathered his data. In search of a sexy title to give his presentation, Peters came up with "Excellence." It was a hit.

Eventually, Peters edited the material into a manuscript. Continuing with the idea of excellence, he titled the book *The Secrets of Excellence*. But the title didn't fly with the McKinsey folks, who feared that clients would think the company was selling the secrets of client operations. In 1982, Peters and co-author Robert Waterman renamed it the more politically astute *In Search of Excellence*. And thus was excellence born.



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Mix these ingredients for cultural creativity

Do you want to nurture a culture of creativity in your organization? Try to build in these essential ingredients:

- **Curiosity.** Ask people questions that challenge the conventional wisdom. Encourage them to stretch boundaries and take chances on new opportunities.
- **Emotion.** People who love what they do are better at generating new ideas about their work. Hire and support people who show a real enthusiasm for your organization and its mission.
- **Tolerance.** People won't suggest ideas if they're afraid of being punished for failure. Encourage risk taking by showing forgiveness when things don't work out, as long as people are giving their best efforts.
- **Direction.** A clear sense of what you want to achieve will help people focus their ideas. Have a concrete mission statement that tells everyone what you're trying to do, why it's important, and how it will benefit everyone.



What do the instructions say? Creativity expert

Yoram Solomon often conducts workshops that teach people to approach problems with an open mind. In one exercise (recounted on the Inc. magazine website), he asks participants to build a structure out of a sheet of paper. Some cut the paper into smaller pieces, although his instructions don't specifically say they can.

Once everyone is finished, Solomon asks, "Did the instructions allow you to cut the paper?" Most believe they've done something wrong. But one person usually pipes up with, "You didn't say we couldn't, either."

"To be creative," Solomon points out, "don't assume restrictions that don't really exist."

Quote

Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine, and at last, you create what you will.

—George Bernard Shaw

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Beware these creativity myths

Creativity can seem magical and mysterious, but you shouldn't make assumptions that can hold your imagination back. Watch out for these misconceptions that can impede your efforts to find innovative ideas and solutions:

- **The “eureka” moment.** Many people believe that creativity is a sudden flash of insight. More often it's the result of research and persistence, immersing yourself in a subject, and then building on what you learn.
- **Inborn creativity.** You aren't necessarily born with the ability—or inability—to think creatively. You can learn the knack by asking questions, looking at things in new ways, and challenging the status quo.
- **Uniqueness.** Good ideas don't always spring from something new. Often the best ideas and solutions come from combining separate elements in different ways.
- **Lone wolves.** The stereotype of the genius working alone in an office or laboratory is misleading at best. Although some mavericks do produce good ideas totally on their own, many of the best ideas and solutions are the result of collaboration by smart, motivated people.
- **Brainstorming.** Brainstorming sessions can produce results if they're focused on a specific issue. If it's just a free-form session of throwing ideas around, chances are you won't generate practical solutions. Keep the discussion centered on the problem you're trying to solve.
- **No limits.** Creativity may seem to thrive on the concept of thinking beyond boundaries. In reality, constraints can force your thinking in the right direction. Try setting some limits to what you want to create—size, budget, deadlines—and see how that helps focus your imagination.

Quote

Curiosity about life in all of its aspects, I think, is still the secret of great creative people.

—Leo Burnett



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Try ginger for its health benefits

Looking to get over a cold a little more quickly, or ease muscle soreness? A little ginger may help. Check out this list of ginger’s healthy benefits from the Huffington Post website:



- **The common cold.** Some research suggests that ginger helps your body sweat out a cold, as well as producing a germ-fighting agent called dermicidin, which can protect you from bacteria and fungi.
- **Muscle aches.** One study by the American Pain Society found that taking two grams of ginger for 11 days can significantly reduce aches and muscle soreness caused by exercise. That’s because ginger contains anti-inflammatory compounds known as gingerols, which prevent the transmission of pain from inflammation. Try adding a few slices of ginger every time you drink a glass of water.
- **Indigestion.** Ginger can help speed up the digestive process, allowing you to empty your stomach faster. It also helps eliminate excess gas from the intestinal tract.

Watch out for ‘masked’ hypertension

Being diagnosed with high blood pressure may be scary, but thinking your blood pressure is normal when it’s not? Scarier still.

The Live Science website reports that almost one in eight Americans who believe their blood pressure is just fine may really have a masked form of hypertension that doesn’t show up when they visit their doctors. Instead their blood pressure is elevated during their daily activities, so they may be at increased risk of heart disease without realizing it. To diagnose masked hypertension, researchers suggest wearing 12-hour blood pressure monitors that take readings through the day.

The flip side of this phenomenon is so-called “white-coat hypertension,” in which patients’ blood pressure increases at the doctor’s office (possibly from nervousness?) but is normal the rest of the time. Unlike masked hypertension, these people don’t appear to be at a higher risk of heart disease.

Quote

Health is the natural condition. When sickness occurs, it is a sign that nature has gone off course because of a physical or mental imbalance. The road to health for everyone is through moderation, harmony, and a “sound mind in a sound body.”

—Jostein Gaarder

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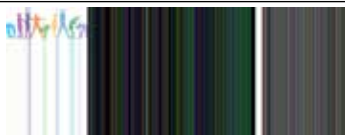


Cleaner air = longer life

Take a deep breath. Lots of them. You'll be breathing longer these days, thanks to improved air quality. Researchers at Brigham Young University and the Harvard School of Public Health, writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, say that since the introduction of the Clean Air Act in 1978, Americans' life expectancy has increased by 2.72 years. Although changes in smoking habits and better socioeconomic living conditions are a major factor in our increased longevity, the scientists note that as much as five weeks of our lengthened lifespans are due to better air because of cuts in auto emissions, steel mills, diesel engines, and coal-fired power plants.

Exercise may improve cognitive functions in stroke patients

Exercise is essential to good health for everyone. Now a recent study suggests that an exercise routine can have positive mental health benefits for stroke survivors.



A stroke cuts off the flow of blood to the brain, and frequently leaves survivors with physical and mental impairments. An analysis of 13 clinical trials at the University of Pittsburgh appears to indicate that moderate aerobic exercise along with strength and balance training is effective at helping survivors regain such cognitive skills as attention and processing speed. Exercise programs of four to 12 weeks can be beneficial, even long after a stroke occurs.

The most effective programs emphasized strength, balance, stretching, and aerobic fitness that increases your heart rate just enough to make patients sweat. Instead of an intense workout, walking on a treadmill or riding a recumbent bike appears to have a positive impact—important news for anyone dealing with the aftermath of a stroke.

Quote

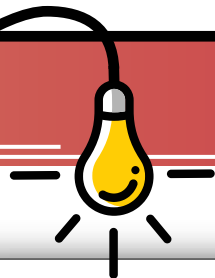
A sad soul can kill you quicker than a germ.

—John Steinbeck



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14 ★ 10

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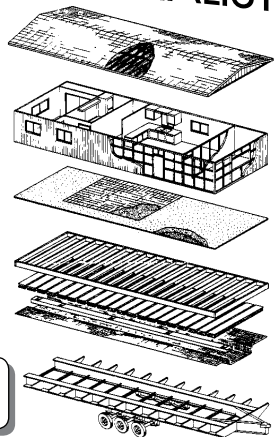
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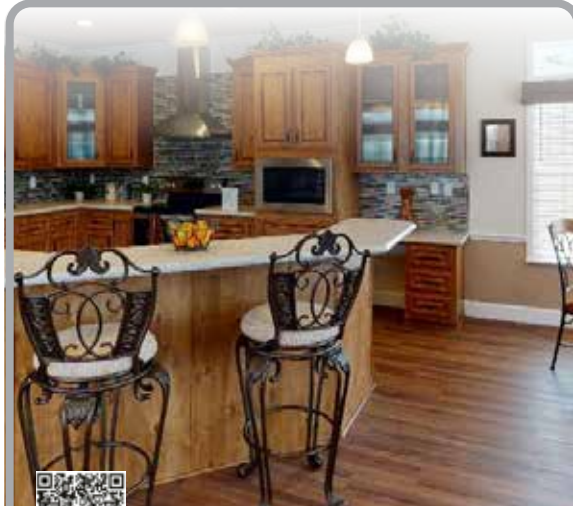
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9 ★ 29



Monthly

Adopt a Cat Month. Your local shelter has tons of cute, cuddly newborn kittens, mellow older cats, and everything in between. Shelter staffers are ready to help you adopt your very first cat or bring home a friend for another beloved cat.

National Dairy Month. Start the summer with nutrient-rich dairy foods. From calcium to potassium, dairy products such as milk contain essential nutrients that can help you manage your weight and reduce your risk for high blood pressure, osteoporosis, and other health problems.

National Zoo and Aquarium Month. June is an excellent time to explore your local zoo and aquarium as well as the websites of America's great zoos and aquariums. Many of them have excellent educational resources—photographs, videos, facts, lesson plans, activities, and sounds so real you'll think you're there.

PTSD Awareness Month. The purpose of PTSD Awareness Month is to raise public awareness of PTSD and effective treatments and help all those affected by PTSD. Mental health experts aren't sure why some people develop PTSD and others don't, but if stress reactions don't improve over time and disrupt everyday life, seeking help to determine whether PTSD is present is important.



Weekly

National Automotive Service Professionals Week, June 8-14. A weeklong celebration to honor the commitment and dedication of the automotive, truck, collision specialists and parts specialists who keep our vehicles running safely.

Men's Health Week, June 15-21. The purpose of Men's Health Week is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys. This week gives health care providers, public policy makers, members of the news media, and individuals an opportunity to encourage men and boys to seek regular medical advice and early treatment for disease and injury.

National Nursing Assistant Week, June 11-17. Nursing assistants work in hospitals and nursing homes performing everyday living tasks for the elderly, chronically ill, or rehabilitation patients who cannot care for themselves. This week is set aside to recognize the nursing assistants who dedicate their lives to the well-being of others.

National Mosquito Control Awareness week, June 20-26. During "Mosquito Week," the American Mosquito Control Association's goal is to educate the public about the significance of mosquitoes in their daily lives and the important service provided by mosquito control workers throughout the United States and worldwide.

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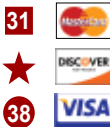
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The cost of a wedding? Priceless

June is a traditional month for weddings, and for some brides and grooms, the sky's the limit. The Knot website tracks wedding costs, and its most recent findings give a snapshot into the state of the wedding industry today:

- Average wedding cost: \$35,329 (excludes honeymoon; up from \$32,641 in 2015)
- Most expensive wedding city: Manhattan, \$78,464 (average)
- Least expensive: Arkansas, \$19,522 (average)
- Average cost of a wedding dress: \$1,564
- Average age: bride, 29; groom, 31
- Average number of guests: 141
- Average number of bridesmaids: 5
- Average number of groomsmen: 5
- Most popular month to get engaged: December (15 percent)
- Average length of engagement: 15 months
- Most popular wedding month: October (16 percent) and September (16 percent)
- Most popular wedding colors: dark blue (29 percent), gold (28 percent), and light pink (28 percent)
- Percentage of destination weddings: 20



What millennials want when dining out

Millennials are driving more and more of the economy, especially with their food and dining choices. Y-Pulse, a youth marketing and millennial research firm, looked at some of the restaurant trends being pushed by people 18-34 years old, and here's some of what it found:

According to the survey, 71 percent of millennials love to attend food-focused events, and 81 percent enjoy exploring new cultures through food. Memorable dining experiences are also important, with 48 percent saying they seek out new restaurants with famous chefs and 69 percent enjoying eating establishments with chefs' tasting menus.

On the other hand, 61 percent say they wish they could find more restaurant offerings that remind them of their grandmothers' cooking, and 69 percent are looking for food that reminds them of their childhood.

Quote

Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty—a beauty cold and austere, like that of sculpture, without appeal to any part of our weaker nature, without the gorgeous trappings of painting or music, yet sublimely pure, and capable of a stern perfection such as only the greatest art can show.

—Bertrand Russell

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Stay safe when working in the heat

When heat and humidity combine to reduce the amount of evaporation of sweat from the body, outdoor work can become dangerous even for those in good shape. The key rules for coping with heat are to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration and slow down and cool off when experiencing fatigue, a headache, a high pulse rate, or shallow breathing. Overheating can cause serious, even life-threatening conditions such as heatstroke. Look out for these symptoms of heat illness:

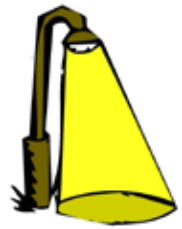
- **Heat cramps.** Working in hot weather can lead to muscle cramps, especially in the legs, because of brief imbalances in body salts. Cramps become less frequent as a person becomes used to the heat.
- **Heat syncope or fainting.** Anyone not used to working in the heat can experience a quick drop in blood pressure that can lead to fainting. As with heat cramps, the best approach is to take it easy.
- **Heat exhaustion.** Losing fluid and salt through perspiration or replacing them in an imbalanced way can lead to dizziness and weakness. Body temperature might rise, but shouldn't exceed 102 degrees. The best defense is to take it easy and drink plenty of water. Don't take salt tablets without consulting a physician.
- **Heatstroke.** In some cases extreme heat can upset the body's thermostat, causing body temperature to rise to 105 degrees or higher. Symptoms are lethargy, confusion, and unconsciousness. Even a suspicion that someone might be suffering from heatstroke requires immediate medical aid. Heatstroke can kill.



Stay awake on the road

Fatigue can be a killer, especially when you're driving on the open highway for long periods of time. Here are a few tips for staying safe at the wheel:

- **Get enough rest.** Try not to start a trip late in the day. Long-distance driving is tough enough in the daytime. Be ready and awake.
- **If possible, don't drive alone.** Passengers can take turns driving, or at least help you stay awake if you need stimulation.
- **Watch your posture.** Drive with your head up and your shoulders back. Tuck your buttocks against the seat back. Legs should not be fully extended, but flexed at about a 45-degree angle.
- **Take frequent breaks.** Stretching is good for staying flexible and awake.





Ancient life hints at life on Mars

Life on Earth may have begun more than 4 billion years ago, according to scientists studying a new discovery of microfossils from the ocean floor. The fossils were found in rocks from Quebec, and probably lived in ancient hydrothermal vents.

Scientists are cautious about identifying the bacteria-size fossils as evidence of life, though. The most obvious cellular bits and other flags of life are often stripped away in fossils of microbes billions of years old. Researchers use chemical tests and analyses of patterns and textures to determine whether they're looking at ancient life.

Still, the discovery raises a tantalizing possibility: life on Mars. The *Guardian* website theorizes that similar microfossils might be found on the red planet someday because Mars had oceans and an atmosphere similar to Earth's billions of years ago.

A journey to the center of the Earth would be very hot

The interior of the Earth is hot—very hot. As reported on the Fox News/Science website, scientists using synthetic materials to simulate mantle rock have determined that temperatures in the Earth's mantle, which sits beneath our crust (lying beneath the oceans), reach 2,570 degrees Fahrenheit, almost 100 degrees hotter than was previously believed.

This new finding will help researchers model our planet's geodynamic processes and plate tectonics more accurately, possibly explaining how tectonic plates move on top of the upper layer of the mantle.

30-year search uncovers trove of ancient Celtic coins

A horde of 68,000 Celtic coins and jewelry has finally been cleaned and separated after being buried since 30-50 B.C.

The cleaning job took three years, but finding the treasure trove took two amateur archeologists 30 years of searching. According to the Smithsonian magazine website, metal detector enthusiasts Reg Mead and Richard Miles began searching for coins after being told by a local friend that her father had found some silver Celtic coins in a pot near her Jersey home. The current owner of the field allowed the pair to search—but only once a year after harvesting his crops.

Ultimately they uncovered a chunk of earth containing the coins in 2012, then called in an archeological team to bring them up. The trove turned out to consist of at least 68,000 coins, along with many gold neck torcs, glass beads, a leather purse, and a bag with silver and gold decoration. It's valued at 10 million British pounds.

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It's liquid! No, it's gas! No, it's . . . a supersolid!

As most of us learned in science class at a young age, matter exists in three states: liquid, solid, and gas. But scientists have discovered a dual state that can exist at a quantum level—a “supersolid” state.

As reported on the Sci-News website, two independent teams of researchers have succeeded in arranging a clump of atoms in a crystalline pattern in which particles move without friction like a fluid. One group used laser cooling combined with evaporative cooling methods to lower the temperature of sodium atoms close to absolute zero.

The other team used an alternative method involving mirrors and lasers to cool a minuscule amount of rubidium gas to just above absolute zero, resulting in a similar crystal-like structure with superfluid properties.

Now that scientists have proven that supersolids can exist, they plan further research—possibly with unexpected results.

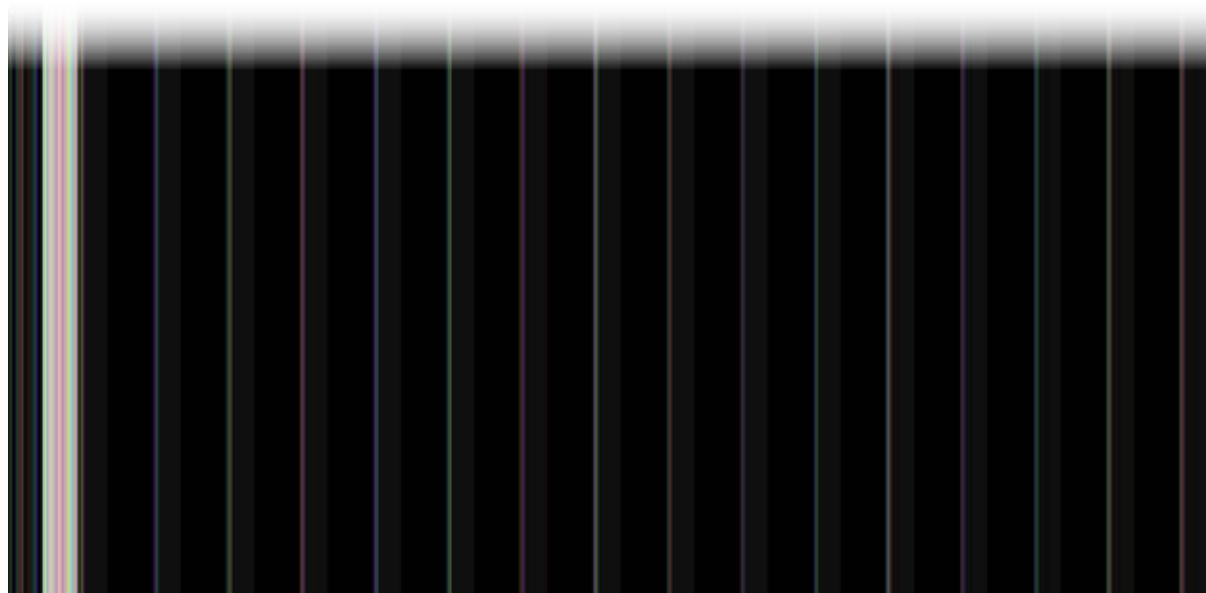
Quotes

Wonder is the seed of knowledge.

—Francis Bacon

Science is the process that takes us from confusion to understanding.

—Brian Green





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ACROSS

1. Bother
5. Start
10. Not us
14. Decorative case
15. Sporting venue
16. Part portrayed
17. Passing from place to place
19. Celtic language
20. Mesh
21. Metric unit of length
22. Beginning
23. Vibrating effect
25. Avoid
27. Hog's home
28. Cow milkers
31. Master of ceremonies
34. Not solids nor liquids
35. Anger
36. Nonclerical
37. Reveals
38. Make a sweater
39. 54 in Roman numerals
40. Satisfies
41. Chomps
42. Slandered
44. Encountered
45. Reluctant
46. In a constricted manner
50. Decree
52. Drama set to classical music
54. Hasten
55. Fluid escape
56. Warranties
58. Ruination
59. Utilizing
60. Desire
61. Formerly (archaic)
62. On edge
63. Stinging insects

DOWN

1. False move
2. Absolute
3. Hotel apartment
4. Transgression
5. Scarcely
6. Muse of poetry
7. Heredity unit
8. Becomes larger
9. No
10. Voguish
11. Wild bergamot
12. Otherwise
13. Encounter
18. Overact
22. Paddles
24. Milliseconds
26. Contends
28. Took a chance
29. One of the Great Lakes
30. Trawling equipment
31. L L L L
32. Cripple
33. Non-military people
34. Castle entrance
37. Thai currency
38. Friends and acquaintances
40. "Go away!"
41. Started
43. Missile
44. Illusion
46. Sea swallows
47. Thither
48. Feudal lord
49. Affirmatives
50. River to the North Sea
51. Darling
53. Hurt
56. Destroy the interior of
57. Vat





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