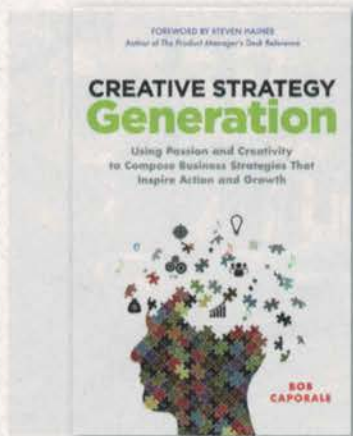


Using Passion and Creativity to Compose Business Strategies That Inspire Action and Growth

Reading a business book can often be heavy going, but *Creative Strategy Generation*, a new book by New York author Bob Caporale, who has more than 20 years experience in leading product teams and business units for large international corporations, takes the reader through tried-and-true business practices in a fresh, new way.

Published by McGraw Hill, the well written book is peppered with analogies to the world of writing music, references to the military history of strategy, and diagrams that illustrate each step as Caporale guides the reader from where the company is now to where the executive wants it to be with a new creative strategy.

The musical references are natural to Caporale since, in addition to his position as president of Sequent Learning



Networks, he has also turned his hobby of writing music into a successful sideline career.

“It took a while before I realized the parallels between writing music and developing a creative strategy,” he said in an exclusive interview with us. “In my career development, I was the go-to person for strategy, and, as I found success, I decided to analyze the process and found that the thought process is the same with both.”

Caporale says that the multiple steps he outlines to develop a successful creative

strategy can be used by companies large and small, young and mature, according to what is needed and the vision of the executive.

“Anybody can benefit,” he says. “This book can help anyone in life. I see it as a life strategy with passion, goals, and personal vision.

“I believe that more people than not have creativity in them that they can tap into. You may say that you aren’t creative, that you have a technology role, but your job is still to bring something needed to life. Maybe you should look at it as ‘creating.’ So often we only think of creativity only in the world of arts.”

In his book, Caporale makes a comparison between a rock band which can develop its own sound without knowledge of a history compared to, eg., a professional pianist who plays the music of Beethoven or Bach and must play that music, giving his interpretation. We asked if that analogy could be applied to a young DOOH company compared to a big company like OUTFRONT Media or Clear Channel Outdoor.

“Yes, based on what they are trying to do,” he says. “The big company might

be compared to the pianist who is trying to interpret and master, not necessarily having the goal of getting something new, while a new company has to innovate. It will be less 'out of the box'. A large company may be slower to move, more constrained because of shareholders' concerns and regulations. It may take time for 'out of the box' thinking. On the other hand, it may have a lot more money to put to development, and it has experience behind it."

Caporale says in his book that, when a company is looking to develop a new strategy, the CEO's views about the products or services offered may be quite different from those of its customers.

"The view from outside the company may be very different," he says. "Sometimes, if a company has time, it can help to get a fresh set of eyes from outside, even bringing in a new CEO, if necessary. Every CEO must maintain a balanced view. It's a key to success."

Readers of Creative Strategy Generation will find that Caporale talks a lot about motivation versus inspiration, and about intuition and passion. We'll leave it to them to enjoy and learn. Suffice to say that, he says, "Passion is doing something you love and the more passionate you are, the more intuitive you will be. They go together."

To quote two early paragraphs from the book based on Caporale's experience that might get executives thinking:

"I am constantly amazed at how many companies choose to ignore their own experiences. It is almost comical how many times companies choose to reorganize themselves, often going back to iterations that have already been tried and discarded many times over. It's almost as if companies don't trust their own histories, which attests to a collective corporate self-confidence that appears to be fairly low."

And regarding highly schooled

business leaders, he says, "They may spend a lot of time learning what other people have done but not enough time coming up with their own original ideas. In my observation, I believe this is one of the main shortcomings of many businesses today. They chase one another. They compete and chase and compete and chase; while too few are actually opening their minds to seeing a future that no one else has yet envisioned.

Grounded in accessible explanations, Creative Strategy Generation is a practical guide that explores the connections between the strategic and creative processes, and it demystifies the complexities of developing a strategic plan. You might well want to put the fun and excitement back into your business planning process by using Creative Strategy Generation to compose your company's next strategic masterpiece! (GC)