

The heavy hemp hassle

When you get a good idea, act on it!

Anton Bruckner acted on it. Bruckner, a 19th Century composer whose works had a spiritual quality, was once asked when and where he had conceived his Ninth Symphony.

It seems he had been walking through the Austrian countryside when he became tired and hungry. He stopped at a resting spot and proceeded to eat a soggy sandwich. All at once a divine tune popped into his head. This was a sudden inspiration which appeared during his mundane meal. It was the birth of a beautiful melody which became a part of his wonderful masterpiece—the Ninth Symphony.

The influx of ideas has come to many famous people. Sir Isaac Newton observed that he could discover more truth sitting under an apple tree than by poring over scientific books.

But famous writers and composers do not corner the market on creativity through ideas. This influx can be experienced by anyone and, after a moment of wonderment and delight, can and should be acted on at once.

The Fairbanks brothers, Erastus and Thaddeus, acted on their idea. They were in the hemp business, back when devices for measuring were still somewhat crude. Their product was the strong, natural fiber used to make cord, and they needed a precise means of weighing it.

Thaddeus began thinking of solutions to their problem, and he eventually devised a platform scale. It worked! They could then weigh their hemp quickly, easily and accurately. But sometimes a creative new idea only causes



another problem. This was true in the case of the Fairbanks brothers. Their customers were more interested in their “new fangled” measuring device—the platform scale—than they were in the hemp.

The Fairbanks brothers eventually gave up the hemp business altogether—so they could earn a fortune manufacturing scales! Their success was the result of a wonderful creative idea—and the fact that the Fairbanks brothers were smart—smart enough to **ACT** on it!

Here’s what you can do: A sudden inspiration can occur while you’re shaving or showering, applying makeup, getting ready for the day’s work, or even while accomplishing your household chores. When it comes, welcome it, think about it, and above all, **ACT** on it!



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Bush magic

How to put it to work for you

You'd like Peter Freeland. He's an Australian with a talent for seeing the opportunities that exist within every problem. He continually puts this talent to work for the benefit of himself and others, and here's an example of how he does it. It's a long story, but keep reading, because you too might someday have your own "63 acres of bush."

Peter's retired brother, Trevor, ran short of money and decided to sell 63 acres of "bush"—Australian countryside—that he'd owned for years. Trevor listed the property with a real estate agent.

"Well, mate, I'll do what I can," the agent said, shaking his head doubtfully. "But the market's tough. Keep that in mind."

More determined to prove his prognostications than he was to sell the property, the agent ran this ad in the newspaper:

"MUST SELL 63 ACRES OF BUSH.
\$120,000.

PLEASE CALL 03-83610."

Four weeks later Trevor had yet to receive a single inquiry, so he called Peter and asked for help. The first thing Peter did was drive out to the property, walk around it, and experience once again its beauty and uniqueness. Then he cancelled the listing agreement and wrote another ad. He increased the price to \$130,000 and told Trevor to stay close to the phone.

The result? To Trevor, it seemed like magic. The phone rang and rang and rang. Over 50 inquiries! Suddenly the problem was turned inside out: there were *too many* buyers! Peter advised Trevor to notify all buyers that the property was no longer for sale, but would be awarded to the highest bidder! And a few days later, a contract was signed for \$156,000 cash.

While reading Peter's ad, keep in mind that he's an Australian, writing about Australian property, for Australian readers. And don't get your hopes up. The new owner has no intention of selling. Although after reading about "Bush Magic" you may want to plan a trip to Australia. It's a beautiful country, with lots of wonderful people like Peter Freeland.

63 ACRES OF ELEVATED BUSH MAGIC

Imagine, if you will, a beautiful park-like setting abounding in native fauna (roos, echidnas, koalas) and rare flora, set high (600m) near the top of the Great Divide with panoramic views 200 km east to Mt. Buffalo.

The 63 acres are complete with permanent soft water springs which gently cascade over giant granite boulders into mysterious pools where the water flowed at 600 gallons per hour even during the recent drought.

This is 'burragaree'—an oasis of peace and beauty just 50 minutes drive north of Melbourne. Regretfully I have to sell after 10 years of loving endeavour.

There is a charming 16 square brick veneer residence which I have only recently completed building—featuring 10'X16' full glass picture windows, cathedral ceilings, cedar wall linings, berber carpets, combustion stove, verandahs all round, new generator, and surrounding it all an established garden which my wife labored over. The property comes complete with 31 colored sheep (all named) and 2000 protea plants which should return \$16,000 next year and \$26,000 the following year. What an investment! It's a perfect hideaway/hobby farm/family retreat. \$130,000 is my price... and I would like to sell soon. Please contact the owner 03-43719.

Here's what you can do:

1. Whatever problem you face, remember that it contains its own solution.
2. Realize that your attitude determines your perspective. Looking at the same property, one man saw 63 acres of bush; another saw paradise on earth.
3. Peter's words had tremendous impact: PANORAMIC VIEWS, GENTLY CASCADE, MYSTERIOUS POOLS, LOVING ENDEAVOR. Whether speaking or writing, choose your words with care. Be selective. Be precise. Pause long enough to think of just the right word—the one with impact.

Got a good idea?

Give it away!

How many times have you said to yourself, "They could do that better if they only did..." In many cases your improvement idea could work and save someone a lot of time, effort, or money—or all three. So what should you do? Why not just give it away! It cost you nothing, so share it for free.

Sound too generous? Not to the over 700 members of the National Association of Suggestion Systems. Each year millions of ideas are given away freely to businesses. Some, of course, are used, work effectively, and not a word of acknowledgment given to the suggestor. Others are well rewarded for their efforts. Some get to see the idea work and improve a company's quality, performance or profits. This gives great satisfaction—"Hey, that's my idea!" Others get the idea named for them. One company says thank you by calling the improvement by name. An improved accounting form carries the title "Jeffries Jotter" named for Susan Jeffries who came up with the idea. Another organization recognizes its employees at a special "thank you" meeting and dinner. One company gives gifts worth \$150 to everyone whose idea is used and works.

I saw this idea in action at a special awards meeting of a major corporation. There on stage was a service technician who earned

about \$38,000/year salary holding in his hand a check for \$100,000. This company had received over 207,000 ideas from its employees. Some never were implemented, but many were. To say "thank you" the company pays the idea originator 25% of the first year's savings. Not a bad way of saying "thank you." Plus, the company gets to keep 75% of the savings. One year this same company paid out over \$17,000,000 to its employees in awards!

Of course, you might not get a dime, or even a "thank you," but you'll receive a good feeling just knowing you helped improve something and made the world just a little better for your being here. So give your ideas away!

Here's what you can do:

1. If you see an I.O. (improvement opportunity) in a store, restaurant, service center, etc., find the owner or manager and say, "I have an idea for you and it's FREE." Then give it away.
2. In your work, when you spot an I.O., take the time to write down your idea and submit it to management. If nothing is done and you still feel it's a good one, do it again. One persistent spotter of an I.O. had to alert management 26 times before they finally took action! When they did, it saved them \$744,000—the first year!



My tantrum is over

When you throw dirt, you lose ground— so avoid arguments

Film director Mel Brooks has always been known for being temperamental. Many years ago, while working on the set of *The Producers*, he confirmed that reputation by yelling at actor Zero Mostel.

The shouting grew louder and Mostel raised his hand and calmly stated, “I am now going to my dressing room. When your tantrum is over and you have finished shouting, you may knock on my door and we will resume the scene.”

“You are going to your dressing room?” Brooks screamed in disbelief. “You mean that while expensive shooting time drains away you plan on staying in your dressing room until my tantrum is over and I have knocked on your door?”

“Yes,” Mostel replied. “That is precisely what I mean.”

At that, Brooks quietly surrendered, saying meekly, “My tantrum is over.”

Although temperamental, Brooks had the presence of mind to see that arguing was a waste of time and money. It always is, whether it occurs on a movie set or in a business office.

You can’t row a boat in two directions at the same time. The people in a business organization have to pull together. That’s why differences of opinion, when they do arise, ought to be settled promptly.

And remember to tune in to station W.I.I.F.M.—“What’s In It For Me?” Find out exactly what others’ needs and desires are—what’s important *to them*. Then you can offer your ideas as a *solution* to their needs. Instead of tantrums, tune in to others, and you’ll turn them on!

Here’s what you can do:

1. Remember there is no advantage in arguing, **Whenever you throw dirt, you lose ground!** So if possible, walk away.
2. Let yourself and your would-be adversary cool down and think logically about each other’s point of view. When you come back, you’ll be less likely to argue.
3. Every dispute has a reason—if you keep a cool head you can uncover the underlying causes and the problem will be less apt to recur.
4. If you’re a manager, don’t let disputes get away from you—give them your full attention immediately. They won’t just blow over—they need to be dealt with! On the other hand, curb the initial impulse to jump in and threaten people.
5. Keep a cool head, listen patiently and don’t take sides. Avoid inflaming an already hot situation by losing your own temper!

