

The Innovation Adventure

By Deena Ebbert, ChartHouse Learning—Home of the FISH! Philosophy • www.charthouse.com

I am all about an adventure. I crave the thrill of discovery and the excitement of exploration. I am fortunate enough to have a job that allows me to experience communities around the world.

I've climbed up along the Great Wall and down into the Grand Canyon. I'm all about adventure, but I don't bungee jump for a reason. I don't like surprises that include a sudden drop or the lurching feeling of not knowing which way is up.

Considering my reluctance for rides that plummet, I am certain folks give me strange looks when I say that I appreciate our current economic descent. I'm not saying I enjoy it, that I am amused by it or that, in any way, I find it invigorating. But I certainly do appreciate it.



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I appreciate it because I deeply value the way people show up when faced with the unexpected—a crisis.

At work, we encounter so many “mission-critical” moments; opportunities to show up, to engage, to gather around us the most valuable of our resources and employ them to their highest potential. Regardless of where I am—be it the tiny niche in my home that I use as a workspace or any one of the fascinating spaces where my clients ply their trades—I am constantly invigorated by the

wealth of resources we have available to us.

Timing, technology and need have come together in a way that both encourages and requires us to share our discoveries. These discoveries become our resources. In my estimation, the most precious of these resources is The Human and how we collaborate in the moments when circumstance demands.

Over and over, through my work with the FISH! Philosophy, I have the opportunity to witness firsthand as people collaborate to reinvent

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The Innovation Adventure continued

organizations beyond the boundaries of “the way it’s always been” into spectacular new possibilities.

Recently, I was introduced to the story of an inspiring team at a precision machining company in Grand Rapids, Mich. Micron Manufacturing Company invited FISH! to its shop. The people there invested themselves in interpreting and personalizing the four practices of “Be There,” “Make Their Day,” “Play” and “Choose Your Attitude.” Their efforts have yielded new ways to approach, not only the work experience, but the world at large.

I am thrilled to be leading two sessions at PMPA’s National Technical Conference this month. There, we will explore more examples of commitment and passion, like I see from the folks at Micron. It’s energy like theirs that reinforces my belief we are fully resourced and perfectly positioned to vanquish difficult situations and economic crunches.

In tough times, this way of being—alive and engaged—allows us to draw people to us. We can then create and reinforce the personal connection, bring together unique cultures and create an inclusive experience based on teamwork, recognition and the adventure of discovery.

Yes, it requires effort to reach a new level. We might have to pretend not to notice our collective panic. We might have to remind ourselves that “good enough” isn’t

good enough. We might have to recognize that some of the most brilliant discoveries are made under the guise of last-minute, mission-critical lunacy. And when we give ourselves permission, we will understand how individuals, teams and organizations around the world experience some of their greatest triumphs on a desperate timeline.

Really, it’s a matter of resources. We all have amazing gifts, precisely cultivated talents and unique, vital skills to offer. Why then do we hold them in reserve, waiting for a crisis, as if our abilities exist in finite quantities?

Today, when the pressure feels unbearable, we can transform into champions of possibility, because

we choose to be part of something about which we are proud, confident and reassured by the talents of our teammates, and we choose to cultivate the trust and collaboration that leads to success.

What are your unique skills and talents? What is the superior offering you have honed to perfection and where is its place in your organization? Likewise, have you discovered the skills, talents and offerings of those around you? How will you begin to call on one another to create the incredible sensation that comes from collaboration?

See you at our adventure in innovation at the PMPA National Technical Conference in Columbus, Ohio.

