

SYLVIA STOCKER

Short Biography

Sylvia is the creative and managing director in the live communication industry with an international portfolio of clients, including many large-scale Swiss companies. She holds a Bachelor in Economics from the Lorange Institute of Business and an arts education in choreography and modern dance from Alvin Ailey in New York. At age 16 she started her career in banking at a Swiss private bank.

Innovation - Create your Future!

I believe financial institutions ought to consider the following key factors going forward:

- innovation & creativity
- awareness and handling of risk
- flexibility and rapid reactions on changes
- internal company culture
- reduction of complexity

While many financial institutions intend to be innovative, while they seek to offer brand new solutions to their clients, and aim at going a step further, yet practice shows that innovation and creativity is not their common approach. Many financial institutions are rather conservative and top-heavy, which frequently hinders them to be innovative and reach their full potential.

The approach of being innovative is very much the same as being creative.

To me, innovation doesn't start with considering regulations, clients' needs or market situations. These are all external factors. Instead innovation emerges from within, from the inside of you and me. It has nothing to do with a classical brainstorming session. Innovation is neither a mental exercise nor a cognitive one. It starts with a gut feeling. There are two preconditions to innovation

- 1) set an intention (not financial)
- 2) connect to your gut feeling and observe carefully

A common approach to innovation is to detach oneself from everyday life patterns and all knowledge that has been accumulated over the years. One is to become a curious child again for a moment. When we assume that we know nothing and become like a

blank sheet of paper, then and only then do we open ourselves to creativity.

Here's an example from the creative world. A movie that is released touches thousands even millions of people worldwide. Now, why does this certain movie touch all these people? Why is it such a masterpiece? Why is it also one of the most profitable movies? Not because the movie was created in the brain with a financial goal in mind, but because the movie was created from a gut feeling with a clear intention of the outcome. It is precisely this gut feeling that was present during production and this feeling is transmitted to everyone that watches the movie. We all have made such an experience in the past.

An example of an innovative successful company is 'Google'. They urge their employees to be innovative from a to z, every day, every hour, to constantly be creative and present new ideas! For an employee, to be part of that, it is an honour, to love what you do, to believe in what you do can change the future, to believe that each one of us is capable to bring out something of significance to the world.

Google is in a different sector of business, nevertheless the initial intention of 'I am curious', I believe that what I do enables my company to reach the greatest potential, that what I do could significantly change my company's values!

Please note that being creative doesn't mean to have a good idea, decide on it and then plan it through mentally, probably losing its exact value. It is very important to precisely define what exactly the idea is and then stick to it to avoid getting sidetracked by many other ideas and influences during the project. To clearly define the idea at the beginning of a project will avoid disappointment and lack of success.

Innovative employees are like a secret ingredient to a company's performance, now and in the future. Thank you!