

What Does A Creative Director Do, Anyway?

A Creative Director is the standard bearer, a strategic driver of new business, new opportunities and new ideas, and a builder of client confidence and relations. A Creative Director is a hands-on problem-solver. But, perhaps the most important ingredient that a Creative Director can bring to the table is leadership and the desire to help people. It's how, in my experience, that you get great work, happy clients and a highly motivated staff. Here are my principles of good leadership:

A leader motivates. And not just his own folks. Everyone is an equally important part of the success equation. Great ideas can come from anybody. So it's important to energize the creative enthusiasm and best in everyone. A motivated staff is a confident staff, and confident staff, simply put, build better mousetraps.

A leader energizes, applying--hands-on--the same imagination to the management of people as to the product. Committed and passionate about the people, the company and the product 24 hours a day.

A leader mentors and grows talent. Teaches, not instructs, provides a blueprint to their inherent greatness. A leader is tough and tender, an Earl Woods to their Tiger within.

A leader raises the bar on quality and standards. Continuously. Is never satisfied with the status quo. Never stands still. The best staff I ever had were always a little insecure with themselves: Is it new? Is it different? Is this the best I can do? How far can I push this thing? (You either push the envelope or you lick it.)

A leader nurtures and sustains a winning attitude. Creates in their people a personal and professional revolution every single day. Makes them true believers. And even more importantly, evangelists for the product and company.

A leader builds a dynamic atmosphere of sharing and caring. Trust = Togetherness = Teamwork. Forge a partnership with the people and they'll think twice about leaving you for a few extra dollars. They'll also work nights, weekends and, believe it or not, like it.

A leader is daring, a risk-taker, engendering in their people the daring to dream, and dream large. That marvelous thing that happens when motivated, energetic, happy people reach for and refuse to let go of the stars.

Care, share, dare—*apply these and you will get ideas that are not only different, but ideas that make a difference. Even better, you will have a pool of talent (from all disciplines) who want to work and stay with you. A workplace with a minimum of politics and a maximum of creative ambition. Where reputations are made and business grows. And much, much more. This is not false idealism or a pipe dream; I have seen it happen. I have made it happen.*