

Have you got the idea yet?

By Louise Ralph

Jack Foster, in his book "How to get ideas" (Berrett-Koehler Publishers 1996), says "new ideas are the wheels of progress. Without them stagnation reigns".

Don't allow your communication to stagnate for a lack of decent ideas. We live in a world overloaded with messages and if you want people to pay attention to yours, you are going to have to do things differently.

There are four powerful steps involved in getting ideas:

1. **Information** – do the groundwork, talk to people and get data!
2. **Incubation** – leave it alone
3. **Inspiration** – now the ideas are flowing
4. **Implementation** – put your idea into action

One of the most amazing stages in the process is **incubation**. You've probably experienced the results without even realising you are doing it.

Remember worrying about how to put together that speech, workshop, article, report? You've done all the groundwork but you've come to a dead stop. You give up, go to bed - and wake with a start at 2am, to find the speech or article virtually written in your head!

Ideas come at awkward times – in peak-hour traffic, the shower and most often when you're asleep. Why? Because you've stopped thinking about the problem and your subconscious is taking care of it for you.

Foster's book on getting ideas is a highly recommended read if you want to get unstuck for ideas. Or look for a creativity site on the web.

And finally, never be afraid to try something new. Remember ~ amateurs built the ark. Professionals built the Titanic.

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