

Creativity – Key to Happiness and Good Work

My grandfather, when he retired from farming, became more or less a full-time carpenter. He usually had more work than he could handle, partly because he charged only 75 cents an hour, which wasn't much even in 1950, but mostly because he was good.

We went to our grandparent's home for dinner almost every Sunday after church. At some point the conversation inevitably got around to carpenter work, which my dad also loved. Granddad would relate, with obvious delight, how he had solved some building or construction problem. Both men were creative workers, able to figure out new ways to do things, and solve problems by modifying a tool or making a new one new to supplement the simple hand tools and equipment they had to work with.

What's more, both were genuinely happy people. They thrived on the simple pleasures of family, church, farming and making things. For example, in the early 1940s Dad had a single-cylinder, water-cooled engine to pump water for livestock and household use. While pumping water or driving Mother's old-fashioned clothes washing machine, it also ran a six-volt generator hooked to a car battery, which powered our radio and a single electric light in a dark closet. He built a wood turning lathe, powered by the engine, and made croquet mallets. These beautiful, artistic instruments, turned out of old hedge (osage orange) posts, and odd pieces of walnut, were in strong demand at the Converse store where a newly

built community croquet court was attracting a wealth of players on weekends and evenings. He always seemed to have some project going.

My late brother followed in

But how can we be creative when so much of farming, ranching and cattle production can be routine if not boring? That is the author's point. Creativity is

My brother had never built a circular staircase. You may have never built a great ad, but I have no doubt that you can if you decide to and then let your imagination and creative juices flow uninhibited.

Start by first determining what it is you want to tell potential customers about your operation and your cattle. Decide upon the most important benefits you offer to a potential customer. You must know this before you start, otherwise your creative ad might not address the points you need to make. But once you have sketched out the problem you want to solve, in your head and on paper, you may be surprised by the creative solutions that spring from your mind if you allow, and even encourage them.

These ideas, on the surface, may appear odd, even crazy, but that doesn't matter. Write them down as fast as they come to you. The best of these "crazy" ideas can form the nucleus of powerful advertising that will attract the attention of potential buyers, and interest them in your cattle and your breeding program.

Most of us shortchange ourselves. We assume that only other people have creative thoughts and ideas. But creativity is endemic to the human condition. Why else would it be so tied to our happiness and the quality of our work?



by Keith Evans, Director of Communications & Public Relations



their footsteps. He built and modified farm machinery. To access a finished basement in his virtually rebuilt house he needed a steel circular staircase. Instead of buying one he designed one in his head, drew it out on a grocery sack, and built it in the farm shop. It fit perfectly into the hole in the floor.

I thought about all this the other day as I read an article about creativity. "Being creative," the author said, "is the key to being happy in any job and to doing better work."

not limited to those in art or music. In fact, some people who make music, paint, draw or sculpt are not creative at all, while many farmers, ranchers, carpenters and others are.

Fortunately, marketing registered Angus cattle offers breeders a wealth of opportunity to be creative. As if to nurture creativity, farming and ranching provides long periods of time – driving a truck or tractor, for example -when people can think and plan and create.