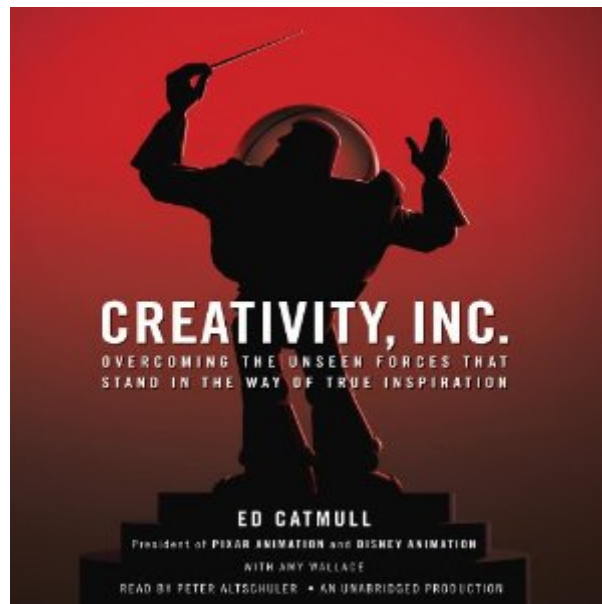


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Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming The Unseen Forces That Stand In The Way Of True Inspiration



Synopsis

From Ed Catmull, co-founder (with Steve Jobs and John Lasseter) of Pixar Animation Studios, comes an incisive book about creativity in business - sure to appeal to readers of Daniel Pink, Tom Peters, and Chip and Dan Heath. *Creativity, Inc.* is a book for managers who want to lead their employees to new heights, a manual for anyone who strives for originality, and the first-ever, all-access trip into the nerve center of Pixar Animation - into the meetings, postmortems, and "Braintrust" sessions where some of the most successful films in history are made. It is, at heart, a book about how to build a creative culture - but it is also, as Pixar co-founder and president Ed Catmull writes, "an expression of the ideas that I believe make the best in us possible." For nearly 20 years, Pixar has dominated the world of animation, producing such beloved films as the Toy Story trilogy, Monsters, Inc., Finding Nemo, The Incredibles, Up, and WALL-E, which have gone on to set box-office records and garner 30 Academy Awards. The joyousness of the storytelling, the inventive plots, the emotional authenticity: In some ways, Pixar movies are an object lesson in what creativity really is. Here, in this book, Catmull reveals the ideals and techniques that have made Pixar so widely admired - and so profitable. As a young man, Ed Catmull had a dream: to make the first computer-animated movie. He nurtured that dream as a PhD student at the University of Utah, where many computer science pioneers got their start, and then forged a partnership with George Lucas that led, indirectly, to his founding Pixar with Steve Jobs and John Lasseter in 1986. Nine years later, Toy Story was released, changing animation forever. The essential ingredient in that movie's success - and in the 13 movies that followed - was the unique environment that Catmull and his colleagues built at Pixar, based on philosophies that protect the creative process and defy convention, such as: Give a good idea to a mediocre team, and they will screw it up. But give a mediocre idea to a great team, and they will either fix it or come up with something better. If you don't strive to uncover what is unseen and understand its nature, you will be ill prepared to lead. It's not the manager's job to prevent risks. It's the manager's job to make it safe for others to take them. The cost of preventing errors is often far greater than the cost of fixing them. A company's communication structure should not mirror its organizational structure. Everybody should be able to talk to anybody. Do not assume that general agreement will lead to change - it takes substantial energy to move a group, even when all are on board.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I would devote myself to learning how to build not just a successful company but a sustainable creative culture." Ed Catmull There is no doubt that Pixar is one of the most creative companies in the world today. They accomplished an "insanely great feat" by creating the first all computer animated feature film, Toy Story, at a time when naysayers were telling them it couldn't be done. Since then, they have created a series of computer-animated films that have thrilled kids and adults every where. One of my most memorable times was sitting in a theater watching Finding Nemo and Cars with my toddler son. What exactly does it take to foster the kind of organizational culture that is capable of doing what nobody else is doing? How can companies, schools and non-profit organizations create what Ed Catmull and Amy Wallace, the authors of Creativity Inc: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration, call a "sustainable creative culture?" Catmull and Wallace tackle that very task in this book with a rare combination of both narrative and common sense. Catmull begins this book by telling Pixar's story, and a fascinating story it is. He describes the company's rise from a part of George Lucas's film company, Lucasfilm, through their partnership with Steve Jobs, to the present day as a company that churns out computer-animated films to anxiously awaiting audiences world-wide. Catmull's anecdotes and stories throughout the book remain true to what he repeats throughout the book: creativity is about the story, and in this book he tells an engaging one for those fascinated with creativity and how it might be fostered within an organization.

What is the recipe for magic? Something magical has been occurring for years at Pixar, but what exactly? We read about Pixar in business books, and have seen their continuous stream of 14 #1 blockbuster animated movies. Chief wizard Steve Jobs' affiliation with Pixar added to their allure. In

reading Walter Isaacson's biography of Jobs, you sense that his association with Pixar influenced Jobs' maturation and reinvention which enabled him to successfully lead Apple again into creating dazzling products. Like the scene from Disney's animated movie SLEEPING BEAUTY in which the magic spells cast create plumes of blue and pink smoke to poof out of the building's chimney, the spells cast at Pixar beguile to come closer and peek in the windows. Just what is going on there? The doors of Pixar are thrown open in this book. Welcoming us is self-effacing Pixar co-founder Ed Catmull who provides a captivating guided tour. He tells the tale of Pixar from its inception. Catmull's purpose is not only to tell, but to teach. He said that as he saw many smart, creative companies go off the rails, he wondered what causes a dangerous disconnect at many creative companies? And how do you build a successful company and sustainable creative culture which will outlast its leaders? He teaches the principles and mechanisms which structure and fertilize Pixar's creativity. It's said we have morphed from the agricultural age through the industrial and information ages to the creative age. Understanding how to thrive in this creative age seems paramount. Living a life is a creative act - the lessons are applicable to personal lives, too. It's a compelling story with characters we already know and love ...

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