

Megan Hills interviews

Susie Petherick,

Director - Expat Services Development
Weight Watchers (China)



Spark creativity in your team

“We can’t do it,” the customer service team said in unison. “It’s not possible.” Susie Petherick had worked extensively with teams in the UK, Australia and China. But on this particular day she had a mammoth challenge. The staff had been told to carry out a particular procedure in under five minutes. Everyone was adamant that it could not be done. It was Susie’s job to turn that attitude around.

So she asked the team to imagine that there actually was an answer to their problem. “I then split everyone up in pairs and said “Your challenge is coming up with a solution of how can we make sure customers get ‘x’ AND keep to the five minute limit. The pair to come up with the best answer gets a prize.” Seeing the problem-solving process more as a game – with an incentive – meant that the team no longer assumed it couldn’t be done. And we got some great creative ideas.”

“Always ask ‘How can we...’ when faced with challenges. It’s a good place to start to spark creativity. However, using the term ‘creativity’ can get in the way. Many people think they are not creative, so opening conversations with a call for creative thinking shuts them down. Having creative thinking in your everyday working environment without labelling it works best.”

Susie’s Top 3 Tips to spark creativity?

- 1. Be a role model** for behaviours you are looking to inspire in others - be surprising, ask great questions to open up thinking.
- 2. Set an assumption that people will contribute** then welcome all ideas, especially from people who think very differently from you.
- 3. Recognise and reward creative thinking** and remind people how successful projects have come from their ideas and contribution.

We need our teams to be open to creative thinking, to challenge assumptions of how things are and should be. It’s a business imperative.

What Susie Petherick says about Think Learn Succeed

“I have used – with success – some of Eleanor’s techniques in skilful questioning to really open up creative thinking. Her drama background means that she has a whole range of skills to bring to staging a session that is engaging, thought provoking, creative and just fun! Even the most cynical participants have been won over. She makes people think they can, and so they do! ”

Book a course for your team [Contact us now](#)