

Newsletters

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Focus

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Let It Go!

Frozen, Walt Disney Pictures' 2013 smash hit, featured Elsa -- a young queen trapped by a terrible power she feared and could not control. Young girls everywhere love the Elsa

character and endlessly play her Oscar-winning song, *Let it go*. However, that catchy tune was not in my conscious mind when my brain made the connection between creative thinking and *Frozen*. That occurred on May 6, 2014. Here's what happened.

During a recent leadership retreat, I was talking with the company's VP of organization development about creative thinking. We were in a woodland setting, with ample wildlife and a nearby lake, perfect for reflection and team bonding. How, then, could we teach managers to think creatively back at the office?

The VP and I knew how to enter a reflective state. You need to relax, tune out distractions, and give your brain time to turn off what's called "The executive attention network;" that's a fancy term for laser-focused attention on a complex problem. Oddly, a great way to do that is to put yourself in an unfamiliar place. That's one reason why remote retreat sites work so well to help people see the unseen.

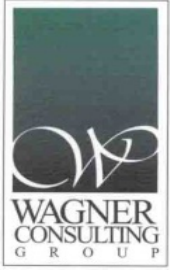
Professor Gregory Berns, director of the Center for Neuropolicy at Emory University, puts it this way, "The surest way to provoke the imagination is to seek out environments you have no experience with. Novel experiences are so effective at unleashing the imagination because they force the perceptual system out of categorization, the tendency of the brain to take shortcuts." And folks, human brains are lazy and love shortcuts, no offense to anyone.

This brings us back to my title, *Let It Go*. Let all the familiar daily challenges drift out of your consciousness. Let your body and mind wander to a different place.

Fortunately, you don't need to build an icy fortress of solitude (hat's off, Superman) like Queen Elsa. Take a walk somewhere different. Go to a museum. Read a book in an unfamiliar place.

Let it go.

Tom



Tom Wagner

President, Wagner Consulting Group, Inc.

To hear the song and see the animation,
Google "let it go" and choose the Disney link

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