

## POSTCARDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

### Creativity Is Everywhere

by Robert Alan Black, Ph.D., CSP

You cannot walk the dirt streets of a village in South Africa, the sidewalks of a small town in India or Sri Lanka, along the paved roads of cities as different as Cairo, Bath, Copenhagen, Athens (Greece, Georgia or Ohio) or a metropolis such as London, Paris, Tokyo or Sydney in any country around the world and not see vast numbers of examples of people being creative. Yet many people live with the fantasy that they are not creative. Other people are, but not them.

It was first while daily sketching doorways of homes and buildings in Cortona, Italy, while teaching there one summer for the University of Georgia in 1982 that I became consciously aware of evidence that people express their creativity even in environments where conformity and consistency seem to be the norm. Since then, I have seen examples on every street, in every shopping center, whether a makeshift market in South Africa along a rural road to a glorious modern shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; in neighborhoods, apartment complexes and instant shanty towns; and in schoolrooms from Teipei, Taiwan to Singapore to Stratford-on-Avon to Seoul, Korea and Mexico City.

The examples I continue to find and experience are where the people own their shops or businesses, whether they have constructed buildings, converted vans or motorhomes, tents, booths or spaces on the ground. When I walk through companies, I see more creativity in the way people decorate their offices, cubicles and workplaces than in their actual work. Outside of their workplaces, I continue to see endless examples of creativity and creative thinking in people's homes, gardens and hobbies: the clothes they wear, the meals they prepare and the toys and games they make for themselves, whether in hi-tech malls in Singapore for a competition of robot cars to shacks along a polluted river in Chennai, India.

At the same time, what I have not seen is much creative think-

ing in offices, stores, plants, workshops and other workplaces except in departments expected to be creative: marketing, research, advertising, design. All human beings are born with vast capacities to be creative, yet by the time they have been in school in any country for four years, much of the natural creativity they demonstrated daily before they entered school seems to have disappeared or at least subconsciously stored away and not used again, except in cases of extreme emergency.

As professionals, we owe it to our clients, customers and audiences to help them develop their vast resources of creativity in whatever area of expertise we focus on. How more creative are you and your work now than last year?

As "experts who speak," it is the development of our creative thinking skills and traits and the daily application of creativity that will bring us the success we seek and the benefits that our clients deserve.

Daily, look for ways to make every aspect of your speaking, training, consulting and promoting more creative. Strive to be meaningfully "unique, novel, different and new" while approaching your work creatively.

Since earning his CSP, **Robert Alan Black** has spent much of the last two years traveling the world and speaking on his expertise, *Creativity*. While he is traveling internationally, Alan can be reached through his web site: [www.cre8ng.com](http://www.cre8ng.com).

Left: Turkish drawing, Danish clown. Above, top to bottom: Mexican headdress, Hobart ceramics, Indian vendors.

