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Introducing The Creative Management Series
A new consulting offering from JLB + Partners

**Conducted by Nina DiSesa,
Former Chairman and Chief Creative Officer of McCann Erickson NY,
And author of “Seducing the Boys Club”**



Nina DiSesa has worked as an advertising writer and Creative Director since 1983; first for Y&R New York, then JWT Chicago and twice for McCann Erickson New York. Many people agree that the Creative Director job is the most challenging one in the advertising business because it requires not only creative ability and judgment, but also the ability to manage and mentor the unmanageable (especially creative people).

The ability to manage people effectively - in a way that wins their respect and loyalty instead of their resentment - is the key to successful relationships in business and in life. This is especially critical for marketers trying to manage the creative people who work on their business.

“Nina’s insight into people, her ability to lead you to water in the most delightful way, her genuine take on creativity and her advice on how to foster it in others are the characteristics that make her a divine sage. I have learned more from her and actually used what she has taught me - more than almost anyone I can remember. Run, don’t walk to any chance to see her teach. You’ll leave mesmerized and a fan, I promise.”

Dana Anderson
SVP, Marketing Strategy & Communications, Kraft Foods

How to Get the Most from Your Creative Agency

The relationship between client and creative people can be rewarding and even fun if it's done right, but it is often fraught with tension, frustration and misunderstanding.

Why is that?

Why does the same agency do brilliant work for one client and just average work for another?

Why do some clients get the A teams on their business while others wind up with B teams . . . or worse?

Why do some creative people love their clients while others can't stop rolling their eyes in client meetings?

As a client, are you a "lemon" or a "plum"? Do creative people fight to work on your brands or dread the thought of it?

Nina believes that while client and creative brains may be wired differently, that shouldn't prevent Left Brain and Right Brain people from working together to get groundbreaking ideas that will build businesses and make clients heroes. "The reality is that if clients understood a creative person's hot buttons and how to push them, everyone would be a lot happier," says Nina.

For instance, when creative people feel loved they are happy, secure, productive, *reasonable* and firing on all cylinders. When they feel loved by their *clients* they will walk through walls for them. If you don't have this kind of relationship with the creative people working on your business the good news is that you can get it. Someone just has to show you how to get the most from your creative agency.

But how do you get a creative person to actually *want* to be your creative champion? What are the stimuli you need to employ to get the responses you want?

The Creative Management Series addresses all these issues and more. Participants will learn to understand the way creative people think, what their actual creative process is, and how to get their best thinking. According to Nina, "The easiest way you can control someone – and a

creative person in particular – is to control how *you* react to *them*. If you do it right, you can motivate them to help you achieve your objectives.”

Offerings

Dirty Little Secrets of the Ad Game - Seminar

A one-day seminar designed to give clients a road map to understand an ad agency creative department. Big or small, they all operate pretty much the same way. If you know about this you can get the best they have to offer.

Are You a “Lemon” or a “Plum”? – Workshop

This custom-designed, two-day workshop puts client teams through exercises that will allow them to walk in the creative person’s shoes. Knowing how they think and react to the things you say and do will give you the advantage. You will have more confidence in dealing with them and giving feedback on their ideas. The result is better work from them.

“Talk to Me” - Lecture Series

Nina created this series of lectures give marketers a better perspective on managing creative people and understanding the creative process.

No-Fault Marriage Counseling – Counseling Services

This customized “marriage counseling” service addresses real-world problems in the relationships between client organizations and their agency creative partners.

“To achieve our mission of helping our clients to improve the value and productivity of their agency relationships, we have always wanted to be able to offer a creative consulting component to our services. But we needed a creative leader with a stellar reputation and one who is an unquestioned client advocate. We were waiting for Nina.”

- David Beals, CEO, JLB + Partners

“Dirty Little Secrets of the Ad Game”

One-Day Seminar

“Getting a ‘peek behind the curtain’ was always a treat when working with Nina. The most fun I had as CMO for Avis was working with Nina and her remarkable yet complicated creative people.

Scott Deaver, EVP, Strategy for Avis Budget Group

Nina will give a team of 10-15 marketing executives an inside look at the agency creative department in order to help them get the best work from their creative partners. She will address the following questions:

What kind of client are you? Seriously.

How do you balance brand sell and product sell?

What kind of agency is best for you? A full service agency or a creative boutique?

What’s the real difference between the two in terms of creative?

How do creative people think? Do they actually listen to criticism and direction?

How do you inspire creative people to give you their best thinking?

Are your creative strategies generating the desired results?

Participants will go through several exercises to learn how to make their creative strategies more exciting and more motivating to creative people.

They will evaluate the strategies they are currently using and be honest about which ones are delivering the work they want, which ones are not.

If the strategies are failing to get good work, participants will rewrite them to be more focused and more inspiring. They will show the group work they admire from other advertisers and decipher what the strategy was to get this work.

Cost: Pricing is based on specific client needs and issues. Please contact us for further details.

Are You a “Lemon” or a “Plum”? Two-Day Workshop

“Nina would say things like, “Ideas are the *babies* of creative people. You can still kill them, but do it with some compassion, for crying out loud.”

Larry Flanagan, Former EVP, CMO, MasterCard

Nina has made this presentation to numerous marketing organizations to help clients understand their creative partners. Now she has expanded this lecture into a two-day workshop, which can be customized to address a client’s specific issues in working with their creative resources.

Nina’s premise is that all agency creative people perceive creative assignments in one of two ways: as a “plum” to be cherished and protected or a “lemon” to be shunned and avoided. She will show you how to make each of your assignments a “plum” for the creative people (strategy is the first step), how to listen to what creative people are really saying, and how to give them re-direction without destroying their will to live.

This workshop gives client marketing people an opportunity to walk in the creative person’s shoes. You are The Creatives. Understanding is the key to managing. By becoming one of them, brand managers and marketing people can experience first-hand how creatives think, how they view the creative process (it’s not an oxymoron), how they develop creative ideas, how they react to client direction and why they sometimes appear to ignore that direction. The workshop divides a group of up to 15 clients into smaller teams that follow the cycle of the creative process:

The 4 Steps in the Creative Process

Writing an inspiring strategy. “Junk in/junk out.”

This is perhaps the most critical step. If you get this right, it’s a lot easier to get the outcome you want. But the biggest complaint creative people have with strategies from clients is that they aren’t focused. There are too many points to make and it becomes virtually impossible to find a

stimulus that delivers the desired response. It takes great courage to deliver a focused strategy with a great consumer insight. Teams can hone these skills working from an existing strategy, or brainstorm a new one.

Creating the Idea. “It’s all about love.”

The primary job of the creative people is to help consumers fall in love – or stay in love – with a brand. The second job is to give them a good reason to buy what the brand is selling. If they accomplish both of these, then their third job will be a breeze: making their clients heroes.

Whether you are heavily invested in traditional media or trying to decipher the digital age, you still need a great idea first. The idea can be in the form of print, broadcast or new media. Teams will brainstorm ideas and then be evaluated on the quality of their ideas -- not the execution of ideas.

Presenting the Idea. “Every idea is someone’s baby.”

Now each team has an idea that will change the world and make the client a hero. All they have to do is communicate the brilliance of their baby to a panel of “clients” consisting of Nina and members of the client organization. The panel will duplicate the evaluation style of the organization at its worst. For instance, texting on a Blackberry while the creative people are presenting, making suggestions about details while missing the big picture, not communicating at all, or – everyone’s favorite – leaving in the middle of the presentation to take a phone call.

Defending Your Work. “*ARGHGHGHGHGH!*”

Now that the panel has torn each team’s precious baby to shreds The Creatives have to salvage what they can. If not, they risk having the wrath of their Creative Director come down on them when they get back to the office. How will they do that without jeopardizing their relationship with the client? Where will they compromise? What will they sacrifice?

Workshop participants will have an entirely new perspective on the creative process and they will be different clients the next time creative people present to them. The end result: a better creative product.

Cost: Pricing is based on specific client needs and issues. Please contact us for further details.

“Talk to Me”

Lecture Series

“Nina was a great friend throughout our professional relationship, starting in 2001 and continuing to this day. Her insights into the creative mindset were always helpful, sometimes surprising and often just plain funny.”

Julie Gardner

EVP, CMO, Kohl’s

1. Managing a Boys Club

It’s not unusual for women to feel left out in an organization. It happens to anyone who is different from everyone else. A boys club, however, is not always a bad place for women; it’s just a challenging one. How can women manage this situation to their advantage?

This topic is covered as a lecture with Q&A or a full-day workshop in which participants can bring real issues to the group, identify tactics that could help, and engage in role-playing in order to practice those tactics. It is based on Nina’s best-selling business book “Seducing the Boys Club” in which she addresses the boys club issues head-on. Women can learn how to navigate their way through the corridors of male-dominated cultures and even work their way up the corporate ladder.

Nina will cover things like why it’s important to find something to like about the men who can make or break you (*“men like women who like them”*). She’ll discuss which male traits and skills are worth learning (*“men admire people who remind them of themselves”*). You will appreciate, even more, the inherent skills every woman has (intuition + compassion = empathy, the next best thing to mind-reading) and learn to use these skills even more effectively. (*“Men don’t have empathy because they don’t need to know what others are feeling. They’re in charge.”*)

The lessons and maneuvers Nina used herself serve as a practical guide to getting ahead in business, learning how to manage the unmanageable and how to succeed in an environment where you are different from most of the people around you.

This offering is a two-hour lecture with Q&A, or a full-day seminar.

Cost: \$3,500 for the lecture, plus travel and expenses

\$7,500 for the workshop, plus travel and expenses

2. Are You a “Lemon” or a “Plum”?

All agency creative people perceive creative assignments in one of two ways: as a “plum” to be cherished and protected or a “lemon” to be shunned and avoided. How are your assignments perceived?

This lecture will help clients understand how creative people think and how to make each assignment a “plum” for them (strategy is the first step).

This is offered as a two-hour lecture, including Q&A.

Cost: \$3,500 plus travel and expenses

3. The Creative Process (An Oxymoron?)

How do creative people get their ideas? What’s their process, and is the very idea of a creative *process* an oxymoron? Why do creative people want their work to be different? Why is it to your advantage for the work to *be* different, to be unexpected? How do you combine the element of surprise with brand relevancy? Is creativity art or is it neuroscience?

This is offered as a two-hour lecture, including with Q&A.

Cost: \$3,500 plus travel and expenses

“No-Fault Marriage Counseling”

A Counseling Service to Clients

“Nina helped us select a wonderful agency network and then worked with us for almost two years to help us get the most out of our creative teams. Not just here in the U.S., but in other markets as well. She helped our more junior people understand how to talk to creative people and win their trust and respect.”

Steven Robins

EVP, CMO, Bausch + Lomb USA

A client/agency relationship always starts out promising, but more often than not, it can eventually deteriorate. But a relationship in trouble can always be fixed if both parties want to fix it. Nina’s unique skills as a creative manager and a client advocate position her ideally to intervene, along with other members of the JLB + Partners team, to assess the situation, recommend a specific course of action, and work with the client and the agency to put an action plan in place to repair the relationship.

Cost: Pricing and timing is based on specific client needs and issues. Please contact us for further details.

Nina DiSesa, Former Chairman and Chief Creative Officer of McCann Erickson, New York

Nina started her career as a writer in Richmond, Virginia and then moved to New York as a writer/creative director at Y&R NY. After 5 years she became the agency creative director for JWT Chicago. In 1994, she moved back to New York as the creative director for McCann Erickson's New York office.

In these roles, Nina established a reputation as a master communicator, a ceiling crusher and a passionate client advocate.

In 1998, after 4 years as the creative leader of McCann NY she was made Chairman and Chief Creative Officer after a 3-year winning streak that brought \$2.5 million in new billings to the New York office. Under her creative leadership a host of blue chip clients joined the agency roster including: MasterCard, Verizon, Kohl's, Gateway Computers, Avis, Motorola and Hewlett Packard. Nina remained as Chairman through 2010.

In 1999, Nina was selected by *Fortune* magazine as one of the 50 Most Powerful Women in American Business. And in 2012, Ad Age named her "one of the 100 most influential advertising women of the last 100 years."

Her successful business book, "*Seducing The Boys Club*" is a memoir of her career working in male-dominated cultures. Ballantine Books, a division of Random House, published the book in 2008.

Nina retired from the agency business in 2010 and is living in New York City doing what she does best-- teaching people how to win, even when the odds are stacked against them.

JLB + Partners

JLB + Partners is a global consultancy whose mission is to help marketers improve the value and productivity of their agency relationships. In addition to the Creative Management Series, core services include agency search and selection, agency contracts and compensation, and agency performance management and evaluation. JLB+P has offices in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, with partner offices in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Beijing, Singapore, London, Denver and Miami.

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