

Animal Crackers



*The serious, step-by-step way to crack your toughest
business problems using the genius of Natural Selection*

Book Proposal

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Animal Crackers is a self-contained, step-by-step system for solving serious business problems, alone or in a group collaborative effort.

How it works. Based on intensive study and long-term research of the creative process in geniuses from all fields, the authors provide a clear roadmap to brilliant solutions for the most difficult and intractable business problems.

Why it is unique. *Animal Crackers* not only helps guide the process of creative thought but also suggests what the content of that thought might be. It starts by taking the user through the mental preparation required to recognize breakthrough ideas, then points to thinking Territories where these ideas are found. It then assists in transforming these ideas into wonderful solutions using real examples of fascinating animal adaptations.

Natural Selection. Throughout history philosophers and other thinkers have tried to understand and harness the creative process. Recent research strongly suggests that the human creative process is evolutionary in nature and seems to mirror the ideas set forth by Charles Darwin in his works on the origin of species. We have taken Darwin's work and translated it into a system called the Natural Selection process for developing and implementing breakthrough business solutions.

Why animals? Countless inventions and insights have been inspired by animals. *Animal Crackers* directs users to the animal adaptations most likely to inspire the breakthrough thinking they need to “crack” their specific business problem.

Aside from setting *Animal Crackers* apart, the use of animals as random stimulation makes the book all the more fascinating and enlightening. From childhood on, most of us develop a keen curiosity and affinity for our fellow

animals. Most of the animals used as examples in *Animal Crackers* are familiar and many share an affinity with humans.

Materials Three sets of cards, three recording forms, and a manual.

Animal Crackers Manual Provides a thorough explanation of background and theory, step-by-step instructions for using the cards and forms, and an example of a successfully resolved business problem using the Natural Selection process.

The Natural Selection process is divided into three parts—Extinction, Mutation, and Selection—reflecting Darwin’s three-step process of evolution.

Extinction The first section helps the user unload all the ideas, patterns, habits, and prejudices that have failed to resolve the problem.

Mutation The second section begins with a search for the appropriate animal and the adaptation that has allowed it to flourish. The animal’s evolutionary behavior contains the seeds of the solution to the business problem!

After choosing the most promising animal adaptation and with the help of a cutting-edge process, the user discovers wonderful new ideas for resolving the business issue. An initial business idea is the chosen.

Selection In the final section, the user modifies the idea in a way that preserves all its value and eliminates its deficiencies.

Cards Three sets. One is two-sided, containing Territories on the front and Animals on the back. These are used in the Mutation section. The other two sets are the Survival and Extinction series, used in the Selection section.

Forms Three forms—Extinction, Mutation, Selection—for recording responses to questions in the corresponding sections of the manual.

By way of its authors, Steve Grossman and Peter Lloyd, *Animal Crackers* embodies 30 years of experience consulting with many of the Fortune 500 companies in the fields of creativity and innovation. In addition, both authors actively practice and have been recognized for creative excellence in science, the arts, as well as in business.

Getting ideas is relatively easy. Getting the right idea and making it work is a more daunting challenge. Our tests with ordinary business people and select creativity experts demonstrate that *Animal Crackers* really works. It makes getting and implementing the right idea amazingly simple.

The authors have designed *Animal Crackers* to be used in companies as the principal process for solving the most difficult and intractable business problems. In addition to offering a fresh approach, the book provides a simple, step-by-step process which can and will be used again and again. We can continually update *Animal Crackers* with new Animal Cards as part of a subscription product. It can be easily adapted for CD-ROM and online presentations.

The Business Version of *Animal Crackers* represents just one of many possible renditions the Natural Selection process can take. We envision a Personal Version, Children's Version, Artist's Version, and many others.

Nor are we limited to the animal format. The Natural Selection process—what Roger von Oech¹ sees as a “unique exploration of proven creativity strategies”—is as solid as it is versatile. The authors can easily adapt the Natural Selection process to feature the adaptations of plant life or limit the focus to insect life or water life, for example. Other versions could feature human innovation in the fields of sports, religion, politics, education, and so on. There is literally no limit, because creativity can be found everywhere.

How *Animal Crackers* is different.

Effective creativity involves a whole range of cognitive and attitudinal shifts which available products do not provide. *Animal Crackers*, on the other hand, accomplishes all this with several unique features:

¹ Developer of the Whack Pack and author of bestsellers *A Whack on the Side of the Head* and *A Kick in the Seat of the Pants*.

1. It mirrors the entire internal mental process of profoundly creative people.
2. It is based on long-term study and 20 years of personal experience in teaching and practicing comprehensive creative performance in business.
3. It is consistent with recently published insight by academics and well-known practitioners.
4. It leads users through all the preparatory work required to extinguish habitual mental ruts.
5. It prepares users' minds for the onset of the creative experience.
6. It focuses the search for creative breakthroughs by providing specific areas for mental investigation based on users' response patterns.
7. It guides users in the development of the right type of recognition system so they appreciate and take full advantage of a wonderful idea when it presents itself.
8. It helps users take a potentially powerful raw idea and perfect it, resolving all the pitfalls and hidden dangers that can sabotage or short-circuit an innovative solution.
9. It is a fun, easy-to-use, self-contained kit for business people.
10. Most importantly, it requires no special skills or outside facilitation.

Who will use *Animal Crackers*.

Animal Crackers will be extremely useful in several professional markets:

1. Decision makers in all types of commercial enterprises who see creativity and innovation as key ingredients to business growth.
2. Non-profit and government institutions who seek to create positive community change in spite of the difficult hurdles and challenges that increase every day.
3. Individuals who see creative behavior as a key that will unlock doors to psychological, physical, financial, and spiritual health.
4. Change agents—entrepreneurs who are trying to create a personal financial and social impact as well as intrapreneurs, with the same goals as part of a larger business setting.

5. Change receptors—people who must be creative in response to executive mandate.

What the reviewers say.

Arthur B. VanGundy², “ says *Animal Crackers* would be ideal for trainers and consultants looking for a fresh approach to creative problem solving training. For that matter, it would be a thoughtful read for anyone interested in new perspectives in their lives.”

In short, as Michael Michalko³ writes, *Animal Crackers* is “what the market is waiting for.”

² Author of 11 successful books on the subject of creativity, including the forthcoming *Steal These Ideas: Hot Thoughts for 21st Century Hotshots*.

³ Author of the highly successful book, *Thinkertoys* and most recently, *Cracking Creativity*.

Bookstore shelves are full of books telling people how to be more creative. This growing market includes scholarly works on the nature of creativity, practical methods for generating ideas, and many other approaches. Clearly creativity is a subject of interest to many readers.

Within this market the authors have identified at least three kinds of creativity books.

1. Step-by-step problem-solving processes
2. Books that provide problem-solving guidelines
3. Books that teach problem-solving skills

Animal Crackers clearly fits within the first category. It takes the user, step-by-step through the most effective problem-solving process ever developed. The very process used by the world's greatest inventors and creative geniuses. The same process nature has used for billions of years to create the universe. We have not found another book that does this.

However, within the first category, the book clearly most like *Animal Crackers* would be **Systematic Innovation: An Introduction to Triz** (1998) by John Terninko, Alla Zusman, and Boris Zlotin. *Systematic Innovation* helps scientists, engineers, and technicians solve problems by leading them outside their own fields with suggested solutions from other fields of science or technology.

Michael Michalko, in his most recent book, *Cracking Creativity*, writes, "Genius is analogous to biological evolution in that it requires the unpredictable generation of a rich diversity of alternatives and conjectures."⁴

⁴ Michalko, Michael; *Cracking Creativity*, (Ten Speed Press), page 6.

Animal Crackers not only leads users beyond other fields or beyond their own business experience, it takes them outside their species and points to completely unexpected and surprising solutions from animal life. No other book provides such a clear roadmap for navigating this process as well as the unpredictable stimulation necessary to break through to a rich diversity of original ideas.

Two books by Edward De Bono also provide a basis for comparison with *Animal Crackers*. The first, **Six Thinking Hats** (1986), uses deliberate role-playing to lead the thinker out of normal experience into imaginary thinking. In De Bono's internationally known bestseller, **Lateral Thinking: Creativity Step-By-Step** (1990), the author demonstrates how creative thinking can be developed. Unlike *Animal Crackers*, however, neither book provides the reader with systematic yet unpredictable stimulation.

The Ideal Problem Solver: A Guide for Improving Thinking, Learning, and Creativity by John D. Bransford (1999) and **Everyone's Problem-Solving Handbook: Step-by-Step Solutions for Quality Improvement** by Michael R. Kelly (1992) outline the problem-solving process, step by step.

The first uses the acronym *Ideal*—Identify, Define, Explore, Anticipate and Act, Look and Learn. Similarly the latter outlines a five-step problem-solving process and introduces 14 tools. Once again, while both books walk readers through the problem-solving process, neither supplies the indispensable random input that separates creative thinking from genius thinking.

Finally, we can compare *Animals Crackers* to a number of tools for supplying the random stimulation we are so keen on. Some provide cute idea-generating techniques for resolving difficult business issues. Others take the form of high-powered software applications—IdeaFisher (a Thesaurus-like idea and concept generator) and The Invention Machine (embodying the TRIZ process mentioned above). These products very successfully stimulate their users and help them see

new perspectives and unusual ideas. They can even lead users to the right idea and making it work.

Undoubtedly the most successful product in this group is Roger von Oech's **Whack Pack**. With or without its accompanying instruction book, the *Whack Pack* offers an outstanding way to boost creative thinking and lead to unexpected solutions. It was not meant to serve as a comprehensive, problem-solving system, like *Animal Crackers*.

According to Arthur B. VanGundy “*Animal Crackers* is a BIG, BOLD book idea. It breaks away from the current crop of creativity books. It rides in the same herd with such visionary thinkers as Peter Senge and his new biological theory of the learning organization.”

Both of the authors are veteran speakers eager to promote their work. In fact, as creativity consultants, installing the *Animal Crackers* process represents exactly what they do for their bread and butter.

In addition, Peter Lloyd operates gocreate.com, a website devoted to promoting creativity and products that promote creativity. The site features *Animal Crackers* at gocreate.com/animal and could lead users to products updates. It also contains humorous songs about animals and a group of proposed radio commercials for zoos, called [Wild Ideas](#), which offer personal creativity advice based on *Animal Crackers* content.

In his email of recommendation of *Animal Crackers* to Peter Lloyd, Roger von Oech writes, “I’ve known Peter since 1994. He’s a very good writer and an excellent self-promoter (that’s a compliment!).”

The authors will not be the only creative professionals behind *Animal Crackers*. Michael Michalko writes in his recommendation to Steve Grossman, “I’m looking forward toward seeing the published product, which I will recommend to prospects in my travels.”

The publisher can reasonably expect cover quotes, a forward, or other promotional comments and reviews from the likes of Roger von Oech, Arthur VanGundy, and Michael Michalko.