



Bob 'Idea Man' Hooey

Success Keys from Rubbermaid

Rubbermaid is a pretty successful company, generating 2.3 billion in retail sales. Not bad for a company who creates consumable products and take-for-granted ones for a multitude of uses.

Rubbermaid in their own words, seeks to *"Master the mundane"*.

They create storage products for the house, the garage, and the patio, anywhere that something needs to be durable, water proof and cost effective. You might even find some of their products in your office.

Their aim in creating all of these 'mundane' products is to promote, *"Consumer delight"*! They apply the 5 T's in their creative design and discussion process:

- **Trends:** Be aware of what is happening in the world.
- **Teams:** Harness the power of applied teamwork toward a focused goal.
- **Training:** Offer training to equip your teams to succeed.
- **Technology:** Acquire and learn technology to make what you do easier and to expand your ability to be creative and innovative.
- **Creative Tension:** Tension can be a good thing if applied creatively. Feed the process!

They even have **Trend Messengers** whose role it is to gather information from around the world around them and share their observations with the rest of their team. As managers, we can learn from their success. They've developed **seven success keys or operating principles**, which have helped them reach their present level of success and will, no doubt continue to do so:

- 1) **Cross-functional teams** are more reliably productive.
- 2) **Oversight teams**, drawn from the Company's top executives, supervise every business unit.
- 3) **Company wide business councils** focus on performance and innovation in such business practices as marketing and design.
- 4) **Scrutinize market trends** by keeping close watch on surface action and digging well beneath the surface for what customers are buying, or would buy.
- 5) **Don't waste time on run-of-the-mill research.** Look for a need, impact and invest the necessary dollars to make a difference.

- 6) **Impose creative tension;** inspire their people to come up with 'fresh' solutions to new tasks in new environments.
- 7) **Offer every kind of training,** but leave it to individual associates to take advantage of it.

Consider the following:

- Can you learn from this successful creator of home, garage and industrial products?
- Can you, like Rubbermaid, investigate the world around you and see opportunities to expand what you offer your clients, your team, and grow to the next level? My guess would be yes!
- Are you applying, or can you apply some or all of these operating principles in your organization?
- What would be the response from your team if you did?
- Would they be more creative and able to explore opportunities for growth and innovation in your process, your products and your services?
- What do you have to loose?
- When will you start this process?

**What future do you want to experience?
Make the decision to Visualize and
Create the Future you want!**

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