



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT AND YOU: CREATING A NEW PERSPECTIVE

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Several years ago I vacationed in Scottsdale. During our stay, my wife, Carolyn, and I visited Taliesin West, Frank Lloyd Wright's world famous architectural school and compound. The compound is situated on 600 acres in the desert on the edge of Scottsdale. Where there was once sagebrush, there is now sprawling suburbia.

As you no doubt are aware, Frank Lloyd Wright was known as one of the most creative minds in the 20th century for his innovative designs and radical breakthroughs in organic architecture. He created and espoused environments in which people, settings, and architecture were all in harmony. We spent about 4 hours on site at Taliesin West and couldn't stop being totally awed by his creative genius.

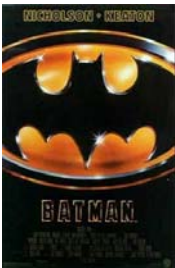


Frank Lloyd Wright's talent rubbed off on everyone he met – if he first didn't rub them the wrong way. His genius was two-fold. He always looked at things with a different perspective and he was courageous. That's what made his practical applications and designs so unique – thinking out of the box and not being constrained by conventional thinking.

Once, he was chided for giving away his ideas so freely. His critic remarked that Wright should patent all of these breakthrough concepts and designs. Wright's gentle retort was that "I regularly shake original ideas out of my sleeve. I can't be bothered capturing them all."

Artists, be they writers, painters, or potters – especially business leaders - all have to manage the challenge of the human condition. That is: **(1) suspend judgment and be open to look at different perspectives** – like Frank Lloyd Wright and **(2) be courageous to explore those things that others don't see or accept initially.**

Many of you know that my hobby is building whimsical stoneware sculptures. I was asked how I see the piece I am sculpting before it is completed. Actually, I maintain a "soft focus," perceiving what image the clay will yield as I begin to massage it. The German psychological concept of Gestalt captures the essence of what I am referring to. Gestalt relates to images or concepts in the foreground (referred to as the "figure") and in the background (referred to as "ground.")



While you might think this concept is too esoteric for everyday application, however, we see it repeatedly everyday. Do you remember when the first serious Batman movie first came out? To me, the poster that advertised the Batman movie didn't make sense. I couldn't see the black bat on a yellow background. All I saw was the yellow teeth. Why? Because I was looking at the "ground" the yellow background and not the black bat image that was the "figure." Once I shifted my hard-edged focus to a soft-focus I was able to see and fully experience the images of the bat and the yellow teeth!

The Bottom Line: *It is imperative for us to master being able to fluidly create a "soft focus," whereby we can quickly and easily shift our perspective. What was once looked like an 'impenetrable challenge' becomes an 'opportunity with the right key'.*

As we become more skilled in shifting our focus, we are able to access more of the creative genius that's in all of us. Frank Lloyd Wright was a master of it. Now it's time for us to practice it, both personally and professionally. Regularly ask yourself, 'what's another perspective?' And, again, 'what's yet another perspective?' You may be delightfully surprised.