

## Would You Have The Guts To Send This Memo To Walt Disney?



Today is the birthday of Van France, Disney Legend and founder of the Disney University. While he has been gone since 1999, his legend lives on. Today's tribute to Van is from Disney U author, Doug Lipp, who worked with Van and who continues to evangelize his message. — Dusty

**“Disneyland will never be completed. We’ve certainly lived up to that promise. But what about the people who operate it? Are we growing with the show, or just getting older? The trouble with people is that we get hardening of the mental arteries, cirrhosis of the enthusiasm and arthritis of the imagination, along with chronic and sometimes acute allergies to supervision, subordinates, the whole darned system. Is it possible that what we have gained through experience, we have lost through habit, and that what we have gained through organization, we have lost in enthusiasm?”**

– Van Arsdale France , *Introduction to his Proposed Program for the University of Disneyland, 1962-63*

This masterfully crafted memo to Walt Disney, and his executive team at Disneyland, helped kick-start the world famous Disney University. The author is the brilliantly creative, and brutally honest, Disney University founder Van France.

Would you, or anyone where you work, have the guts to be this honest with your boss?

Ponder the following questions when considering the state of innovation and creativity in your life or work:

- 1) Who is the equivalent of Van France in your organization? Who has the guts to be so brutally honest with you, your leadership team, your founding family? Van wasn't afraid to level with anyone ... including Walt Disney.
- 2) Who on your team can package honesty in such an innovative manner? Van's combination of directness and creative writing grabbed the Disney leadership team by the lapels; his was a wake up call impossible to ignore.
- 3) Using Van's words, what have you "lost through habit?"

Now it's your turn. How do you plan on waking up your "inner Van France" to ignite more honesty and creativity? Would you have the nerve to send a memo like this to the Walt Disney in your life?

