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Training Businesses to be Better Innovators: Just Point. And Click.

VisionMining Uses Photography as a Creativity Catalyst

Chesapeake City, MD — Acclaimed photographer and photography workshop founder/director Steve Gottlieb has launched VisionMining, a business innovation workshop company that uses a photography-based process as a “creativity and innovation catalyst.” Workshops are tailored to businesses, government agencies and non-profits. Gottlieb has taught hundreds of adult students across the United States how to be more creative with a camera. Using those same concepts and approaches, VisionMining workshops train executives, managers and staffs in the attitudes and behavior required to maximize their creativity and innovation.

VisionMining workshops engage participants in photography “assignments” (using point and shoot cameras), followed by probing discussions stimulated by those assignments, to open minds to fresh ways of perceiving and solving problems. Workshop exercises are crafted so that lessons learned translate easily to the workplace.

“VisionMining,” says Gottlieb, “engages participants — individually and in teams — in the dynamic act of being creative and innovative ... the “aha!” moments we generate make people aware of the techniques that improve results. In just a few hours, students learn how to broaden their vision ... and produce tangible outcomes. Everyone enjoys photography, so our workshops are fun, teamwork-enhancing and enlightening.” Gottlieb emphasizes that the central goal of the training is to maximize everyone’s creative potential. “Cameras are a familiar, yet powerful, tool for helping workshop participants enhance their unique creative ability and skills in a way that leads to better business performance.”

Workshops are held at client locations or at VisionMining’s training studio in historic Chesapeake City in northeast Maryland. In addition to workshops, Gottlieb offers interactive presentations onsite and at conferences.

About Steve Gottlieb

After graduating from Columbia Law School, Steve Gottlieb practiced law both in private firms and federal agencies, transitioning to corporate management in the environmental field. In an unusual mid-life transition, he

became a commercial photographer whose images have been recognized with such awards as "Advertising Photograph of the Year" in both NYC and Washington, DC. He is the photographer (as well as author and graphic designer) of six books, including *American Icons, Washington: Portrait of a City* and *Abandoned America*; the latter was selected by both *People Magazine* and *USA Today* as a 2002 "Gift Book of the Year." Gottlieb was designated as one of a half-dozen "Kodak Professional Icons" in the U.S. In 2005, he founded Horizon Photography Workshops, where he is director and one of the instructors. *American Photo* magazine designated Horizon as one of the "Twelve Outstanding Travel Photography Workshops in the United States."

VisionMining is an outgrowth of Gottlieb's diverse personal experiences. As a college student, he took an exhaustive battery of aptitude tests; the evaluator concluded that he had a notable absence of creative aptitude, both in the creative arts and in creative problem solving. That judgment steered Gottlieb to becoming a lawyer, a career he felt depended little on creative aptitude. From his experiences in the unusual career path that followed, he became convinced that creative ability (and its close kin, the ability to innovate), is far less a matter of natural aptitude and far more a matter of adopting certain attitudes and mastering certain skills. This belief has been strongly reinforced by his training of hundreds of adult photography students; in a short period of time, these students, many of whom believed that they lacked "creative aptitude," learned attitudes and skills that dramatically broadened their perspectives and enhanced the quality of their work. Gottlieb realized that photography could be used in similar ways to benefit people in business, government and non-profits. And VisionMining was born.

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