

What a Concept

Have you been reading Concept? It's the new one-page piece that starts off the features every month. I was just wondering whether it has been noticed. Concept's tag line is "a powerful, intriguing, inspiring, or perhaps odd idea distilled to its essential elements."

Like a new baby in the family, Concept is currently my favorite brain child. Actually, it was another editor's idea, and I embraced it, dubbed it "Concept," and have fashioned it. This isn't about me, though, but about where talent can come from—just stay with me here. The original concept for Concept was to have a one-page article that captured an idea or a process in its essence. Sounds simple, but then you have to come up with a different "powerful, intriguing, etc." idea every month and find someone different each month to express it succinctly in less than 300 words. Not so simple.

I didn't want professional writers crafting Concept, so I started asking colleagues, then friends, and even relatives. My nephew wrote one, so has a former beau—never mind which is which. What has been amazing to me is how good these little literary pieces have turned out to be. One key, of course, is choosing an idea about something in the writer's life or work, something he (Concept hasn't featured a she yet, but will) could relate to and, therefore, have something of import to say about it. But more to the point is that when you go looking or asking or exploring in perhaps least obvious places, you sometimes find gold, or at least fine silver.

That's not exactly profound, and maybe it's not even a "powerful, intriguing, inspiring, etc." idea. But it does say something about talent. So perhaps for your next brainstorming strategy session, you might want to ask the young guy who works in the mailroom or the return-to-work homemaker in the customer service center or the CEO's admin. Offline, you might want to ask your nephew.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Haidee Allerton".

Haidee E. Allerton

Editor



@Work (The Web)
Regular Column,
Staff Written
ASBPE
2002

Publication Redesign
ASBPE
2001

Editorial Excellence
ASBPE
1998

Gold Circle Awards
ASAE
(American Society of
Association Executives)
1994

Best Design
OZZIE Bronze Award of
Excellence 1992

Magazine Column
"Working Life"
Clarion Award
Women in
Communications
1992