

## **“Innovation Activists” Head to Detroit to Lead BootCamp for Exiting Auto Execs**

*Chrysler’s Former Head of Leadership Development  
Teams Up with Renowned Entrepreneurship Experts*

**CHICAGO, December 9, 2008**—Get Stirred Up ([www.getstirredup.com](http://www.getstirredup.com))—the innovation, brand strategy and design firm—announced today that it will be leading a two-day program on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> in the Detroit area for exiting auto executives who are interested in pursuing entrepreneurial career paths that hone in on their game-changing business ideas. The program, called “Shifting Gears: From Employee to Founder—A Two-Day BootCamp for Activating BIG Ideas,” will take place at the Troy Hilton and is structured as part seminar, part one-on-one coaching.

Teaming up with Chrysler’s former head of leadership development, Katy Caschera, Get Stirred Up’s roster of “Innovation Activists” will be taking a “bootcamp”-style approach, weaving together highly effective brainstorming techniques with candid entrepreneurial storytelling and tactical business planning activities. That roster includes Chic Thompson (author of *What a Great Idea!*), Ed Rogoff (author of *Bankable Business Plans* and *The Entrepreneurial Conversation*), and serial (and cereal) entrepreneurs David Roth and Rick Bacher (widely known for their retail venture, Cereality Cereal Bar & Café, which was sold to the parent company of Cold Stone Creamery).

### **Innovation Viewed as “Life-Support System” in These Trying Times**

“In this environment where the job market is in shambles, the outplacement firms are swamped, and the big corporate titles no longer offer any real job security, innovation has become the only reliable life-support system,” explains Get Stirred Up’s David Roth. “For those highly competent and motivated individuals who have had their hands tied when they’ve attempted to act on real innovation within their corporate cultures, this type of workshop will provide the welcome relief and tools they’ll need to once and for all reap the financial and personal rewards that they’re due,” he adds.

Katy Caschera is one of the close to 5,000 white-collar employees at Chrysler who accepted the much publicized separation package—the latest in a series of steps the auto-maker has taken to shrink its ranks during these challenging financial times. “I’ve been with Chrysler for more than nine years and have never lost my entrepreneurial spirit,” says Caschera. “My role as manager of leadership development provided a wonderful platform to help my colleagues develop their ‘intrapreneurial’ skills while building a collaborative and supportive, corporate culture.” She adds, “The ‘Shifting Gears’ format will allow me to continue supporting these individuals (and others within the industry) along these same lines, but in an even more hands-on, pragmatic way, as they make that seismic shift from ‘employee’ to ‘founder.’”

Creativity expert Chic Thompson, who has consulted to more than 300 clients from Fortune 500 companies, government agencies, and non-profit organizations over the past 25 years, has been

working with Chrysler's leadership team for the past two years as part of their "Leaders of Today and Tomorrow" initiative (designed and led by Caschera). He is particularly enthusiastic about this opportunity: "I know and really care for these people," shares Thompson. "I've been in the trenches with them as they've wrestled with how to improve the company's overall performance and efficiencies. Over the last two years we have come up with several creative approaches for improving vehicle reliability and energy sustainability. So now having the chance to build on that creative thinking and help them become entrepreneurs is truly rewarding and will be a boost for our struggling economy," he adds.

The two-day program is divided into a series of thematically-focused keynotes and breakout sessions on the first day, each led by a different "Innovation Activist," and revolving one-on-one coaching sessions with those same experts on the second day, where participants can drill down on their own, specific business ideas. Overall, they will learn how to brainstorm in a way that results in meaningful innovation, not just cleverness; champion their big idea with different constituents; find and structure deals with non-traditional funding sources; hook 'early adopters' and turn them into brand zealots; and keep focused, manage risk and make mid-course corrections.

"This is a program designed specifically for tomorrow's best innovators, not weary corporate folks who are pursuing the self-employment route out of default," explains workshop leader and nationally recognized expert on entrepreneurship, Ed Rogoff. He emphasizes: "It's geared to those individuals who will be the real fuel of economic change in America. With this new wellspring of excellent business leaders suddenly re-entering the job market in Detroit, the ones who possess real entrepreneurial promise require immediate and pragmatic support as they embrace their new roles in helping to turn around the economy: as founders of truly innovative companies."

Get Stirred Up's "Shifting Gears" program will be held at the Troy Hilton in Troy, Michigan on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9am – 5pm. Information regarding the agenda, fees and registration procedures can be found at [www.getstirredup.com/shiftinggears](http://www.getstirredup.com/shiftinggears) or by calling Niki Conrad at 312-596-3426.

### **About Get Stirred Up**

Chicago-based Get Stirred Up is an innovation, brand strategy and design firm that helps entrepreneurs and organizations create game-changing solutions for enterprise growth, new product development or line extensions, channel expansion, and brand identity and (re)positioning. The firm was started by serial (and cereal) entrepreneurs David Roth and Rick Bacher, who've been the creative force behind a number of innovative businesses over the past twenty years. Get Stirred Up's roster of "Innovation Activists" also includes Chic Thompson, the leading business authority and author of the best-selling book on creativity, *What a Great Idea!* and Dr. Edward Rogoff, an expert on entrepreneurship who chairs the Department of Management at CUNY's Zicklin School of Business and is the author of *Bankable Business Plans* and *The Entrepreneurial Conversation*.

For more information on Get Stirred Up, please visit <http://www.getstirredup.com>.

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### **Media Contact**

David Roth  
Managing Partner, Get Stirred Up  
312-596-3408  
[david.roth@getstirredup.com](mailto:david.roth@getstirredup.com)