

Introduction

I t's The Experience That Counts!

Newsflash: experience is the coolest new consumer concept, an entertaining and gift-giving idea that'll fly no matter which way the economy turns. The art of provoking an experience from a gift or turning an experience into a gift – it's easy once you have the formula.



Step One, get your head into a creative mindset. Be more personal and less commercial with your socializing. Actors, fashion designers and musicians are artists, and so are you! You don't need to buy something expensive to be original, fashionable, or relevant. Go for the impact.



Next, tour the never-neverland corners of your house for ideas and materials. Old funky junk can be re-imagined as witty ingredients to transform into clever gifts or spark your party plan. Now, use these ingredients to make a recipe for memorable fun. Style and money are not twins separated at birth.

**DON'T THINK
TRASH-INTO-TREASURE
AS MUCH AS
SWAP-NOT-SPEND:**



RE-PURPOSE BEFORE YOU PURCHASE



- 1 Make that gift evoke a shared memory or personal story.** Nicknames, inside jokes, vacation experiences, childhood memories, sporting events – when you're planning an event or choosing a gift, draw on experiences that connect you as inspiration.
- 2 Be interesting, be unexpected!** So take those old drum sticks in the garage, paint them red, and tie them to an invitation for a night out at your local jazz club.
- 3 Humor gets the best mileage.** Drag out those white elephants, those eye-sores, laugh at those little vices and ironies. Our family passes a hideous rooster around at the holidays; the surprise recipient must display it proudly until it's time to give their prize to someone else.
- 4 Practicality is a virtue, but please inject a little twist.** Sure, socks and underwear are thoughtful gifts on some level, but can't you do something to dress up that value-pak of disappointment?
- 5 Sentimental journeys always end happily.** Heirlooms, whether old or new, rank numero uno on the list of gifts that maximize meaning.

The Bottom Line is we take so much for granted – we all possess creative skills and we tend to ignore the fabulousness under our very noses. Unique experiences, not the store-bought kind – that's what draws people to your social circle. Use this guide to start personalizing your social experiences now.

