

Circulating Creativity Through Conversation with George Marshall | LOOP Forum 2025

Key Learnings

Avoid Small Steps Messaging

Individual behavior change campaigns consistently fail because they signal that issues aren't important enough to require significant effort. When governments promote easy actions or small steps, people interpret this as evidence the problem isn't serious. Behavior change literature shows **people only change when new practices become embedded into their fundamental identity and values**, making incremental approaches counterproductive for driving meaningful transformation.

Connect to Identity and Values

People adopt and maintain behaviors only when those actions become expressions of who they are at their core. **Once behaviors are embedded into personal identity and values, individuals defend them strongly** and resist changing back. Circular economy **initiatives must connect to existing identity frameworks** rather than trying to layer new behaviors onto unchanged value systems.

Build Conversation Infrastructure

Hierarchical organisations consistently overlook bottom-up expertise that could accelerate circular transitions. The people closest to daily operations often possess the most valuable knowledge for circular economy implementation but are systematically excluded from strategic planning. **Creating formal pathways for operational input is essential** for accessing practical implementation knowledge that management typically lacks.

Reframe Around Local and Joyful Benefits

When people become fatigued by sustainability messaging, **shift from technical targets to what people directly care about** like health, air quality, community, and making places more beautiful. **Hold conversations in people's own groups and languages**, and keep the tone lighter and more fun rather than focusing on international obligations or abstract planetary concepts. **Invest in broad public engagement** through local organisations like football clubs and community groups rather than relying on expert-led technical discussions.

Listen to the full episode here:

<https://circularity.fm/circulating-creativity-through-conversation/>

