



Head & Heart is a collection of ideas, resources and frameworks to support your personal and professional development in leading yourself, others and organizations with head and heart.

Summer 2009

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Times of economic disruption, uncertainty, and scarcity can challenge even the best of us to support a culture of innovative thinking. However, it's these same characteristics - disruption, uncertainty, and scarcity - that have led to some of the most innovative breakthroughs of our time.

In the spirit of promoting innovation, I'd like to offer you the opportunity to use our Gartenhaus conference area for half a day. The first five groups (ideally 6-8 people) that ask us for its use will be able to enjoy our wonderful Gartenhaus, which is a great place for innovative thinking.

Our offer is on the table - it's yours for the asking. So what are you waiting for? Come to Das Gartenhaus for your next innovation dialog for which I am sure you'll find some inspiration in our Innovative Leadership issue. Enjoy the read!

Dan Norenberg

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Thought Leadership

The Grace of Innovative Gardening

"Transforming the seeds of an idea to the fruits of innovation"

Warren Bennis reminds us that "Innovation will not be accepted at first. It takes repeated attempts, endless demonstrations, and monotonous rehearsals before innovation can be accepted and internalized by an organization. This requires courageous patience." If anyone I know demonstrated the traits of courageous patience, it was my late grandmother, Grace Norenberg. She was a depression-era mother of 10 children with a hard working husband (my grandfather) who laid railroad tracks by day and jobbed by night. Grandma Grace knew how to transform her garden seeds into valuable produce in order to feed her hungry family.

She wasn't discouraged by her seeming lack of resources because she understood the trait of resourcefulness. She was able to turn her apparent scarcity (lack of money) into a garden of plenty that produced enough to feed a family of 12, as well as a surplus so that her children (including my father) could sell the extra produce to neighbors and town folks, providing needed cash and other bartered goods.

Grace wasn't the only one to innovate her way to profit during the Great Depression. Hewlett-Packard got its start at this time (1938), DuPont discovered nylon in 1934 and while rivals cut R&D budgets during this period, Tom Watson build new research centers.

During times of turbulence, we must remind ourselves that the role of a leader is more than simply a cost cutter. True leaders in turbulent times realize they play many roles: visionary, strategist, coach, and change agent, to name a few. I propose that to stimulate, encourage and create an innovative organizational culture, the leader is also a gardener, who needs courageous patience. Because the seeds of innovation, and certainly the single most important condition for transforming a crisis, lie inside the people and their potential.

Understanding the grace of innovative gardening doesn't mean that you, the leader, have to be the most innovative person in your organization. What this means is that you are able to recognize and support the innovative process, one that takes the seeds of ideas to the fruits of innovation. It means being comfortable with the absence of immediate results, feeling the tension being on the edge of risk, dealing constructively with failures and having a deeply grounded personal conviction that innovation will make a difference.

While the idea is important, it's what you do with the idea that lies at the core of innovation. So what are you waiting for, get out your gloves and start gardening!

Dan Norenberg

Leading Self

Headstand Innovation

Considering how to make your customers unhappy can be a good thing!

Until the 1960s, the US auto industry was dominated by a certain way of thinking about the design of safety features in their vehicles. The dominant maxim was "it will be safe if used correctly." Then it suddenly changed. The new maxim: "it will be safe even if used incorrectly." The result: far fewer fatalities from road accidents.

The business world is full of similar examples. But for many individuals the challenge is: how do I get myself (and others) to think differently? A good place to start is to consider the barriers to thinking differently.

The external barriers are well-known to anyone with several years experience of organizational life. Chief amongst them are: the lack of an innovation-friendly culture, unwritten rules or internal politics, an overly-complicated innovation process, and not dedicating enough time to innovation. Then there are the internal barriers we impose on ourselves. These barriers are the ones we put in place because of our own mindsets. Awareness is the key to breaking them.

Deep trust and high confidence in yourself and your colleagues creates an environment in which people feel comfortable enough to put forward different ideas. Showing **enthusiasm, appreciation** and a dash of **humor** helps here too. **Questioning and re-framing our assumptions** (as in the US auto industry example above) leads to great breakthroughs. And finally, **taking time** and finding the **space to relax** encourages creative thinking.



According to *Manager Magazin*, executives generate a whopping 76% of their creative ideas while they are out of the office.

So how do you get creative and break through those barriers in practice? One neat way is the "headstand technique." Instead of posing a question like, "how can we make this customer happy?" and then brainstorming the answers, dig deeper and question your assumptions by standing the question on its head, "how can we make this customer unhappy?" Set a time limit and let the ideas – clever and crazy, they're all welcome – flow. You'll be amazed how quickly you indirectly highlight

the shortcomings in your products, services and customer relationships. Plus, within the ideas you bring out are the seeds for new, innovative ways of engaging with your customer. The trick is to let the ideas settle, then turn the negative ideas (how to make the customer unhappy) around, do the opposite and surprise your customer.

In a time when customers are better informed than ever before, when your competitive advantage disappears faster than ever as competitors quickly catch up and when you may lack the resources (during the recession) for big investments in innovation, the headstand technique is an effective way to give your customer something unique and to keep you ahead of your competitors.

Steven Hunt

Point of View

Inspiring Innovation

"Innovation is the creation of the new or the re-arranging of the old in a new way."

Michael Vance

If I am ever in need of inspiration, I bring to mind the Il Duomo Cathedral in Florence and the utter brilliance of Filippo Brunelleschi and his dome.

The cathedral was the investment of active patrons who had the audacious vision of wanting to make Florence "the most beautiful city in Christendom." It was a grand design, so big that the diameter of the dome precluded the traditional use of wood. The cathedral had been left open to the skies for eighty years!

Until Brunelleschi!

He began to study the framework of earlier architectural designs and in particular, the Pantheon, a masterpiece of its time, built by the Romans.

He saw ideas there and in intervening Gothic models that enabled him to produce 'a liberating new form' that has inspired hundreds of builders since, including Michelangelo's design for the cupola of St Peter's in Rome.

It was completed in 1436 and is still the largest masonry dome in the world. It weighs 37,000 tons and contains 4 million bricks!

This was certainly the creation of the new and the re-arranging of earlier ideas in a new way.

Brunelleschi demonstrated not only genius in design but also genius in execution through a complex web of other people's points of view.

Ed Norman

Word Watch

InNOVAtion

Webster's Dictionary defines innovation as: 1. the introduction of something new 2. a new idea, method, or device. While this is the classic definition of the word, I'd like to focus on a word within the word: nova.

The word nova comes from the Latin "novus" and means "new." People used to believe that what astronomers refer to as a nova was a "new" star. In fact, a nova is an existing star which significantly increases its brightness over a short period of time. It was there all along but couldn't be seen. Astronomers estimate that our own galaxy, the Milky Way, has somewhere between 30 to 60 novae per year.

How many organizations, maybe some which have not been noticed before, will "go nova" this year in your business "galaxy?"

Even in these turbulent times, can your organization be a nova? What will enable your organization to not only survive but to thrive - to suddenly increase your brightness and shine out, while others remain the same or struggle to even keep shining?

We believe that at least one answer lies, literally and figuratively, in inNOVAtion. Business as usual is certainly not a viable option which makes this the perfect time to be innovative. Whether it is creating and developing new ideas, new or improved methods or new products to meet changing customer needs - innovation is the key to making your organization shine more brightly than ever.

Unleashing the innovative potential inside your people is the fuel for your nova to shine!

Michael Couch

Leading Others

Leadership & Innovation

"Innovation requires that the innovators get enough power to mobilize people and resources to get something non-routine done."

Rosabeth Moss Kanter

The reality today is that most innovations draw on many contributions and that individual ideas, however brilliant, run a proven risk of never "seeing the light of day" unless there is an inspiring sponsorship of innovation that is truly connected to the muscle of the organization to make things happen.



The quotation above taps into two essential truths of innovation generation of which leaders need to be acutely aware:

1. Survival in today's increasingly competitive environments requires constant creative adjustment to changing conditions. To achieve this, leaders need to be in a position to choose the best people, have the best information and to recognise and support the best ideas. **Innovation is directly proportional to the attitude of leadership.** Leaders of innovation realize that, without necessarily being creative themselves, they hold the key for turning great ideas into practical reality. They are a dynamic part of the creative process and not merely passive patrons.

2. **Individual innovation is influenced by two principles of human behaviour:** first of all, we are motivated to explore and manipulate our environ-

ment in ways which are essentially creative. Secondly, we are driven by a need to be free from threat and to have a sense of psychological safety.

So, as leaders of others, what do we draw from this?

Firstly, we need to understand that too many management models are stacked against innovation. Innovation is assumed to be the role of R&D. It is not embedded as a dynamic part of the performance management process.

Secondly, we have to work hard at fostering innovation. The different drivers of our natural curiosity to do the non-routine and our need to be free from threat, unless managed and overtly valued by leadership, will lead to the "routine" winning the day - **breaking out of the routine to innovate becomes too risky.**

Jack Welch and GE may be over-quoted examples of business excellence but their sustained strategic emphasis on innovation driving their business from a collection of commoditized services and products to "high value add" in financial services, health-care and technology was and still is truly remarkable. A key to GE success was recognizing the above by declaring that innovation was mission critical to the execution of their strategy and developing a leadership ethos that encouraged individuals to take personal accountability for driving innovation and to "circulate ideas in the organization with the speed of light."

Ed Norman

Leading Organizations

The Response-Ability to Innovate

"It is better to be a part of the steamroller than part of the pavement"

Peter Drucker

Do you believe that your future will look exactly like the present? That your industry will be the same one year from now as it is today? I doubt it. Would you like to set the pace of change in your industry instead of reacting to it? Then you'll need to be innovative and to do this, you'll need lots of innovators. Where can you find them? Look around! How can you help them? Give them response-ability.

In turbulent times we are tempted to look for the "lightning bolt from the sky" – the breakthrough innovation that will lead us back to "normal." Yet, Kouzes and Posner point out in "The Leadership Challenge" that nearly 70% of cost savings measured over a 20 year period at chemical company Du Pont were the result of small, incremental ideas proposed by people doing their everyday jobs. These were people who were encouraged by leadership to share their ideas, since they would logically be the first to notice the need for change. They were aware of their environment and were given the **ability to respond**. They chose to influence their circumstances rather than being controlled or constrained by them and they experienced the creative joy of innovation, however modest the scale might have been.



Leadership can increase the number of innovators in your company by helping people see that, as shown in the Du Pont story, innovation is everyone's business. Challenge people to increase their awareness of your environment. What's happening with your suppliers? Your customers? Your customer's customers? Where are the opportunities they see in this environment? This conversation alone is powerful because you encourage people not to sit and wish for the past "good times" but to own the present circumstances and spot the opportunities for future success. With this kind of awareness you can take the next step. Encourage, enable and empower people who are in the field and give them the responsibility and the ability to respond to what they see. This is one step to becoming a change-leader in your industry.

Research shows us that a feeling of responsibility is one of the greatest single predictors of motivation. More importantly, innovation surely starts with innovators who have response-ability and feel responsible for it!

Michael Couch

Food for Thought

Learning and innovation go hand in hand. The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow.

William Pollard, Quaker minister (1828 – 1893)

Leadership Facts and Figures

The enterprise of the future is home to visionary challengers, with innovation being one of the five factors for future success. More than 40% of the CEOs polled strive to gain competitive advantage through enterprise model innovation, which particularly means increasing collaboration. CEOs of outperforming companies embark on even more disruptive and extensive business model innovation than their underperforming peers.

Adapted from IBM's Global CEO Survey 2008

For more interesting **Leadership Facts and Figures** go to our Leader's Toolkit at http://www.nvision-learning.com/leadersedge_toolkit.php

Challenging Situations?

What challenging situation would you like us to deal with in a future issue of Head & Heart? Get our perspective.

Send us an e-mail at: headandheart@nvision-learning.com

We will of course ensure that your challenging situation remains anonymous.