

Better Business Focus

April 2019

Expert inspiration for a Better Business



Better Business Focus is the essential key for business owners and managers. It achieves that by focusing on the way in which successful businesses compete and manage their organisations. It focuses on how people are recruited, coached and developed; on how marketing and selling is undertaken in professional markets as well as in markets with intense competition; on how technology and the Internet is reshaping the face of domestic and home business; and on how people are being equipped with new skills and techniques. In short, it offers expert inspiration for a better business.

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Shelly Greenway

Ideation Pitfalls Part I: The Herd Effect

Most companies don't have a problem with generating innovation ideas. Many are awash with ideas. The problem is usually working out which ideas to resource and investigate further. And it is this process of initial idea evaluation that is often flawed. It results in good ideas being killed before they can even sprout any limbs.

So, what is going wrong when organisations evaluate initial innovation ideas? There are two main culprits to watch out for; the herd effect and the not normal issue (which we'll delve into in Part 2).

When animals are in a herd or flock, they can be seen to regularly move in unison. Often one or two leaders head in one direction. Then momentum builds as more and more join until the majority of the herd or flock are all heading in the same direction.

And this is what tends to happen when an organisation has generated a number of innovation ideas that need to be assessed for their initial potential.

The concept of human herding has a long history in philosophy and crowd psychology. It is defined as a phenomenon in which individuals act collectively as part of a group, often making decisions as a group that they would not make as an individual. This is not a good behaviour to employ when assessing the potential of new ideas.

Let's take, for example, an ideation workshop. Often tools such as 'power dotting' or 'post-it noting' are employed as a methodology to supposedly weed out the best ideas.



Herd: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/>

Yet the herding mentality means that it will not be a group, or unbiased, decision for a number of reasons.

1. In a group situation there is a strong social pressure to conform and be accepted. But not everyone is equal. In most businesses there are levels of seniority or power. The need to conform and be accepted by senior people is high. This means that in our ideation workshop scenario the group will tend to follow the decision making of the most senior person in the room; even if those choices go against individual knowledge or instincts.
2. The "herding" makes people question their own judgement. Even brave individuals who don't have a strong need to conform, find themselves thinking "they all can't be wrong" or "they must know something I don't".
3. For those that like to keep their heads down it means that they don't have to think or make any decisions. They just follow.

So, countermeasures have to be taken to stop very raw ideas living or dying on the basis of the assumptions and bias of one or two individuals within a business.

In A Nutshell

- Good ideas get sabotaged as they often don't even make it out of the ideation stage.
- Instead, a lesser idea gets the backing and resources due the lack of impartial measurement criteria.
- Strategies have to be employed to take account of the herd affect.

Keep your eyes peeled for Ideation Pitfalls Part 2: The Not Normal Issue, next month.

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About the Author

Shelly Greenway is a front-end innovation strategist and partner at The Strategy Distillery – a brand innovation consultancy that specializes in opportunity hunting and proposition development.

Co-ordinates

LinkedIn:

[linkedin.com/in/shellygreenway/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/shellygreenway/)



Grant Leboff

Price isn't just what you charge



What's the difference? To charge 5 x £50 one-day tickets to an amusement park or 1 x £250 for a **5-day** ticket? In this Vlog, Grant explains that it all depends on the results you want...

When thinking about pricing, people get obsessed with what they charge, but that's not the only thing that matters.

When they charge also counts. Professors, John Gourville and Dilip Soman, discovered that the closer to when someone pays, the more likely they are to use your products or services.

Let me give you an example. A company may charge £1200 a year for gym membership. Often, what businesses do, is they'll charge the money up front with a discount because it's great for cash flow.

However, here's the problem. Someone that spends £1200 at the beginning of the year on gym membership is very lightly – by about halfway through – to stop using the gym or not use it as much.

Whereas someone that is paying £100 a month; because they are paying every month and, therefore, that purchase is coming out their account, they're much more likely to use the gym on a regular basis.

Of course, this matters for renewals. Someone that hasn't

used the gym for quite a few months is less likely to renew than someone that goes frequently. That isn't to say that companies should never charge money upfront. It really depends on the outcome that you want.

Think of a family theme park. It costs £50 a day to go. Now the theme park could charge £50 per day for five one day passes, or they could charge £250 up front for a five day pass.

However, if someone pays £50 a day for five one day passes, they're less likely to skip a day than if they paid £250 up front for a five-day pass.

Now the theme park may very much like people to skip a day, because they're not always at full capacity, so really you have to think about the outcome that you want from the usage, about how you charge.

So, it isn't just the amount, but you also want to think about outcomes, when you think about the way that you're going to charge.

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About the Author

Grant Leboff is one of the UK's leading Sales and Marketing experts. His fourth book, '**Digital Selling**', debuted at #1 on the Amazon charts.

This follows the success of Leboff's previous titles. '**Stickier Marketing**' (2014) went straight to #1 in the Amazon Sales & Marketing Chart, and was in the top 10 overall Business Chart, on publication. '**Sales Therapy**' (2007) and '**Sticky Marketing**' (2011) were both in Amazon's top 10 Business Books, and #1 in the Sales & Marketing bestsellers chart.

Sticky Marketing Club® Ltd., is a sales and marketing consultancy providing companies with the strategies to thrive in an increasingly competitive world. Leboff's Sales and Marketing portal, stickymarketing.com produces a wealth of resources and information on effective Sales and Marketing for organisations in an ever-changing business environment. He is a highly sought-after consultant and speaker, and constantly makes presentations at conferences and events all over the world.

Co-ordinates

Sticky Marketing Club® Ltd.
Unit 45, Harriet Way,
Bushey, WD23 4JH
Get in Touch:

www.stickymarketing.com/contact-us





Amy Vetter

Help employees check out to check in at work

Purposeful Breaks Have to Start Top-down to Transform Workplace Culture

Do you remember when there were “smoke breaks” during the workday, when employees took a 10 to 15 minute break from their desk? As a non-smoker, I remember when I began working feeling jealous of those that were able to take this break during the day while I kept plugging away.

Recently, I was thinking about what those breaks provided to smokers at the time. It gave them a few minutes in their day to walk away from their tasks at hand and get some quiet time. As I have been **interviewing** more mindfulness experts about how they are helping organizations incorporate mindfulness programs into the workday, I realized, we are finally providing everyone this needed reprieve from the day so they can be more present and productive, as well as contribute positively in their interactions with one another.

Companies such as LinkedIn, Oracle SAP, and more, are training their employees are mindfulness skills that can be incorporated right into the workday, in order to alleviate stress and be more present for work each person is doing each day. Stay tuned for more of my interviews being released in the coming weeks with these organizations to hear how they are doing it.

If you have been wondering how to get started with incorporating mindfulness in your business or work-life, with low investment, here are some quick ideas to get you started!

S.T.O.P to Take a Pulse

It’s been almost a decade since Daniel Gilbert and Matthew Killingsworth revealed how most of us are on

autopilot as we spend almost half of our waking hours thinking about everything but what we’re currently doing. We’ve all had those days where it felt like we just got to work, but before we knew it, the day was over and we couldn’t quite recall all that we did. Many treat their work breaks the same way. They focus on the result, which is taking the break, instead of process, which is *how* to make use of the break.

Dr. Elisha Goldstein is the founder of The Center for Mindful Living. He developed the S.T.O.P method to achieve mental and emotional healing through mindful breaks.

- S is to “Stop what you’re doing”.
- T is to “Take a few deep breaths”.
- O is to “Observe how you’re feeling”.
- P is to “Proceed with support”.

The key is to create space in the day to pause from all the stressors and get back to the present moment. This has been **scientifically** proven to mitigate the negativity tremendously.

Leading by Example

At the workplace, leadership holds the key to creating the culture they want for their organization. With the call for **work-life harmony** louder than ever, purposeful breaks are now more important than ever. Andy Puddicombe and Rich Pierson co-founded **Headspace**, a meditative app aimed at improving the world’s health and happiness. I had the pleasure of speaking to them in February on **why leaders now meditate**. Andy reminded me how fundamentally, all of us just want to be happy at home and at work, and mindfulness is the gateway.

Rich Fernandez, the CEO of **Search Inside Your Leadership Institute (SIYLI)** echoed this sentiment at the Wisdom 2.0 Conference. He along with three mindfulness champions likened a business organization to a society,

where something as simple as **mindful listening** during interactions can help with **better decisions, focus** and **productivity**.

Tips to Get Started

If your business is looking to implement more mindfulness exercises, there are many tools and resources available. Just bear in mind that small, incremental steps are always the way to go. But no matter what you choose, whether it’s a **five-minute morning routine**, to tips on **monotasking**, or working in **25-minute segments**, know that mindfulness means putting *you* in control so you can bring your whole to self to work and life, every day.

For our B³ Method Institute members - we provide meditation videos right on the online learning platform. You can close the door to your office, take a walk, put the headset in and let us guide you! Click [here](#) and learn more.

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About the Author

Amy Vetter is an accomplished entrepreneur, business executive, national speaker, CPA, and yoga practitioner. She is also the author of *Business, Balance & Bliss: How the B³ Method Can Transform Your Career and Life* available in June 2017. As a third-generation woman entrepreneur, Amy has launched and sold multiple businesses including yoga studios, an accounting practice, and other business ventures. Amy has also held corporate leadership roles overseeing customer, sales, education, and marketing functions. Throughout her 20-plus years in business, Amy has learned valuable insights on how to achieve work-life harmony and live a more purposeful life.

Co-ordinates

Email: INFO@AMYVETTER.COM
Web: www.amyvetter.com/



Gavin Ingham

Are your sales teams full of saboteurs & passengers?



I realise the question above is a bit in your face but what is your reality right now?

Generally speaking, my clients split into four easily recognisable groups...

1. Failing.
2. Surviving.
3. Performing.
4. Winning.

Each group has four instantly recognisable sales teams...

The first, I call Saboteurs.

They are mostly (or all) under target. Sometimes, so far under their targets that they have forgotten what they look like! Their teams have poor morale and if you leave them alone for long they will be moaning about the economy, Brexit, the company, their lack of support, their leaders, their clients, their tools... I could go on; I am sure that you get the point. We have all met teams like these.

Saboteurs, not surprisingly, have low activity levels and are reactive. They respond, with varying degrees of sloth-like-actions to stimuli but will rarely (read never) be the ones taking the initiative.

I would categorise a Saboteur's mental toughness levels as "lacking".

The second group, I call Passengers.

Passengers can be benign in your business. They do not do much harm but they are not doing much good either. Sometimes, just to confuse things, they can be fun to have around... Hey! Who doesn't enjoy a day out and an ice cream?!

The results in teams full of Passengers are varied, usually under target, and wildly inconsistent. Morale goes up and down and managing it feels like you are painting the Forth Bridge (never ending).

Activity is inconsistent and individuals are often busy on the "wrong" things. Passengers are easily derailed; the slightest thing can knock them off track whether it is an economic issue, office politics, an unwanted email, or, sometimes, just the weather.

I would categorise a Passenger's mental toughness as "inconsistent."

The third group, I call Players.

Players are in the game. They want to do well and for some/much of the time they do. Sales results are mostly on target although still prone to inconsistency.

Sales morale is generally good and office banter positive and individuals spend significant amounts of time on proactive activity.

Teams of Players are generally good to manage but there is always this frustration that things are not as consistent as they might be and an underlying feeling that they could achieve more.

I would categorise a Player's mental toughness as "consistent."

The fourth group, I call Winners.

Winners are the top performers. They are on top of their game. They consistently better their targets; sometimes, significantly.

Teams made primarily of Winners produce world-class sales cultures. They have high productivity and are constantly seeking to sharpen the saw - both in their own approach and in the services that they provide for your clients. Teams of Winners are, not surprisingly, the Holy Grail.

I would categorise a Winner's mental toughness as "world-class"

You will have a blend... but, as with good coffee, the blend matters.

Teams are never made up of one category and most teams have a blend of all four, but it is this blend and what your plan is for dealing with it that determines whether you are going to move up or down the failing, surviving, performing or winning pyramid.

So, and I like the tough questions, which category do your teams fall into? And what are you going to do about it?

In a follow-up article, I am going to share with you what you need to do in each group but if you want to speak with me before then about how I can help you to build high performance teams then drop me an email return or give me a call on **UK +44 (0)845 838 5958**. You can also book straight into my diary for a chat here www.calendly.com/gaviningham/IAM10/.

Kind regards

Gavin

p.s. Whenever you're ready...

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About the Author

Gavin Ingham is a speaker and author on mental toughness and will help you to Be More, Do More & Have More in your business and in your life. He is the author of three books and numerous multi-media programmes including the ground-breaking "Sales Juice". Gavin is the founder of the "I am 10" success philosophy and his insights, tips and advice are shared by high-performing professionals, business leaders and organisations around the world to achieve commercial success. His blog is one of the top 25 sales blogs in the world and he has contributed to leading industry magazines such as the ISMM's Winning Edge magazine, the national press (including the Guardian and the Financial Times) and TV.

Co-ordinates

Gavin Ingham
Head of Sales, Training & Coaching
Performance Coaching International
Tel: + 44 (0) 1708 510345
Email:
info@performancecoachinginternational.com
Web: www.gaviningham.com



Very strange Words beginning with T

- **Tegestology** - The collecting of beer mats.
- **Tellurian** - Adjective meaning "of or inhabiting the earth." From Latin word meaning "the earth" this is often used in science fiction.
- **Telmatology** - The study of peat bogs.
- **Temulent** - Adjective meaning drunken or intoxicating.
- **Terpsichorean** - Relating to dancing.
- **Testudineous** - To be as slow as a tortoise.
- **Thelytokous** - Adjective meaning producing only female offspring.
- **Theopneust** - Adjective meaning divinely inspired.
- **Therblig** - Pertaining to the study of time and motion, this is any task that can be analyzed.
- **Thixotropy** - The property of certain gels becoming liquid when agitated and turning into a gel again when allowed to stand still.
- **Tilly-vally** - An expression that means nonsense, trifling or impertinent.
- **Thwarterous** - Adjective meaning twisted or gnarled.
- **Tmesis** - The separation of the parts of a compound word by the interposition of another word or words. Example: Rather than saying the word hodgepodge, one says "hodge and podge."
- **Torschlusspanik** - (German word) means a sense of panic brought on by the feeling that life is passing you by. Today this is called a "mid-life crisis."
- **Tracasserie** - A state of annoyance or petty quarrel.
- **Tractatrix** - A female shampooer.
- **Tragematopolist** - A seller of candy, sweets.
- **Tralatitious** - Means traditional; handed down from generation to generation.
- **Transmundane** - Spiritual; Something that extends into the spiritual world or exists there. Not earthly.
- **Trencherman** - A hearty eater.
- **Tripotage** - Pawing, handling or fingering people.
- **Tripudant** - Dancing (usually triumphantly).
- **Tristichous** - Arranged in three rows or ranks. A tristich is a group of 3 lines of poetry or a stanza of 3 lines. A distich is a couplet.
- **Troke** - To fail; unable to do something or to deceive.
- **Tropism** - The turning or bending (via growth) of an organism in response to an external stimuli.
- **Tropology** - The use of metaphors in writing or speaking. To tropologize is to use it as a metaphor such as "He is the Nixon of politics."
- **Truandal** - Beggars or camp followers; hobos.
- **Trypall** - Tall, lanky, slovenly person.
- **Turveydrop** - A person who pretends to be a perfect model of deportment; or he/she really is one!
- **Tutoyant** - Affectionate; Intimate.
- **Typhlobasia** - Kissing with the eyes closed.
- **Typocrat** - One who rules by controlling the press.
- **Tyroticism** - To be poisoned by cheese or other dairy products.





Greg Satell

How to prepare your organisation for innovation

In 1919, Mahatma Gandhi initiated a campaign of civil disobedience, including the sale of banned literature, fasting, prayer and work stoppages, to protest the oppressive Rowlatt Acts the British had recently passed. These were an immediate success, but soon turned disastrous and ultimately ended with the massacre at Amritsar.

He would later call this his Himalayan miscalculation. “I realized that before a people could be fit for offering civil disobedience, they should thoroughly understand its deeper implications,” he would later write in his autobiography. The same can be said for innovation. Before you embark on a game changing initiative, your organization needs to be prepared for it.

In a recent article for *Harvard Business Review*, columnist Scott Kirsner pointed to a survey of 270 corporate leaders that found that the most significant obstacles to innovation are not things like budget, skill sets or CEO support, but politics and culture. Those are pervasive issues and can't be solved overnight, but they can be overcome. Here are 4 things you can do:

1. Focus on Your Mission More Than Your Metrics

It's long been fashionable to say that “you manage what you measure.” Usually the sentiment is voiced to advocate for a metrics based-approach to management, but clearly the opposite is also

true. It's hard to manage what you don't — or can't — measure. This is often referred to as availability bias, we tend to act on the information that is most accessible, rather than what's most important.

That's why it's crucial to manage for mission, not for metrics. Reducing success to performance against a limited number of objective numbers often leads to unintended consequences, because numbers never tell the whole story. You can, off course, expand the number of metrics that you use, but eventually you'll find that that more numbers leads to more confusion.

One company that exemplifies a mission-based approach is Amazon. Surely, Amazon does not shy away from measurement, but numbers are secondary to its fanatical focus on the customer. A new project at Amazon does not start with a quantitative analysis, but with a backward-looking press release that imagines the impact on the customer. The numbers come later.

Every enterprise is defined by the problems it seeks to solve. That's what gives it meaning and helps to determine what you measure, but measurement alone cannot fully capture the essence of a mission. If *why* you do what you do isn't front and centre, *what* you do will eventually lose relevance.

2. Empower Exploration and Experimentation

The purpose of innovation in an organization is to improve performance, whether that is to increase revenues and profits, to expand and deepen impact or to empower key stakeholders. Every enterprise defines its own mission and how it measures success.

There are, simply put, three ways you can innovate. You can get better at what you already do, apply what you are already good at to a different market or context or figure out a completely new problem to solve. These are not in any way mutually exclusive and can often reinforce each other. The best innovators pursue all three.

Still, because it provides little in the way of immediate benefits, it is the last one, exploring new problems, that is often neglected. Every organization can find ways to improve and can see opportunities in adjacent markets.

Yet to effectively explore you must venture out into the unknown, often without tangible metrics for success or a clear timeline for achieving it. That's much harder.

Yet make no mistake, innovation needs exploration. If you don't explore, you won't discover. If you don't discover you won't invent and if you don't invent you will be disrupted eventually. It's just a matter of time.

3. Connect Your Silos

It's become fashionable to talk about "breaking down silos. The problem with that type of thinking is that when you reorganize to break down one kind of silo, you inevitably create others. If, for example, your company is organized around functional groups, then you will get poor collaboration around products. But when you reorganize to focus on product groups, you get the same problem within functions.

Besides, silos are not only inevitable, but important and useful. To understand why, think of a Navy SEAL team. To perform at an elite level, the team needs to build incredibly strong bonds of trust and loyalty among its members. That inevitably makes it a silo, but if it wasn't it would lose its edge.

So instead of trying to break down silos, we need to connect them. A Navy SEAL can maintain strong, trustful bonds with those on his team and still have trustful relationships with, say, a communications officer or an intelligence analyst. Network science shows that it takes relatively few of these seemingly random "weak ties" to thoroughly connect even massive organizations.

There are a number of ways to network your organization. Internal training programs and offsites can help build crucial links between disparate divisional and functional areas. Designating respected executives to act as liaisons can also be an effective strategy.

4. Adopt a "Grand Challenge" Mindset

All too often, innovation is confused with agility. We're told to "adapt or die" and encouraged to "move fast and break things."

But the most important innovations take time. Einstein spent ten years on special relativity and then another ten on general relativity. To solve tough, fundamental problems, we have to be able to commit to solving a grand challenge for the long haul.

"A successful grand challenge is one that people, even experts in the field, regard as an epiphany and changes assumptions about what's possible," Bernard Meyerson, IBM's Chief Innovation Officer, told me. That's what shifts paradigms and creates completely new markets.

The reason that most businesses don't pursue grand challenges isn't for lack of money, sustained long-term efforts are not expensive, but for lack of vision. Immediate competitive pressures tend to monopolize our time and focus. We know on some level that we need to prepare for the future and plan to get to it... sometime, but never do.

The truth is that everyone gets disrupted eventually, because no business model lasts forever. That's why we need to manage not for stability, but for disruption and that means shifting our mindset to focus not only on the market of today, but on the constant existential threat that we all face of a world in which we have lost relevance.

It's always better to prepare than adapt. By the time you realize you need to adapt, it might very well be too late.

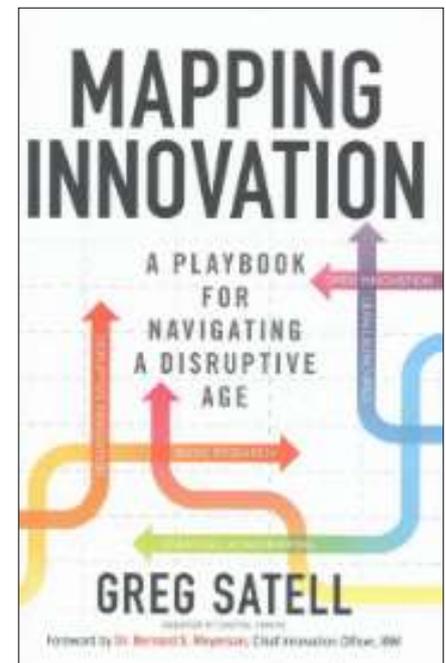
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About the Author

Greg Satell is a popular author, speaker, and innovation adviser whose recent book, *Mapping Innovation*, was selected as one of the best business books of 2017. His new book, *Cascades: How to Create a Movement that Drives Transformational Change*, will be published by McGraw-Hill in April 2019.

Co-ordinates

LinkedIn: [LinkedIn profile](#)
Twitter: [@DigitalTonto](#)
Website: www.digitaltonto.com/
and www.GregSatell.com





Tom Koulopoulos

A little known 9-word Tom Brady quote is the true north of all success

It's not talent, skill, or even dedication that guides your path to success. It's this.

First things first. This isn't a Patriot-ic column. Yes, I'm from Boston. Yes, I'm rooting for the Pats. Yes, I cannot help but be drawn into the Super Bowl frenzy. And yes, I too was wondering if Tom Brady's gloved hand was masking surgery to implant a sixth finger.

Truth is, I'm far from a rabid sports fan. I'm that guy from Boston who can only name two players on the Patriots' roster. And for a while that was only because I shared the same first name with one of them.

I am however, a voracious fan of success. And even more so of the people who have the courage to on take the great life-altering risks and sacrifices needed to achieve it.

Which is why, of all the things that the Patriots' Quarterback Tom Brady has accomplished, among all the stories told by his throngs of lovers and haters, one incredibly simple story stands out in my mind as the essential ingredient in his success and what has fueled its somewhat unlikely rise.

It's not a story of perseverance, skill, talent, dedication, or even leadership. There are plenty of those that will be regaled this weekend, each of which clearly has played a role in achieving his great success. It's something far simpler; a story rarely told about a scrawny 22-year-old kid who made an utterly ridiculous, at the time laughable, nine-word prediction about his future.

Tom Who?

Let's go back 18 years. Tom Brady was the 199th overall pick in the sixth round of the draft when he joined the Patriots. Not likely someone who you would have been predicted to become

one of the game's all time greatest players.

And yet he had that one elusive and immeasurable quality that is the fuel of every successful person I've ever known.

As patriots owner Bob Kraft tells it, "I still have the image of Tom Brady coming down the old Foxboro stadium steps with that pizza box under his arm, a skinny beanpole, and when he introduced himself to me and said 'Hi Mr. Kraft,' he was about to say who he was, but I said 'I know who you are, you're Tom Brady. You're our sixth-round draft choice,'" recalled Kraft. "And he looked me in the eye and said 'I'm the best decision this organization has ever made.'" (See the correction about word count at the end of the article.)

When Kraft tells the story today, with five Super Bowl rings in tow, he smiles. Wouldn't you love to know what he was thinking in that moment at the audacity of that young kid?

Imagine being Brady. It's your first day on the job. You should be gushing with gratitude to have been picked up at all. And here you are, the first time you've met the company's owner, telling him that you're the best decision he's ever made!

Arrogance? Self assuredness? Cockiness? It would seem like all of the above. I'd like to propose that's Brady's comment demonstrated none of these, but something else altogether.

'I'm the best decision this organization has ever made.'

It doesn't matter whether you adore or despise Brady. This has nothing to do with your team allegiance. I don't care if you come from Boston, Philly, or Helsinki, the lesson to be learned

here is universal. It applies to anyone who has not only the desire to be successful but the deeply rooted need to succeed.

If that's who you are then I can assure of one thing, you will never let yourself off the hook for not making every effort, seeking every opportunity, and dedicating your every waking moment to achieving your dreams, no matter what stood in your way.

Your Future You

What Brady did is a world removed from arrogance, which is simply boasting loud enough to be heard. Instead it seems to me that what Brady was doing, is what every successful person does at some point in his or her life, making an irrevocable commitment to become who they envision themselves as, rather than who they are.

The mantel of success is not just hard work, dedication, and relentless sacrifice in the pursuit of a goal. It is fundamentally about growth and change. Seeing yourself as you want to be, changing yourself when you need to, and then doing everything necessary in your behaviours, decisions, and actions—on a daily basis— to become that person is the only path to success.

Unafraid of Success

What successful people share is not an absence of fear regarding failure, they despise losing. Brady himself has said, "You never get over losses. I've never gotten over one loss I've had in my career.

They always stick with me." Instead what successful people possess is a fearless attitude about success, doing whatever is needed to succeed and using failures as the painful catalytic growing pains needed to learn and grow into the person they need to be.

You can come up with a very long list of why you are not that person today or you can commit to relentlessly doing everything to become that person. Think of it as being unafraid of success.

I'll sum it up bluntly, unsuccessful people fear not only failure but also fear the sacrifice of success, successful people fear neither.

Whether you end with six (oops, sorry, five and counting...) Super Bowl rings or the simple satisfaction of having become the quarterback of your own future, I can assure you of two things; it will be the toughest thing you do in your life, but also the most fulfilling.

Correction: The original version of this article referred to a 7-word quote "I'm the best decision you ever made." It has been corrected to the actual 9-word quote (to be precise, counting I'm as the two words "I am"), "I'm the best decision your organization ever made." [Link](#) to 2012 news story quoting Bob Kraft

This article originally appeared on Innovation Excellence: <https://www.innovationexcellence.com/blog/2019/03/20/a-little-known-9-word-tom-brady-quote-is-the-true-north-of-all-success/>

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About the Author

Tom Koulopoulos is the author of 10 books and founder of the **Delphi Group**, a 25-year-old Boston-based think tank and a past Inc. 500 company that focuses on innovation and the future of business.

Co-ordinates

Web: [Delphi Group](#)
Twitter: [@tkspeaks](#)



National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage: Update from Acas

The **National Minimum Wage** (NMW) is the minimum pay per hour most workers under the age of 25 are entitled to by law. The government's **National Living Wage** (NLW) is the minimum pay per hour most workers aged 25 and over are entitled to by law. The rate will depend on a worker's age and if they are an apprentice. HMRC (HM Revenue & Customs) can take employers to court for not paying the NMW/NLW. The rates are reviewed annually by the Low Pay Commission.

Please click [here](#) for access to the Acas website for more information.

New rates from 1st April 2019

The new rates from 1st April 2019 are:

- £8.21 per hour for ages 25 and over.
- £7.70 per hour for ages 21 to 24.
- £6.15 per hour for ages 18 to 20.
- £4.35 per hour for school leaving age to 17.
- £3.90 per hour for apprentices.

The new rate will apply to the next pay reference period that begins on or after the date:

- a rate increase begins
- an employee reaches a new age bracket.

If a worker receives above NMW there is no legal obligation on an employer to increase their pay when the NMW rate increases.

Exemptions to the rates

There are a number of people who are not entitled to the NMW or NLW. The NMW and NLW do not apply to:

- self-employed people
- volunteers or voluntary workers
- company directors
- members of the armed forces
- family members, or people who live in the family home of the employer who undertake household tasks
- work experience students, depending on the length of their placement.

All other workers including pieceworkers, home workers, agency workers, commission workers, part-time workers and casual workers must receive at least the NMW or NLW.

Apprentices

The apprenticeship rate only applies to apprentices aged:

- under 19
- 19 or over who are in the first year of their apprenticeship.

Apprentices aged 19 or over in their second year of apprenticeship must receive the national minimum wage or national living wage rate their age entitles them to.

Agricultural Workers

Agricultural and horticultural workers in England employed after 1st October 2013 must be paid the appropriate NMW or NLW rate (see above). If they were already employed before 1st October 2013, they will still be entitled to the same terms and conditions set under their contract of employment. This can include overtime rates, agricultural wages, sick pay or dog allowance. DEFRA will continue to handle complaints about non-payment or non-compliance for up to six years after the breach occurred.

Agricultural and horticultural workers in Scotland/Wales must be paid the highest rate that applies to them from the Agricultural Minimum Wage, the NMW or the NLW.

The difference between the National Living Wage and the Living Wage

The government's NLW is different from the Living Wage, which is an hourly rate of pay and updated annually.

The Living Wage is set independently by the Living Wage Foundation and is calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK. Employers choose to pay the Living Wage on a voluntary basis.



Paul Sloane

Ask: 'Who benefits most from my innovation?'



Sony and Philips developed the Compact Disc (CD) which they launched in 1982. It was originally designed to store and play music. It offered much higher quality of recording than vinyl records. It later became used for data storage; it held far more data than most personal computer hard drives.

Mickey Schulhof had joined Sony in 1974 as an engineer. He rose rapidly up the ranks becoming vice-chairman of Sony USA and then the first American to become a board member of a major Japanese company. Schulhof wanted to sell the idea of using CDs for music distribution to the major record companies in the USA but his efforts met with resistance and scepticism. The companies had enormous investment in vinyl disc factories and were unwilling to consider changing formats.

Schulhof asked himself, 'Who wants much higher quality recordings?' The answer was the music recording artists themselves. He approached major bands and stars and showed them the benefits of having their music on CDs. When the top recording artists became enthusiastic about the new medium the record companies reluctantly agreed to release some music on CD. The first band to sell a million copies on CD was Dire Straits, with their 1985 album, *Brothers in*



Sony D-50 Portable CD Player: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/eevblog/26076702356/in/photolist->

Arms. Ironically, the record companies made handsome profits from the many fans who bought CD versions of albums they already owned in vinyl.

If the main route to market for your great innovation is blocked by naysayers committed to current products and methods, you should ask – who benefits most from this? And then approach them directly.

The song *Bohemian Rhapsody* was written by Freddie Mercury for Queen's 1975 album *A Night at the Opera*. It broke all the rules for a popular music single release. At a time when most pop songs were simple and formulaic Mercury's song was a complex mixture of different styles and tempos. It had six separate sections – a close harmony acapella introduction, a ballad, a guitar solo, an opera parody, a rock anthem and a melodic finale. It contained enigmatic and fatalistic lyrics about killing a man. And it was very long.

When it was proposed to Queen's record producers EMI that they release the song as a single they flatly rejected the idea. It was 5 minutes 55 seconds in duration

and the general rule of the day was that radio stations only played items that lasted no more than three and a half minutes.

So, Queen bypassed EMI and went straight to the DJ Kenny Everett. They gave him a copy on condition that he only play sections of it. He did this and the reaction was so strong that he played the whole six minutes several times on his weekend show on Capital Radio.

On Monday morning hordes of fans went into music stores to buy the record only to be told that it was not available. EMI was forced to release it and the song that they claimed was unplayable went on to become one of their greatest hits. It was the first song to reach number one twice with the same version – in 1975 on its first release and in 1991 following Mercury's death. It went gold in the USA with over 1 million copies sold. It had a worldwide resurgence in 1992 when it featured in the film *Wayne's World*.

Fifty Shades of Grey is a 2011 erotic romance novel by British author E. L. James. Reviewers were generally very critical of the standard of writing in the book and of the way it described

explicitly erotic scenes featuring bondage and sadism. Salman Rushdie later said of the book: "I've never read anything so badly written that got published. It made *Twilight* look like *War and Peace*."

With no publisher interested, James self-published the work as an e-book. When it became wildly popular on the internet it was published by Vintage Books. *Fifty Shades of Grey* went on to top best-seller lists around the world, selling over 130 million copies worldwide. It has been translated into 52 languages and set a record in the United Kingdom as the fastest-selling paperback of all time. If you really believe in your new product then back it yourself and take it direct to those who need it. Going back to Mickey Schulhof, he said this, "At Sony, the financial review came last, not first. When we launched CDs, we did no market surveys and hired no consultants. We invested \$100 million developing the technology and building a factory before the first CD player was put on the market. Nobody gave us any assurance that there would be a market, but we believed it was a good product."

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About the Author

Paul Sloane is an author and expert on lateral thinking in business. He has delivered hundreds of talks to executive audiences around the world. His talks are different because they challenge your thinking head-on. He is a skilled facilitator and course leader who helps top level teams achieve breakthrough results in their meetings. He helps companies overcome the problems they have making innovation happen. He can improve creativity and lateral thinking for leaders with leadership and innovation master classes. This results in a more agile culture, more ideas and successful innovation.

Co-ordinates

Web: www.destination-innovation.com

E-mail: psloane@destination-innovation.com

Twitter: [@paulsloane](https://twitter.com/paulsloane)

Facebook: [Facebook page](#)



Andy Bounds

What does your customer/boss want you to include in today's proposal?

Q: What does your customer/boss want you to include in today's proposal?

A: I've no idea. Ask them.

The best way to produce a communication that someone wants...

...Is to ask them what they want in it. So...

- What headings do they want in there? Ask them
- How long do they want it to be? Ask them
- Do they want a formal document, or an informal chat? Ask them

In fact, before you write anything, verbally agree as much as you can.

Doing this, then confirming in writing what you've verbally agreed, is much faster than hoping your document does the selling for you.

(If you don't believe me, re-read the tedious Email Tennis game you played with a colleague recently).

Imagine if, every time you wrote a proposal, you'd already verbally

agreed the solution, deliverables, £value it'd deliver, your price, the proposal headings and style... well, your document is now a confirmation; not an exploration.

And that's much more likely to work.

Action Point

For the next communication you're preparing for someone, verbally agree as much as you can upfront.

And if you're currently in the middle of writing one – and it's taking miles too long – go back to them and agree things verbally. You'll both save yourselves a lot of time if you do.

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About the Author

Andy Bounds is an expert at helping companies communicate and sell better. Author of two best-selling books and winner of the title Britain's Sales Trainer of the Year, Andy has shared his expertise with some of the world's largest companies, helping every one of them have more success. Marketing legend Drayton Bird said Andy had taught him '... more about effective communicating than a lady who'd taught two American Presidents'.

Are you following me on twitter?

To receive my weekly tips on how to communicate more effectively, [click here](#)

Short of time? Here are my [Quick Wins](#)

Co-ordinates

E-mail: andy@andybounds.com

Web: www.andybounds.com/tips





Pete Foley

Four ways to nudge smarter innovation

I love behavioural science. Together with related disciplines such as perceptual science, cognitive linguistics and cognitive psychology, I've found it to be incredibly useful in helping us both to innovate, and to communicate our innovations more effectively.

However, while it is wonderful for guiding our designs, it's critical to remember that its theories are approximations that do not precisely predict behaviour. The complexity of real world contexts, and the inevitability of competing, often conflicting heuristics that impact real human decisions and behaviours, combined with differences between individuals means that outcomes are never guaranteed. Behavioural science is a powerful guide, but it's not physics, and its predictions are approximations, not hard and fast predictive rules.

When Nudges Fail: To this exact point, I just read an **excellent article** on the BE Hub by Linda Thunström from the University of Wyoming. It shared some great examples of when nudges don't give us the outcomes we expect. For example, calorie labels often fail to effectively encourage low calorie food choices, while nudges aimed at encouraging people to take charge of their retirement savings appeal most to those who wrongly believe that they are sufficiently financially literate to do so.

This kind of unanticipated outcome is unfortunately quite common. Another example is free gym memberships, a relatively common tool employed by large corporations to help improve employee wellness, and so indirectly reduce healthcare costs. While it is not a bad idea per se, the group who take most advantage of it are

frequently those who need it least – the people who would likely have bought a gym membership anyway. Conversely those without a pre-existing proclivity for exercise are far less likely to use a free membership, or even if they do, to fade away once the initial allure of free is replaced by reality of the sacrifices demanded by a regular exercise regime.

So, do these examples mean we should abandon Nudging, and Behavioural Science? Absolutely not. It remains a tool with the potential to do enormous good. It can help people to find new products and services, adopt better, healthier lifestyles, or to make better long-term financial decisions. It's just not 100% predictive, so we need to find ways to manage unexpected outcomes.

Sensory Nudging, Cognitive Linguistics and Framing: I actually believe we should extend nudging well beyond the 'traditional' domain of Behavioural Economics and decision engineering. For example, by using insights drawn from sensory and visual science, we can also nudge what people notice, pay attention to, what comparisons they make, and what consideration sets they choose from. Similarly, cognitive linguistics and framing can influence both what comparisons people make, in what context, and the emotional framework that influences those decisions.

Four ways to Nudge Smarter:

But how do we avoid unintentionally nudging people to do the wrong thing? Well, in part the answer is that we'll never be certain of the outcome of a nudge. And sometimes a surprising result may teach us far more than the predicted one. But there are some things I believe we can do to increase our chances of ultimately achieving our desired outcomes:

1. Experiment, Experiment, Experiment.

We need to stay constantly in an experimental mindset, ideally start small, always measure the outcomes of our interventions, design tests that challenge our assumptions, and never simply assume our hypothesis will go as planned.

2. Be as creative in how we test breakthroughs as we are in designing them!

It's not just important to run experiments, but also to run the right ones. Whilst we may be able to use existing methodologies to test some innovations, the act of innovation rightly creates new behaviours, new markets, and new consumer perceptions.

We therefore often need to adapt our methodologies to reflect this, while also measuring the implicit as well as explicit consumer elements of consumer decisions that are central to our growing knowledge of behavioural science. And research design is where we are often our own worst enemy. Habits don't just drive consumer behaviour, they also influence innovators and market researchers. If we are truly innovating a market, there's a good chance we've also disrupted how it needs to be consumer tested. But we tend to fall back on familiar, established methodologies and benchmarks, and have a bias to use existing expertise, or create familiar data that is easy to understand, share, and use to justify our decisions if the worst happens, and a launch does not go as planned. It is all too easy to take a revolutionary product or service, and then test it using research designed for how the market used to be, instead of how it is now, or will be. But, and it's a critical but, this does not mean cramming new technology into our research just because it is new, cool, or we've just invested a ton of money in it. Instead it's about anticipating and observing how our innovation will change it's

market and consumers, and adjusting our methodologies accordingly. And most importantly of all, it's about ensuring that our testing has the minimum impact on the behaviours we are observing.

Using techniques such as disguised choice, anthropological observation, or non-invasive biometric technology such as mobile eye tracking can measure consumers behaviour in real, messy contexts, while causing the minimal disruption to their behaviour.

3. Blue Ocean Nudging.

When I first became interested in Behavioural Economics about 13 years ago, nudges were relatively rare, and the field was wide open. But behavioural science has become quite popular since then, and nudge based strategies can now be found everywhere, be it on websites, marketing or in public policy. As they become more ubiquitous, we do face a signal to noise problem.

If everyone is trying to nudge the same consumer, not only do nudge strategies inevitably become less effective, but people also become more aware of them. That doesn't mean they won't work, and awareness is not always a bad thing. But most nudges rely at least in part upon implicit behaviours, and so consumer awareness can reduce effectiveness. So as behavioural science becomes more commonplace, and people become more sophisticated, it becomes increasingly important to assess the landscape before we start nudging, and ideally be selective about where we nudge, opting where possible for 'blue oceans', where existing nudge activity is at a minimum. As an analogy, a neon sign on a dark freeway will grab attention but adding the same sign to the existing blaze of light that is Times Square is unlikely to have much impact.

4. Blur the Lines Between Testing and Launching.

The innovation model I grew up on was one of stage gates, qualification, and a somewhat false sense of security about our ability to predict the success of an innovation. The concept that we'll know within a few percentage points how our product will perform in market is seductive, especially if we are investing significant

capital, or risking change an important, profit generating brand. But one reason so many innovations fail is that we are simply not very good at predictive research on new ideas. And the more disruptive our innovation, the harder it is to anticipate how it will perform. In part this is because, as Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman pointed out, we don't know our future selves very well. And if we cannot predict our own future behaviours, the odds are stacked against us predicting that of others. And this is compounded by our bias towards designing tests whose results are easily understood and shared. This drives us to sacrifice predictive accuracy for the illusion of precision, and the comfort of "quantitative data" and 'good statistics'.

Unfortunately, the real world is messy, multivariable, and full of factors that are beyond our control. To some extent, we need to live with that ambiguity.

This is not always possible, but one powerful way to do this is to treat the launch of innovations as experiments.

Start small, observe and measure as we go, and maintain as much flexibility as possible to modify our propositions as we collect initial feedback. Emerging web based supply chains, and the flexibility provided by new materials, printing and manufacturing techniques opens the door to more test markets, soft launches, and most importantly, leaving some flexibility in design specs that allow us to learn as we go.

It's also not as hard as we may think. For example, I can think of multiple times we've had to lock on an innovative design 6-12 months before launch because we are supposed to have zero flexibility after we start to invest in manufacturing, only to make rapid, on the fly changes early in the launch process when market results don't match our research, or we uncover unexpected flaws in our design. All too often our lack of flexibility is at least in part in our own heads, or it is structural, driven by our internal budgeting needs to separate research and commercial initiatives.

In Conclusion: All of these suggestions come with challenges. But I passionately believe innovators who embrace behavioural science, but with

commensurate flexibility in business models and research techniques will win the innovation race. We need to be change receptive, but also smart. Avoid expensive tech heavy tests of the blindingly obvious, launch with flexibility, and with an experimental mindset that challenges our assumptions early, tests our results frequently, and that allows us to bend, but not break, as the market tells us far more about our innovations than we can ever hope our research to do.

This article originally appeared on Innovation Excellence:
<https://www.innovationexcellence.com/blog/2019/03/21/four-ways-to-nudge-smarter-innovation/>

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About the Author

Pete Foley is a Behavioural Science and Innovation Consultant who specializes in applying Psychology, Behavioural Economics and Perceptual Science to deliver innovative solutions to a wide range of business challenges.

An experienced innovation leader, facilitator and practitioner. He draws on 25 years' experience at P&G, where as a serial innovator, he published over 100 patents, and co-led the foundation of their Behavioural Science capability.

For the last five years he has been an independent consultant, working with large and small companies across a broad range of businesses.

Pete is a sought-after keynote speaker, has extensive experience in designing and leading customized innovation and design thinking workshops, and in supporting the design and placement of consumer tests built around principles of consumer psychology.

Pete blogs regularly about the science and psychology of innovation He has been recognized as one of the top 20 bloggers on Innovationexcellence.com for the last three years, has written multiple articles for the award-winning biomimicry magazine Zygote.

Co-ordinates

Web: www.mindmatters.biz
 Twitter: [@foley_pete](https://twitter.com/foley_pete)





Amy Morin

13 things mentally strong people don't do

Mentally strong people have healthy habits. They manage their emotions, thoughts, and behaviours in ways that set them up for success in life. Check out these things that mentally strong people don't do so that you too can become more mentally strong.

1. They Don't Waste Time Feeling Sorry for Themselves

Mentally strong people don't sit around feeling sorry about their circumstances or how others have treated them. Instead, they take responsibility for their role in life and understand that life isn't always easy or fair.

2. They Don't Give Away Their Power

They don't allow others to control them, and they don't give someone else power over them. They don't say things like, "My boss makes me feel bad," because they understand that they are in control over their own emotions and they have a choice in how they respond.

3. They Don't Shy Away from Change

Mentally strong people don't try to avoid change. Instead, they welcome positive change and are willing to be flexible. They understand that change is inevitable and believe in their abilities to adapt.

4. They Don't Waste Energy on Things They Can't Control

You won't hear a mentally strong person complaining over lost luggage or traffic jams. Instead, they focus on what they can control in their lives. They recognize that sometimes, the

only thing they can control is their attitude.

5. They Don't Worry About Pleasing Everyone

Mentally strong people recognize that they don't need to please everyone all the time. They're not afraid to say no or speak up when necessary. They strive to be kind and fair, but can handle other people being upset if they didn't make them happy.

6. They Don't Fear Taking Calculated Risks

They don't take reckless or foolish risks, but don't mind taking calculated risks. Mentally strong people spend time weighing the risks and benefits before making a big decision, and they're fully informed of the potential downsides before they take action.

7. They Don't Dwell on the Past

Mentally strong people don't waste time dwelling on the past and wishing things could be different. They acknowledge their past and can say what they've learned from it. However, they don't constantly relive bad experiences or fantasize about the glory days. Instead, they live for the present and plan for the future.

8. They Don't Make the Same Mistakes Over and Over

They accept responsibility for their behavior and learn from their past mistakes. As a result, they don't keep repeating those mistakes over and over. Instead, they move on and make better decisions in the future.

9. They Don't Resent Other People's Success

Mentally strong people can appreciate and celebrate other people's success in life. They don't grow jealous or feel cheated when others surpass them. Instead, they recognize that success comes with hard work, and they are willing to work hard for their own chance at success.

10. They Don't Give Up After the First Failure

They don't view failure as a reason to give up. Instead, they use failure as an opportunity to grow and improve. They are willing to keep trying until they get it right.

11. They Don't Fear Alone Time

Mentally strong people can tolerate being alone and they don't fear silence. They aren't afraid to be alone with their thoughts and they can use downtime to be productive. They enjoy their own company and aren't dependent on others for companionship and entertainment all the time but instead can be happy alone.

12. They Don't Feel the World Owes Them Anything

They don't feel entitled to things in life. They weren't born with a mentality that others would take care of them or that the world must give them something. Instead, they look for opportunities based on their own merits.

13. They Don't Expect Immediate Results

Whether they are working on improving their health or getting a new business off the ground, mentally strong people don't expect immediate results. Instead, they apply their skills and time to the best of their ability and understand that real change takes time.

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About the Author

Amy Morin is a licensed clinical social worker and psychotherapist. Since 2002, she has been counseling children, teens, and adults. She also works as an adjunct psychology instructor.

Amy serves as About.com's Parenting Teens Expert and Child Discipline Expert. She's a regular contributor to Forbes and Psychology Today.

Her expertise in mental strength has attracted international attention. Her bestselling book, *13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do*, is being translated into more than 20 languages.

Amy's advice has been featured by a number of media outlets, including: *Parenting*, *Time*, *Fast Company*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Elle*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Success*, Oprah.com, Health.com, Fox News, NBC, ABC, MSN, Lifetime Moms, and We TV. She has also provided on-camera interviews for Fox Business, Forbes, and TheBlaze TV. She's a frequent guest on a variety of radio shows as well.

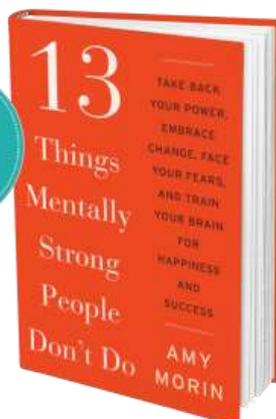
Co-ordinates

Facebook:

[facebook.com/AmyMorinAuthor](https://www.facebook.com/AmyMorinAuthor)

Web: www.AmyMorinLCSW.com

Twitter: twitter.com/AmyMorinLCSW



Ron Kaufman

Setting Effective Service Standards: Challenge #1 of 5



UP Your Service

Published on 26th Mar 2019

<http://www.UpYourService.com>

<http://www.RonKaufman.com>

Enjoy this interview with Jeff Eilertsen who leads the Client Success team at UP! Your Service with 25 years' experience improving service and leadership in organizations around the world.

As a consultant, keynote speaker and global master trainer, Jeff works with clients to develop people, processes and best practices to achieve a culture of Service Excellence. Jeff offers service performance insights to address five essential service challenges every organization must successfully address.

In this interview with Ron Kaufman, Jeff discusses the first challenge, Setting Effective Service Standards.

These are the links to watch Challenges 2 to 5:

Challenge 2: Shifting from Service Process to Customer Experience

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZjJP...>

Challenge 3: Building Internal Service Relationships and Employee Engagement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBdoI...>

Challenge 4: Turning Customer Complaints to Customer Loyalty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFq7L...>

Challenge 5: Aligning Leadership and Service Performance

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vdT_...

Ron Kaufman is the New York Times bestselling author of "UPLIFTING SERVICE: The Proven Path to Delighting Your Customers, Colleagues and Everyone Else You Meet", and is the founder of UP! Your Service. Visit

<https://www.upyourservice.com/proven-...> to learn more about how UP!

Your Service helps leaders and organizations achieve sustainable advantage with a culture of service excellence.

Visit

<http://www.RonKaufman.com/demo> to learn more about Ron, watch a keynote speech, and hear from his clients.





Debra Murphy

Create a successful content marketing strategy

Content marketing is creating, publishing and promoting value-based content to attract your target audience so they get to know, like and trust you. But content marketing should not be done without a well thought-out content marketing strategy.

All major marketing activities require a well-planned strategy. Without a strategy, marketing activities become random and unfocused. Not having a strategy wastes resources on tasks that don't help you achieve your goals. And many times, without a strategy, your marketing activities are not focused on the things that help you reach your ideal client.

What is a content marketing strategy?

A content marketing strategy is about creating a plan to provide relevant, valuable content and promoting it on the marketing channels that best reach your target audience. You need to match your content to the needs and desires of your audience so that you educate them and become memorable.

By providing quality content, you become known as a trusted expert and advisor in your industry. This helps to build your online brand presence, making your business more visible. And one of the most important aspects of content marketing is that it helps attract new visitors and turn them into qualified leads. Before you start creating content, answer the following and create your content marketing strategy.

What do you want to achieve?

Determine the goals for your content marketing efforts. Do you want to:

- Attract new visitors

- Generate more leads
- Grow your email list
- Develop an expert reputation
- Build brand awareness

By knowing what you want to achieve, you can align the content with those goals so that it delivers actionable results.

Well written blog posts shared on relevant social media sites can drive more traffic to your website, help you build brand awareness and develop an expert reputation. Blog posts are good for visitors in the early part of their buyer's journey.

eBooks and whitepapers are more useful for visitors who have learned about your business and want to get further education on how you can help them.

Creating a content marketing strategy will help ensure that you focus all your time, energy, and money on reaching a goal that is important to your business.

What does your target prospect want?

Creating content that connects with your audience is hard. What does your target audience want to know? What challenges or pain points are causing them to look for a solution?

You need to intimately understand your audience and the buyer's journey and your content needs to be aligned with steps along that path.

Perform a content audit and organize it by type (blog posts, articles, white papers, videos and presentations) and by topic to determine where you need to fill in the gaps. Use this information to lay out your editorial calendar that will be your content road map going forward.

How often will you publish?

The challenge for most small businesses is to provide engaging content on a consistent basis. Finding the time to implement a regular and consistent strategy is very difficult. The key to success is to do what works for you based on your time and resources. Small businesses need to focus on providing quality content on a regular schedule, even if that schedule is only once or twice a month.

Set the schedule for publishing new content in your editorial calendar. Having set dates for publishing can help remind you that it's time for new content. Otherwise, time will pass and no content will get published.

Be realistic. Plan a schedule that can work for you and stick with it as best possible.

Where will you promote your content?

Great content that is hidden is not supporting your strategy. Determine where you will promote it, based on where you can reach your target audience. Make it easy for others to share your content broadly.

- Add a visible subscribe button on your blog and don't forget to allow visitors to subscribe via email.
- Sending content in the form of a series of emails to your list
- Add social share buttons to your website so visitors can share your content to their friends and followers.
- Share your content on the social sites that you use.
- Syndicate your content to sites such as [Business2Community](#).

How will you measure your effectiveness?

Measure your results based on how effective you are at achieving your goals. If you want:

- More inbound leads, is your content helping?
- To grow your email list, is your lead magnet attracting the right audience?
- To become known as an expert in your industry, is your content projecting that image for you?

Track and measure your efforts so you can adjust if necessary.

Content creation is the basis of inbound marketing

Remember that content creation is the core of your inbound marketing strategy and needs to be done regularly for it to be effective. Good content gets found, consumed and shared, fuelling more traffic to your website and giving you an opportunity to build trust, credibility, and authority for your business.

Are you going to create a content marketing strategy for your business?

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About the Author

Debra is a marketing coach and mentor passionate about helping small business owners take control of a critical business asset – their online digital footprint – and use it to increase visibility and generate inbound leads. Through expert guidance and support, they achieve success by learning, incorporating and executing marketing activities that take their business from mediocre to marvellous.

Although experienced across all traditional marketing channels, Debra specializes in inbound marketing, a combination of search, social media and content marketing, enabling small businesses to create a larger digital footprint that increases their visibility and generates more quality inbound leads.

Co-ordinates

Web: masterful-marketing.com
 Twitter: [@masterfulmktg](https://twitter.com/masterfulmktg)
 LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/debramurphy](https://www.linkedin.com/in/debramurphy)
 Facebook: [MasterfulMarketing](https://www.facebook.com/MasterfulMarketing)



Drayton Bird

What's the difference between success and failure?

(No need to wade through this if you're doing just fine).

You don't become a howling success just because you know more - though that helps.

Nor because you work harder - though that helps too.

You don't even need a better idea.

You can thank Nikola Tesla for radio, wireless technology, neon lamps, and X-rays - but he died penniless. Marconi and Edison took his ideas and cleaned up.

The big difference is simple.

While the dreamers dream, the winners get on with it.

Pretty much every day we hear from people who are "thinking" about marketing.

Not all their ideas have genuine potential. But quite a few do.

They just don't follow through. So, they don't get anywhere. And we think it's a waste and a shame.

Who knows? Maybe you have something with real potential.

It doesn't have to be entirely new.

It could just be a new way of selling something old (books were around for quite a few centuries before Amazon set up shop).

Whatever it is, don't just sit there.

Contact Gerald. He's a very down to earth guy so he won't waste your time, or ours making fancy promises.

But whatever you do, don't just think about it.

Please.

Drayton

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About the Author

In 2003, the Chartered Institute of Marketing named Drayton Bird one of 50 living individuals who have shaped today's marketing. He has spoken in 53 countries for many organisations, and much of what he discusses derive from his work with many of the world's greatest brands. These include American Express, Audi, Bentley, British Airways, Cisco, Deutsche Post, Ford, IBM, McKinsey, Mercedes, Microsoft, Nestle, Philips, Procter & Gamble, Toyota, Unilever, Visa and Volkswagen. In various capacities – mostly as a writer – Drayton has helped sell everything from Airbus planes to Peppa Pig. His book, *Commonsense Direct and Digital Marketing*, out in 17 languages, has been the UK's best seller on the subject every year since 1982.

Co-ordinates

Drayton Bird Associates
 Web: <http://draytonbird.com>
 Tel: +44 (0) 845 3700 121

Email: drayton@draytonbird.com
 or db@draytonbird.com





Marla Tabaka

How great leaders keep top performers happy and productive

A disengaged work force can destroy a company's value. Invest in the difference makers, and you will see a remarkable ROI.

When asked what their company's No. 1 asset is, smart leaders will answer that it's their **employees**. Yet a whopping 50 percent of employees who leave a company do so because of their relationship with the **boss**.

There are obvious consequences in lacking a **culture** that embodies positive company values and due appreciation of its employees. Valuation expert Dave Bookbinder sheds a new light on the importance of such a culture in a series of articles he's publishing called "**The New ROI: Return on Individuals**."

"It's no secret that a **happy** work force is a more engaged work force, and a more engaged work force is a more productive work force," writes Bookbinder. "It's important to recognize that the people are responsible for translating that **productivity** into an increased value of the overall business enterprise. Conversely, a disengaged work force can destroy a company's value."

How can you build this value into your company's overall worth? "In the valuation world, where people are referred to as human capital assets, it's the positive difference makers, or high performers, who are the greatest asset," Bookbinder says. Difference makers are the ones who ask the right questions, see the whole picture, and go outside of their networks to gather ideas from a variety of perspectives. Difference

makers know that good enough is never good enough. And since they get great pleasure from a sense of accomplishment, they take ownership of every project they touch.

According to Bookbinder, retaining these difference makers will help you, not only in the short-term, but also in successfully implementing your long-term strategy. Building value now will pay off in the future.

Here are some of the things that are most important to difference makers. Build a **culture** that allows them the opportunity to make a difference, and your top performers will remain happy and productive for years to come.

1. Understand their goals.

Take the time to discover their personal goals and find a way to tie them into the goals of the organization. For example, if someone has aspirations to start a business, allow him or her to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours inside the company. By aligning the individual's goals with those of the company, you will turn a mercenary (someone who works for the top dollar) into a missionary (someone who believes in and is loyal to the organization).

2. Invest in them.

Professional development, training, and **coaching** are investments, not perks. If you view people as expenses, they will behave accordingly. Human capital is an asset after all, even if it doesn't show up on a financial statement. An average CEO may ask, "What if we invest in our employees and they leave?" An outstanding CEO will ask, "What if we don't invest in our employees and they stay?"

3. Create a connection.

Difference makers are looking to make a deep connection with not only their work, but also the people they work with and work for. If you are a managing a difference maker, adopt a **leadership style** that resonates with him or her. Your actions must be in alignment with your words. Remember, these people don't quit their jobs, they quit their bosses.

4. Develop the stakes beyond salary, benefits, and perks.

For difference makers, it's about more than money—it's about meaningful work and being a part of something bigger than the task at hand. Yes, the compensation package has to be appropriate, but allow your difference makers to ask their probing questions and identify areas that need improvement without being judgmental. If you let them have at it, there is a good chance that they will improve upon it.

5. Surround them with high-calibre colleagues.

Just as no single great athlete can make a team successful, difference makers also need to be surrounded by talented players. Allow your top talent to collaborate and reap the exponential benefits of that collaboration.

All in all, your top performers are inspired and motivated by internal factors, not external ones. They're not the people who are just working in wait for the weekend to come. By creating this type of culture, you might just inspire a whole new group of difference makers that you didn't even know you had.

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About the Author

Marla Tabaka is an internationally known business strategist, national radio show host, and leading Inc. Magazine author. Her integrative approach to coaching combines mindset management and strategic planning, resulting in multi-million dollar businesses for many of her small business clients. Marla has appeared in noteworthy publications such as American Express Open, Fox Business News, TIME Business, The Huffington Post, Entrepreneur.com, Social Media Mags, and The Business Intelligence Report. If you would like to take the next steps toward a healthy life and business, contact Marla for a complimentary consultation.

Co-ordinates

Web: www.marlabakka.com
Twitter: twitter.com/MarlaTabaka
Email: Marla@MarlaTabaka.com



Sunil Bali

Art and Soul ...

The ceramics teacher announced on the first day of class, that he was dividing the class into two groups.

One half of the class would be graded solely on the *quantity* of work they produced, and the other half would be graded solely on the *quality* of their work.



On the final day of class the teacher would bring his bathroom scales and weigh the work of the *quantity group*: fifty pounds in weight of pots rated a Grade "A", forty pounds a Grade "B", and so on.

Those being graded on *quality*, however, needed to produce only one pot – albeit a perfect one – to get a Grade "A".

Come grading time a curious fact emerged: the works of highest *quality* were all produced by the group being graded for *quantity*. It seems that while the *quantity group* was busily churning out piles of work – and learning from their mistakes – the *quality group* had sat theorizing about perfection, and in the end had little more to show for their efforts than grandiose theories and a not very good pot.

Whether its business, art or sport, it's not the quest to achieve one perfect goal that makes you better, it's the skills you develop from doing a volume of work.

Focus on the repetitions that lead to your desired outcome. Focus on the iterations that come before the success. Focus on the hundreds of ceramic pots that come before the masterpiece.

In other words: Try. Fail. Learn. Repeat.

Don't be afraid of making a load of rubbish. Be afraid of making nothing at all.

Ps. The ceramics story is taken from the book **Art and Fear**

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About the Author

Sunil is a Performance Coach, Speaker and Author.

Ex Head of Talent for Vodafone Group and Santander, and having run a £50m business, Sunil has been responsible for hiring over 50000 people and has had the pleasure of working with some great entrepreneurs, professionals and leaders.

Moving minds - Transforming performance

Co-ordinates

E-mail: sunil@sunilbali.com
Web: www.sunilbali.com
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/sunilbali



Sari van Poelje

Creating cooperation & belonging: Are you living up to your promise?



As I travel the world helping businesses to create communities of cooperation and innovation I sometimes wonder why we have not been able to solve the world's Big Hairy Audacious problems together. We potentially have the knowledge, the resources and the technology to do so, but hunger, overpopulation, poverty and pollution are still on the rise. As Peter Block says in his book *Community*, we have not lived up to our promise of abundance, equality and sustainability. This comes with the knowledge that each of us, including myself, are participating in creating this world daily. I believe that if we can create a culture of community and cooperation, we could fulfill our promise.

Why is cooperation important?

In a volatile and complex environment accelerating time to market is essential. **To do this alone is unrealistic.** More and more companies are moving towards creating communities, enabling cooperation and increasing the sense of belonging in order to become more innovative. To solve the world's BHA problems we as individuals, non-profits, small businesses, large

corporations, groups and associations need to do the same. If we want to maintain our innovation and co-operation I would argue we all have to start thinking differently. **We need to develop interdependence, build trust and base decisions on morality.** We can not afford inward looking, competitiveness based on privileged ranks. We need everyone, and every perspective to develop and innovate.



How do you 'create' community? Isn't it something that just happens?

Knowledge of individual transformation is not enough when it comes to transforming a community. My sources of inspiration are therefore to be found in systemic thinkers and community builders like Eric Berne on the Structure And Dynamics Of Groups And Organizations, Peter Block's book

Community, Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* and John Gottman's *The Science of Trust*.

The structure of community

At the structural level a community is a social aggregation held by: Boundaries, Roles and Hierarchy. These define the distribution of decision making power.

We looked in more detail at the structure of a community in a business at: **Team agility and business innovation: Agile boundary paradoxes**

The overriding concern of every healthy organization is to survive, grow and innovate. To be able to stay healthy all of us must find a way to deal with three core interdependencies:

1. Corporate identity – evolving market
2. Leadership control – delegation to membership
3. Individual independence – relational interdependence

Relationship of Trust

In *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putman, shows that geography, history, great leadership and economic advantage only make a marginal difference to the health of a community. A community's well-

being has to do with the quality of relationship, where people trust their safety and success depends on the safety and success of all others. Like the Bodhisatva belief that not one of us can enter Nirvana until all others have gone before us. Trust is the intention to accept vulnerability based on the positive expectations or beliefs regarding the intentions of others. Gottman goes further and says it is a specific state that exists when both are willing to change their behaviour to benefit the other.

Building trust and cooperation

One of the most researched cooperation games is called: The Prisoner's Dilemma. The game allows players to achieve mutual gains from cooperation, but it also allows them to exploit or not cooperate. In his book *The Evolution of Cooperation*, Robert Axelrod found that the best strategy was 'Tit for Tat'.

1. Cooperate first – never be the first to defect.
2. Be nice – avoid defection as long as the other player cooperates.
3. Reciprocity – retaliate immediately with defection if the other player defects.
4. Forgiveness – after the other player reverts to cooperation cooperate immediately. Minimize the echo effects.
5. Clarity – be absolutely transparent about what you are doing and why you are doing it so others can learn.

Does this sound like a great way to run a business or an organisation? A great way to organise ourselves to solve the BHA problems we face?

“Create cooperation and belonging, and together we can live up to our promise.

The prisoner's dilemma offers us evidence of how we can increase cohesion. For an interesting and diverting way of testing out the permutations in the prisoner's dilemma try out, *'The Evolution of Trust' game from Nicky Case.*

On the whole there are three strategies to increase cohesion,

(read more about why cohesion is important for business innovation):

1. **Increase the interpersonal attraction by:**
 - Increasing perceived similarity between members.
 - Increase the interdependence of shared goals.
 - Increase the social interaction in the group.
2. **Enhance the social identity:**
 - Create positive in-group – negative out-group
 - Minimize intergroup and maximize intergroup differences
 - Manipulate social beliefs mobility, change, legitimacy
3. **Social exchange strategy:**
 - Increase reward, lower cost of membership
 - Manipulate alternatives, investment, expectations

Using social exchange theory we can see that by cooperating first and being nice we open up the social negotiation on a positive and provide high benefits for cooperation. When boundaries are broken or crossed, we must be quick to reciprocate, and then even quicker to forgive when actions are taken to put things right. Overall our strategy and goals must be clear and obvious to all involved. In this way we create cooperation and belonging, and together we can live up to our promise.

Radical Agile Transformation Exercise:

1. How can you increase cooperation in your life?
2. In which ways can you cooperate first?
3. How can you maintain your cooperative attitude more?
4. In which areas do you need to reciprocate more quickly?
5. When the other party cooperates again, are you quick to forgive?
6. Are you clear in your strategy?

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About the Author

Drs Sari van Poelje is one of the world's leading experts on creating agile and innovative leadership teams. Sari is a business consultant, executive coach and trainer. She is the managing director of Intact Academy. With offices in Budapest and Goteborg, and associated offices in Antwerp, Milan, Lyon and Paris, the company offers executive coaching, management consultancy and training programs for coaches, consultants and leaders.

Sari has 30 years' experience of coaching and consulting with managers and directors in a multinational business setting. She has been a consultant and coach for such diverse companies as IFF, BMW, Claas, Carmeuse, ING, Prezi and GE. Sari has also fulfilled senior director roles in various international corporations such as KLM, EMI music, ASML and Shell for 23 years.

Co-ordinates

Web: www.sarivanpoelje.com
www.intactacademy.com
www.teamagility.com





Rob Garibay

Little known secret most CEOs don't know to grow your business

As a business coach, I've worked with CEO clients from all across the United States on the growth of their companies. My clients are among leaders of some of the fastest growing businesses in their industries.

These CEOs are challenged with a litany of obstacles they must overcome to grow their organizations to the next level.

Out of my years of experience mentoring leaders, what is one of my top pieces of advice to CEOs?

Hire fewer employees. Pay them more.

Let me explain...

A large part of business is assembling the right team to meet the challenges of your business.

As a CEO, think of yourself as a coach of a professional football team. Every coach knows that you can't win Super Bowl without great talent.

Just like in pro football, you can't win the great game of business with mediocre players.

But how do you systematically get the best players on your team? The first step is knowing the different levels of employees. A key to assembling a championship business team is understanding these categories and knowing what to do with them.

3 Types of Employees:

1. C Players:

These employees are the worse members to have on your team. They do not embrace your core values, they consistently underperform, and create chaos in your organization.

2. B Players

These members of your team do their jobs and meet goals. However, they seldomly do more than that. To a B player, their position is little more than a job. There is little or no passion or enthusiasm in their work.

3. A Players

These are your rock stars on your team. A Players embrace your core values and are enthusiastic problem solvers that go above and beyond the call of duty. They have a high internal motivation, a need to succeed, and don't need to be constantly motivated.

Knowing the difference between A players, B players, and C players is half the battle. What do you do with them?

Employee Action Plan:

1. C players:

Get them off your team. C players are mis-hires. When you analyze the cost to your company with the time, energy, and effort of hiring, training, cleaning up messes of a mis-hire, it typically costs a company 15X their salary!

Do not fall into the C player trap. The vast majority of managers in companies spend more time with C Players one-on-one (200 hrs on average) than with A Players. This is often due to disciplinary reasons or requirements to address C Player behaviours.

The #1 reason why A players leave a company is their tolerance for C players.

Don't try to train or fix a C player. It will not work. Transition a C player off of your team as soon as possible.

2. B players:

Work with B players and coach them to become A players. There may be several reasons a B player aren't fully engaged in their work. Here are a few strategies to nurture a B player:

- **Metrics and accountability:** Your B player may not know what is expected of him. Make sure your management team has property communicated priorities, has assigned quantifiable metrics with the employee, and has set up a meeting rhythm to review those metrics.
- **Motivation:** Find out what motivates them and offer incentives to reach goals.
- **Analyze their personality and skill set.** Your B player may be an A player who is in the wrong seat on your bus.
- **Create an engaging core purpose:** The #1 reason an employee engages in a business is if they believe in the company.

3. A players:

Keep them! Do everything you can to keep these members on your team. Since A players stand for excellence, they have a number of opportunities to work elsewhere. Ask yourself why would an A player want to work for your company and not your competitor.

A players will produce as much as three B players, so pay A players more. If you have an A player on your team, consider compensating them 1.5x the industry average salary. You will come out ahead in the end.

Once you get your C players off your team, hire more A players. Your current A players probably know other A players in their networks. Use these employees to refer other new A player candidates

Hire fewer employees. Pay them more.

Create a recruitment and retention strategy that understands the 3 different types of employees is a major secret I coach my clients to grow their company to the next level.

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About the Author:

Rob Garibay is a business owner, business expert & coach, certified with Gazelles International, ActionCOACH, and Engage & Grow, as well as a John Maxwell Founding Partner Leadership Coach. His professional career spans building businesses in manufacturing, R&D, distribution, retail, and IT. Rob has been a guest lecturer at The University of Oklahoma Price College of Business and also a weekly contributor to The Norman Transcript Sunday Business section.

Rob is the author of the book *Energize Your Profits* and contributing author to *Roadmap to Success*, both available on Amazon.com. He has achieved #3 ranking in the USA and #15 in the world among over 1400 ActionCOACH business coaches.

Rob is a graduate of the Case School of Engineering, Case Western Reserve University. He co-founded and grew a technology business which he sold after 15 years.

Rob has written business plans that have raised \$30 million in investment capital.

He is passionate about helping business owners successfully scale their mid-sized businesses by applying the Rockefeller Habits and 4 Decisions concepts to their companies.

Co-ordinates:

Facebook: <http://on.fb.me/1U42xpp>
Twitter: <http://bit.ly/20pkfUh>
LinkedIn: <http://bit.ly/1T8tGXv>



Mike Shipulski

What's your problem?

If you don't have a problem, you've got a big problem.

It's important to know where a problem happens, but also when it happens.

Solutions are 90% defining and the other half is solving.

To solve a problem, you've got to understand things as they are.

Before you start solving a new problem, solve the one you have now.

It's good to solve your problems, but it's better to solve your customers' problems.

Opportunities are problems in sheep's clothing.

There's nothing worse than solving the wrong problem – all the cost with none of the solution.

When you're stumped by a problem, make it worse then do the opposite.

With problem definition, error on the side of clarity.

All problems are business problems, unless you care about society's problems.

Odds are, your problem has been solved by someone else. Your real problem is to find them.

Define your problem as narrowly as possible, but no narrower.

Problems are not a sign of weakness.

Before adding something to solve the problem, try removing something.

If your problem involves more than two things, you have more than one problem.

The problem you think you have is never the problem you actually have.

Problems can be solved before, during or after they happen, and the solutions are different.

Start with the biggest problem, otherwise you're only getting ready to solve the biggest problem.

If you can't draw a closeup sketch of the problem, you don't understand it well enough.

If you have an itchy backside and you scratch your head, you still have an itch. And it's the same with problems.

If innovation is all about problem solving and problem solving is all about problem definition, well, there you have it.

This article originally appeared on: <https://www.innovationexcellence.com/blog/2019/02/20/whats-your-problem/>

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About the Author:

Mike strives to define best practices and tools for *Product and Technology Development* and embed them into company culture. With that, practices and tools become a working part of how a company does business instead of ending up in a thick handbook that defines how things "should be done" which is read by no one. To Mike, behavior is most important.

Co-ordinates:

Web: www.shipulski.com
Twitter: twitter.com/mikeshipulski





Robert B. Tucker

These nine powerful technologies are now ready for rollout

Every technology goes through a Development Phase before entering its Application Phase. The tech-advancements below are all entering the Application Phase. They are ready to be used as innovation tools — and to be used to solve your company's and your customers real world challenges.

Innovators in large multinational organizations, as well as small and mid-sized firms are discovering creative ways to deploy these technologies to acquire new customers, enhance existing products, increase employee productivity, and otherwise invent the future.

Take a look:

1. 5G Tech: Coming Soon to a Network Near You

Unless you live in China or South Korea, 5G technology may not be available in your area until late 2019 or 2020. Nevertheless, when it does arrive, 5G will be 10 times faster than 4G, and will enable you to remain connected wherever you go, and to download full length movies in seconds among other applications. The reason there's so much hoopla around 5G is that it promises to be a huge enabler of innovation for a wide variety of industries, professions and populations! Some estimates are that one billion people will be "5G enabled" within five years, so we're talking about a game-changing technology, rather than an incremental improvement. The combination of speed, responsiveness and reach is

certain to be a further catalyst to the full-blossoming of such tech-trends as self-driving cars, telemedicine, big data, drones, virtual reality and the internet of things.

2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is now a mainstream technology. Leading players are already using it to achieve competitive advantage.

First mover firms in a growing number of industries are applying AI to give them an edge going forward. Some are automating routine tasks like accounting and billing, while others are pursuing ever larger opportunities. Leading law firms now use AI to scan thousands of legal documents in minutes, rather than weeks, to build stronger cases at a fraction of the cost. Bloomberg's AI software writes routine articles without human intervention. John Deere's new tractors rely on AI to apply micro-squirts of pesticides, replacing crop dusters. China's AI industry has grown by 67 percent over the past year and has produced more patents than its U.S. counterparts. Suggestion: Become the AI "point person" in your firm and be on the lookout for new applications. Scope out the rise of AI, it's benefits and dangers, and look broadly for ways AI could be used ethically to make existing products and services better, to lower costs, and free up people to perform more creative and higher value tasks.

3. Apps are now essential tools for adding customer value and aiding employee productivity. What are you app to do next?

Fort Worth, Texas-based startup Booster Fuels saves time-strapped motorists a trip to the gas station. When you order fuel on your Booster app, they bring the gasoline to you. Startups like Booster Fuels are taking advantage of the app trend to address unmet customer needs. And established companies like Safeco auto insurance are finding new ways to use apps to add value to customers —and improve worker productivity.

Safeco's auto insurance customers can now report an auto accident using the company's app. Right from the accident scene, customers can submit photos, report what happened and arrange for a tow — all by using Safeco's innovative app. Fast movers will increasingly use mobile apps for on-the-spot-troubleshooting, managing inventory, providing on-site estimates, generating invoices, and gathering data that can be used to better understand customer preferences.

Pest control operator Rentokil uses a proprietary app to give its field technicians a productivity edge. When confused by type of bug or rodent, they simply snap a photo and run the app, which sifts through a data-bank of pest images to quickly identify the intruder. The app even suggests remediation solutions. Voila, problem solved.

4. Wearable technology is enhancing guest experience at Carnival Cruise Lines. How might you (and your organization) profit from wearables?

Modern cruise ships carry over 6000 passengers and offer everything from violin concerts to bungee jumping to belly dancing classes. But there's a problem. Carnival Cruise Lines' research showed that so many choices were overwhelming guests and creating an anxious-prone customer experience. So, Carnival created a wearable technology to help customers avoid "over-choice." Passengers are given the option to wear a wristband device synced with a companion app on their smartphone to serve as a kind of constant guide while onboard. As you partake of various onboard activities, the wearable tool responds by guiding you to activities that you're bound to like, providing a new level of customized service for passengers.

Result: Carnival customer data shows that guests come away happier, less stressed, and more apt to return to Carnival for their next cruise.

5. Big Data empowers Starbucks' location scouting. Are you and your firm looking far enough ahead of the Big Data Curve?

Ever wonder how Starbucks can open multiple shops in the same neighbourhood without cannibalizing existing store traffic? Answer: they use big data to scout locations that will grow revenue and avoid shortchanging existing stores.

Until now, big data was available exclusively to big companies. No longer. As more and more digital data gets collected (as when you give your phone number to the clerk at the grocery store), mid-sized and even small firms are now able to tap the power of big data analytics to carve out new strategic advantage: to lower the cost of customer acquisition, find new ways to cut costs, increase

sales, personalize product offerings, and enter new markets.

Starbucks was a first mover in using big data to give their location scouts a tool to reduce guesswork. Big data — the technology that allows more people to analyze more information from more sources in more ways than ever before — helps Starbucks' staffers crunch data on foot traffic patterns, area demographic trends and customer behaviour profiles, greatly reducing the complexity of decision making.

6. Alexa and Google Assistant have emerged as the leading voice-control platforms. Is now the time to embrace the Internet of Things?

In November 2017, Enrichment Federal Credit Union became the first credit union in the United States to link to Amazon's Alexa voice-controlled smart speakers. Members of the Oak Ridge, Tennessee-based credit union can now move money between accounts, make loan payments and access balances and account histories using convenient voice commands.

Enrichment's move is just the latest application of an exploding techno-trend where tiny sensors embedded in homes, buildings, and everyday objects such as smartphones, are connected via the internet, to comprise what is being called The Internet of Things (IoT). While Alexa is out front, Google's Assistant is coming on strong, followed by a host of others just now entering the race to wire the living room.

IoT technology first burst on the scene in 2015, when a startup called Nest reinvented the thermostat and made it "smart," which is to say programmable, and connected via the internet to the consumers smart phone, and voice-controlled speaker. Nest went on to reinvent smoke alarms, home security and a growing list of other products, and the technology is exploding. In home security, for example, for a fraction of the cost of traditional home security- service,

consumers can set up the new do it yourself system — you set up the alarm system yourself by placing the easy to use sensors and cameras and motion detectors around your home, and connect to a control hub, and an app on your smart phone.

Action step: Look for ever increasing numbers of homes to be united with the IoT, and new entrants wishing to dance in the voice-control platform space.

7. Advanced robotics are moving out of the factory and showing up everywhere. Is it time you made a bet on the future?

Hotel chain Aloft uses robotic bellhops to supplement their bell staff — delivering extra towels, keys and whatever else to guest rooms without delay. Suddenly, agile, trainable, lightweight robots aren't just found on the factory floor, they're showing up everywhere. And they won't replace workers in most cases, they will enable smarter labor deployment by taking on repetitive, backbreaking and higher risk tasks and introducing logistical efficiency. Look for robots to expand exponentially over the next decade to where every industry will utilize them in some capacity.

8. Drones are experiencing growing pains, but their uses are exploding. Is there a drone in your company's future?

In a year of setbacks for the drone movement, airports in New Jersey and England were forced to shut down because of dangerous near-misses with drones. But these setbacks should not deter exploration of the many potential uses of unmanned aerial devices. Last year, a New Zealand couple became the first to have a pizza delivered by drone. These days drones are finding their way into the insurance, construction, real estate, news, wedding, sports and other businesses at a rapid clip. The commercial drone industry already touches almost every sector of the economy, 38 types of businesses have already been approved for drone

operations, and the industry is poised to be one of the fastest-growing sectors in the U.S. From inspecting infrastructure, to providing farmers with aerial views of their crops, to enabling rescues of swimmers in heavy surf, to allowing law enforcement agencies greater access to monitor criminal behavior, it's no wonder businesses — small and large are clamoring to use this technology.

9. With Virtual Reality, the possibilities are virtually limitless.

Home improvement pioneer Lowe's created Holoroom, where customers plug in the dimensions of a room and can then see a VR mockup of their renovation plans, transfer design to Google Cardboard and take the VR mockup home. Cirque du Soleil's traveling Kurious exhibit puts VR users in the center of the action via a 360-degree camera in the center of the performance. North Face brings the Yosemite wilderness to retail stores. Thomas Cook, Europe's biggest tour operator, uses VR headsets to show customers what certain vacations would be like.

Virtual reality — computer technology that uses special headsets or multi-projected environments, sometimes in combination with physical environments or props, to generate realistic images, sounds and other sensations — is poised to take off, and not just in the consumer space. Increasingly, firms are using VR to lower the cost of training.

As you review these nine trends below ask yourself: how might you and your business unit apply them to your challenges? What are applications that you find unexpected and exciting? And: how long will it be before your competitors move ahead of you if you don't act?

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About the Author

Robert B. Tucker is a renowned global futurist and innovation keynote speaker with a client list that includes over 200 of the Fortune 500 companies. President and founder of **Innovation Resource Consulting Group**, Tucker is an internationally recognized pioneer in the field of innovation, Tucker's highly interactive presentations lead audiences on a guided tour inside the world's most creative companies. Through stories and examples, Tucker shows leaders how to tap into the mindset, skillset and toolset to embrace change, discover opportunity and avoid obsolescence. Known for his in-depth customization, Tucker provides today's leaders with practical strategies, cutting edge insights, and inspiration to take action once back at the office.

A former adjunct professor at UCLA, Tucker's pioneering research in identifying the critical attributes of innovators became the acclaimed book *Winning the Innovation Game*.

Co-ordinates

Web:

www.innovationresource.com

Email:

contact@innovationresource.com

Facebook:

facebook.com/RobertTuckerInnovationResource/



Don't worry if you don't know the meaning of **Dark Pools of Liquidity**

These are electronic "crossing networks" that provide liquidity that is not displayed on order books. They offer institutional investors and larger hedge funds many of the same benefits associated with making trades on the stock exchanges' public limit order books - without tipping their hands to others, meaning publicly quoted prices aren't affected. Dark pools range from completely opaque to semi-transparent and their order flow can range from transient to stationary.

Opaqueness impacts fairness, as the more transparent the liquidity pool, the easier it is to be manipulated. More-transparent crossing networks (such as Liquidnet Inc., Pipeline, or the SIGMA X unit of Goldman Sachs) solve this problem by not letting brokers or more-active traders onto the platform and by policing their community and evicting poachers.

Other crossing engines with some transparency, such as Pipeline or Posit, give away such limited information that is difficult to use. These "pools" are growing rapidly, both in number and in volume of trades and account for around 12% of all US stock trades.

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Soren Kaplan

Manufacturing isn't dead, it's just transforming before our eyes



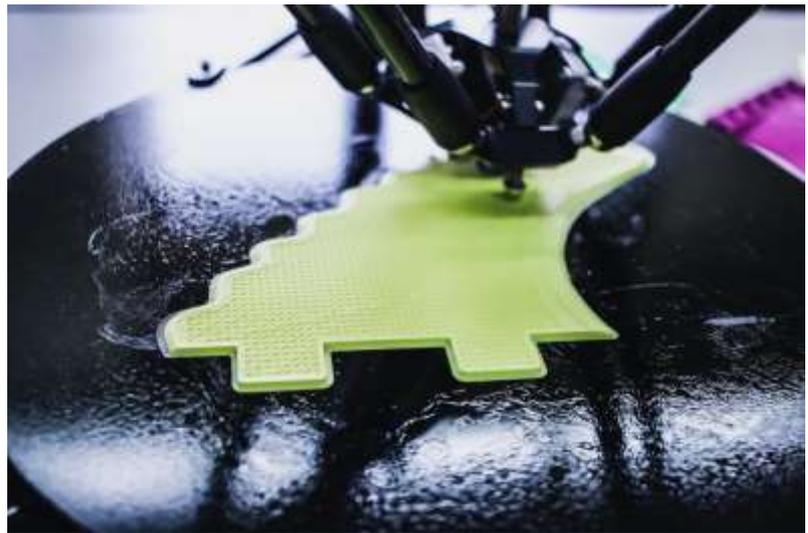
Large scale 3D printing farms will create the next industrial revolution

When it comes to business and the economy, there's constant buzz about:

Apple, Amazon, Google, and Facebook.

There's also been lots of attention lately on middle America and the **loss of manufacturing jobs**. At times these topics seem at odds – the new high-tech guard disrupting the old, jobs shifting from blue to white collar, outsourcing overseas versus keeping things at home, and the list goes on.

These hot debates have been obscuring a major phenomenon in the Rust Belt. Manufacturing, the making of physical things, is roaring into the 21st century with its own approach to digitization and platforms. 3D printing promises to do for industry what the internet has done to the information world. No longer relegated to trinkets or prototyping, 3D printing is now going into full-scale mass production. Just take a look at what some of the leaders are doing like **3D Systems**, **Stratasys**, **Arcam**, and **HP**.



That's my takeaway from a new book, *The Pan-Industrial Revolution: How New Manufacturing Titans Will Transform the World*. It's written by Richard D'Aveni, a professor of strategy at Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business.

The book explains why 3D printing, or more generally additive manufacturing, will do more than just alter the factory floor. It also promises to reshape competition.

3D printers are amazingly flexible: they can make a product one week, and then a very different product the next week, with minimal changeover costs. The same factory can therefore make parts and products for a wide range of industries.

That's a game-changer: companies will finally achieve operational synergies across multiple divisions. After all, if you have a factory devoted to only one industry, and demand drops, you're stuck. But if you've diversified into multiple divisions, you can switch over the factory's capacity to the industry with stronger sales, and keep the factory running at a high level.

D'Aveni predicts the emergence of many such "pan-industrial" companies, gradually squeezing out focused manufacturers. They'll have an edge not just in factory utilization, but also in reducing supply chain, distribution, and even product development costs. Just imaging a factory, not with robotics and assembly lines, but with rows of 3D printers cranking out whatever you want when you want it.

Where do traditional small manufacturers fit into this? D'Aveni offers a mixed prognosis. The bad news is that the only way to compete directly with a pan-industrial is to get big yourself, so you can achieve the economies of scale and scope that come from additive manufacturing. Also, with 3D printing, companies can produce complex, integrated designs with fewer parts to be assembled. So, a lot of small, focused suppliers may be challenged to stay afloat since everything needed for whatever you're manufacturing comes directly out of the printer.

The good news is that the bigger players will likely invite outside companies to join their software platforms. Like the software giants, these pan-industrials will create digital marketplaces turbocharged by network effects.

By joining a pan-industrial platform, a small manufacturing company will get access to customers and all sorts of ancillary services, similar to what they get from Apple or Amazon's platforms.

This is all about the future, as there aren't any full-fledged pan-industrials yet. D'Aveni points to Jabil, Siemens, and some other industrial leaders as candidates. The software giants like Google, Adobe, Autodesk, Apple, and Amazon might even use their digital prowess to get in on the action.

These "pan-industrials" will likely emerge in the next few years. In the meantime, D'Aveni urges companies big and small to do these three things:

1. Raise the alert and start learning about the current state of additive manufacturing: is it now cost-competitive with your current production techniques?

2. Try out some additive equipment. You'll understand not just the production advantages but also how you can digitize areas you never could before, including product innovation.
3. Expand your horizon beyond your immediate industry. Additive is going to dissolve industry boundaries, so a competitor (or friendly platform operator) could emerge out of nowhere.

If D'Aveni is right, ten years from now, we may have the same excitement and fear with pan-industrials that we now have with the software giants. And even if he's only half right, companies need to start preparing for the additive revolution — or get left behind.

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About the Author

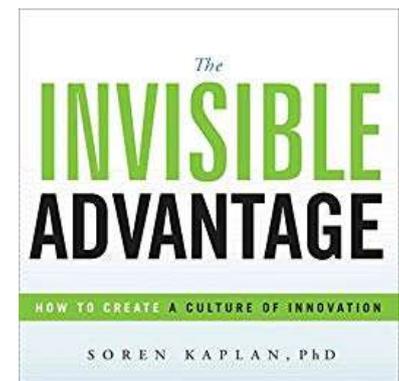
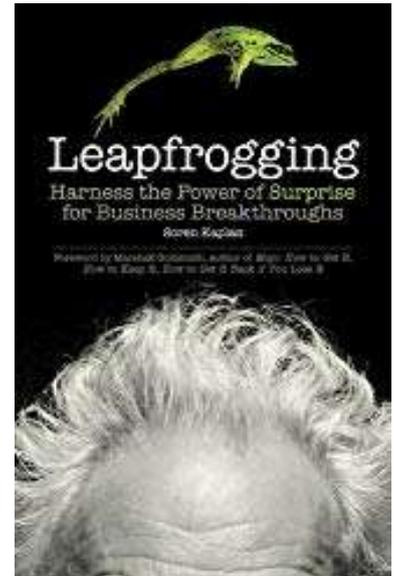
Soren Kaplan is the author of two bestselling and award-winning books, *Leapfrogging* and *The Invisible Advantage*. He is a former corporate executive, an affiliated professor at USC's Center for Effective Organizations, and founder of **InnovationPoint** and **upBOARD**.

Co-ordinates

Web: www.upboard.io

Twitter: twitter.com/sorenkaplan

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/sorenkaplan



Barry Urquhart

'No Ifs..., Buts or Maybes



With apologies to Rudyard Kipling...

*When all around you are losing theirs,
keep your head.*

Royal Commission notwithstanding, the relevance and currency of those words extend beyond Australian bankers, insurance agents, financial planners and mortgage brokers.

Every person, brand, company, product, service, application and concept is being subjected to scrutiny, audit and review. Transparency and accountability lead the agenda of most aspects of business.

Personal, corporate, individual and collective worth are being questioned, and rightly so. It should have been for ever thus. Many customers, it seems, have been short-changed.

RESPONSIBLE

At times like these it is important to accept responsibility. Resist taking the blame in isolation, particularly when all seem to doubt you. Whether it's internal or external to a company, it is important that leadership is apparent, consistent, articulated, supported, applauded, endorsed and celebrated.

That attribute appears to be in short-supply at present. "Sitting on the fence" and "spinning wheels" do not reflect leadership. "Follow me" is a style which is back in vogue and is re-emerging.

The "road ahead" will have many twists, turns and peaks to conquer. Milestones should be checked off, quantified and maintained.

Allowances will need to be made for "doubting Thomas's", of which there will be many. Self-belief will be, is, and always has been a virtue. Self-monitoring provides reassurance.

The immediate challenges for nations, regions, sectors and professions will be formidable. Remedial actions will be draining. Therefore, it is imperative that one overcomes tiredness. Ultimate success and progress will have their own rewards.

VIRTUES

At no time should lies be contemplated, or tolerated.

It is unconscionable, to charge for services which have not been sought, have been paid for but never utilised. Issuing or maintaining life insurance policies for the dead is simply beyond this world.

Be true to yourself. To do otherwise is to cheat yourself. The evidence during, and the consequences since the conduct, conclusion and release of the report from the Australian Banking Royal Commission is sufficient to identify the extent, toxic nature and adverse manifestations of lies, many of which were ingrained in corporate cultures.

Those will not die, and the perpetrators will have to live with them and themselves.

There are no shades of grey in lies. It's a matter of black and white.

A COOL HEAD

In moments of anxiety, panic and concern a "cool head" is a magnet that facilitates cohesion, integration and focus. For some two decades home builders, property developers and real estate agents were too involved in reaping the fruits and benefits of continuing "boom" times.

Returns from an investment in taking the time to contemplate and to ponder the question, "what if"? were not recognised, nor respected. The consequences are typically immediate, sustainable and profound.

“Buts” and “Maybes” need to be considered in context. They are seldom barriers or impediments. Rather, they demand justification, and that is reasonable and ultimately reassuring. There are lessons aplenty awaiting those in the broader retail sector.

Imagine the scope possible for the Brexit negotiations between Britain and the European Union, and within Westminster. Accountability and justification apply to all.

Funding, construction and the administration of a wall on the border between the United States of America and Mexico may well be another issue.

In that instance key questions relate to the aim itself. Some things are not negotiable, as evidenced in the attitudes of the US President and the Democrats in Congress. What is the aim? Raw political power. The proposed wall is simply a means to that aim.

GOOD TIMES AHEAD

With the effluxion of time, good times will return.

In those periods, as now, it is important to not look or present “too good”. Talking too much will have little or no audience.

Don't stop dreaming. However, dreams and their content must never become the aim.

And yes, think. Share those thoughts. Develop, refine, reinforce and extend them. But avoid the temptation to make them the final objective.

Innovate, create and simplify. Each is an essential attribute of disruption.

Don't leave it to others to ask, “IF?”

RECALIBRATE

Volatility, toxicity and dysfunction are each components of the prevailing marketplace and, seemingly, the cultures of many entities throughout the world, across Australia, within communities and among peers,

clients and associates.

At a time when all around you are losing their heads, a measure of stability, consistency and integrity is greatly valued.

A measure of balance will enable the “ship” to be steadied, a new course to be set and broad horizons challenged and conquered.

IF (only). Thank you, Rudyard Kipling.

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About the Author:

Barry Urquhart, Managing Director, Marketing Focus, Perth, is an inspiring speaker, author of Australia's top two selling books on customer service and an international consultant on dynamic innovation and creativity. Barry is author of six books, including the two largest selling publications on service excellence in Australasia. He is a regular commentator of consumer issues on ABC radio, is featured on a series of interview topics on “Today Tonight” and contributes articles to 47 magazines throughout the world. He is one of Australia's most active keynote speakers and is an internationally recognised authority on quality customer service, consumer behaviour and creative visual merchandising. Marketing Focus is a Perth based market research and strategic planning practice. The firm and Barry consult to multinational, national and local entities in the private sector and the public sector. He is a former lecturer in Marketing and Management at the Curtin University of Technology and has degrees in marketing, political science and sociology.

Co-ordinates

Mail: 26 Central Road, Kalamunda, Western Australia 6076

Tel - Office: 006 1089 257 1777

Tel - Mobile: 006 1041 983 5555

E-mail:

Urquhart@marketingfocus.net.au

Website: www.marketingfocus.net.au

Don't worry if you don't know what “**Loan-to-Own**” means

Loan-to-Own (or Distressed-Debt Strategy/Rescue Financing)

is a strategy used by private equity and other investors to purchase companies as an alternative to conventional asset, stock or merger transactions.

In applying these strategies, creditors use their debt positions to take ownership of troubled companies which agree with their lenders and shareholders to dramatically strengthen their balance sheet by swapping the majority of their debt for equity. It provides an opportunity for investors to take control of a company without buying it outright, providing capital to a business that needs money to continue operating. The strategy can also be applied by Hedge Funds and Private Equity investors to acquire debt, and sometimes certain amounts of equity or management control, such as voting power or board seats, from a lender of a distressed company.

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August J. Aquila

Advice from other managing partners – Leadership

While everyone learns by doing, we can certainly learn from others, especially those who have faced the same problem we are now facing. If you are a new leader or a seasoned one, here is some advice for you. Make 2019 the year in which you really excel.

Do it sooner than later. This is perhaps the most often heard bit of advice that I hear from firm partners. Too often we wait too long to address an issue. We know what the solution needs to be, but we are either afraid to decide or are hopeful that the problem will resolve itself.

Spending too much time with partners that don't want to change. Leaders often fall into the trap of trying to convince the naysayers in the firm and spend all their energy with them. They would be better off working with those partners that are in line with the firm's vision.

Sticking with a failed plan or person. It is critical to get the right people in the right seats at the firm. A service-line leader who is not producing or hasn't produced needs to be replaced. A growth strategy that is not working needs to be changed or dropped.

Not getting your other partners involved. Any strategy needs the endorsement of key partners in the firm. You can't go off to the mountain like Moses and bring the plan back. This becomes your plan and not their plan.

Not having specific goals for partners. Even partners won't know what to do if you don't clearly set measurable goals that are tied to compensation rewards.

Communicate with complete clarity. Whenever you communicate with the firm, make sure that the message you send is understandable. What do you want the recipient of the message to know, do or take away?

Don't have any hidden agendas. It's important to be transparent and truthful. If your partners don't trust you no one else in the firm will.

Play the long game. While current results are important don't forget to look at the future – not only for challenges but also for opportunities.

Remember, you are not the only person facing these issues. They go with the territory. The issues are not the key concern, it's how you react to them.

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About the Author

August Aquila is the founder and CEO of AQUILA Global Advisors, LLC and is a key thought leader for professional service firms (PSFs). He has worked with various types of PSFs in the US, Canada, India and England.

August was a partner in a Top50 US CPA firm and a senior executive with American Express Tax & Business Services, Inc., For 30 years he has advised PSFs in the areas of succession planning, mergers and acquisitions, compensation plan designs and partnership issues.

His articles have appeared in MP (Managing Partner), Journal of Accountancy, CA Magazine, Accounting Today, Of Counsel and other major publications.

Recent books include How to Become the Firm of Choice, What Makes a Great Partnership, Client at the Core: Marketing and Managing Today's Professional Services Firm; Performance Is Everything – The Why, What and How of Designing Compensation Plans; Compensation as a Strategic Asset: The New Paradigm; What Successful Managing Partner Do and Engaging Partners in the Firm's Future. August holds an MBA from DePaul University (Chicago) and a PhD from Indiana University (Bloomington).

Co-ordinates

August J. Aquila, PhD
Aquila Global Advisors, LLC
4732 Chantrey Place
Minnetonka, MN 55345
Email: aaquila@aquilaadvisors.com
Web: www.aquilaadvisors.com





Tim Stroh

How to build effective strategy even in constant change

Strategy is More Important than Ever: Many have pronounced “Strategy is dead.” Citing the speed with which new technologies are emerging and the perpetual changes to market conditions, consultants and executives alike are claiming that it is no longer possible to craft a meaningful long-term strategy.

“Strategy” must be adaptable and ever-evolving. The word has become a euphemism for short-term plans intended to guide organizations their leaders hope are agile. In reality, the rapidly changing, volatile, uncertain, ambiguous, and complex nature of modern markets has made strategy both more important than ever and, in some ways, easier.

To meaningfully discuss strategy, it is imperative to clarify what the word means and what we are talking about. Regrettably, the word “strategy” is now most commonly used to describe any plan intended to produce an important outcome. Plans are called strategies irrespective of if they were created considering any issues beyond a basic sequence of execution. This common use of the word is in no small part the reason for the perceived futility of long-term strategy. Plans must change to address unexpected conditions, competitive activity, and new technologies. Plans regularly fail. If every plan is a strategy, however, and the word is just a synonym for “plan,” then the concept has no practical value or use. But this is not the case.

What Makes a Winning Strategy?

A strategy is not a plan. A strategy is a statement of intent with very specific properties. To qualify as a strategy, the statement must describe a focus for activity and an implicit or explicit set of conditions for an end state that, when successfully executed, guarantee the organization will achieve its desired

goals. Good strategies ensure that the goal will be achieved irrespective of any reasonably foreseeable competitive activity or probable change to an arena activity. A well-crafted strategy, successfully executed, will guarantee a desired outcome irrespective of anything but a black swan event completely outside the scope of even robust scenario planning.

In addition, when expressed, all good strategies manifest several key characteristics. They are:

- easily understood and explained
- provide sufficient detail regarding a key purpose to provide clear prioritization and guidance but are not so detailed as to restrict how teams and leaders with distributed authority choose to execute
- are a useful tool in decision making and resource allocation in all specific areas of activity conducted by an organization
- make self-evident or intuitive what a stakeholder should not do as well as what they should do
- allow for arena specific strategies to be defined that are universally aligned with the overall higher level or organizational strategy

Often when I put forward this definition, people balk at the notion that an outcome can be “guaranteed”. They then become positively disparaging when they see “irrespective of competitive activity...or changes to a market.” But great strategies, and there are many examples throughout both military and business history, have always satisfied this definition. While black swan events and poor execution can always lead to failure, the goal of anyone crafting a strategy, at any level, should be the simplest expression of a method paired with an achievable end state or directed purpose that will guarantee success.

Examples of Winning Strategies

Let’s look at some examples, one from geopolitical history and several commercial examples. First, the Allied

strategy of WWII. This was simple and clear; “Self-preservation. Starve the enemies war machine.” This strategy meets all of the criteria of our definition. Despite setbacks, problems with execution, and fierce competitive activity, by the end of the war, the average Allied soldier had 2 tons of supply accessible to them or on the way in the supply chain. The average Axis soldier had less than 2 kilos. Victory for the Allies had been made inevitable long before hostilities ended. It’s just that neither side realized. Despite changing conditions during the war, this strategy did not change while arena specific plans changed or were adapted regularly.

Cisco’s early acquisition strategy is another good example. “Acquire companies that own or are developing the key technologies required for each step or component in the burgeoning IT network market.” This was further bounded by a rule to ensure a focus on acquiring leading and new technologies, “acquire companies with no more than 75 employees, 75% of whom are engineers”. Computer networks were and are mission-critical systems for most businesses. If any component failed, people couldn’t communicate, and information stopped flowing. By buying the companies that owned and produced the best new technologies for each component in a network, Cisco could ensure its products were included in nearly every project implemented as well as those that would be implemented in the foreseeable future. By controlling the development of future generations of key technology products as well as providing leading components now, it was able to substantially influence or control the standards established for all network products sold. This strategy, effectively executed, guaranteed Cisco would achieve its objectives. It produced an end state for the ecosystem in which Cisco products were included in nearly every solution sold and its influence over specifying technical standards would ensure it could maintain that lead.

Proctor & Gamble's long-time strategy to "constantly improve on market-leading products that make lives better and sell them using great brands" continues to be highly effective. By focussing on making already market-leading products better, Proctor & Gamble ensures that its brands are always associated with the value, quality, and the certainty of being both a safe purchase and the best available solution for a need. Effectively executed, this strategy prioritizes resources on just two things and these two things produce the ultimate advantage within a fast moving consumer goods market.

In all three cases, rapidly changing technology or market conditions may require arena specific plans to change. But a constant prioritization of resources to achieve the strategy guaranteed or at least maximised the probability of successfully achieving the desired outcomes.

Since the beginning of recorded history technologies, conditions, and methods have changed. In relative terms, sometimes at often unprecedented rates. Competent leaders have nonetheless crafted sound strategies that reduced uncertainty, empowered rapid and distributed decision making, enabled effective prioritization of resources, and ultimately that were fundamental to their success. For the best of these leaders, tactical plans changed frequently, but their strategy remained constant over extended periods of time. The same is true today. An effectively crafted strategy does not need to change and yet will dramatically reduce risk while facilitating better, faster, and easier decision making throughout an organization.

For more details on useful tools and methods, a **better** understanding of **consumer decision making**, innovation success, how to **remove bias from internal decision processes**, craft **more effective** and safer **incentive programs** and **strategies**, or for more details on the science of Motivational Drive Theory, (1) read **A Deeper Truth: The new science of innovation, human choice, and societal scale behavior** (2) sign up and read other instalments of Tim Stroh's Value In 60 Seconds or Under 3 Minutes email and blog, or (3) if you would like assistance make contact to arrange a discussion, workshops, keynote presentation, or services engagement via LinkedIn (<http://linkedin.com/in/timstroh>) or tim@strohinternational.com.

For optimal results, find and recruit ex U.S., U.K., or Australian military personnel who are well versed in the approaches and tools used by the military services to further organizational learning, innovation, and command structures that are accompanied by rapid action cycles.

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About the Author:

Tim Stroh is a successful innovator, author and speaker. He has taken software-as-a-service (SaaS) start-ups from idea through to multimillion-dollar trade sale, lead the R&D efforts of market-leading consumer product manufacturers, and is the award-winning author of **A Deeper Truth: The new science of innovation, human choice and societal scale behaviour**. Tenaciously curious, he is known for his engaging speaking, his ability to bring together and make relevant radically diverse topics, and as a catalyst for objectivity.

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Co-ordinates

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www.linkedin.com/in/timstroh

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Finish with Humour





Bizezia Limited Incorporated in England and Wales, Company Number 04017546.
Kingfisher House, Hurstwood Grange, Hurstwood Lane, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7QX, UK
Tel: 07710 356825

Email: info@bizezia.com **Web:** onesmartplace.com

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