Better Business Focus

Expert inspiration for a Better Business

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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.

This month's contents

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Paul Sloane

Six reasons why you should post articles on LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the primary social media platform for business professionals. Your profile is important but so is your activity. There are several benefits in posting articles on LinkedIn (LI).

1. It demonstrates your expertise.
An article on a topic related to your skills and experience shows that you have level of expert knowledge on the subject. It raises your standing and authority.

2. It leads to more connections.
You will find that you get more link requests if you post articles. An extended network of LI connections increases your chance of business or employment opportunities. You should reply to comments on your article and ask to link with anyone who comments.

3. It moves you up on LinkedIn searches.
The algorithm that LI uses is secret and is changed from time to time. Keywords in your profile are obviously important. It is believed that activity in terms of posts and comments move you up the algorithm rankings so that you are more likely to be found by important contacts such as recruiters.

4. It increases your reach.
Every time you post an article your connections are notified (unless you turn this off). They can then share the article with their networks. Your reach and the awareness of what you have to offer is significantly increased. You can also post your article in many LI groups.

5. Posts can be repurposed for other sites.
Your posts can be held on your website as a series of blogs. They can he promoted on Twitter, Facebook and other sites. They can be repurposed – maybe with a different emphasis and headline – for industry specific websites and journals.

6. You feel better!
Publishing an article gives you a quiet sense of achievement and we all need that from time to time!

What can you write about? Lists are always appealing. Review a book. Ask a question then answer it. Here are some suggestions. Say you are an expert photographer you could pen these titles:

A. The Six Most Common Mistakes that Amateur Photographers Make

B. Five Easy Ways to Improve your Photos

C. Lessons we can Learn from the Three Greatest Photographers of the Last Century

D. Should you take photos with your mobile phone or with a quality camera?

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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.

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John Bancroft

Does marketing stop when a sales lead is generated?

Every C-level exec, business unit lead or sales and marketing director appreciate the importance of modern B2B marketing, which has greater involvement in the overall B2B sales cycle. However, a successful strategy is defined by several key factors, and this needs even more involvement from marketing.

Most companies are now happy to accept that seven touchpoints aren't sufficient on the road to digital success. But is it also necessary to extend the length of marketing's involvement, in addition to the number of pit stops along the way? Let's find out why.

The close connection between marketing, lead generation, and lead validation

Building brand awareness and taking a customer through the stages of Awareness, Consideration, and Decision requires an investment of time and money. Losing the prospective sale and subsequent client relationship is, therefore, not an option you can consider.

A successful B2B marketing campaign that generates a genuine lead will have set a great first impression of the business. However, Harvard researchers found that leads are 60x more likely to qualify the lead when they are contacted within the hour compared to after 24 hours. This study alone underlines the need for responsiveness to ensure that the buying-cycle moves in the right direction.

Yet, without ongoing marketing involvement, hot leads can quickly turn cold and result in prospective clients choosing your competitors. Marketing casting an eye over ongoing communications, helping with presentations, supporting collateral and supporting proposal and bids will deliver far greater results. Studies show that:

- Customers want a good experience and over 80% will happily pay more for it.
- Up to 80% of sales require 5 or more post-meeting follow-up contacts.
- New companies grow 24% faster when marketing and sales are aligned.
- Marketing to existing customers is 5x cheaper than new ones.
- Increasing customer retention by 5% can boost profits by up to 75%.

Marketing and sales are so closely linked that the two teams need to be closely aligned to ensure that a lead's enthusiasm towards the brand and its products are maintained beyond the lead generation phase and into the converted sale – and, ideally, future repeat sales.

How can B2B businesses promote post-lead generation marketing?

Continued marketing beyond the point of lead generation is important to provide branded, on message, content at every stage of the buyer journey. After all, a huge 95% will choose a company that achieves this goal.

Companies must invest heavily in building good links between marketing and sales teams to ensure a continuous and solid representation of the brand. When sales teams are presented with the relevant information about a lead, the likelihood of a quick conversion is greatly increased. When thinking about ongoing engagement with a prospect well after the lead generation stage, it is important to:

- Build a good level of consistency that continues the brand imagery, tone, and style.
- Include case studies, brochures, white papers, to support proposals and bids.
- Ensure that regular contact is made to prevent leads from going cold.
- Implement presentations and proposals to show B2B leads what you offer.
- Ensure that the content leads on from the marketing strategy rather than repeat it.

Marketing has perhaps more to do than ever before, but in order to achieve greater results ensuring marketing is involved in proposals and messaging around major bids is critical to ensure success.

If your business needs help devising the winning b2b sales lead generation strategy, contact the Incognate team for a comprehensive, convenient, and cost-effective solution.

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About the Author
John's talent for effective selling began at the age of 15 selling ice-creams from a cart! Since then his selling career has gone from strength to strength. Following a successful career in retail he launched into sales as a Financial Advisor with Abbey Life. John became a partner in a computer solutions company and built a new division in the Speech Recognition Market, which became an accredited IBM supplier.

Following a brief appointment with IMRglobal, a leading IT solutions provider, he assisted in the development of the new business function, and then joined Sapiens, an international IT Tools vendor. Whilst there he effected their transition from a tools vendor to solution provider and created a new business sales team, in addition to developing new business processes and a new infrastructure. John is Executive Vice President establishing the sales & marketing operation for Performative plc. Having left there he has set up his own business called Incognate that helps companies to grow more business revenue.

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Guy Arnold

How to run a small business well and get a good night's sleep

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If you're like me, you probably went into business because you were passionate about what you do: maybe your run your own business because you felt that your passion and ability would enable you to successfully get and keep customers and build a profitable business.

But, somehow, when you get going, after the initial excitement and rush, do you perhaps start to feel a bit bogged down?

- Is it harder to get noticed by customers than you thought?
- Is it harder to get customers to buy from you without having to offer a discount or a special offer?
- Is it harder to find good people and to get them motivated and organised so that your customers get a consistent experience whether you're there or not?

In a nutshell, **is it harder than you thought it would be in general, and do you feel more stressed than you thought you might do when you initially started**?

Well, of course, I expect the answer to at least some of these questions is: yes, that's exactly right!

And the good news is that **this is completely normal**, but the bad news is that over 55% of independent businesses fail within 4 years of being founded.

On top of this, leaders and managers of independent businesses suffer the highest levels of stress of any leaders and managers in the business world.

Surely this level of stress and hassle wasn't what you signed up to when you got going?

But I'm here to tell you that there are simple answers to this problem and life doesn't have to be as stressful as perhaps it might be at the moment.

There are simple, common-sense systems that you can put into place to help you get more from every day and get a better night's sleep each night.

Sound too good to be true?

Well, if what we teach at 'Slow Selling' wasn't based on the principles of universal, timeless, self-evident, common-sense, then I'd agree with you: **be very cautious when someone tells you they can fix your problems: if something seems too good to be true, it probably is!**

There are plenty of people around you who are trying to sell you something and who want to make life as complicated as possible so that you buy their solution.

Do any internet search on standard business issues and you will find millions upon millions of marketing, sales and motivation 'Solutions' that you could put in place and that will definitely not be cheap!

… and when you do put those Solutions in place, it's a bit like whack-a-mole: other problems just seem to pop out when you're looking in the other direction!

The good news is that common-sense applies to everything you do in business just in the same way as everything you do in life: the problem is that common-sense solutions aren't terribly profitable for all the consultants and service sellers out there who want to try and sell you a portfolio of expensive quick fixes.

So, the short and blunt message from this blog is simple: our promise that all your problems can get fixed if you slow down and apply simple, common-sense solutions one by one.

Indeed, this is the whole reason why I started my consultancy business almost 20 years ago now: I had been in a senior position in the business and had a list of problems that needed fixing and was so appalled at the short-term, quick fix, and awfully expensive solutions that were being offered to me.

So, instead I started to study this whole area of business effectiveness and why some businesses succeed massively over the long-term while others flail about in confusion and the people who run them end up continually chasing their tails.

We have worked for almost 20 years with all sorts of businesses, using the same simple common-sense solutions, and have seen time and time again the mist falling away from the owners' eyes and the ability and confidence to take solid effective action to solve their problems appear almost overnight. And what is more, to last over the long term.

Because no matter what the problem, if you have a set of systems, based on timeless principles of common sense, they will apply to every situation you come across … no matter how complex, urgent or grave.

So, for now, please just make sure that you take the time to sign up to our weekly blog and podcast using the links on our website, share this blog with people you care about – who may be struggling and under pressure, and keep remembering…

… in order to run a small business properly and get a good night's sleep, all you need to do is slow down and follow simple common-sense systems …

.. which we provide to you one by one each week in the blog and podcast mentioned above.

To listen to the Podcast on this subject, please click below:

LISTEN TO THE PODCAST

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About the Author:
Guy Arnold is a Self-employed business adviser and coach, delivering business support across the UK: specialising in:

• Building sales via consistent delivery of outstanding customer experiences.
• Personal and Organisational effectiveness.
• Empowering and motivating teams he is a flexible, independent, constructive, and diligent person, known for his focused and positive approach to issues, and thrives by helping others get the best out of themselves.

Guy's two main business interests:

1. His own training and consultancy Company, specialising in organisational and personal effectiveness, leadership, customer service, sales and time management: either working independently, or in conjunction with Franklin Covey Europe.

2. Authoring & publishing material on building sales through service in the customer empowered social media world: following four years research into one question: '*If GREAT customer service is blindingly obvious common sense, why isn't it common practice?*'

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Serenity in Leadership

Top D&I experts reveal aspirations as we look to a future post pandemic

As the UK hopes to be coming out of the pandemic, we ask some of the most experienced D&I experts what the single most important business lesson they learnt from the pandemic was and what their top aspirations are for the next 12 months.

Thom Dennis, CEO of Serenity in Leadership:

Lesson: WE MUST REFLECT ABOUT WHAT HAS CHANGED.
"However tough you are, the constraints of the pandemic will have affected your psyche, albeit in different ways for different people. This deserves some clear reflection time to identify what's changed and whether you want to retain the new habits and mindsets, or work on ways to move on from them. Coaching will be vital for this."

Aspiration: LEADERS WILL ENGAGE POSITIVELY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY.
"Leaders may be super-busy individuals but their decisions impact so many people and without an actively supportive D&I focus, they may actually be damaging their own people, the company's reputation and the bottom line."

Suzie Lewis, Founder and MD of Transform for Value:

Lesson: THE NEED FOR INCLUSION IS GREATER NOW THAN EVER BEFORE.

"People are fundamentally wired for human connection as the pandemic highlighted, so the need for deliberate inclusion is greater now than ever before. There is real learning here about the need to understand human systems and how important an inclusive employee experience is for competitive advantage moving forward. The need to create psychological safety in a hybrid workplace is key to the employee experience, as we move into a phase where new working models and leadership paradigms need to be defined and operationalised."

Aspiration: A REAL UNDERSTANDING OF HOW POWERFUL DIVERSITY IS FOR THE BOTTOM LINE"
"It can't be a tick box exercise, or just "HR's job". It is a real change journey. I would love to see more understanding of our own mental models and biases, and role modelling of inclusive behaviours and language from leaders at all levels of the organisation. I would like to see people using diversity as a positive lever for change and actively calling out inappropriate language and behaviour to create a norm that becomes part of the working culture."

D+I facilitator, speaker and coach, Gamal Turawa:

Lesson: A SUPPORTIVE NETWORK IS VITAL.

"The single most important business lesson we have learnt from the pandemic is the power of connecting across multiple platforms and having a supportive network."

Aspiration: THAT WE HAVE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS.
"To ensure that organisations can recognise the relevance of creating space for courageous conversations that promote the wellbeing and value of what their staff are feeling and experiencing in the workplace."

Jane Hatton, CEO of Evenbreak, helping inclusive employers attract and retain talented disabled candidates:

Lesson: IF WE UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE, WE CAN CHANGE.
"We saw more than ever that inequality is rife and built into our systems and employment practices, but it isn't inevitable, and can change if enough people can see the importance of doing so."

Aspiration: THAT ANY SILVER LININGS FROM THE PANDEMIC ARE EMBEDDED INTO NEW AND BETTER WAYS OF WORKING.
"The model that all employees need to work full-time, 9.00 to 5.00 Monday to Friday in a specific location has not been fit for purpose for a very long time. Work can be done in a variety of

different ways, flexibly in terms of the number of hours, and when and where they are worked, to meet the needs of the employer and the employee."

Raggi Kotak, Barrister at law and Racial Justice Facilitator:
Lesson: VALUE YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM.
"Nurture your eco-system i.e. all that supports you including relationships, resilience and resources. You never know when you will be really challenged, and when you will need to lean into the stability you have created."

Aspiration: TO SHIFT THE DYNAMICS OF RACISM THAT PLAY OUT AMONGST US.
"Many of us have already taken steps forward. We need to continue to support that journey in a non-judgmental way, knowing that we can all become more aware of our impact to racialised communities and create spaces that are welcoming of diversity in all its forms."

Joanne Lockwood, a Diversity & Inclusion & Belonging Specialist who also promotes Transgender Awareness to organisations:
Lesson: NO EXCUSE FOR LACK OF ACTION.
"Organisations can adapt quickly; processes and thinking can change rapidly – there is no longer any excuse for lack of action. Employee wellbeing has come to the forefront, mental health and being much more person-centric has been necessary in this topsy turvy year of change. Organisations have also learnt that flexible working is more than dress-down Friday, it is about engaging with colleagues and team members in a way that works for them."

Aspiration: TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF LISTENING AND ACTION.
"I would like to see organisations moving from this performative phase, recruiting heads of DEI and putting out bland statements.

Organisations need to look at inequities brought in through the lockdown in terms of gender and ethnicity where certain groups have been impacted in a more significant way than others. This next 12 months will be a truth telling for many organisations if they don't consider their people and listen to their needs at this time."

Executive coach and co-founder of Lanellsohn, Edward Nelson:
Lesson: TRUST IS EVERYTHING.
"Fundamentally we learnt that you can trust your employees if you give them a bit of space."

Aspiration: FAR MORE OPEN DIALOGUE ABOUT WHAT DE&I MEANS.
"I think there are a lot of solutions being offered, when we are still grappling to understand the problems and power dynamics, let alone find the solutions."

Leadership and Organisational Development specialist, James Peal:
Lesson: MEDIA POWER COLOURS THE WAY WE THINK.
"The lesson I have learnt is the power of media and platforms and how that colours our world, both positively and negatively…Also how important fresh air and physical activity is."

Aspiration: TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERS.
"I would like to create an environment for every leader to be profoundly touched & transformed so they can be a sustaining DE&I beacon and for their organisation."

Linda Crockett MSW, RSW, SEP, CCPA from The Canadian Institute of Workplace Bullying Resources:
Lesson: ABUSERS FIND NEW

WAYS EVEN IN A PANDEMIC.
"Regardless of a pandemic and many working from home, someone who wishes to harass, discriminate, or abuse others can continue. The abusive employees have simply found new ways to do this which means the negative impact is spreading into employees' home and the cases are becoming more and more complex."

Aspiration: BETTER TRAINING FOR FIRST CONTACT PROFESSIONALS.
"HR, Leaders, Investigators, Safety, Mediators need to be trained on research-based, best practises re: trauma-informed processes to address complex cases of psychological harassment, or psychological violence. Too many unintentional errors are being made, resulting in more harm."

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About Serenity in Leadership
Serenity in Leadership has been transforming organisational cultures for the last 26 years.

Thom Dennis is founder and CEO of Serenity in Leadership. He is a facilitator, speaker, consultant, change agent and educator. For the last 29 years, he has led companies dedicated to coaching executives and teams through personal and organisational change, defining strategy, working through M&As and improving communication.

With Serenity in Leadership, Thom is focusing his depth and breadth of experience to help organisations move into the 20s and all the changes that are developing. He is intent on resolving issues of inclusion to help people whoever they are, whatever background they have come from, shine and thrive, and their organisations with them.

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Dr Lynda Shaw

Why holidays are important for our health

The past year has been incredibly tough and unpredictable, and the uncertainty and constant changes have increased our stress and anxiety levels. Many of us are hoping to take a holiday this summer, whether that is in this country or perhaps abroad. Here is why taking a holiday is so important to our physical and mental health.

1. **Holidays improve our physical health…** Working without breaks creates an imbalance in hormone levels and increases inflammatory processes which weakens the immune system, making you more susceptible to colds, viruses and other illnesses. Giving your body frequent periods of rest prevents poor health and can reduce the chances of serious medical conditions like heart disease, cancer, obesity and diabetes.

2. **Holidays help our mental health…** Overworking and overstimulating our brains makes our neurons more excitable and alert which leads to trouble sleeping, mood swings, short temperedness, and poor memory, focus and confusion. More serious mental health problems can also occur like depression and anxiety. Holidays do the reverse and help us take time to find solutions to problems and to be relaxed in the moment.

3. **Holidays help consolidate and process memories…** and make happy ones… During periods of rest our brains take time to process and sort memories so that we are more prepared for work and normal home life when we get back.

4. **Holidays strengthen bonds…** Quality time with partners, children, other family members and friends strengthens social bonds. This last year has shown how unpredictable and tough life can be and as pack animals, and how we rely on a strong social infrastructure for support. Spending time with your children also boosts their self-esteem, sense of security and family values.

5. **Holidays decrease burnout…** Burnout can influence every aspect of your life from relationships to physical and mental health. One of the main ways to tackle burnout is taking time off to relax. Time off helps to ease feelings of stress and anxiety, alleviating pressure and feelings of burnout.

6. **Holidays help us catch up on sleep…** Holidays allow us to catch up on sleep which is essential for brain function. Whilst we are asleep our brains consolidate information and memories from the day which improves our mental functioning, problem solving, memory and creativity. Studies show that people with depression often have less than six hours sleep per night, meaning they do not have enough deep sleep and REM sleep, which is when the brain is restored. In fact, prolonged time awake can actually result in the loss of a certain type of brain cell known as the locus ceruleus which regulates norepinephrine. The more norepinephrine the less likely we can achieve REM sleep.

7. **Holidays sharpen your mind…** Giving your brain a break from the daily activities you undertake at work and at home by doing something new helps establish stronger connections between brain cells which improves the learning process and concentration. Spending more time resting boosts creativity, problem solving skills and also makes us more efficient. Information is also transmitted from one part of the brain to another more effectively, improving recall.

8. **Holidays boost your creativity…** Research has found that the brain gradually stops registering sense stimuli such as sight, sound or feeling if that stimulus remains consistent for long periods. This may cause us to lose focus and diminish performance and creativity. Taking regular breaks and time off helps to prevent this, leaving us more motivated and creative.

9. **Holidays make us more active especially outdoors…** Most of us spend more time outside on our holidays which is hugely beneficial to our health. For example, studies have found

that going for a walk outside lowers blood pressure, stress levels, improves focus, helps us heel quicker, slows ageing and simply make us happier! Exercise helps to boost your creativity even more by increasing oxygen flow to the brain. In addition to enjoying it on holidays, incorporate time outdoors into your daily routine, especially if you have a desk job.

10. **Holidays encourage us to try something new…** like open water swimming, a segway, a new type of food, footgolf, a barge trip, an open air cinema or learning about a new culture. Trying new things allows us to expand our minds, learn and step out of our comfort zone which expands our horizons and increases productivity, inspiration and knowledge.

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About the Author
Dr Lynda Shaw is cognitive neuroscientist and chartered psychologist, a Forbes contributor, an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, a Fellow of the Professional Speakers Association. as well as an entrepreneur and author of adult and children's books.

Dr Shaw has lectured in Psychology and Neuroscience at various Universities in the UK and conducted research on brain function and impairment, specialising in consciousness, emotion and the effects of ageing. She was honoured to receive the Professional Speaking Award of Excellence in October 2017, the highest accolade for UK speakers given by their peers.

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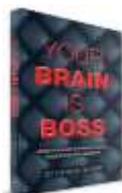
How to make a group FaceTime call with Siri in iOS 14.5

Thanks to the recent iOS 14.5 update, you can now initiate group FaceTime audio and video calls with Siri. This saves you the trouble of having to sort through your contacts to find the right group members.

First, Update to iOS 14.5
This feature only works in iOS 14.5 or later, so you'll need to update your iPhone to the latest iOS software prior to using the steps in this article. The update takes around two hours but is well worth it! Once you've successfully updated, you can continue with the steps in the next section to make a group FaceTime call using Siri!

How to Use Siri to Make FaceTime Group Call on Your iPhone
If you don't typically use Siri, I recommend checking to make sure "Hey Siri" is enabled on your iPhone first, and then you can use the following steps to initiate a group FaceTime call.

1. To start a three-way FaceTime call, simply say, **"Hey Siri, make a FaceTime call to [Person 1] and [Person 2]."**

2. You can also use a group name from your messages or contacts by saying, **"Hey Siri, make a FaceTime call to [Group Name]."**

3. Siri will then start a group FaceTime call with each contact listed in that contact group.

4. You can also specify whether you prefer an audio or video call via FaceTime. (If you do not specify, Siri defaults to a video call with your camera on.)

5. To specify a group FaceTime call with audio only, say **"Hey Siri, start a FaceTime audio call to [Group or Contact Names]"**

6. It's important to say the name of the person or group as it is saved in your contacts. Otherwise, Siri will not be able to find the person to call and will ask again.

7. If this happens, simply repeat the name as it is listed in your contacts, and Siri will launch the FaceTime call.

Making a FaceTime group call has never been easier, thanks to the iOS 14.5 update! Now you no longer have to search through your contacts for multiple people, you can have Siri do it for you instead.

Web: https://www.iphonelife.com/

Bob Apollo

Why your customers want to buy is as important as what they want to buy

You'd hope, wouldn't you, that most salespeople understand what their prospective customers want to buy. You'd expect, wouldn't you, that your salespeople understand what their prospects think they need before making a proposal.

That may, of course, be sufficient in a relatively simple, transactional environment where the prospective customer is in the process of making an inevitable purchase.

But no matter how good a job your salespeople do when it comes to understanding and hopefully influencing what their prospects think they need, understanding what their prospects want to buy is only part of the picture.

In complex, discretionary B2B buying environments it's just as important - often more important - to understand _why_ your prospective customer has embarked on their buying journey.

In fact, I'd go as far as to say that no matter how perfect your salespeople's understanding of their prospect's needs is, and no matter how good a job your salespeople have done in influencing those needs in your favour, if you don't understand **why** your customers are buying, you're flying blind.

Too many salespeople - faced with an apparently well-qualified prospect that matches their ideal customer profile and key buyer personas - make the dangerous assumption that the prospect is inevitably going to buy something, and that their role is to persuade and convince the prospect to buy it from them.

The statistics tell a different story. Around half of all apparently well-qualified opportunities end up **not buying anything**. In any discretionary buying environment, your salespeople's most significant competitor is typically not another vendor, but the **status quo**.

That's why it's so important to understand why any prospective customer set off on their buying decision journey in the first place, and if and why they are currently completely convinced that they need to change, or whether they still need to be persuaded.

This is a critical lesson - the presence of a defined significant need (even the presence of an RFP) does not guarantee that the customer will actually do anything. And the absence of a defined significant need virtually guarantees that your prospect will **not** do anything.

This is why answering "why change" is the first and in many ways the most important of the four questions every prospective customer needs to answer before they agree to implement a significant buying decision:

- **Why** should they **change** (rather than staying on their current path)?
- **Why** should they choose **you** (rather than any other option)?
- **Why** should they act **now** (rather than later)?
- **Who** is going to **benefit** from the change (and how)?

Why change?
Your prospective customer's decision to abandon the status quo and move in a new direction involves a number of interconnected elements.

First, they need to see their **current situation** as being unsatisfactory and to accept and acknowledge that continuing on their current path involves unpleasant consequences - **the cost of inaction**. Unless and until they associate staying on their current path with significant and growing **pain**, they will have little motivation to change.

Next, they need to have a vision of a future **better outcome** that justifies the inevitable disruption associated with change. The **benefits of change** need to be clear, significant and - preferably - to continue to grow over time.

The contrast between their current situation and their better future outcome - the perceived "**outcome gap**" needs to be as wide as possible. When the outcome gap is small and stable, they are likely to stick with the status quo. When the outcome gap is large and growing, they are far more likely to acknowledge the need for decisive action.

The chances of change are further amplified if the project can be associated with and seen to support one or a number of the organisation's high-priority **corporate priorities or initiatives**.

Finally, change is more likely if their preferred approach is seen to eliminate some of the **obstacles** that may have previously prevented progress towards their objectives.

Salespeople have a critical responsibility to understand their prospective customer's change drivers, to do all they can to **stretch** the **outcome gap** to a point where their prospect concludes that action is essential, and to have the discipline to qualify out opportunities where the outcome gap is weak or non-existent.

What was the trigger event?
In addition to identifying and shaping their prospective customer's outcome gap, salespeople also need to understand what triggered the prospect's interest in searching for a solution in the first place.

Typically, **something happened** to draw the prospect's attention to an issue. This could have been an internal change such as new leadership being appointed to a key function, a new initiative or priority, or the failure of an existing system or process.

External trigger events often involve new legislation or regulation, changes in the competitive environment or changes in customer behaviour. But if there is no obvious trigger

event, the motivation to change is also likely to be weaker.

Discovery and qualification
Effective discovery and rigorous qualification are both fundamental to assessing the likelihood that a prospective customer will decide to take action. I hope that I've managed to persuade you that understanding **why** your prospective customer embarked on their buying decision journey is at least as important as understanding what they think they want to buy.

And I hope - if your salespeople cannot identify or create a wide enough outcome gap – that they will have the good sense to politely and professionally disqualify the "opportunity" rather than wasting their time on something that is never likely to come to fruition.

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About the Author
Bob Apollo is a Fellow of the Association of Professional Sales, a founding contributor to the International Journal of Sales Transformation, an active member of the Sales Experts Channel and the Sales Enablement Society, and the driving force behind Inflexion-Point Strategy Partners, the leading proponents of outcome-centric selling.

Following a successful corporate career spanning start-ups, scale-ups and market leaders, Bob now works as a strategic advisor, mentor, trainer and coach to ambitious B2B sales organisations - teaching them how to differentiate themselves through their provably superior approach to achieving their customer's desired outcomes.

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Urko Wood

Why most organizations are failing at innovation today

Study after study has shown that the #1 reason for start-up and new product failure is "no market need," i.e., misunderstanding customer needs.

The primary challenge of innovation is not to come up with ideas, develop and commercialize them; it's to gain clarity about the opportunities in your market so you can focus on the issues that your customers care about most. Either gain great insights to generate great ideas or suffer the harsh reality of "garbage in, garbage out."

Knowing where to focus your creativity makes all the difference in the world. Ideas are cheap, insights are priceless. Reveal needs. Create value. Drive growth.

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About the Author:
Urko Wood founded *Reveal Growth Consultants* in 2012 to help companies turn innovation and growth into a repeatable business process. He has created a free PDF explaining how over 400 of the Fortune 1000 have done so called Rethinking Innovation: How the Jobs-to-Be-Done Approach Delivers Dramatically Better Results.

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Janet Sernack

Coaching in an innovation culture

One of the most exciting aspects of living and coaching in an innovation culture, is the creative energy that constantly erupts, causing disruptive bursts to the way people think, feel and act. Especially when it comes to sensing, seeing and solving complex problems, (one of the higher cognitive skills identified by the World Economic Forum needed to thrive by 2030) through maximizing peoples' differences and diversity quickly and efficiently, as they do in Israel, the Start-Up Nation.

As a coach for innovation, I am constantly challenged with finding effective ways of capturing people's attention to break and disrupt people's habitual ways of thinking and acting.

Where attention goes energy flows
With the constant war for our attention, and the awareness of the value disruption brings in effecting change and learning, it's not always an easy and comfortable situation to deal with. Simply because they often cause clients to feel some degree of discomfort and pain. Because disruptions add to, and distort their sense of uncertainty and instability, resulting in a lack of attentive capacity due to their state of cognitive dissonance.

People are neurologically wired to react to and move away from disruption and uncertainty
Paradoxically as a coach for innovation, I also know that without some kind of disruption that creates a crack, or an

opening, deep learning, change, and creativity seldom occurs. Also, at ImagineNation™, our experience proves that innovation emerges from a co-creative frequency, and not from a process. Involving real creative conversations, within a safe holding space and container where the interplay between innovation, creativity, and consciousness, that emerges new ideas, spontaneously happens.

Coaching in an innovation culture requires the coach to artfully and skilfully flow with the client's state of cognitive dissonance, at a co-creative frequency, within a safe container, to transform it into the creative energy that allows people to emerge creative ideas and innovative solutions.

How cognitive dissonance affects people's mindsets
Cognitive dissonance affects peoples' autonomic nervous system, which operates largely automatically and outside of their conscious awareness and control. It impacts on their whole being – physically emotionally and cognitively, specifically impacting on their moods and states of mind, or their mindset towards embracing or resisting change.

It is also where people's neurological, emotional, visceral and cognitive challenges to the massive changes' innovation cause and bring, thrive. If not dealt with effectively, it will sabotage any innovation-led change efforts.

Coaching in an innovation culture
ImagineNation™ has been running The Coach for Innovators Certified Program globally for more than five years, where innovation is the result of human collisions between different programming, perspectives and thought patterns!

Where coaches for innovation are trained to dance in the moment, at a co-creative frequency, using a paradox lens, that allows contradictory yet interrelated elements to consistently coexist.

This is the key strategy for harnessing an individual's genius as well as people's collective genius, in coaching in an innovation culture, by applying the five steps illustrated below:

What does this mean?
Cognitive dissonance is the state of having inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes, especially as relating to behavioural decisions and attitude change.

Creative tension exists in the gap between the desired future state and current reality and is also a source of energy. If there were no gap, there would be no need for any action to move towards the vision.

Both are normal neurological responses, that occurs when what we know and believe in gets challenged, another way of saying this – is when the status quo gets disrupted, we often don't know how to make sense of it.

Until this is understood, people feel uncomfortable, insecure and unsafe, and even out of control, so they neurologically respond, habitually and naturally by moving away from what is making them uncomfortable. This creates the imperative for developing a client's discomfort resilience.

Discomfort resilience is about creating a safe space, or psychological safety for people to feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed, and to then help them to be comfortable with being uncomfortable as a way of life.

Elastic thinking is about letting go of what we know and believe to be true, to challenge conventional mindsets, inquire, listen and challenge the status quo, to be inquisitive, curious and imaginative, experiment with a wide variety of ideas.

Human collisions are about generating constructive debates, being safely provocative, contrary and using conflict, diversity and differences to emerge and explore high-level creative thinking using generative listening, inquiring and debating skills.

Why is this an important innovation coaching skillset?
When these key elements are not included considered, people become psychologically uncomfortable, anxious, confused and conflicted. They will make some, or all of these cognitive strategies to avoid the anxiety, discomfort, tension or confusion change led innovation causes by;

- Avoiding; people will ignore, delete or deny the information, to move away for the pain or discomfort.
- Distorting; people will exaggerate and make the change process bigger, more radical, important, dangerous that what it really is.
- Disconfirming; people will resist and ignore a different mental model, or point of view, because it does not confirm their core beliefs.
- Reassuring; people will seek assurance from others to

validate or justify what they believe to be true.
- Re-evaluating; people will re-evaluate or change the importance of existing, new ideas and facts.

Coaching for innovation
Coaching in an innovation culture aims to deeply engage people towards embracing change, without judgement or evaluation. To evoke and bring forth possibilities by discovering opportunities that bring about constructive nonconformity, that uncover counterintuitive and surprising ideas and solutions. By creating safe, human collisions, resulting in an explosion of creative energy that leads to new ideas, breakthroughs and innovative solutions, and building their commitment to the newly emerged creative ideas and the conviction to move forward with them.

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About the Author
Janet is the Founder, CEO & Chief Katalyst of ImagineNation™ a generative and provocative global enterprise innovation consulting, education and coaching company that enables people to be, think and act differently. She has 29 years of experience consulting and leading culture development, change management, leadership and innovation education programs to some of Australasia's and Israel's top 100 companies in the retail, service, IT, telecommunications, financial services, building and manufacturing sectors.

Prior to launching her consulting, training and coaching career she was Marketing Development Manager for the 42 Grace Bros' department stores, which are now, part of the Myer Group. She then launched Australia's first design management consultancy and worked with some of the world's leading fashion and lifestyle brands including Oroton, Chanel and Seafolly.

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Thom Dennis

Why fear stops inclusion & 14 ways to break the cycle

Fear at work comes in many forms. External forces that are out of our control like the pandemic give rise to fear and force change upon us because we are living in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) world. Internal fear forces at work may arise from unfair treatment, anxiety about job security, or fear from bullying and harassment. Whilst we can't control many external forces, leaders can eliminate fear within the business because fear stops inclusion, and a lack of inclusion generates fear, but how does this cycle develop in the workplace, and how do we break it?

Fear is often systemic.
The less diverse the business, the more likely the problem is systemic. Making employees fearful of losing their job keeps them vulnerable and easy to manipulate. Fear that is felt collectively within the workplace, is harder to alleviate. The more fear there is in a business, the more likely it is that people who don't 'fit the mould' will be excluded.

We fear those who are 'different'.
We are consciously or unconsciously fearful of people who are different to us. Some of

us are afraid of saying the wrong thing or simply not knowing what to say in the first place so we keep them at arm's length, as is often felt by workers with disability, indeed all minority groups.

Hoping for the best isn't going to work.
Whilst some leaders are given budgets to support inclusion, and we know that diversity makes us smarter and changes the way we think, this will simply never be enough to break the mould and create real change.

Fear generates opportunities for bullying.
Fear is highly effective as a means to exert control over others. Bullying and harassment are still rife in the workplace and through intimidation and exclusion tactics, bullies disempower victims and also coerce others into enabling fear. Cultures characterised by bullying are neither cost-effective nor productive ones.

Fear-based management.
Fear-based managers are obsessed with the rules, punishments and structure. They use exclusion techniques to maintain control and cling to power through fear. They are frequently insecure about their own position and enjoy power games to divert from their own ineptitude.

HOW TO ELIMINATE FEAR (AND BUILD INCLUSION WHILST DOING SO)
by Thom Dennis of Serenity in Leadership and Suzie Lewis, Founder and MD of Transform for Value:

1. **Shift from 'I' to 'we'.** Dominating opinions mean silent voices, so you lose the benefits of diversity. Instead, welcome different opinions and harness the collective intelligence of the entire team for better results. You will go further together.

2. **Avoid group think**, don't go with the consensus. Encourage disagreement by listening, calling for input from everyone and creating transparent processes. That doesn't mean you should create a tug of war of ideas. Instead, be open to other's ideas and offer co-responsibility and co-accountability for actions taken as a team.

3. **Change the culture** – To effectively focus on changing culture and behaviour, don't be derailed if things don't go according to plan immediately. In every change programme you will need to go backwards and forwards. Be prepared to

unlearn what you have learnt and to relearn new habits – this takes time, education and commitment. Minorites don't need fixing, it's the attitudes towards them that need attention. Blocks, poor systems and processes, and toxic individuals need removing.

4. **Put everything you have behind effective change**.
Leaders are pivotal in ensuring diversity and inclusivity and need truly to believe in the value of D&I and do all they can to achieve and support it, including creating significant budget. Ensure you have people who influence positively on the change programme and that the change panel are diverse themselves.

5. **Hold effective meetings**
preferably around a round table to avoid a visual hierarchy and call out interruptions if they arise. Research shows that men are three times more likely to interrupt women in meetings. As a preventative measure, leaders should name this as unacceptable behaviour before the meeting starts. Practise collaborative behaviour by enabling everyone to state issues respectively, question if you think there is a misunderstanding and take turns.

6. **Commitment, not compliance.**
Training, groups discussion and real action are needed to raise awareness and for deep understanding. Compliance won't be nearly as effective as commitment.

7. **Avoid meritocracy**
because merit is in the eye of the beholder. Don't reward individual behaviour if you want a collective result. Systems and processes are needed, but so is collaboration.

8. **Recognise your bias.**
We all have biases, but we need to recognise and accept they exist. Just because you have a daughter doesn't mean you don't unconsciously have a prejudice towards women. Take a step back to see what your actions say, test your ideas with a coach.

9. **Handle bullying properly.**
How a business handles bullying reveals how they feel about diversity and inclusion as well. Active, genuine inclusion is the single most effective way of eliminating dysfunctional behaviour. The importance of belonging and connection have never been more important.

10. **Speak to people, be curious and engage in courageous conversations.** Listen to other people and come without judgement. These conversations may not always be comfortable, building psychological safety often isn't, however it is incredibly powerful.

11. **Role model the right behaviours and call out the wrong ones.**
Listening to what others say and paying attention to what isn't being said and the conversations that are being avoided are key to inclusion and reducing fear. If you feel that these avoidances are deliberate, raise them with leaders, who themselves should strive against a blame-based culture.

12. **Minorities require support and engagement**.
Anyone in a minority might need time to find their voice but it is vital they are given those opportunities. Don't rely on them to lead the change or fix the problem or put them on a committee or interviewing panel just for the sake of it. The whole panel has to be onboard with reducing fear, and supporting and building D&I. Remember minorities aren't the

problem, it's the attitude towards them that's the problem.

13. **Leaders should evaluate systemic problems.**
Leaders shouldn't be afraid of the evaluation of their systems and processes and shouldn't do it as a tick box exercise. Data may be different between groups, countries or departments so collect and evaluate separately. Ask for regular updates on D&I and test to see how it is helping or hindering strategy. Know what the gender and minorities pay gaps are and where in the hierarchy the D&I talent starts to decline.

14. **Diversity means different reward centres, beliefs and experience**.
Find out what your people need, think and want and they will be sure to feel included.

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About the Author
Thom Dennis is CEO of Serenity in Leadership. He is a facilitator, speaker, consultant, change agent and educator. For the last 29 years, he has led companies dedicated to coaching executives and teams through personal and organisational change, defining strategy, working through M&As and improving communication.

With Serenity in Leadership, Thom is focusing his depth and breadth of experience to help organisations move into the 20s and all the changes that are developing. He is intent on resolving issues of inclusion to help people whoever they are, whatever background they have come from, shine and thrive, and their organisations with them.

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David Finkel

The real reason your turnover is high

A while back we talked about the real reasons why you weren't hiring new employees, and shared the hard truths behind why you might be hesitant to find and hire new talent despite a need for help. Today, I wanted to share a little more hard truth- this time surrounding the reasons why your employees quit. As a business owner, you may have an idea of why you have turnover, but it generally boils down to four main categories.

1. Lack of Recognition
One of the main reasons that employees look for another position has to do with lack of recognition from management. They think "*I have been busting my hump for these people for the last ten years and I haven't had a raise in three and all they ever do is give praise to Julie and I have done twice as much as Julie….etc*" Really taking the time to celebrate victories with your employees and recognize their hard work goes a long way to keeping them happy in their current position. And it's important to think outside of the "employee of the month" box and really get to the heart of recognizing hard work and talent on your team.

Hiring Tip: *If your job opening has growth opportunities make sure to list that in the listing. A lot of job seekers are looking for this specifically and will help you stand out amongst the crowd.*

2. Lack of Growth
Does the position have the opportunity for promotion? Employees that have no promotion opportunities, are already at the top of their pay grade and have no coaching or mentorship opportunities available to them are the most likely to leave to look for something else. Depending on your company, you may not be able to offer up a promotion in the traditional sense but mentoring or coaching your key team members to grow in their field can go a long way to keeping them interested and engaged.

Hiring Tip: *Instead of hiring for a project manager right out of the gate consider hiring for a project manager level 1 or level 2, allowing the candidate room to be promoted over time.*

3. Lack of Management
We have all heard the phrase, "people don't quit jobs, they quit managers." And this is very true. If they aren't getting recognition, training or advancement opportunities it's usually because of a manager. You want to make sure that your managers know what they're doing and value their team and are doing all those things that are important to be able to keep those people.

4. Money
Everyone has economic needs and it's important to pay your employees fairly. This should be a given. But when we talk about money and compensation it really comes down to two things.
1) Are you being fair? Are you paying the person what they are worth to the company?
2) Are you being respectful? Are you paying them what the market values their skill set at?

We can't all compete to pay the highest wage, but you can make sure that you are being fair and respectful of your employees and their economic needs.

Hiring Tip: *It's also important to note here that often times when an employee comes to you asking for more money, what they really mean is that they want more independence, autonomy or growth opportunities. Those things can often be achieved with a larger salary, but there are other ways to make an employee feel appreciated without offering up more money. So if you are paying a fair wage, it might be a good idea to look at other factors that are at play here.*

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About the Author
David Finkel is co-author of, *SCALE: 7 Proven Principles to Grow Your Business and Get Your Life Back* (written with Priceline.com co-founder Jeff Hoffman), and one of the nation's most respected business thinkers. A *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week* bestselling author of 11 business books, David's weekly business owner e-letter is read by 100,000 business owners around the world. David is the CEO of Maui Mastermind, one of the nation's premier business coaching companies. Over the past 20 years, David and the other Maui coaches have personally scaled and sold over $2 billion of businesses.

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Braden Kelley

Five lessons I learned as an accidental entrepreneur

You don't have to start a business to learn from my journey.

I like think of myself as an accidental entrepreneur. I originally set out to make innovation insights accessible for the greater good. But, nearly 15 years after publishing my first article, I sold a site that had more than 8,000 articles from around 400 contributing authors. Along the way I learned a great deal of things, some the easy way and some the hard way. Here are the five key lessons I learned from my 15-year journey as a webpreneur:

1. Before turning a passion into a business, nail the business model

My website, Innovation Excellence, started as a passion project that shared my own thoughts about innovation. The site didn't begin with a business model and sort of evolved as my project grew. Even after bringing in partners to transform my project, everyone had a day job and didn't have time to develop the most viable revenue streams. I began to experiment with advertising and sponsorships, but everything was difficult and quite manual. From this inability to invest, I learned that you shouldn't start commercializing a passion project before nailing the business model. If you can't, leave it as a small, manageable hobby.

2. Don't give up too much equity too soon

I eventually brought on three partners, but ended up owning less than a third of my creation. I now see that I placed too little value on all of the work that I had done to that point.

Don't give away half the commercial potential of your passion project to the first person offering you money to grow it. You always have the option of not growing it or growing it more slowly with more control. Make these choices carefully and err on the side of only giving up small amounts of equity for investment. I brought on some great people as partners, but the painful reality is that I gave up equity to fund a redesign that we ended up throwing away for another redesign that I did myself.

3. In any partnership, make sure ownership percentages match contributions

It takes work to run a website. If someone owns a third of your business, they should be doing a third of the day-to-day work involved. Even financial investors should be getting their hands dirty. Refuse purely financial investors unless their money funds the successful launching of a profitable business model.

4. Create as many win-wins as possible

My team was able to build Innovation Excellence into a saleable asset because it was a purpose-driven business focused on creating as many win-wins as possible. Every decision was measured against the mission to make innovation insights accessible, and we were focused on creating value for our global innovation community and value for our contributing authors. We turned down advertising dollars we didn't think would be a win for our community and our authors.

If I start a new site, it will definitely follow this paradigm of creating value for as many stakeholders as possible. Win-win relationships create value over time, while win-lose relationships destroy value until it reaches zero.

5. When it's time to sell, make sure the buyers share your vision

I'm proud of what I built with Innovation Excellence and grateful for my partners. Sadly, Innovation Excellence has disappeared. The buyers said they shared our vision, wanted to do no harm, respected what we had built and only wanted to make it better, but they completely replaced the brand nonetheless.

The buyer had every right to do this in pursuit of leveraging the assets they purchased, but it's still painful as a founder to not be able to point people to the thing that you built. This should be a consideration when you sell something you've poured your heart and soul into.

Building and selling the Innovation Excellence was a wild ride, and I definitely learned a lot along the way. But you don't have to build a company to gain insights. You can learn so much about how investors think by watching Shark Tank or reading articles. Talk to other entrepreneurs so you can learn without going through the hard part. Always look to grow and keep innovating, so you're prepared when entrepreneurship comes knocking.

This article originally appeared on Entrepreneur.com

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Braden Kelley is an experienced innovation speaker, trainer, and digital transformation specialist. He is the author of Charting Change and of Stoking Your Innovation Bonfire, the creator of the Change Planning Toolkit™ and creator of MisterInnovation.com.

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Greg Satell

We have to learn to embrace uncertainty and confusion

One of the most often told stories about innovation is that of Alexander Fleming and his discovery of penicillin. Returning after a summer holiday in 1928, the solitary Scottish scientist noticed that a strange mold had contaminated the bacteria cultures he was growing. That single observation would change the world.
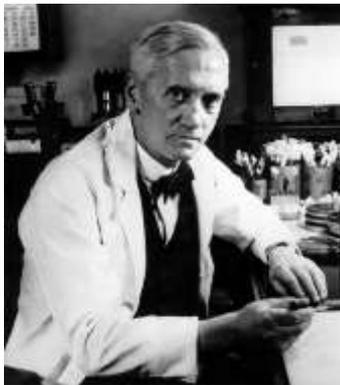
Alexander Fleming
Picture Source:
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At least, that's how the story is usually told. What really happened is that when Fleming published his findings, no one really noticed because what he discovered couldn't have cured anyone. It wasn't until a decade later that his paper was unearthed by another

group of scientists who engineered it into the miracle cure we know today.

The truth is that the next big thing always starts out looking like nothing at all because it arrives out of context. Great innovations not only change the world, the world changes them and while that's going on no one really knows how things will turn out. That's what nobody tells you about innovation. To do it well you need to learn to live in a state of confusion.

The 30 Years Rule
Penicillin's long gestation — it wasn't made commercially available until 1946 — is more the rule than the exception. In fact, it's time to market was greatly shortened because the US government ordered more than two dozen pharmaceutical companies to begin manufacturing the drug for the war effort.

Electricity and the internal combustion engine took even longer. Although the initial technologies were developed in the early 1880's, widespread adoption and economic impact didn't come until the 1920s. It took that long for things like infrastructure and complimentary technologies to build up and for new practices to arise that made use of new capabilities.

Although we tend to think that things move much faster today, the path from discovery to productivity doesn't seem to have shortened. It wasn't till about thirty years after Douglas Engelbart's Mother of All Demos that personal computers started showing up in the productivity numbers. More recent advances, such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing and cancer immunotherapy follow similar timelines.

So innovation is never a single event, but usually takes about thirty years to move from discovery to engineering to transformation. That's just a rule of thumb, sometimes it can be longer or shorter, but we're talking decades, not months or years.

Unlikely Combinations
One reason that innovation takes so long is that lone technologies rarely make much of an impact alone. Just as the automobile needed roads and gas stations and electricity needed appliances, modern technologies need an ecosystem of support in order to really change the world. After all, what would an iPhone be without an app store?

Combinations also play an important role in discovery. In the case of penicillin, one of the

reasons why Fleming's discovery never gained traction was that there was no way to produce enough of it to be therapeutically effective. Part of the answer came in the form of corn steep liquor, a fermentation medium common in the American Midwest, but unheard of in England, where Fleming lived and worked.

Again, this is more the rule than the exception. In fact, in a study that analyzed 17.9 million scientific papers, it was found most breakthroughs occur when conventional wisdom from one field is combined with a smidgen of insight from some unlikely place. It is often that small piece of information that breaks a logjam and points to entirely new directions.

Innovation, at its core, is about combination. The only way to break free of old paradigms is to continually seek out new things and then merge, mix and incorporate those with stuff you already know.

Exploring Unlikely Places
In researching my book, *Mapping Innovation*, I talked to dozens of great innovators who were, in many ways, very diverse. Some were outrageously successful executives and entrepreneurs. Others were scientists who made breakthrough discoveries. Some were funny and outgoing. Others were quiet and thoughtful. There didn't seem to be one "type."

Yet one aspect of their personalities was amazingly common. Almost all were tremendously nice and generous people who wanted to be helpful. They were also intensely curious, asking me questions about myself and my work. Often, I got the feeling that they were almost as interested in me as I was about them.

When you think about it though, it begins to make sense. Innovation needs exploration. The more you explore, the more likely you are to come across that random smidgen of insight that will help you solve a problem. Being a sharing person increases the amount of people who are willing to share with you. Generosity can actually be a competitive advantage.

However, constantly searching and exploring takes you into unfamiliar places where your knowledge and experience provide little guidance. That can be uncomfortable, but it is also absolutely essential to coming up with profoundly new ideas.

Transcending Uncertainty
One of my biggest heroes is the physicist Richard Feynman. Besides the pathbreaking discoveries he made in his own field, he also helped establish new fields such as nanotechnology, quantum computing and did important research in virology. Still though, he admitted that he spend most of his time in a state of confusion.

What made Feynman — and many other great innovators as well — different, is that he was able to revel in his own inability to understand things and transform confusion and uncertainty into wonder. He knew many things, but he was most happy with unknowing and took pleasure in finding things out.

Yet nobody ever seems to want to talk about that. We imagine great innovators to be those with almost godlike powers of vision. We see Steve Jobs standing on stage in triumph and rarely take note of his many failures and missteps.

Nobody ever talks about the pain of muddling through a problem for years when it seems like an answer will never reveal itself.

That's a shame, because to do anything significant you have to muddle through. If answers were easy to come by somebody else would already have found them. Investors want predictability. Managers want results. But great innovators learn to become comfortable with their own limitations and live in a state of confusion, chipping away with no guarantee of success.

That's how things move forward.

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About the Author
Greg Satell is an international keynote speaker, adviser and bestselling author of *Cascades: How to Create a Movement that Drives Transformational Change.* His previous effort, *Mapping Innovation*, was selected as one of the best business books of 2017.
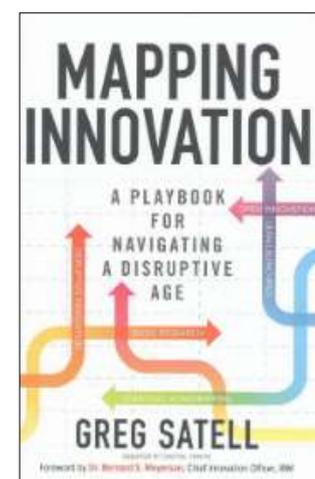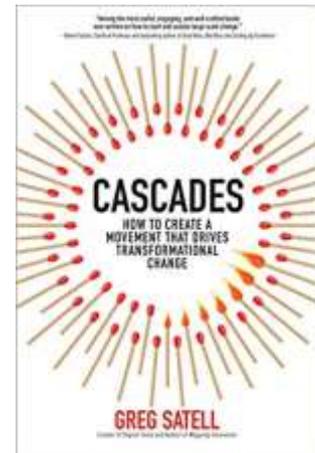
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Tom Koulopoulos

Three keys to ensuring your family business succeeds

Keeping it all in the family sounds great as long as you do this as well.

Amazingly, 90% of American businesses are either family owned or controlled. Allot is riding on the success of these businesses, in terms of both your fortune and your family relationships. Yet fewer than 15% of family-owned businesses are successful enough to make it to a third generation. So, why do they fail?

According to a new book, *Business is Business: Reality Checks for Family-Owned Companies*, by stepmother/stepdaughter author team Kathy Kolbe and Amy Bruske, They don't follow some simple rules and establish boundaries between family and business.

I asked Kathy and Amy to give me the top three lessons that they've learned about handling the challenges of a family owned business. Here's what they told me.

1. Setting clear home/work boundaries in a family business is as important as putting a fence around your swimming pool.

I love the metaphor of a fence, it's a vivid visual of the risks in not setting clear boundaries between work and family. According to the authors, "Without work-related boundaries, family members can easily get in over their heads without even knowing they've fallen into the deep end." What you need are some very simple Dos and Don'ts that everyone agrees to before hand. Don't discount how obvious these may be. In my own experience I've seen how ignoring them can lead to catastrophic unintended consequences for a family business.

- Don't discuss business problems at home
- Do drop family nouns at work. Such as: Dad, Sis, Junior, Honey
- Do avoid common rivalries, for instance – don't put siblings in competitive situations
- Don't alienate non-family members by turning them into "babysitters" for next generation family members.

Ignore these basic boundaries and things get ugly fast! The authors give a specific example that's probably all too familiar to anyone who has been in a family business involving a spouse or partner.

Susan was so furious with her business partner/husband for "dropping the ball" with a potentially profitable client. That night she fumed about it over dinner with their kids. It got much worse when she then further mixed business a family by using the loss of the client's business as a reason for taking a less expensive vacation. The icing on the cake was when she decided to "teach" him how to change his approach to selling during their weekend date-night.

In interviewing Susan and her husband he admitted, "I was wrong, but it was a business issue. Susan made it into a very personal/relationship problem. I can't continue to work with her if it's going to impact our family dinners and romantic evenings. It'll destroy our marriage."

It's easy to try to cast blame on Susan for bringing this home. However, the key in a family business is for all family members to accept that they have an obligation to each other to keep business and family separate. It's much harder than it sounds because you naturally want to celebrate with family when things go well, but you cannot allow that to spill over into chastising and criticizing each other when things don't go well.

The solution is to make sure everyone agrees to keep business as business and family as family, and to remind each other of the agreement whenever boundaries are crossed.

2. Ditch gender stereotypes and birth-order myths that can cripple the potential of a family business. This was one of the most insightful parts of the book for me.

The authors claim to have been researching Conation – the way people instinctively take action – for more than 40 years. And their data, which they say includes more than one million cases, disproves some pretty firmly held stereotypes.

First, their data shows that women are not better organisers than men, and men are not naturally better business strategist than women. If you've bought into that stereotype and you're in business with a spouse or partner of the opposite sex then you're limiting your potential from the outset by not leveraging the actual core skills versus the stereotypical skills of each person.

Second, the data also shows that there are no differences by birth order in the ways people naturally perform, lead, or problem solve. Family businesses that simply accept birth order as the determinant of ability often suffer from both the loss of the natural person for that role and instead operate under the assumption that the oldest is the natural leader. You're not a royal family bound by the laws of succession to the throne!

3. Exit gracefully; getting out of the family business is harder than getting it started.

This last point is one I have seen up close in even the largest and most successful family-owned businesses when contemplating the transfer of power from the first-generation founders to the second generation in line. Simply put - lots of people start businesses, but few exit gracefully. The authors shared a short story from an interview with a founder that drove the point home.

Authors: "*What's the hardest thing you've ever had to do as a business owner.*"

Founder: "I haven't done it yet. It will happen when I can no longer run the business – or raise it as my own baby."

Authors: "When do you expect that to happen?"

Founder: "Others are doing a great job managing parts of it. But, even in my 80's, I'm still teaching them tricks of the trade, I may die in this job."

Authors: "*So you think there may never be a time when "your baby" is ready to go off on its own?*"

Founder: "*Well, when you put it that way – sure. I need to get it there before I die.*"

Authors: "*Can you do that by staying there?*"

Founder: "*Hmmm………I suppose not. Shall I pretend to die and see what happens?*"

It's important for the founder of any business, but especially a family-owned business, to know when to leave the party and to exit with a plan of succession. The challenge of walking away as the founder of a family-owned business is pretty obvious. The distinction between family and business is again blurred, as might be the long-term economic ties the founder still has to the business - which is why a plan that has been well thought out well ahead of time, is crucial.

I recently encountered this while talking to a son whose father had started and built a very successful printing and advertising business. As we began to talk, I naturally assumed that he was now leading the business. Then he handed me his business card; his title was VP of sales. He must have seen the apparently puzzled look on my face as I read the card.

"*No, I'm not the CEO.*" He said, sensing my surprise. I wanted to know more so I asked him if he'd share why. He was very direct and not at all shy about sharing. "*When the time came for my dad to step down he and I had already talked at length about the fact that I loved*

sales and that it was where I could add the most value to the business. So, we decided that it was where I should stay. He promoted someone else to the role of CEO and I couldn't be happier."

I'll admit, that sort of candour and dedication to putting the business first is not something I run across very often, but my respect for the integrity and thoughtfulness of both father and son left a deep impression on me.

There are many reasons to build a family business and just as many to keep it in the family. Despite the potential stressor and the self-awareness it takes to pull it off, I'd never discourage anyone from going that route. But I would strongly encourage you to put in place the ground rules that Kathy and Amy point out in their book, Is there a magic formula to making a family-owned business work? To quote Tolstoy's opening line in his book Anna Karenina: "*Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.*" The same could be said for family-owned businesses. Those that work do so because they all follow these basic and simple truths. Those that don't survive fall into myriad more traps that undermine both the business and the family.

Working with family complicates the already daunting task of owning a business, and it's tough not to take work problems home with you. In the end, the best approach is to realise that family is family and business is business.

About the Author
Tom Koulopoulos is the author of **13** books and founder of the Delphi Group, a **30**-year-old Boston-based think tank and a past Inc. 500 company that focuses on innovation and the future of business.

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Yoram Solomon

Does (team) size matter (for trust)?

In this article, I will talk about why teams and teamwork are so important, why trust is important to the team and successful teamwork, and how trust is correlated to the size of the team. I will close with what is the ideal team size.

The Importance of Teams and Teamwork

Teams and teamwork are often critical to the success of the company. First, they are important to be able to bounce ideas off each other. You must be able to suggest an idea and have another person on your team tell you what is wrong with it and it can be better. Teamwork is also important for productivity. Let us say that it takes you 10 seconds to lift 100 pounds. How long do you think it will take you to lift 200 pounds? Well, it is not going to be 20 seconds, because you cannot lift 200 pounds at all. I know that I cannot. So, you must have more than just one person to be able to lift those 200 pounds. Furthermore, imagine what would happen if you're part of a team, but every member of the team feels the need to watch over their shoulders to see what the other team members are doing, and to monitor what they're doing. This goes against the whole idea of professionalism and specialisation when every member of the team specialises in one thing. What I found in my own research is that what makes a team the most creative, productive, and effective is constructive disagreement. It is the ability to argue over things without letting it become personal and irrational. The alternatives to constructive disagreement would

be a destructive disagreement, where everything becomes personal, or avoiding disagreement altogether or the politically correct agreement, where we have the meeting before the meeting, the meeting after the meeting, just not the meeting during the meeting. In my research, I found the correlation between positive team dynamics and constructive disagreement and creativity was 42.5%.

Trust and Teamwork

Research showed that projects performance would improve 45% When there is higher level of trust within the team. In one of my surveys, I found that when you have a low trust environment, people are 10 times more likely to state that they think that disagreement is unproductive, that they do not feel comfortable disagreeing, or that they avoid the disagreement altogether, compared to teams that have a high level of trust. I found three elements required to be able to hold constructive disagreement: vulnerability (willingness to suggest stupid ideas and to ask stupid questions), the willingness to give direct, unfiltered, unsweetened feedback to another person about their ideas), and the receptivity to feedback in general. Once again, I found that in a high trust environment, you are 240% more willing to be vulnerable, 106% more willing to give feedback, and 76% more receptive to that feedback. And once again, if you are willing to be vulnerable, give feedback and be receptive to feedback, then you are going to be so much more successful in holding a constructive disagreement, which leads directly to productivity, creativity, efficiency, and effectiveness.

In one of my surveys, I found that 18.3% of the respondents did not have a single person that they could trust in their organisation. In companies with more than 100

employees, 14.4% (one in seven) said that they did not have a single person that they could trust, and in companies with more than 1,000 employees that number was smaller, but still 9.6%. Think about that. One in 10 people in a company with more than 1,000 employees said that they do not have a single person that they can trust.

Does Team Size Matter for Trust?

This brings me to the age-old question. Does size matter? Well, it does when it comes to the relationship between trust and team size. Robin Dunbar, a British anthropologist, correlated the ratio between the volume of the neocortex to the volume of the rest of the brain in different species to the size of their social group, to the extent that he could estimate it. He found that humans have about 150 people that he called casual friends. More accurately, 147.8, and to stay within 95% of confidence, that range was between 100 to 231. When you start thinking about your friends, there's a kind of hierarchy. How many friends do you have on Facebook right now? Do you call them friends? How many of them can you trust? How much can you trust all your Facebook friends? Dunbar claimed that you have on average about 1,500 people whom you can put a name to their faces. There are 500 people who he would describe as acquaintances, people that you know more than just putting a name to a face. 150 of those are casual friends. Those are people that you meet every now and then. Start thinking about your own network and find who those 150 are. He referred to 50 of them as close friends. People that you can rely on, or trust more than the others. He referred to 15 as sympathy friends. Finally, five are what he referred to as close support. Those could be your immediate

family, your closest friends, people who you can trust and rely on for the most important and critical things to you. You may have more than those 1,500 hundred friends on Facebook or LinkedIn, but such that you will not even be able to put names to their faces. Elite military units operate in small teams of 4 or 5. A military division would have about 1,500 soldiers. A battalion would be about 500 soldiers, a company would have 150, a platoon would have 50, a squad would have 15, and the team would have just about five. For the book of trust, I interviewed a former Navy SEAL, Floyd McClendon, who told me about missions that he participated in, and it was always part of a small team of four or five soldiers who trusted each other at the highest level possible.

The level of trust that you have in a team depends on how big the team is. It is actually how small the team is. There are three reasons for that. One is because the amount of trust that you have is limited. And if it is limited, then the bigger the team is, the less level of trust that you will distribute to every single member of the team. The second reason is that you have less exposure to each member of the team. If you are a member of a team with 50 members, how much exposure do you get to each individual team member? You are limited in how much time and intimacy you can dedicate to each member of the team. The larger the team size is, the less time you can spend and the less intimate you can be with every member of the team. The third reason is because there is a higher probability of having an untrustworthy member in the team. Imagine yourself being part of a team that is made of just you and one other person that you trust very much. How vulnerable are you willing to be with that person? A lot, right? But what if there are four members in that team? You trust two of them a lot, but you do not trust the last one very much. How vulnerable are you willing to be with that entire team? Your level of vulnerability, your willingness to give feedback, and your receptivity

to feedback depends on the lowest level of trust you have in any single member of the team - just like a chain is as strong as its weakest link. So, the bigger the team, the higher the probability that you are going to have a member in the team you do not trust.

The Ideal Team Size

What is the ideal team size? First, it depends on what the team is supposed to do as a team. As a result, it depends on the level of trust that you must have in the team to achieve that goal. If this team is involved in something that does not have high risk and it does not require a high level of trust, then a large team would be fine. But, when you have a team that faces a high level of risk, possibly because of a high level of fear, you must have a high level of trust to compensate for that fear, and you are going to need a smaller team. However, the team can be too small, too. If the team is too small, it is not going to be effective, creative, or productive, because you will not benefit from having multiple ideas, you will not benefit from having multiple people trying to lift the weight that the team is charged with. If the team is too big, then you are not going to have enough trust, there would be not enough "airtime" for every member to express themselves, and you are going to split the trust among different members of the team.

I started reviewing articles about the ideal team size of the team. Oddly enough, none of them considered trust as a determining factor. The common wisdom showed numbers between five and 12. One article stated that the best number is 4.6, which is not really feasible. With everything I described, and my personal experience, suggest that the size for high trust, high performance team would be five.

What is the task is bigger and five people would not be enough? In this case, you must break the team into teams of five, and the tasks that you allocate to every team should be one that is appropriate to that size of team.

But having the right size of the team is not enough. You must make sure that you have all the elements that will contribute to building trust in that team. More on that in later episodes of this podcast. Finally, even if you have all the elements, you still need to make sure that you spend time on building trust in that team through trust-building activities.

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About the Author
Dr. Yoram Solomon is the author of The Book of Trust and host of The Trust Show Podcast, committed to help companies and individuals build trust and become trustworthy. He published 14 books, 22 patents, more than 300 articles, and was one of the creators of Wi-Fi and USB 3.0. Named one of the Top 40 Innovation Bloggers and one of the Top 20 Global Thought Leaders on Corporate Culture. Yoram is a professional member of the National Speakers Association, and was a TEDx speaker and host. He is an adjunct professor at Southern Methodist University. His trust-building model is based on years of original research and service at the IDF 35th Airborne Brigade.

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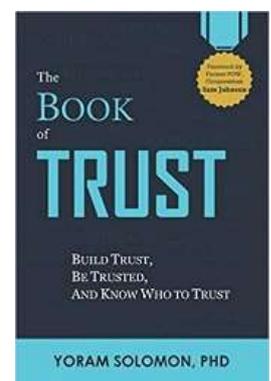
Michael Graber

Allow innovation exercises to expand business model

As your innovation efforts begin to move from the ideation to the testing phase, or the co-creation with consumers or customers, outlandish and disruptive concepts present themselves. As messy as children arriving, they show up, saying "*feed me, let me scream at the top of my lungs, I'm uncivilized*" all without speaking.

Don't be put off by how wild or unconventional they may be at first. Remember, breakthrough thinking sits right next to insanity, or as we in the trade say, "awesome sits right next to ridiculous."

Instead of having a knee-jerk overreaction to something novel, practice non-judgment on some of your discernment filters. Even if the concepts do not fit your current business model that doesn't mean you cannot capitalize on the insight in a number of ways.

Here are three viable models to consider whereby you can realize the value of the more seemingly "out there" innovations that arise as a natural part of the process.

First, if the market seems big enough and you have resources to deploy, start a new branch of your business. This could mean a product company selling as a subscription rather than at retail or starting an e-commerce only channel for a specific product. Or, it could mean a service business launching a product line. Or, a product company could pilot a store with an eye to growing it into a franchise business.

Second, maybe you can license your brand to a key partner for this particular concept. You've already developed the idea and complete market testing on it, and therefore have a realistic grasp on the market desirability and technical feasibility. Make sure this scenario is a win-win—that your partner has something to gain and also already has something key that you do not, whether it be channel distribution or technological expertise. A good licensing partner can make a good concept a great success.

Third, think brand marriage. Find a good relationship with a brand that makes a good marriage; think of Cole Haan using Nike insoles or Apple using Intel chips. So many examples come to mind where the best of each company becomes part of a whole offering.

The main thesis here is don't toss away good concepts because they don't fit your existing business model. If you invest the time and energy, you can reap a bigger harvest than your current paradigm allows. Think broadly.

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About the Author
Michael is Co-Founder and Managing Partner at Southern Growth Studio. Michael leads the qualitative team with a particular focus on innovation, to deliver high-impact go-to-market strategies and product launches.

Michael has more than twenty years of experience leading marketing and innovation efforts. An expert in experiential marketing and user interface, Michael has consulted across a wide range of industries through his work at iXL and advertising agencies. He previously founded Johnson|Graber, a successful interactive marketing firm that was acquired by Memphis-based Lokion in 2004. Also, an accomplished brand strategist, Michael has advised a myriad of clients on the positioning strategy and value proposition.

A published poet and musician, Michael is the creative force that compliments the analytical side of the house. Michael speaks and publishes frequently on best practices in marketing, business strategy, and innovation.

Michael holds a M.F.A from the University of Memphis.

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Sunil Bali

Permission impossible …..

Robert had a blue collar upbringing in a poor part of Chicago.

As a kid he loved watching the aeroplanes fly over his house and playing with his parents 8mm home movie camera. At birthdays and holidays he always took it upon himself to create a movie.

When it came to choosing a career, it was either to be a pilot or a film director.

Robert's parents, however, thought he was wasting his time and said to him, "*Don't you see where you come from? You can't be a movie director or a pilot. How many pilots and movie directors are there in our neighbourhood?*"

Despite his parents' disapproval, Robert decided to go to film school.

Today, aged 70, the films of Robert Zemeckis have grossed nearly $5Billion, won numerous Oscars and include "Back to the Future" and "Forrest Gump".

Zemeckis says, "*Whether you want to make paper planes for fun or fly planes for a living, the only person you need permission from is yourself.*"

... staying alive is good but feeling alive is better.

Ps. Zemeckis has also fulfilled his ambition of becoming a pilot and frequently flies his private jet.

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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

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