

CHANGE, CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

Food for Thought, Inspiration . . . and Action!

Compiled by Steve Gottlieb, President, VISIONMINING

“Leaders who cannot embrace change are destined to be left behind.”

The Eight Signs of a Bad Leader, Bernard Marr

“The life span of an innovation has never been shorter. An African hand ax from 285,000 years ago, for instance, was essentially identical to those made some 250,000 years later. The hoe was invented...a few thousand years before Jesus, but a similar tool was being used a thousand years after his death. During the Middle Ages, amid major advances in agriculture, warfare and building technology, the failure loop closed to less than a century. During the Enlightenment and early Industrial Revolution, it was reduced to about a lifetime. By the 20th century, it could be measured in decades. Today, it is best measured in years and, for some products, even less.”

Adam Davidson, “Welcome to the Failure Age,” *New York Times Magazine*, Nov. 16, 2014

“Very often thinking well means pushing against the grain of our nature — against vanity, against laziness, against the desire for certainty, against the desire to avoid painful truths.”

David Brooks, NY Times

“It’s human nature to believe that the way we have first learned and long done things is the best way, and other ways won’t work as well. It stops us from having to learn anything new. One of the reasons change is hard is that people have to unlearn the old way first, which is twice as hard as just learning something new.”

10 Top Impediments to Creative Thinking, Forbes

Highlights of 2010 IBM poll/interview of 1,500 CEOs:

- Creativity is the top leadership competency for the future.
- Today’s business environment is volatile, uncertain and increasingly complex. Eight in ten CEOs expect their environment to grow significantly more complex, but only 49% believe their organizations are equipped to deal with it successfully. This is the largest leadership challenge identified in eight years of research.
- CEOs are confronted with massive shifts — new government regulations, changes in global economic power centers, accelerated industry transformation, growing volumes of data, rapidly evolving customer preferences — that can be overcome by instilling “creativity” throughout an organization.

“Fear of being ridiculed is the biggest stumbling block in people who do not make a choice to be creative. Once you detach yourself from your work, all criticism and feedback is then about the work and not about you.”

Makesh Gupta

“Everyone says they want creativity, but generally they fear it....Creative people are often seen as quirky, unfocused and non-conformist. As a result, when a person voices creative ideas she isn’t seen as a leader.”

Larry Dignan, *Smart Planet*

“Companies that were quick to release a new product but not skilled at tinkering have tended to flame out.”

Jill Lepore: “What the Theory of ‘Disruptive Innovation’ Gets Wrong,” *New Yorker*, June 17, 2014

“Entrepreneurs often have to pivot from a first idea or attempt because their first idea doesn’t work or isn’t scalable. The ability to pivot is crucial because it leads you to a better, more efficient and effective way to solve the problem....But you must be willing to cut your losses, switch horses, change up the game when you realize what you’re doing isn’t working. I know too many people who won’t let go because they’re afraid it means they’re a failure, or wrong. That’s not reality; that’s story (and ego). And it’s getting in your way. The best entrepreneurs stay light on their feet. And just as they’re unafraid to tackle a problem, they’re also ok with letting one go.”

Jan Bruce, *Forbes*

“The defining skills of the previous era—the “left brain” capabilities that powered the Information Age—are necessary but no longer sufficient. And the capabilities we once disdained or thought frivolous—the “right-brain” qualities of inventiveness, empathy, joyfulness, and meaning—increasingly will determine who flourishes and who flounders.”

Daniel H. Pink, *A Whole New Mind*

“We all have rules—ingrained patterns of thinking that we mistake for truth....When a rule rut forms, all conflicting ideas are ignored. Rules are not always bad things. They are like railroad tracks. If you want to go where the track goes, they are perfect. But like destinations without a rail line, some solutions cannot be reached with our rules. The only way to get there is to leave the track. Rules stunt innovative thinking because they seem so right.”

Scott Thorpe, *How to Think Like Einstein*

“As people begin to believe that their organization’s innovation efforts are not just a gimmick, [this] begins to unlock the energy of people who aren’t necessarily great at coming up with ideas, but who do have a lot to offer when it comes to evolving and developing them.”

Braden Kelley, “*The Big Myth of Innovation*,” American Express Open Forum

“Most people resist change, so a key part of innovating is convincing other people that your idea is a good one—by enlisting their help and, in doing so, by helping them see the usefulness of the idea.”

Art Fry, 3M Scientist, Inventor of Post-Its

“If you want the innovation, flexibility, and problem-solving power of creativity, you don’t necessarily have to hire creative people. You probably already employ them....Instead of searching for creativity, we should be fostering it in people we already work with.”

Kate Canales, *Atlantic* magazine

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“Creativity tests [reveal that] only 20 to 40 percent of performance is genetically based. What that means is that creativity is much more learned than we think.”

Jeff Dyer (author w. Christensen & Gregersen of *The Innovator's DNA*)

“What single piece of advice would I give people who want to become more creative? Have confidence that you can be [more creative]. People lack confidence they can do something and therefore assume that they're incapable of it. There's a very big difference between not having learned to do something and being incapable of it.”

Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative, Sir Ken Robinson

“The five important ‘discovery’ skills for innovators: associating, questioning, observing, experimenting, and networking. The most powerful overall driver of innovation was associating—making connections across seemingly unrelated questions, problems, or ideas.”

McKinsey Quarterly citing Harvard Business Review

“Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things.....Innovation comes from people meeting up in the hallways or calling each other at 10:30 at night with a new idea.”

Steve Jobs, Apple

“[Conviction-driven thinkers'] ideas might not be the most original (remember, the Kindle was not the first e-reader; the iPod was not the first MP3 player; Google was not the first search engine; Facebook was not the first social network)....Their passion and their vision on how to improve the world or even the everyday quality of life in your company's workspace are focused. They are engaged. As a result, they can be very persuasive. Such a mixture of focus, engagement, and persuasion, more than creativity alone, is what brings ideas to market.”

Doreen Lorenzo, *CNN Money*

“Collaboration is the rising force behind the leaps in creativity and innovation being seen today. Companies that create ways to channel collaboration across departments, geographies and even corporate borders, will reap the biggest rewards.”

Scott Allison, *Forbes*

“Even a bad idea can prompt a good one. We think by refutation, and an idea we consider wrong is more likely than just about anything else to inspire an idea we consider right.”

Cristina Nehring

“If there are people in the organization who feel they are not free to suggest ideas, you lose.”

Catmull & Wallace, *CREATIVITY INC.*:

Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration

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“You don’t need monetary rewards for innovation. Innovation is intrinsically enjoyable, and it’s easy to recognize and confer status on those who put their discretionary effort into it. Our research interviews provided plentiful evidence that this is the case.”

“*Five Myths of Innovation*,” Birkinshaw, Bouquet, Barsoux, MIT Sloan Mgmt Review

73 percent of employees are disengaged or activity disengaged with their employers; only 27 percent show up with any passion or excitement.

2011 Gallup survey

“What’s the key to igniting creativity, joy, trust, and productivity among your employees? According to recent research, the single most important factor is simply a sense of making progress on meaningful work.”

Harvard Business School Book Review of Amabile and Kramer, *The Progress Principle: Using Small Wins to Ignite Joy, Engagement and Creativity at Work*

“It’s tempting to believe that creativity comes from starting fresh. But even when we start fresh, we approach projects and problems with self-created boundaries. You can’t do real work without edges, without something to leverage, but those edges don’t have to be the same edges as everyone else uses. Creative people often excel because they change the shape of the clean sheet.”

Seth Godin

“Einstein famously defined ‘insanity’ as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting *different* results. In today’s dynamic economy, ‘insanity’ might be defined as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting the *same* results.”

Anonymous

We hope you found this collection of ideas illuminating and inspiring.

Of course words, by themselves, won’t achieve your goals. Words must be *internalized* so they become ingrained attitudes and behaviors.

VisionMining’s objective is to collaborate with you to help make that happen.

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