

Lack of Innovation

Lack of Innovation-Who is to Blame?

In today's overcrowded industries competing head-on results in nothing but a bloody red ocean of rivals fighting over a shrinking profit pool. Lasting success increasingly comes, not from battling competitors, but from creating blue oceans of untapped new market spaces ripe for growth. Thomas Edison, the greatest innovator of all time, put it well: "Innovation is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration." Reflect on that, how much time is your organization spending on inspiration vs. perspiration? In numerous recent surveys, leaders around the globe have proclaimed innovation as one of their top priorities. They know that complex new problems, new competitors and rapid market shifts are requiring more creative solutions to stay ahead. The demand for creativity from employees is rising in this age of rapid technological advancement, and there's not enough time for an apple to fall over our heads. So, WHO IS TO BLAME FOR LACK OF INNOVATION?

What is Innovation?

First we need to look at these 2 interchangeable terms, often used mistakenly; Creativity and innovation. Organizations often chase creativity but what they really should pursue is innovation. According to business insider, the main difference is focus, CREATIVITY is about unleashing the potential of the mind to conceive new ideas, the ability to challenge assumptions, recognize patterns, see in new ways, make connections, take risks and seize upon a chance, it is subjective and hard to measure. INNOVATION on the other hand is completely measurable. It is about introducing change into relatively stable systems, simply put, thinking creatively ultimately leads to innovation. Ultimately, no matter what the "talk" is, if the climate doesn't support creative and innovative thinking, the results will continue to disappoint. Creativity is important in today's business world, but it's really only the beginning. Organizations need to foster creativity. Driving business results by running ideas through an innovation process puts those ideas to work – for companies and their customers. Creativity is the price of admission, but it's innovation that pays the bills.

Why is There Lack of Innovation?

Perhaps to think creatively has become luxury, after having spent years in school listening and studying other people's experiences and being taught there is only one correct answer. Whether you refer to design thinking, lateral thinking or "out-of-the box" thinking, all of these essential aspects of creativity come from the brain. The brain is to be blamed, the dorso lateral prefrontal cortex to be exact, it controls impulses which inhibits new ideas. There is also the human side, it feels strange to be 'out of the box', it is our natural response to resist generating a new idea, we don't feel entitled to be innovators, questions like this arise: 'who am I to be the generator of this idea? For sure someone else had thought of it and it was dismissed.' Landing on a new idea is exactly like landing on a new planet. Because the brain is the source of creativity, we can't unleash the creative and innovative potential in the organization without first recognizing what we're actually asking people to do in terms of their thinking. Just as essential, we have to recognize that everybody can access creative thinking, but they will approach it in their own unique way.

How Do We Achieve Innovation?

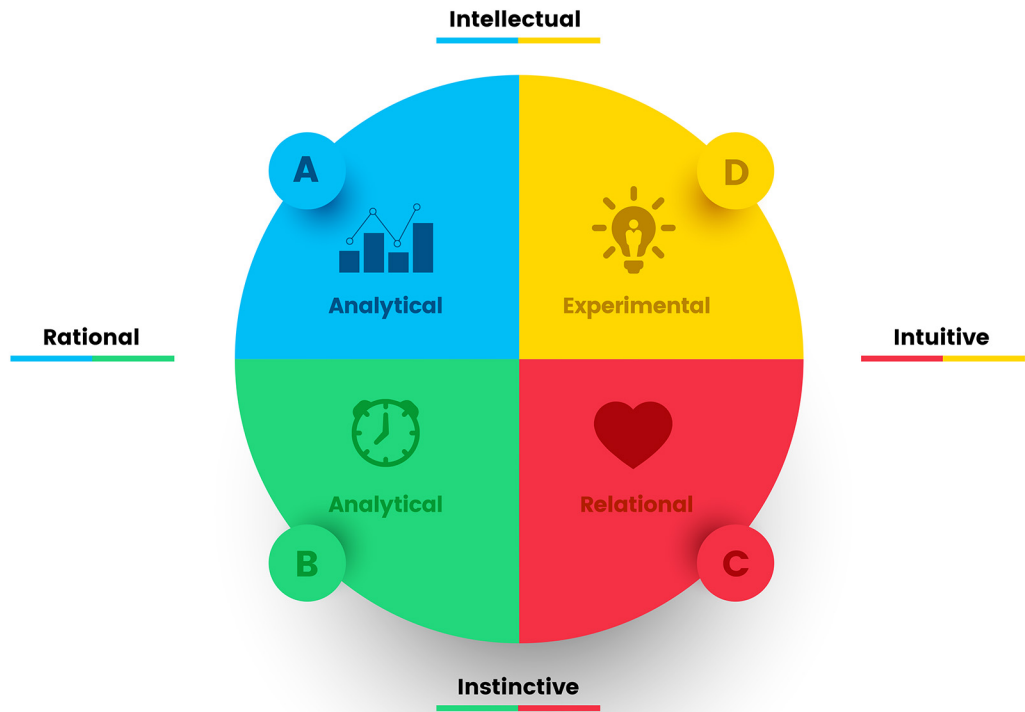
The introduction of a common language for innovation and design thinking enables organizations to better measure milestones in their innovative efforts, becoming creative is simple, everyone can generate ideas, genetics account for only 30% and the myth of right brain thinking Vs. left brain is no longer viable, and with so many tools to creative thinking - Tony Buzan's mind mapping - De Bono's 6 thinking hats - the Disney method and our favourite; Herrmann's whole brain model-employees have no longer any excuse. None of these tools however would work if the employee is living in fear, in a judgemental punishing environment, they will never get out of that box!

So where should this quest for being a creative innovative business start? Creativity starts with the mind-sets of the leaders of an organisation. It is here where creativity is either supported, nurtured and lead by example, or NOT. Shoving a group of people in a "brainstorming chamber" and ask them to immediately come up with new exciting money-making ideas is not the best path to innovation. In fact, studies show that brainstorming sessions result in fewer ideas then when it is done without a conducive environment for creativity to be expressed.

With Whole Brain Creativity®, your organization can create a climate that supports ongoing innovation as an integral part of the business. Given the right tools and techniques, everyone has the ability to contribute to the organization's creative output

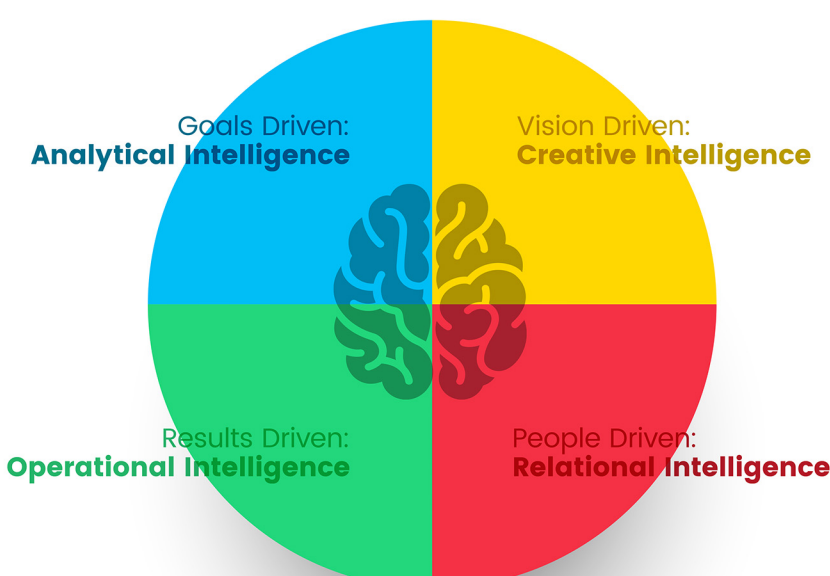
Step One: Understanding how thinking preferences impact creativity and how people use creativity.

Each person (yes, you!) has thinking preferences, some strong, others intermediate. Those preferences develop into dominances, and without the awareness of those preferences, you may fall victim to blind spots when it comes to other people's ways of thinking. But Whole Brain® Thinking reminds us that everyone has access to all four ways of thinking.



Step Two: Applying a proven creative process involving all four quadrants of the brain to foster creativity and manage ongoing implementation of ideas;

Whole-Brain Creativity



The whole-brain thinking model can be used for creativity and innovation, framing problems and opportunities, decision-making and planning. It helps individuals and teams get out of mental ruts and improve the scope of their thinking. Analytical intelligence includes how you frame a problem. Also how you evaluate an idea, including critical thinking. Creative intelligence includes using your imagination, visual thinking, and how you envision possibilities. Relational intelligence includes how your idea connects or impacts others within a system. Also how you collaborate and co-create with others. Operational intelligence includes planning and organizing; how you turn an idea into action.

Step Three: Generating new and different ideas that will have value for the business

Final thoughts

To be innovative is no longer an insulated process that doesn't require on-going engagement with the business units, companies should be pursuing "intertwined innovation," where the interests and needs of the business units are knitted into the command of a group of high-powered researchers. Google's X division is a good example of that model, resulted in Google glass and driverless cars.

A successful organization learns from its past and consider it a learning experience resulting in uniqueness, amplified inspiration, and exceptional branding. Companies like Google, Amazon, Nike, Netflix and Uber have found their way on the top 50 most innovative businesses list every single year. Why? They understand the barriers to innovation, they test, tweak and refine their ideas, based in part on lessons learned from their predecessors, rather than rushing to market. They recognize that nurturing creativity is crucial to ALL departments, they know that whatever challenges may be buffeting business—political uncertainty, market instability, international unrest—there are always pockets of extraordinary achievement.

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