

Innovating Innovation

Leadership Tools to Make Revolutionary Change Happen for You and Your Business

by **David Morey**



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THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

In business, creativity is the bridge to innovation. It allows businesses to innovate and market and redefine their own success. But too many companies and leaders put themselves in a position where they're focusing exclusively on invention, which can stagnate them, or they're focusing on maintaining the status quo, which can send them on a downward spiral toward irrelevancy.

In *Innovating Innovation*, David Morey champions the idea of taking a new approach to innovation itself. Inspired by great innovators and leaders like Thomas Edison, the eleven primary concepts of this outline are designed to help leaders understand the connection between innovation and marketing, transform their perception, take a linear approach to creativity and processes, build powerful creative environments, create a culture of urgency while making people feel comfortable with failure, and much more.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- What it means to “innovate innovation” on both a personal and organizational scale.
- How to eliminate innovation-killing habits within yourself and your organization.
- How to capitalize on both good and bad luck to propel yourself forward.
- How to empower the people you work with to be more creative and independent.

Marketing And Innovation

Today, we are surrounded by remarkable examples of innovation, and a handful of great companies are driving innovation by the exponential dimension of their business models. In this context, everyone says they want innovation. But the truth? Innovation is broken. Most business leaders and businesses struggle to find ways to crack through their own corporate politics and bureaucratic silos, to move from defense to offense, to nurture real breakthrough, to drive bold creativity in ways that add new value to everything they do.

Innovation itself needs innovation. This book features lessons that teach, coach, and guide readers across eleven concrete and pragmatic steps that unlock and drive day-to-day innovation in business and help you take long-term competitive advantage in your marketplace.

Stop Being A Punchline

Business leaders must remember that perceptions rule. The power of using consumer perceptions as your starting point is fundamental to your strategic focus on marketing and innovation. Just as important is finding a way to be different at all costs. Sometimes executives are less interested in designing and refining a distinctive product, image, or character and more intent on making their product serve everything and everyone at once. Think of this as lazy innovation and lazy marketing, a dreary combination if there ever was one, shining a light on everything and everyone rather than focusing the spotlight on what is core to the success of your mission.

The “everything approach” may be easier, but it’s doomed from the start. “He who defends everything defends nothing.” A lack of focused differentiation will throttle any effort at innovative breakthrough.

It’s important to innovate forward, meaning that you should aim your research and thinking toward the future rather than the past. Put to work the same level of agility in dealing with change that today’s consumers bring to their everyday lives.

Meanwhile, in today’s hyper-change environment, wide-angle and continual strategic transformation of your business model isn’t optional, but mandatory for marketing and innovation success. You should always recognize and understand the larger context into which your product, service, brand, or company competes. Better yet, develop and drive a strategy to control the dialogue and help define this larger context.

Subdivide Light

If you want to innovate in a meaningful way and transform your business and the world, it can sometimes be effective to think in terms of linear innovation. Your first task is to commit to a way of thinking. Sometimes, our challenge is that we don’t believe we belong on a bigger stage or that we can innovate any kind of breakthrough, big or small. Up to 70% of people experience imposter syndrome at some time in their lives. They believe the stage on which they stand is too big and that they have no business being on it.

Belief in your legitimacy must be steadily fueled by your imagination, the lifeblood of innovation. Preparing internally to drive innovation breakthrough means taking yourself as seriously as you want others to take you. From working with top corporate CEOs and political leaders of many countries, the lesson learned is that they each have their own affirmative self-image as a powerful drive, filter, and vision they can aim for and move toward at all times.

It’s also important to ensure that we’re thinking in terms of innovation, not invention. Many companies try to invent their way into success by creating the Next Big Thing. But it’s more important to innovate, focusing instead on disrupting, renovating, and changing their thinking, destination, battlefield map, attitudinal segmentation, brand positioning, customer experience, core strategy, and executional campaign.

Finally, it’s vital to use agility to think, act, and plan for the future. You must always be ready to adapt based on the constantly evolving and changing world.

Build Workshops, Not Laboratories

During his active period, Thomas Edison hosted a creative workshop the likes of which the world had never seen. Arguably his greatest invention, the approach to innovation at this workshop was unprecedented. It was a place, system, and ethos that disrupted traditional concepts of creativity. Gone was the mystification of genius and inspiration and luck. The replacement was a set of procedures and mandates that both required and enabled imaginative creation on demand. It was the reinvention of invention.

Meanwhile, businesses must learn by doing, not being afraid to go out and make mistakes in the real world as they try a range of methods and approaches to learn about what is most effective—and what they can’t effectively do.

Edison also was a profound example of someone who

accepted every problem as a gift and was always able to capitalize on disaster. He recognized what many businesses fail to recognize, which is that failure isn't an obstacle but rather an absolutely essential tool to long-term success. Innovation begins with dissatisfaction.

To channel Edison, businesses must build a team of people you trust, be bolder, model success in all behaviors and practices, learn and take measurements of success or failure, brainstorm constantly, and train your creativity like a muscle. Eventually, you'll find it growing stronger and stronger with each day.

Create A Culture Of Urgency

Richard Branson has said that he likes to 'create panic early.' For businesses and leaders looking to innovate their innovation, it can be difficult to strike the balance between instilling a sense of urgency while still letting team members feel comfortable with failure.

That's why you should manage a culture that fosters both. Your teams and projects should always feel urgent, necessary, and immediate. If this doesn't happen right now, just right, then we've failed. However, in order to make your people feel comfortable in this culture of urgency, you must also let them know that failure will simply be part of the process. When they feel comfortable knowing that their company and team members will have their back if things don't go according to plan, they'll be much more comfortable in that culture of urgency as they strive to innovate greatness.

What happens when companies achieve a bit of success? Often, they lose the sense of urgency that leads to innovation. Leaders must never stop innovating urgently. While protecting the downside, double-down on efforts to think out of the box and innovate differently. Meanwhile, it's vital to also start thinking not just in terms of what's straight ahead, but also what's hiding in your peripheral vision.

Develop Peripheral Vision

The only way for large, established companies to innovate is to learn to act like insurgents. By behaving like the new upstarts, they're able to be more agile and innovative than their slow, cumbersome counterparts.

By the 21st century, business analysts began to understand that change is the one true constant. As the information revolution has continued to grow, instability has become the norm.

That's why developing peripheral vision regarding how the world around you is changing is so essential. To know is to change. To know infinitely more and know it instantly is to change profoundly. Unsurprisingly, the rules of change greatly favor the insurgent, who embraces and adores change.

There are seven major ways to mobilize peripheral disorganization and starting innovating again— get away from what you know, do the doable to create momentum, create your own team of outsiders and misfits to get new perspectives, continually disrupt your thinking, challenge your status quo, focus on 'new rules' and Google your future— meaning, learn about your industry's path and where it's going in the next five or ten years.

Innovate Benefits, Own the Future

In order to own the future with your business or innovation, the first thing you need to do is shape the details of your work around your innovation and strategy. Don't get so lost in the day-to-day of your work that it becomes your product. Always arrange the details around what you're most passionate about and what will have greatest impact. Everything else will begin to fall into place.

Next, complete an 'audit' of how every element of your company communicates something to your customers. Is everything about your brand communicating a message that you want your customers to hear? Where are the areas where you're communicating something off-brand or off-message? Identify these areas and adjust them.

Third, ensure that innovation is marketing. This means that every aspect of innovation, operation, administration, and communication should be adding value, or it should not be happening. Product innovation and manufacture are designed to add value. Recruiting and hiring should add value. If it doesn't add value, it's a problem.

By focusing your innovation on what truly brings value to customers, you'll begin innovating innovation in a powerful and meaningful way.

Sail West To Find East

You can't control luck. You can't harness the power of the universe such that you end up in the elevator with the exact client you most wanted to make a good impression with, and you can't force them to have seen the same movie you saw last weekend in order to strike up a great ice-breaker conversation.

What can you do? You can put yourself in a position where you're prepared to exploit luck. Not only that, but you can even find ways to exploit crisis. When you set up your business to be agile, you're always ready to turn both good luck and bad luck into a propulsion towards your ultimate goals. Companies that move slowly can only succeed when the expected happens— agile and innovative companies excel when the unexpected happens.

Be A Change Leader, Not A Business Leader

Insurgent brands and insurgent leaders are on the rise, disrupting every marketplace, every industry, every political campaign, and every part of society. Yet, stunningly, managers of incumbent organizations continue to tell their people to 'act like a leader,' by which they mean 'act like an incumbent.' They might as well say, "act like a loser."

You must transform your culture to one that sees itself as the challenger, and acts like it. Those who act like they're at the top generally find themselves back at the bottom eventually. Those who constantly scratch and claw and innovate like they're desperate to make their way up the ladder are the ones who are most likely to excel.

Empower, Don't Manage

The best leaders are those who make the people they lead feel like leaders themselves. When we micromanage every aspect of our teams and companies, we completely eliminate the opportunity for our people to innovate in ways we don't expect. If you have a team of ten, but you're dictating exactly what is to be done to each member of the team, you may have a manpower of 10, but you're only enjoying the brainpower of one.

The best approach is to empower your teams— tell them what needs to be done, but let them innovate the best ways to make it happen. You'll find that your people are happier, more innovative, and more equipped to create greatness.

Punctuate Your Equilibrium

Creativity sends a satellite to Pluto, decodes the human genome, creates more cell phones on the planet than toothbrushes, changes the economics of energy, and pulls a billion people from poverty. By 2030, creativity will build a computer that's smarter in some ways than the human brain.

In business creativity is the bridge to innovation. It allows businesses to innovate and market and redefine their own success. In politics, creativity allows future leaders to push beyond America's current famine of political and social imagination.

Across this bridge, we change leaders must march from imagination to innovation. We must do this because no one else will ever be sufficiently hungry and foolish enough to redefine what innovation means and what change means. We are the crazy ones just mad enough to change the world.



David Morey, Chairman and CEO of DMG Global and Vice Chairman of Core Strategy Group, is one of America's leading strategic consultants--and one of the most sought-after speakers, performers, and magicians. The award-winning coauthor of *The Underdog Advantage*, and *The Leadership Campaign*, Morey has advised a who's who of Fortune 500 CEOs and companies and many of the world's top political leaders, including five Nobel Peace Prize winners.

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