

The Competence-Innovation Loop

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How competence and innovation go together

Competence



Innovation

But jobs are focused on competence



Tensions between competence and innovation

COMPETENCE

Alignment with pre-set criteria
Compliance with pre-set standards
Conformity with expectations

QUALITIES

Reliable
Consistent
Risk-free
Trustworthy

INNOVATION

New, novel
Improved, better

QUALITIES

Ground-breaking
Exciting
Astounding

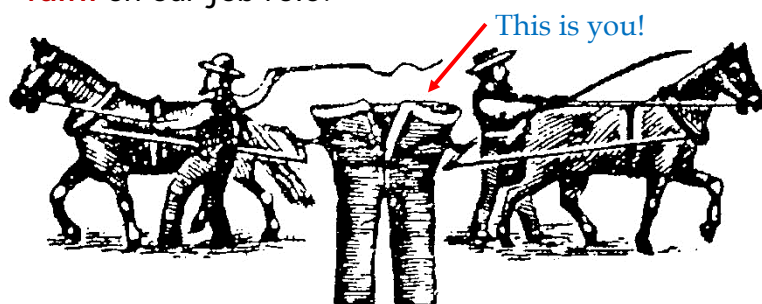
Competence and innovation (summary)

Competence

We **align** ourselves with what is required and expected - and we **fulfil** on our job role.

Innovation

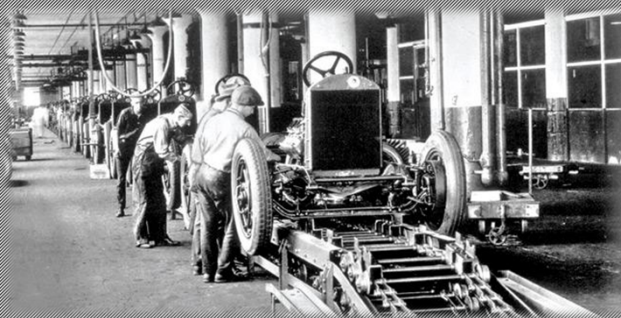
We offer something **unexpected** and **better**.



Sometimes, we are asked to do/be **both**....

Why is there a need for innovation?

- Customers change
- Competitors change
- Workplace structures change
- Technology changes



Is innovation an extra competency?



Innovation as a competence

"To build innovation muscle, companies must include innovation in their competency models."

1. Creativity
2. Enterprising
3. Integrating perspectives
4. Forecasting
5. Managing change

(Drew Boyd)



Where does innovation get into the picture?



Norwest skytrain construction at Memorial Avenue, Kellyville, 2016

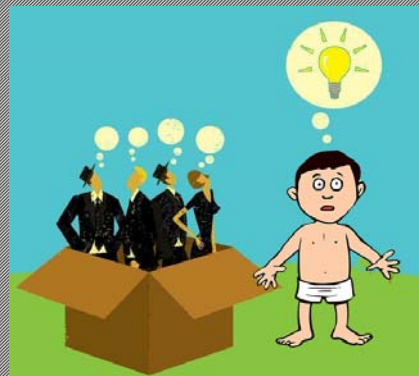
Does innovation trump competence?



Angel killing demon, fresco in the Chapel of Pius V, Vatican (16th Century)

Definitions of innovation

1. Generating new ideas, solutions
2. Constantly looking for ways to improve
3. Thinking "outside the box"
4. Being "tech savvy"
5. Looking for ideas from different fields
6. Intelligent risk-taking



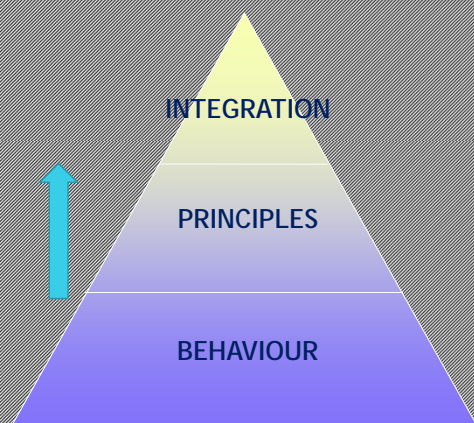
Simple definition of innovation

People implementing
new ideas
that create value.

- Hattori & Wycoff (*Innovation training*, 2004)



Senge's model of expertise



Stage 4: Wisdom

Stage 3: Expert

Internalised values, skills, beliefs and habits

Stage 2: Competent practitioner

Insight, changing action rules, generalisation

Stage 1: Novice

New practices, language, skills, knowledge

Adapted from Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*

From expert to innovator?

Problem

What about the experienced, competent staff who are not innovative OR who do not see themselves as innovative?
(and the teams and work groups....)



Yes, innovation is something extra!



Reconciling expertise and innovation

Focus on expertise

Novice: Language and basic practices

Competent practitioner: Insights, principles, generalise across contexts

Expert: Internalised skills, values, beliefs, habits

Focus on innovation

Creating what is new, novel, better, improved, enhanced, exciting....?

How??!

Innovation for competent people (1)

A strong foundation of knowledge and experience in the field, including:

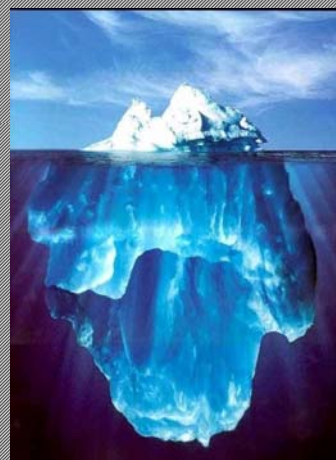
- The context
- The dynamics (how things work)
- The politics



Innovation for competent people (2)

Awareness, attention and observation:

- Dynamics
- Change
- Openness to what is happening around you.



Innovation for competent people (3)

Connect things / Imagine:

- New ways are evoked and experimented with
- Based on experiences and tacit knowledge
- Draw things together from different fields
- Show an appreciation of aesthetics



Adrian Borda

Innovation for competent people (4)



- Continue to focus on **purpose** (but different ways of getting there)
- Allow for **humour** (with a sense of appropriateness)
- Keep **ego** under control

"Humans think in metaphors and learn through stories."

Innovation for competent people (5)

Willing to do left-brain work:

Linear - do research; assess and test new ideas

Requires patience, persistence and carefulness

"It's 90% patience."

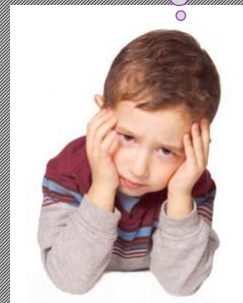


"Am I innovative?"

You should definitely use a different font!



Am I innovative?



There is a balance.

Competence



Innovation



Team conditions for innovation

Innovation is an individual capacity but it is not solitary - it requires interaction in a supportive team.

Key qualities of innovation-rich settings:

- Trust and support
- Freedom to exercise self-control
- Variety in learning contexts
- Access to constructive feedback
- Balance between challenges and capabilities

Rasmussen, 2012



The College Blended Learning Team

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Competence and innovation

Innovation:
People implementing
new ideas
that create value.



Sources and resources

Boyd, Drew and Goldenberg, Jacob, 2014, *Inside the Box: A Proven System of Creativity for Breakthrough*. See post by [Drew Boyd](#)

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Slides: See www.slideshare.net (Search for Glenn Martin; beware the impostors)