

# How to make innovation happens

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## Introduction

| Innovation is not only improvements but also exploration, mainly exploration.

## Kinds of Innovations

Exploration needs proper conditions to be fueled and proper conditions to become effective. An idea without its implementation which not really impacts on the business, it is not an innovation but just a try. Trying to have no meaning.

- Innovation that brings continuous improvement is related to the Japanese Kaizen.
- Innovation that brings disruptive changes, it is related to the exploration model.

The two are not separated but they are distinct. The first is compatible with strict rules and roles. It requires that information and intelligence is distributed over the entire productive processes. The second is not compatible with strict rules and roles, neither.

## Kinds of Premiums

Both innovation models require involvement and participation but with different levels of maturity and emotional bounds. The prize model to make people feel involved into the company activities are different in the two models, as well.

- **Kaizen could be driven by a goals-oriented prize model. *Motivation* is the key.**

Exploration not, because exploration could bring us into a dead-end or into an exceptional place. In both cases, it's worth because it enhances the overall knowledge. For example, being assured that a different model of business could not have any kind of success – we have found the best way to fail – it reasonably grants the company that any new entrant will not show-up in that way or they will be not a danger.

- **Motivation is not enough for exploration. *Participation* is the key.**

Participation is not something could be limited within exploration team. All the people working into the company could have the chance to participate to the exploration. In the same manner the man on the moon has been followed by many people around the world and not only by NASA ones. Emotions, sharing, exploration, experimenting, mistakes and risks are related concepts and important ingredients for a successful innovation.

Exploration means sharing. Sharing the experience and the know-how fall-out, experience is the name we give to our mistakes. Sharing the emotions and the risks.

# Human Capital Management

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A very successful company needs to gain the emotional participation of any people involved into its activities. Clients love the products or the services. They do it because those worked on them, loves their effort and give a meaning to it. On the opposite side, any kind of activities that do not require passion for excellence and quality, should be automatized by machines. Why should we assign to people doing something so boring or repetitive that could be automatized?

- **People love the feeling of being part of something greater. *Meaning* is the key.**

Any kind of activity that has not any meaning is doomed to fail in getting any kind of human attraction. Any kind of work which rely on cognitive capabilities could not be done with great degrees of excellence and quality, if emotions are not involved in.

## Meaning is the key

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To give a meaning to something is easy. As humans, we are always looking for a meaning. Our brain is designed to recognize patterns and to connect events.

To give a *Meaning* to something is completely another story. Brands and logos are two powerful tools that marketing may use to seduce clients. Brands may attract employee as well. People retention is another story. Attraction and retention follow two different paths in our brain. This is easy to demonstrates: most of men are keen to be attracted by women dressing red high wheels shoes but retention is another story. Otherwise divorce will not exists as long as red shoes could be bought.

- **Attraction is related to *expectations*. Retention is related to *satisfaction*.**

## Why Innovation fails?

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Considering the following chain of values:

- **Attraction → Expectations → Partecipation → Motivation → Satisfaction**

If this chain of values is not coherently communicated on rational side or not able to get a strong grip on emotional side, *participation* is weak. Do we think that our people are keen to face the effort and the risks of changing something, if they are feeling they are not involved into something greater than themselves? Guess not.

People do not work into the void. They work and live into an environment. This is made by things, processes, others people, structure, organization, etc. The environment, people perceive, needs to be coherent and aligned with the above chain of values.

We may attract talents, raise their expectation, empower their motivation. Then they may find themselves working in a meaningless environment. What about motivation? What about satisfaction? What about participation? What about retention? Guess what.

Prizing people by goals will work, if we were always able to grant them to fulfill the achievements. Obviously it is not possible, on Earth – or the goals chosen were not challenging enough. Prizing people by involvement works better but do not strongly tend to the goals. They may prolong the activity because they loves it, just doing it.

### Did we got these points?

- Prizing people by participation means that we are able to give a meaning to the activities and to the goals, both. Prizes should be material and emotional, both.
- Prizes should not delivered at the finish line only, too far away. A week is a good time frame – both from emotional and calendar point of views – to prize their participation.
- Environment is the daily way to prize their *participation*. Salary, it is the monthly way.

## Organizational Culture

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[...] *In my research I've found that building a culture of trust is what makes a meaningful difference. Employees in high-trust organizations are more productive, have more energy at work, collaborate better with their colleagues, and stay with their employers longer than people working at low-trust companies. They also suffer less chronic stress and are happier with their lives, and these factors fuel stronger performance. [...] Compared with people at low-trust companies, people at high-trust companies report: 74% less stress, 106% more energy at work, 50% higher productivity, 13% fewer sick days, 76% more engagement, 29% more satisfaction with their lives, 40% less burnout. [...]*

-- [The Neuroscience of Trust](#) by Paul J. Zak

## Conclusion

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Innovation means that we are improving ourselves respect the ones we were yesterday.

Innovation is not so much different by any other form of business. It declines in two main ways: continuous improvements or disruptive exploration. Business has quarterly goals and long term vision, both. In any negotiation numbers (value/price) are much less important than emotions. Into any relations involved by innovation, numbers are much less important than emotions. *Business* and *Innovation* are made by people, both.

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