

## Leadership Alerts

### *Harvard Business Review's Innovation Essentials*

HBR has just put together a list of **innovation essentials**. These are five of the articles included in the list.

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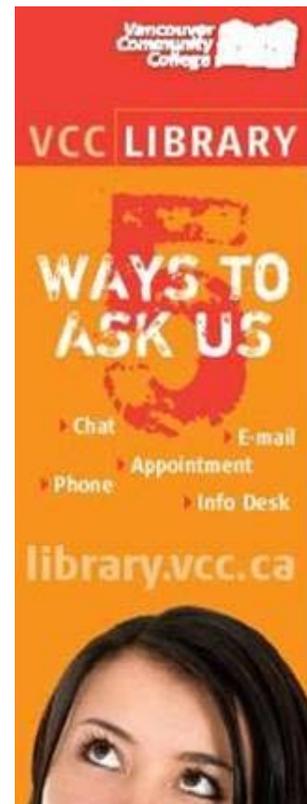
### HBR's Innovation Essentials

Govindarajan, V., & Trimble, C. (2010). **Stop the Innovation Wars**. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(7/8), 76-83.

Special teams dedicated to innovation initiatives inevitably run into conflict with the rest of the organization. The people responsible for ongoing operations view the innovators as undisciplined upstarts. The innovators dismiss the operations people as bureaucratic dinosaurs. It's natural to separate the two warring groups. But it's also dead wrong, say Tuck Business School's Govindarajan and Trimble. Nearly all innovation initiatives build on a firm's existing resources and know-how. When a group is asked to innovate in isolation, the corporation forfeits its main advantage over smaller, nimbler rivals--its mammoth asset base. The best approach is to set up a partnership between the dedicated team and the people who maintain excellence in ongoing operations, the company's performance engine. There are three steps to making the partnership work: First, decide which tasks the performance engine can handle, assigning it only those that flow along the same path as ongoing operations. Next, assemble a dedicated team to carry out the rest, being careful to bring in outside perspectives and create new norms. Last, proactively manage conflicts. The key here is having an innovation leader who can collaborate well with the performance engine and a senior executive who supports the dedicated team, prioritizes the company's long-term interests, and adjudicates contests for resources. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

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- HBR's Innovation Essentials



Euchner, J. (2011). **Managing Disruption: an Interview With Clayton Christensen.** *Research Technology Management*, 54(1), 11-17.

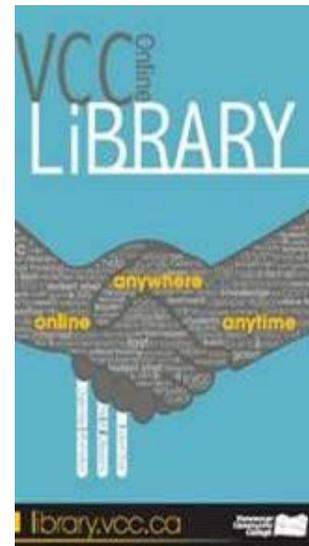
An interview with Clayton Christensen, an expert on innovation and growth, about how companies can anticipate disruption and the challenges of managing disruptive change, is presented. He cites some examples of disruptive innovations including personal computer, the router and Toyota's automobiles. He describes the customers for the disruptive technology. He also illustrates how companies can manage disruptive forces in real time. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Dyer, J. H., Gregersen, H. B., & Christensen, C. M. (2009). **The Innovator's DNA.** *Harvard Business Review*, 87(12), 60-67.

"How do I find innovative people for my organization? And how can I become more innovative myself?" These are questions that stump most senior executives, who know that the ability to innovate is the "secret sauce" of business success. Perhaps for this reason most of us stand in awe of the work of visionary entrepreneurs such as Apple's Steve Jobs, Amazon's Jeff Bezos, eBay's Pierre Omidyar, and P&G's A.G. Lafley. How do these individuals come up with groundbreaking new ideas? In this article, Dyer of Brigham Young University; Gregersen, of Insead; and Christensen, of Harvard Business School, reveal how innovative entrepreneurs differ from typical executives. Their study demonstrates that five "discovery skills" distinguish the most creative executives: Associating helps them discover new directions by making connections among seemingly unrelated questions, problems, or ideas. Questioning allows innovators to break out of the status quo and consider new ideas. Through observing, innovators carefully and consistently look out for small behavioral details -- in the activities of customers, suppliers, and other companies -- to gain insights about new ways of doing things. In experimenting, they relentlessly try on new experiences and explore the world. And through networking with diverse individuals from an array of backgrounds, they gain radically different perspectives. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

Kanter, R. (2006). **Innovation: The Classic Traps.** *Harvard Business Review*, 84(11), 72-83.

Never a fad, but always in or out of fashion, innovation gets rediscovered as a growth enabler every half dozen years. Too often, though, grand declarations about innovation are followed by mediocre execution that produces anemic results, and innovation groups are quietly disbanded in cost-cutting drives. Each managerial generation embarks on the same enthusiastic quest for the next new thing. And each generation faces the same vexing challenges--most of which stem from the tensions between protecting existing revenue streams critical to current success and supporting new concepts that may be crucial to future success. In this article, Harvard Business School professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter reflects on the four major waves of innovation enthusiasm she's observed over the past 25 years. She describes the classic mistakes companies make in innovation strategy, process, structure, and skills assessment, illustrating her points with a plethora of real-world examples--including AT&T Worldnet, Timberland, and Ocean Spray. Kanter offers practical advice for avoiding these traps. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]



#### BOOKSHELF SPOTLIGHT

**Harvard Business Review On Inspiring and Executing Innovation**



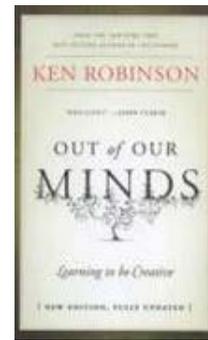
**Creative People Must Be Stopped : 6 Ways We Kill Innovation (Without Even Trying)**



**Out of our minds : learning to be creative**

Anthony, S. D., Eyring, M., & Gibson, L. (2006). **Mapping Your Innovation Strategy.** *Harvard Business Review*, 84(5), 104-113.

In the complex sport of American football, teams rely on playbooks as thick as the Manhattan phone directory. But when it comes to creating innovative growth businesses--which is at least as complicated as professional football--most companies have not developed detailed game plans. Indeed, many managers have concluded that a fog enshrouds the world of innovation, obscuring high-potential opportunities. The authors believe that companies can penetrate that fog by developing growth strategies based on disruptive innovations, as defined by Clayton Christensen. Such innovations conform to a pattern: They offer an entirely new solution; they perform adequately along traditional dimensions and much better along other dimensions that matter more to target customers; and they are not initially appealing to powerful incumbents. Companies can develop customized checklists, or playbooks, by combining this basic pattern with analysis of major innovations in their markets. The key early on is to focus not on detailed financial estimates--which will always guide companies toward the markets most hostile to disruptive innovations--but on how well the innovation fits the pattern of success. It's also crucial to encourage flexibility: Companies must be willing to kill projects that are going nowhere, exempt innovations from standard development processes, and avoid burdening project teams with extra financing, which can keep them heading in the wrong direction. Companies can create competitive advantage by becoming champions at defining the pattern of successful innovations and executing against it. But as that pattern becomes obvious--and others emerge--building a sustainable advantage on innovation competencies will again prove elusive. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]



**Dangerous ideas : when provocative thinking becomes your most valuable asset**

