



In today's demanding and sometimes unforgiving business

environment – companies must innovate to survive. This is the genesis behind PLAY...to help organizations address strategic challenges by strengthening their creativity and innovation “muscle”.

PLAY enables teams to examine their organizations' knowledge of itself and determine what might be in the way of successfully addressing a single, or multiple, pressing business issues. Using stakeholder interviews and a creative, team-based, discovery process, a holistic view is created to identify an organization's capabilities, resources, and processes, and the factors that may limit their full potential for innovation. This discovery yields recommendations for strategies, methods, and tools that can help the organization leverage what's working and mitigate roadblocks to innovation.

Why PLAY? From modern brain science, we know that play activities touch and activate the areas of the brain that control executive functions often known as the “CEO of the brain”. These functions control ability to organize information, decision making, problem-solving, task flexibility and delegation, time management, planning and execution activities. And, play activities facilitate more balanced participation within a group: mutual curiosity and discovery begin to overshadow titles and hierarchy, yielding diverse perspectives on the challenge at hand.

play: it's serious business™

In other peoples' words

The number of business leaders, academics, and organizational gurus that look to innovation and creativity as a critical element of a smart business strategy and organizational design are too many to name. But here are a few...

“Serious play is not an oxymoron; it is the essence of innovation.”

– Michael Schrage - Research Fellow, MIT Center for Digital Business Fellow, Imperial College
Department of Innovation and Entrepreneurship

“Creative thinking is not a talent, it is a skill that can be learnt. It empowers people by adding strength to their natural abilities which improves teamwork, productivity and where appropriate profits.”

– Dr. Edward de Bono, creativity expert, author, consultant.

“Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.”

– Steve Jobs

“We know where most of the creativity, the innovation, the stuff that drives productivity lies - in the minds of those closest to the work.”

– Jack Welch

“The heart and soul of a company is creativity and innovation.”

– Robert Iger, CEO of Walt Disney

“One of the only ways to get out of a tight box is to invent your way out.”

– Jeff Bezos, CEO Amazon

some interesting metrics...

The WSJ reported that a two year in-house creativity course at General Electric resulted in a 60% increase in patentable concepts.

Frito-Lay reports documented cost savings over a four-year period of almost \$600M due to their creativity training programs

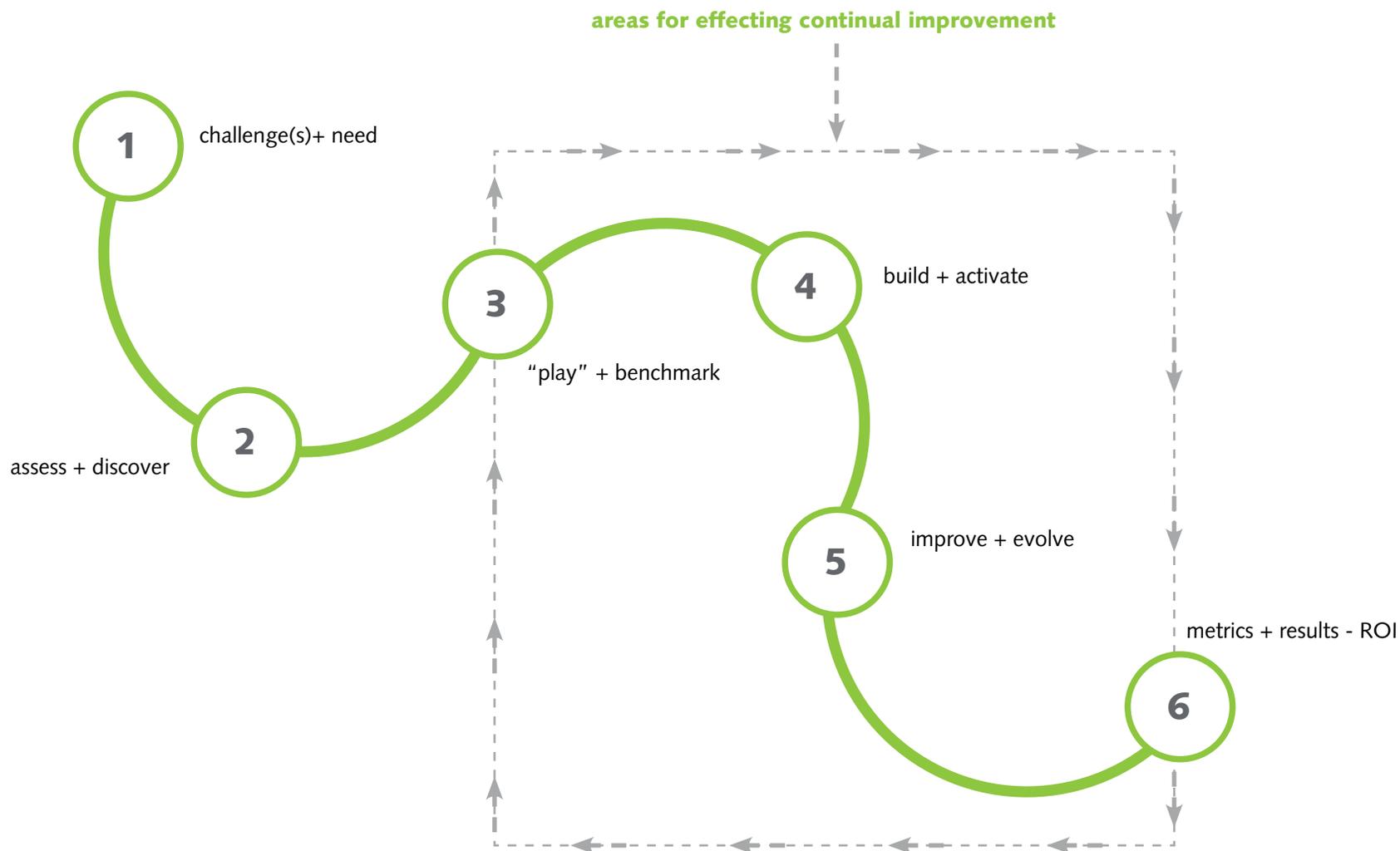
1

situational profiles - some examples

So what do creativity and innovation bring to the table?

Below are just a few of the business challenges you might be facing. Strengthening the creativity and innovation “muscle” in your organization can greatly impact and/or often solve these challenges.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Are you having trouble getting new products into the market? | Are you facing a more direct or threatening challenge from competitors? | Are you trying to grow into new markets? |
| Have you lost your competitive advantage? | Do you need to figure out a way to keep your teams “fresh”? | Are you attempting to shift the focus of your business? |
| Are you trying to shift the culture to become more nimble ? | Is a “incubator” mechanism for ideas needed in the organization? | Are your teams unintentionally not unified? |
| Do you have lots of ideas but don’t know how to develop or focus them? | Do you believe you need to change or the business could “die”? | |
| Are your products and services struggling in the marketplace ? | Is your company legacy working against you? | |
| Are you trying to build or increase creative and innovation “muscle”? | Is your organizational “brain” growing “flabby”? | |



2

preliminary assessment and discovery – “getting smarter”

Applying...

- our backgrounds - diverse, multi-faceted, business and organizations - large and small
- expertise - organizational, team, technology, marketing, sales and brand - development and leadership
- synthesized research - MIT Sloan, lens of “most innovative”, HBS, Sustainability Model, 3 Basic principles, Baumgartner’s Seven Essential Characteristics
- the science – play theories, brain training, executive function development

Outcomes...

- metrics/goals identified
- capture POV from senior “sponsor (s)”
- team identification - “to begin with”
- team profiles - who are the players, roles, perceived strengths and challenges
- report - capturing “what we heard”

3

where is your organization on the innovation continuum?



Collecting data, perspectives and team intelligence using...

- "game" as device - describing a journey, discovering what is
 - "land of rainbows and unicorns" - where you want to go
 - "boulders" - small, medium, large - obstacles in your way
 - "once upon a time" - debunking or confirming company lore
 - "the archaeological dig" - data extraction - where does it sit, how do we get access to it, how usable is it?
 - "idea ravine" - where ideas can end up, why are they there, can they be "rescued"?
 - "the goldmine" - where we tap the mother lode of organizational "gold" (IP, technology, human capital, etc.)?
 - "you rock" - manifestations and mechanisms for acknowledging contributions, i.e. "bolder destroyer", "ROI realizer"
 - "the weigh station" - prioritization of what's important
 - "the grid" - connecting things that make sense together
 - "danger zones" - situations that have negative impact or consequences - "places" that need to be avoided
 - "black holes" - where we lose our bearings (sense of time, goals, perspectives), communication becomes impeded or non-existent.

- insuring safety - "the cone of silence" - reportable but not attributable

you are here

- you are a "4"
- what does that mean?
- what is the "typical" profile of a 4?
- why we think you're there

4

methods, strategies and exercises – to build and activate

Some examples of what we might need to employ...

- skills in navigating the organization
- 6 hat methodology
- having difficult conversations - training
- what's missing in the "core" of the organization - macro (organizational level) and macro/micro (team level) - to support innovation and creativity
- the protecting and valuing of creativity
- "interventions" around particularly complex issues/dynamics
- "blowing up the boulders" - that get in our way

5

replaying the “game” - improvement and shifts on the continuum

To keep the momentum going...

- replay the game after strategies, methods, and exercises activated
- use moment to “restart the clock” around achievement and “what’s expected”
- timing for replaying TBD based on organization and feedback but no less than 3 months after programming in place
- use results of the game as a visual manifestation for team (and sponsors) of progress - kind of a game based progress report
- actively apply learning to hone existing and employ new strategies, exercises and methods as game results continue to improve and evolve

6

innovation “score card” - metrics and results

Applying the “calculator”...

- quantitative and qualitative in nature
- improvements - in process, outcomes, team dynamics, creative thinking, etc.
- more revenue - in what measure and from what sources?
- less cost - in what measure and from what sources?

research, data and building blocks

Sources for Play design and guiding principles...

Academic Institutions:

- MIT Sloan – “How Innovative Is Your Company’s Culture?” – Six Building Blocks of An Innovative Company
- Harvard Business School (HBS) – “5 Ways to Make Your Company More Innovative
- MIT Sloan – “Sustainability-Oriented Innovation: A Bridge to Breakthroughs”
- Penn State – “Executive Function: What’s Play Got to Do With It”

“Gurus”/organizations in the space:

- Edward de Bono – “Serious Creativity” – creator of Six Hats Thinking model
- Jon Kabat-Zinn – Mindfulness
- Daniel Goleman – Emotional Intelligence
- Peter Senge – Systems thinking
- Rolf Faste, Peter Rowe, David M. Kelley – Design Thinking
- Creative Problem Solving Institute (CPSI)
- National Institute of Play
- Teresa Amabile - Harvard Business School
- Roger Lewin “The Edge of Chaos”
- John Ratey - <http://www.johnratey.com>
- Patricia Harmon PhD - “The Mind of an Innovator”
- Michael Michalko – “Thinker Toys”

research, data and building blocks

Sources for Play design and guiding principles (continued)...

Publications:

- Fast Company – “50 Most innovative Companies”
- Forbes.com
- Inc.
- Employee engagement - Gallup Poll

Progressive thinking/thought leadership:

- Neari – Brain based learning center
- Energy Project – Tony Schwartz
- Essentialism – Greg McKeown
- “Seven essential characteristics of innovative companies” – Jeffrey Baumgartner
- Edward Hallowell – Center for cognitive and emotional health
- Luke Hohmann – Innovation Games

bios – product leaders

Paul Kimmerling, program designer, master trainer and facilitator, helps organizations and individuals boost their performance through customized programming, facilitated events, experiential workshops, and coaching. Paul's dynamic approach creates an engaging environment for discovery and transformation. He blends powerful techniques (Innovation Games, Six Hats Thinking, CPSI methods) with his own insights to generate innovative ideas and practical methods for success.

His current clients include Bombora, the leading provider of intent data for B2B marketers; Kyriba, the global leader in cloud treasury solutions; Analytic Partners, an international marketing consulting firm; and Clever Devices, a worldwide provider of mass transit technology. As a co-founder and Training Director of the Holistic Performance Group, Paul has developed programs for Time Inc. and SUNY New Paltz; as a faculty member at the American Management Association (AMA) he has worked with such leading organizations as the NYC MTA, Mitsubishi Financial, Wounded Warriors, EY (Ernst & Young), and he authored, "Mindfulness: A Building Block of Emotional Intelligence" for the online AMA Playbook. As consultant to Balancing Life's Issues, has worked with the organizations including Council on Foreign Affairs, Anthem Health, GlaxoSmithKline, and Verizon.

Prior to his current work, Paul was the HR Learning & Development Manager at MediaOcean (formerly DDS), an advertising technology company. Paul developed and delivered global training solutions to operationalize company objectives and values, and build individual, team and departmental performance. His facilitation of user-centered design approaches and creative problem solving/discovery techniques was crucial in the success of new initiatives, and fostered improvements in processes, products and relationships.

Beyond his corporate work, Paul leads workshops in Contemplative Photography that incorporate exercises based on mindfulness and imaginative play to boost awareness and creative vision.

contact info: paul@paulkimmerling.com

bios – product leaders

Tim Carlson, is a passionate leader in the formulation and implementation of technology, brand, marketing and sales strategies. A frequent speaker within the business and design communities, including the American Marketing Association, AIGA, Seybold, and the Massachusetts Entrepreneur Program, Tim has become recognized as an expert at maintaining and delivering precisely targeted business initiatives and programming.

Throughout his career, Tim has worked with more than 200 brands - large and small - in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. That work has focused on bringing companies, products and services to life and to market. Some examples of those clients include: Agfa/Monotype, Arbella Insurance Group, Atlantic Broadband, Avaya Communications, Dartmouth College, Grubb & Ellis, Harvard Medical School, The John F. Kennedy Library and Foundation, Lucent Technology, MIT, Polaroid Graphics Imaging, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Wellesley College, Whole Foods, and Universal Music Group.

His current company, thinkcube, works closely with creators, business and organizational leaders, and change agents to incubate, challenge and advance new business concepts, products, services and untraditional offerings. thinkcube applies design methods to allow for deep understanding, ideation, creative strategy building, activation of ideas, evaluation and evolution of plan. This methodology is effectively used to better understand customers, delivery new experiences for internal and external stakeholders and design/execute innovative business strategies and models.

Prior to thinkcube, Tim was most recently the Chief Product Officer and Head of Marketing and Sales at Talent Partners, a \$850M business services organization and managing partner at Oxygen, a strategy, brand and marketing consultancy.

Tim is an award-winning designer and has a business degree in finance and marketing from Boston University.

contact info: tim@thinkcube.biz