



FEATURED EVENTS

CEO Talent Summit
October 13-14, 2016,
Cincinnati, OH

Chief Executive Leadership Summit
November 3-4, 2016,
Palm Beach, FL

CEO2CEO Digital Transformation Summit
December 6, 2016,
New York, NY

SUBSCRIBE TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE



For over 38 years, Chief Executive magazine has provided ideas, strategies and tactics for top executive leaders seeking to build more effective organizations.

Subscribe Now!

The Key to Successful Innovation Is Proper Implementation

The very purpose of innovation is to change things up, to move processes forward, and to disrupt the status quo. However, “innovation for the sake of innovation” is a misuse of a very powerful and beneficial tool.

Posted by: Robert F. Brands | October 29, 2015

Innovation is more than generating the next big idea—it involves how you implement the ideas that make it out of the gate, and how you build the culture to sustain the creation of those ideas. Thus, innovation’s ability to modify strategy is critical.

With that said, the implementation of innovation must exist separately and distinctly from your overall corporate strategy. There are generally moments within the history of an organization when the need for innovation becomes crystal clear. It may be a long draught of revenue growth, a succession of lost bids, or a competitor’s new product.

Whatever the tipping-point, the first step toward creating a sustained culture of innovation is to lay the groundwork toward building the organizational capability for innovation.

“Build consensus, reinforce ideas, and underscore the need for accountability. Don’t rush it.”

The climate for innovation can only thrive when every aspect of the organization promotes creativity, engagement and acceptance of the change required.

Implementing innovation has 3 big parts.

1. “Big” Ideas. Start by creating your innovation mantra. The best mantras inform a company’s everyday decisions and are actionable statements of intent, such as: “Create one new Innovation a year”; “Be relentless”; or “Inspire Innovation”.

Build your culture of innovation step-by-step, stone by stone. Build consensus, reinforce ideas, and underscore the need for accountability. Don’t rush it, and follow the rules of innovation.

Another barrier to making your innovative culture stick is innovation assassinations. The residual effects of the Great Recession still reverberate down the hallway of today’s public and private sector organizations. When your team feels insecure, whether that insecurity is justified or not, they are more prone to innovation assassination. Resistance can take many forms, from open dissent to covert subterfuge; but in any form, it is threat to innovation implementation.

The first step to countering innovation assassination is by acknowledging its existence. Second is to understand why. Lastly, it can be hard to mitigate these would-be assassins, but the best approach is by reinforcing a culture that accepts, and even encourages, disruption and risk. One of Pixar’s mantras has been to “be wrong as fast as we can”. I like to say, “fail fast and fail cheap”. Google’s phrase is “fail well.” Risk often translates into failure, so make sure failure is seen and experienced as a “Learning Experience”.

2. People. The reason innovation implementation can seem a daunting process is largely due to people-related issues. They require patience (and intestinal fortitude) as well as structure to combat.

A key element to implementing innovation is finding and keeping the right people. In the past, an organization’s culture would shape the individual employees. However, today it is the value system of the individuals that, collectively, define the organization’s style and mores.

The workplace of today is complex. Generations of workers are not always defined by age. Also, technology is changing the way we do things, and it is changing us. It is changing the very DNA of the work environment we have come to know and understand from years of experience. Organizations will have to be nimble in the treatment and care of workers to create a culture of innovation. Organizational structure should be reviewed and modified as appropriate. Think about co-working spaces, new desk layouts and floor plans. In the end, it is imperative to make sure everybody in the organization is engaged and expected to contribute to innovation.

“Real opportunity exists for organizations to step up and create the conditions and commitment needed to encourage innovation in their work environments...if we get this right, we can better retain talent, remain

THE DAILY BEST OF THE WEB

CEOs and Business Leaders React to Brexit
June 24, 2016

Brexit Vote Caught Most Business Leaders by Surprise
June 24, 2016

Brexit’s Impact on U.S. Companies Will Challenge the Sector They’re In
June 24, 2016

8 Tips for Having a Successful ‘Take Your Work Day’
June 23, 2016

Positive Brexit Vote Will Bring Challenges for U.S. Firms
June 21, 2016



CEOS IN THE NEWS

Popular Summer Vacation Spots for CEOs
June 27, 2016

The Similarities of—and Differences Between—Top 20 and Bottom 20 Fortune 500 CEOs
June 20, 2016

HP CEO Meg Whitman Wants Trump to Win
June 13, 2016

A.G. Lafley: A Look Back at the Career of a Successful CEO in P&G History
June 13, 2016

Why These 10 CEOs Are Considered the Most Powerful
June 11, 2016

more competitive into the future, and more positively impact society," Deloitte Global CEO Barry Salzberg said in a company statement.

3. Process. Ideate, align, repeat. When teams collaborate in developing new innovations, having the right mix of ingredients will ensure that its overall marketability will happen relatively quickly and will enhance productivity across the board. According to Soren Kaplan, author, consultant, and educator at NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, "The most innovative companies today realize that competitive differentiation comes as much from how they innovate as it does from what they're innovating."

Key Ingredients to the process include: Generating Ideas, Screening, Testing, Analysis, Beta Tests, Product Development Technicalities, Commercialization, and Post Launch Review. To get results in innovation, a structured, repeatable process is essential from start to finish.

Previous: [How to Make the Most of a Group Purchasing Partnership](#)

Next: [How to Turn Employees into Your Best Brand Ambassadors](#)

ABOUT ROBERT F. BRANDS



Robert F. Brands is President & CEO of Variblending, a manufacturer of custom-blending, dual-dispensing technology, and the founder of Innovation Coach, an innovation speaker and consultant. He is also the author of the book series Robert's Rules of Innovation.

0 Comments ChiefExecutive.net 1 Login

Recommend Share Sort by Best



Start the discussion...

Be the first to comment.

ALSO ON CHIEFEXECUTIVE.NET

Are U.S. Presidential Candidates Failing the "Ultimate Job Interview"?

1 comment • 3 months ago

debrown@KF — Refreshing to read Sadiq Khan's Manifesto, London's first Muslim mayor. How do you think he measures ...

Slam Dunk: 5 Leadership Lessons for CEOs from LeBron James

1 comment • 6 days ago

mrlauber — I thought that you'd make another key point: LBJ put in the work. Championships aren't made in the ...

Insider Tips for C-Level Summertime Entertaining

1 comment • 13 hours ago

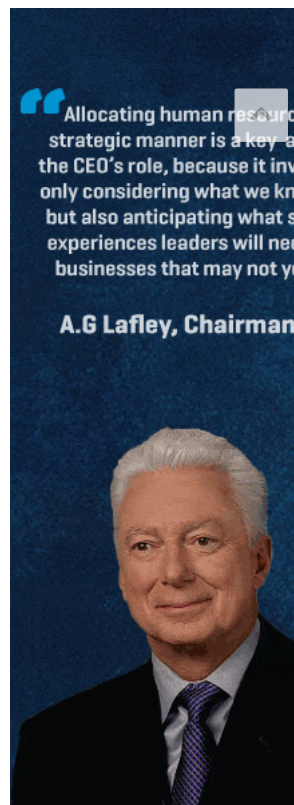
Nancy Moon — Very useful tips, thanks for creating, perfect timing!

Manufacturing Jobs Are Returning to the U.S.

1 comment • 2 months ago

Rick Sanchez — Why use Raleway font? It is probably the most unreadable font in existence.

Subscribe Add Disqus to your site Add Disqus Add Privacy



CEO INSIGHTS

Boards of Directors

CEO Life

Economic Development

Global Business

AWARDS & RANKINGS

Best Companies for Leaders

Best Companies for Leaders

CEO Confidence Index

Corporate Citizenship Awards

CHIEF EXECUTIVE GROUP

About Chief Executive Group

Advertising/Sponsorship

Careers

Chief Executive magazine

- Leadership & Strategy
- Manufacturing
- Marketing & Sales
- Mid-Market Report
- Policy & Politics
- Talent Management
- Technology

- CEO of the Year
- Mid-Market Elite
- Wealth Creators

- Chief Executive Network
- Contact Us
- Events
 - Smart Manufacturing Summit
 - CEO2CEO Digital Transformation Summit
- Newsletters
- Peer Network
 - Chief Executive Network
 - Senior Executive Network
- Press
- Research
 - B2B Sales & Marketing Research Report
 - CEO & Senior Executive Compensation Report Private Companies
- Webinars
- White Papers