



Tucker on Innovation

Reporting on best practices, the latest research and upcoming events in the field of innovation, Tucker on Innovation is a free quarterly newsletter for organizational practitioners, thought leaders, and friends of the Global Innovation Movement.
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Judy Williams, Editor

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Looking Back at 2006

At Toast to the Unreasonable People

By this time in the year, my guess is that you're so busy tying up loose ends and looking forward to the holidays that innovation just isn't your top priority at the moment. So instead of reporting on the Global Innovation Movement, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your support, for being a part of my life, and to reflect on the year.

People sometimes ask whether I ever get tired of all the travel. For those of us who don't use corporate aircraft, there's no question that airline travel has gotten tougher, flights fuller, delays more frequent and security lines longer. Yet what I recall now as I reflect on the year are not the hassles but the magic moments, exotic locations and the meetings with remarkable people like you whom I met along the way.

What interests me about innovation is that it's the study of human progress. While so much of the news is about war, poverty, disease, genocide and environmental degradation, innovation is about the opposite. It's about creating a better future for yourself, your family, your community, your organization and your country.

George Bernard Shaw once observed that the reasonable person adapts to the conditions that surround him, whereas the *unreasonable* person tries to adapt surrounding conditions to himself. Shaw concluded therefore that all progress depends on the unreasonable person. The best part of what I get to do for a living is to associate with so many constructively unreasonable people.

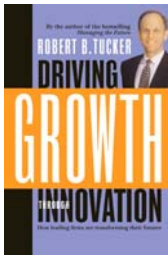
So here's to you, you unreasonable person! Thank you for being the spark. Thank you for stepping forward. Thank you for dreaming big, and for rolling up your sleeves to turn vision into reality. Thank you for questioning the status quo in your organization; thank you for questioning the necessity of war, the inevitability of disease. Thank you for trying to find a better way.

While this is by no means a complete list, here are just a few unreasonable people who I met on my journey this year.

Eighty-five years ago, an innovator named Edgar Allen set out to reform the way society perceived people with disabilities. He saw a need to create services designed specifically to help people gain greater independence. His

Driving Growth Through Innovation

by Robert B. Tucker



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"The reasonable person adapts to the conditions that surround him. The unreasonable person tries to adapt surrounding conditions to himself. All progress depends on the unreasonable person."

George Bernard Shaw

vision that "there's got to be a better way" blossomed into Easter Seals, which today helps more than a million individuals and their families each year.

At this year's annual gathering of the Easter Seals affiliated organizations in Chicago, I had the honor of being invited to be the keynote speaker. During the course of preparing, I became familiar with the progress CEO Jim Williams and his team are making in transforming Easter Seals into an example of a 21st century nonprofit organization that works.

The folks at Easter Seals asked me if I would be willing to interview several of their clients onstage about their experiences. I met four of the most incredible young Americans, and their inspiring stories brought tears to one's eyes. Iowa farm boy Ryan Odens described how he was nearly killed in a disabling rollover accident in his pickup truck and was told he'd be a quadriplegic for life. During months of painful recovery and physical therapy, Ryan was encouraged to pursue other interests away from the farm. But Ryan, a wise-cracking, self-effacing young man, was unreasonable in his determination to live a normal life. He was determined not only to walk, but continue farming with his family. With the help of Easter Seals Rural Solutions program, which modified equipment to accommodate his disabilities, Ryan is today growing corn and soybeans and even selling insurance on the side.

What a privilege to be invited to work with the innovators at Consumer Reports. At a time when business, media and governmental institutions' reputations are in tatters, these passionate product testers based in Yonkers, New York are busy inventing a bolder future for this well-regarded brand. This year, they invited InnovationNetwork's Joyce Wycoff and me to assist them in their efforts to revitalize their offerings for a new generation of consumers. To CEO Jim Guest, John Satejo, Dan Winston and the innovation teams, thank you for not being content to rest on all you have accomplished, and for the opportunity to work with such stimulating, mission-oriented people.

The work that I do often puts me into contact with economic development people, most often in the States, but sometimes in other parts of the world. This year I worked with manufacturing development organizations in various regions of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Connecticut and Maryland. I thank each of you for seeing that innovation is the next phase of progress for small and mid-sized businesses that will compete in the global economy. Thank you to all the guests on the Innovation Talk Shows who shared their best practices with audiences of peers.

To Mike Galiazzo, of Regional Manufacturing Institute in Maryland, my hat is off to you for your passion and dedication, and all the organizing work you do. To Luis Cervantes Fernandez and Melissa Felix, two of the hardest working, most dedicated organizers for the state of Guanajuato, Mexico, I say that businesses in your region are indebted to you two for what you bring to them in the way of new ideas and solutions. The theme at the huge conference in Leon, Mexico that I addressed in August was a topic that might surprise you: how Mexico's manufacturers can themselves compete against lower wage China and Vietnam.

To the folks at IBM, whom we were fortunate to work with on four continents this year, a special thanks to Charmaine KM Sim, IBM Asia Pacific headquarters in Singapore, and Joaquin "Jajo" Quintos, IBM Country General Manager the Philippines, and Suphajee Suthumpun, Country General Manager Thailand, for the opportunity to share my message at your CEO summits. Jajo, your own presentation on IBM and techno-trends at the Summit in Manila was so thought-provoking that I am just glad you are not on the lecture circuit – I don't need the competition!

Finally, to all of the speaker's bureaus and individual agents we work with, a heartfelt thank you. Without you, nothing happens. Thanks to Santiago Zapata in South America, Prakash Idnani in India, Richard Barcham in Dallas, Ed Adler in Boston, and David Loy and Brian Lord in Nashville – among many others, for making this year the best ever. With you, everything happens!

See you next year, and have an unreasonably great holiday.

Tucker to Speak in Paris and Sydney

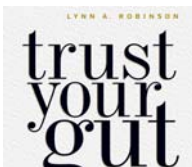
As you probably know, most of the work I do for clients is behind closed doors and is not open to the public. But two upcoming events are the exception, and I wanted to let you know about them in the event that you may wish to attend, or perchance, have me arrange a side trip to work with you and your group while I'm in the "neighborhood."

The first public event will be in Paris, France on February 14th, 2007 at the Alcatel-Lucent Forum 2007, a three-day international conference of CEOs and CIOs where they tell me they expect 8000 attendees. For details on registration, please [read more](#) and watch for the announcement which will be posted after the new year.

On March 14 and 15, 2007, the prestigious Hargraves Institute of Sydney, Australia, has invited me to deliver the international address at this conference attracting not only Australia's but top executives from throughout the Asia-Pacific region. For details [click here](#).

**Trust Your Gut: How
the Power of
Intuition Can Grow
Your Business**

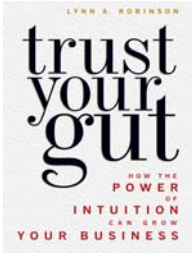
by Lynn A. Robinson



How Intuition Can Help You Be a Better Innovator

Trust Your Gut: How the Power of Intuition Can Grow Your Business by Lynn Robinson (Kaplan Publishing, 2006) features a chapter devoted to the ideas of Robert Tucker ("Liberate Your Inner Innovator"), and his suggestions for tapping its guiding power. "Innovation, by its very nature, means





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that you're doing something that's never been done before," says Tucker. "There are no step-by-step recipes and no market research that can guarantee success. But going with your gut can become a kind of sixth sense that can tell you to 'keep the faith and continue' or 'throw in the towel'."

Inside the Innovation Elite Best Practices of the World's Most Innovative Firms

This online executive seminar gives you the tools and lessons learned of the world's most innovative firms. Master the best practices companies have used to build new capability, discover your next breakthrough idea, and foster a culture where experimentation and openness to change flourish.

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