



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. Past issues are archived on our website: <http://www.innovationresource.com>. Reprint permission granted upon request to the Editor at jwilliams@innovationresource.com. Copyright 2008, all rights reserved.

Judy Williams, Editor Fourth Quarter, 2008

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“Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”

– Matthew 7:7

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Innovation in a Global Recession? Yes, You Can.

It's no secret that 2009 looks to be the most challenging year in decades, regardless of where you live, where you work or what you do. So the question is: what can you do, starting now, to meet the challenge of this new year of uncertainty and disruption? How might you use your innovation skills to create a more prosperous, secure future for yourself and those around you?

Trying to do things the same way could be fatal. Simply hunkering down to ride out the storm won't protect you this time. And changing everything in a panic is equally flawed.

I've always believed in the old saw, "accuracy first, then momentum." It's a counterpoint to: "we're lost but we're making good time!"

Now is the perfect time to pause and reflect, to steep ourselves in history. Winston Churchill once said, "The farther back you can look, the further forward you can see." History tells us that in tough periods, a new order is born, old assumptions and ways of doing business are rendered obsolete, and new leaders often emerge.

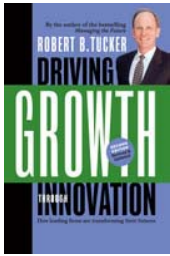
If you want to lead change rather than be buffeted by it, now is the time to reflect, refocus, and regenerate.

Reflect first of all on what's still working. Reflect on and cherish valued colleagues, customers, suppliers, and of course, friends and family. They are the real source of prosperity in your life. Why not communicate with them how much you value them and care for them?

Reflect too on the skills and practices that have brought you success to date. They are the building blocks of even greater success in the years ahead. Take the time to identify that which you do well, including your leadership skills and innovation competencies and the relationships you have formed.

Next, rethink just about everything. Especially reconsider long-held assumptions about your business, your customers, even your style. Rethink priorities and goals to make sure they are still relevant. Ask yourself often: is this assumption still true? Is this what my customer wants from me now?

Through Innovation



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In uncertain times, challenging assumptions is an essential endeavor of leaders. When customers are redefining what “value” means to them by the day, and deciding it is different, it is essential to keep pace. Customers still want what you sell; their problems haven’t gone away. It’s just that their ability to afford your offerings, at the moment, has been diminished by economic uncertainty and fear. Rethinking the relevance of your business model, and making changes to remain relevant, will put you in good stead. And when the market does turn up again, you will still be around to serve their needs.

And finally, take the time to regenerate. You’re probably going to work harder than ever in 2009 to keep up with vast changes and issues not even on your radar yet. So why not take a real break in the action during the holidays to slow down, read a book, spend time with your loved ones, write a long letter to a friend you haven’t seen in awhile?

The new year will be here before you know it. I wish you the very best and a happy holiday.

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