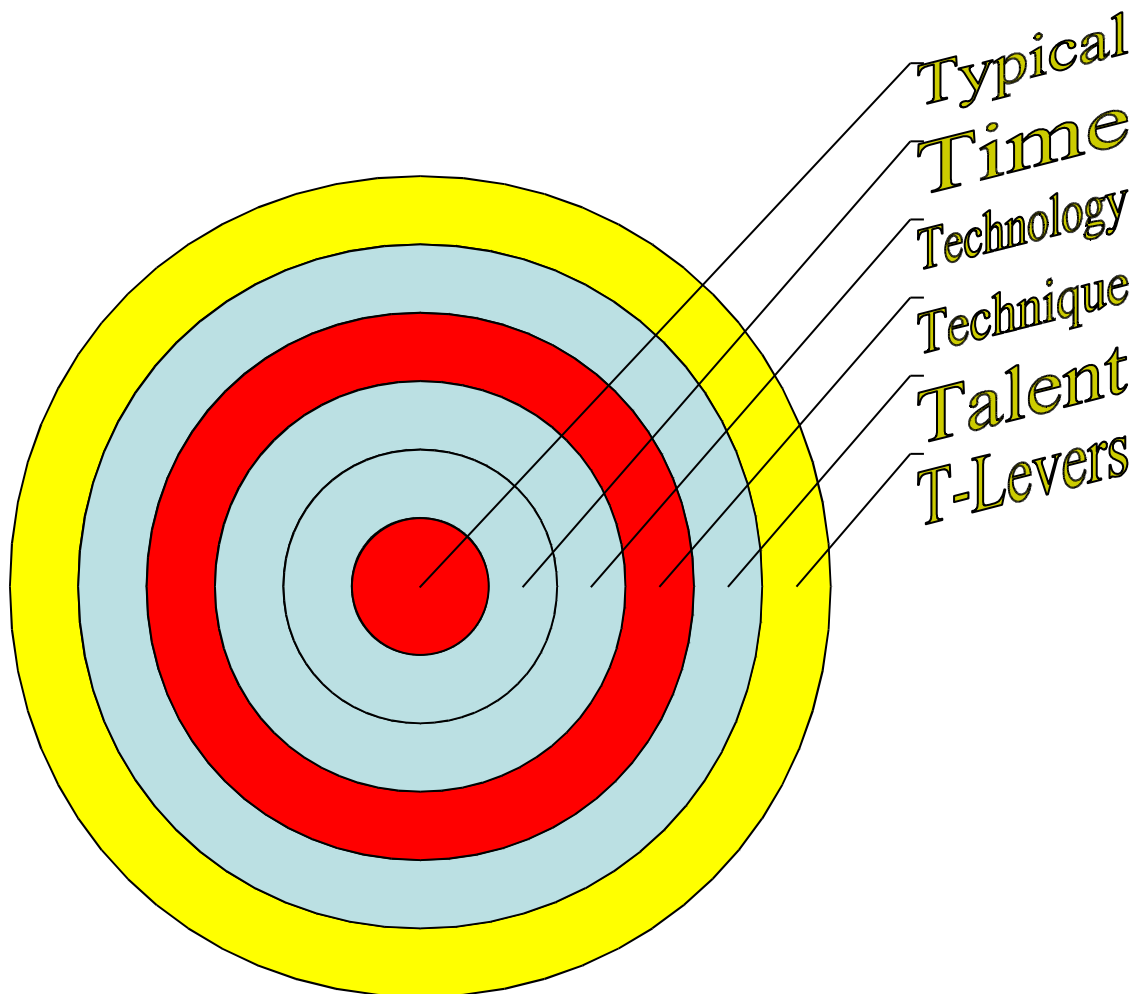


Energizing Your Innovative Leadership Power



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Energizing Your Innovative Leadership Power

Innovative leadership is a set of aptitudes you can acquire through learning and practice. If you can feel, think, act and believe you are innovative, you will become and be recognized or respected for your innovative leadership.

Whether you are a professional, manager, entrepreneur or someone who just wants to learn more about innovative leadership, this paper will empower you to take positive action towards your goal.

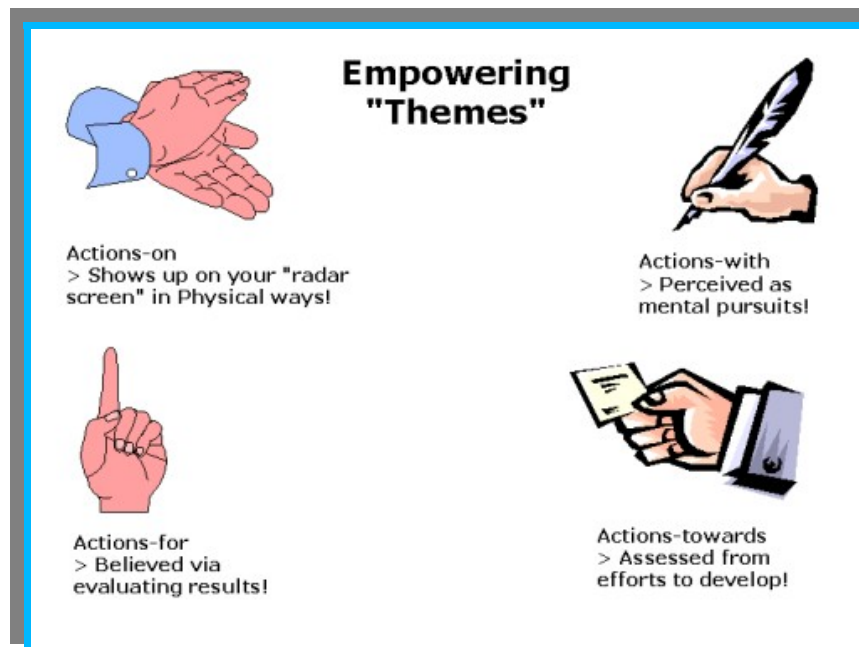
By learning the traits and skills of innovative leadership you will then have the ability and tools you need to teach and coach your associates, to help those partners or colleagues you work with to innovate and enable them to create and launch more sustainable solutions for the challenges they encounter.



What distinguishes an innovative leader from other leaders?

After researching the commonalities of history's most successful and enduring leaders, we came to a relatively simple conclusion – legendary leaders remain loyal disciples to their group's noble purpose by performing three mission-critical acts:

1. They always engage the hearts, minds and wills of their people;
2. They always empower the skills, performance and competencies of their people;
3. They always encourage the endeavors, strengths and confidence of their people.



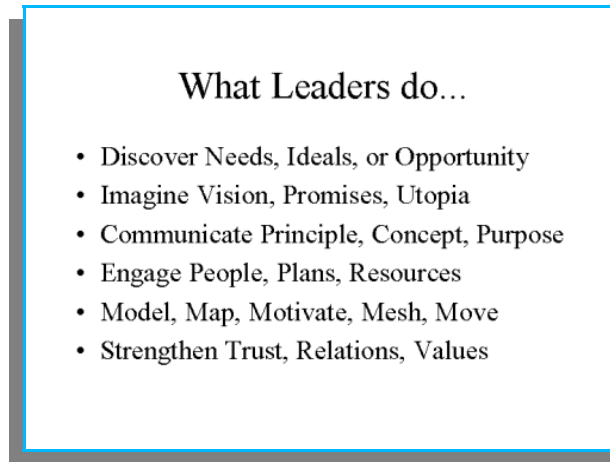
Leadership Is An Act of Empowerment!

You can increase the success rate of your leadership actions if you adopt these practices. To achieve your own measure of leadership greatness, make it your ambition to:

- **Engage** - help your colleagues, partners, associates, peers & constituents or clients to connect with, believe in, commit to and organize themselves for taking these actions:
 - i. Working in or performing on a mission-critical activity,
 - ii. Specifying, reaching or earnestly striving for a desired objective,
 - iii. Completing a project step, contracted milestone or some special assignment
- **Empower** – by linking them with the knowledge, resources, assets & processes they need, in such a way as to achieve these aims:
 - i. Preparing them for the tasks, activities, objectives, challenges & problems they will need to work on and struggle through;
 - ii. Directing them to the sources of tools or materials, supplies and resources, specialists or networks which will enable them to succeed in their efforts, -
 - iii. Guiding them in and coach them through the complex processes of identifying, classifying, mapping or modeling, learning, analyzing, evaluating, innovating & creating, managing, venturing & leading for any situation
 - iv. Facilitating a steady, continuous supply of emotional, spiritual and psychological supportive organizational structures, cultural-strengthening systems and capabilities to support them as they deal with the trials of performing the difficult work at hand
 - v. Providing your people with the awesome energy of a powerful shared belief, a way to employ their core competences or promoting their acceptance and buy-in for a relevant yet inspirational mission or meaning;
- **Encourage** – means giving those who work with you clearly defined reasons for taking action, acting responsibly or being committed through statements which reinforce their:
 - i. Purpose for being, for their inclusion in this endeavor, for making a difference and contribution, for reaching upwards or towards a loftier plateau
 - ii. Obligation to the mission, to help others, to fulfill an ideal, to belong, to the precepts a higher power or some greater good for the world
 - iii. Trust in the common purpose, in the good nature of others, in the love and mercy of an Almighty God, in a promising potential for the venture
 - iv. Affinity with a noble or worthy enterprise, with other positive or success-oriented people, with a great and righteous goal.

Attaining competence in these three skill areas will give you a distinct advantage in today's globally-oriented, time-compressed, resource-constrained, knowledge-driven

reality – yet, even with those impressive capabilities you could still lack the strategic insights, creative instincts and artistic flair demanded of innovators.



The Tasks of Traditional Leaders

Exceptional leaders like Jesus Christ, Martin Luther King, Jr., former GE CEO, Jack Welch and Mohandas Gandhi exhibited many laudable traits of innovators but not all leaders are innovative. On the other hand, most innovative leaders make and display a good-faith effort to act-out and master those three core skills of legendary leaders.

Innovative leaders take their performances to a whole new place – they illustrate the passion and willingness necessary for stepping out towards a compelling vision plus they possess an unflinching allegiance to the pursuit of a better future while they persuade others to join in their adventurous, enterprising efforts.

Exploring the Inner Qualities of Innovative Leadership

In order to justify our later recommendations for changing, adjusting and improving your leadership, you will need to understand the underlying qualities of history's most famous innovative leaders.

In the sections which follow, you will read a quick summary catalog description for each characteristic along with some anecdotal evidence and names of prominent people who ably display the desired trait.

Generally, you will easily learn how innovative leaders tend to differ from their traditional leadership counterparts by evaluating their primary actions for promoting the creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship of others as fitting into one or more of the following three categories:

1. They **inspire** people – by breathing life into or animating the mission
2. They are **guides** to people – by being a steadying or directing influence
3. They **enlighten** people – by illuminating or providing insight on the ideals

Just another word of guidance. As we list and catalog these ingredients of innovative leadership, I beg you to pause at each item for a moment and ask yourself this question. If you do not possess this particular trait, what do you plan to do about acquiring it? I want you to think seriously about making each and every one of these aptitudes a vital part of your personal portfolio.

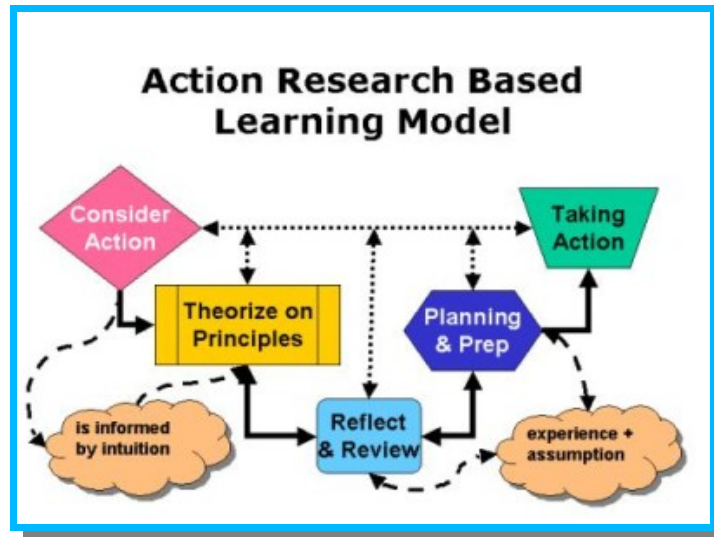


Diagram – Use Activity-based Learning

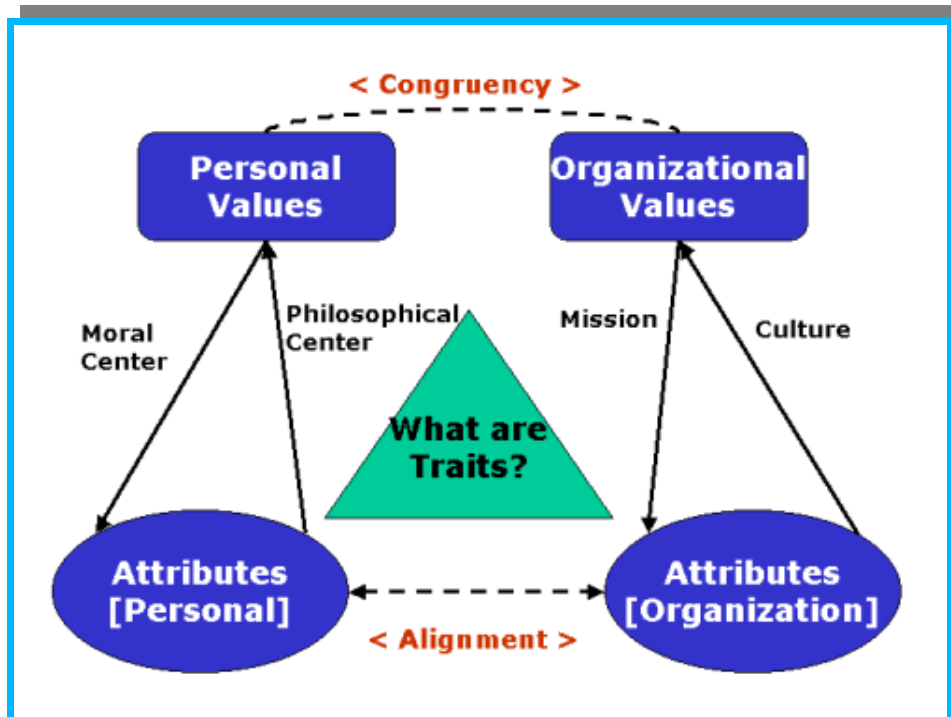
In case you mistakenly assume the above advice does not apply to you because your job title implies you are a leader or manager already – please consider this – every successful leader is an excellent learner. Even those leaders who have mastered all three skills will agree with me on this point – we can always improve our performance, competency and effectiveness and today is a great day to begin working on those resolutions!

Deciphering the Mysteries of Innovative Leadership

Aptitude means having a natural tendency or suitability for learning or doing a task or skill. Behaviors are how we arrange the ways, manners and attitudes behind our conduct, actions and customs. Traits are characteristics demonstrating our unique personal or tribal qualities whenever we act, perform or align ourselves with other people or principles.

Instead of categorizing these elements of innovative leaders into traits, or behaviors and so on, we will list each ingredient and describe it by referring to it in terms of its being a trait, aptitude, etc. We also wish to avoid any semblance of disingenuity, so we will provide a few real-life notable examples for these behaviors, qualities and characteristics.





Challenges of Congruency & Alignment of the Personal with the Organizational

Human beings have the ability to adopt or acquire new behaviors and we can alter our emotional states and mental aptitudes to present any types of traits or changed patterns of behavior we desire. The hard work of changing ourselves demands we make all possible effort for fulfilling the intentions of our commitments.

To assist you in strengthening your inner qualities, mental attitudes and unleashing your latent talents, we will supply you with recommendations and suggestions of tools, educational resources and training services whenever possible – remember, the world's very best leaders are highly aggressive, persistent and uncompromising learners!

Traits, Aptitudes and Behaviors of Innovative Leadership

Innovative leaders inspire, guide and enlighten people to enable them to generate, commit to and achieve truly impressive breakthroughs in creative, change challenging endeavors. With this definition in mind, we now embark upon our journey into the nature, characteristics and elements of innovative leadership.

1. Action-driven – wants and needs to analyze situations, take decisions and exploit opportunities in the most proactive, agile and quickest possible ways to avoid losing out due to inaction or procrastination [aptitude]
2. Deployment-speedster – worships the notions of extreme speed and time being of the essence when it involves deploying or implementing new ideas, innovations or learning [aptitude] – Ed Zander, CEO of Motorola Corp., believes in compressing the cycle time used in launching new, innovative product ideas

3. Change-agent extraordinaire – fosters, cultivates and nurtures an atmosphere of change by helping ensure everyone learns, adapts, improves, evolves, masters and embraces new things on a continual basis [trait]

4. Future-preoccupied
– can see and is compelled to find the next horizon, to visualize and create the future, this person hunts for and pounces on possible paradigm shifts, evolving



- fields of knowledge, focusing on 'what's next scenarios' and pursues the very latest or most recent directions in trends [behavior] – Sir Richard Branson, Chairman of the Virgin Group, PLC, best exemplifies this behavior, plans are in-place to offer the Virgin-Galactic space ferry service in 2008
5. Star-maker – speaks to, connects with and builds-up the commitment, longing, pride, faith, hope, drive and perseverance of people and through which empower people to reach for and achieve their own version of stardom and summit-level accomplishments – a former supervisor of mine actively looked for, recruited and led a team of telecommunications engineering superstars who regularly surpassed the achievements of all other professionals in the field [so much so that companies in other countries would beg for a few minutes of our time just to get answers or ideas for their challenges] – he transformed every person who worked for him into a true star! [trait]
 6. Impassioned-player – expresses, showcases and exudes a passionate, excited confidence in new ideas, the possibilities contained in change and the value or worthiness of the mission [aptitude]
 7. Evangelically-oriented – communicates and projects a message, aura and vision of a hopeful, enticing, more desirable future by using persuasive influence and their convincing loyalty to the mission of serving the needs of others [behavior] – Vinod Khosla, co-founder of Sun Microsystems, and high-technology entrepreneur and venture capitalist and financier, has become the prophetic supporter, a voice for our future sustainability with his ardent backing of new alternative sources of energy
 8. Regulatory-outlaw – throws out, burns and disregards the rules, bureaucracy and policy manuals and chooses to establish or follow ethically-purified, truly sensible guidelines [aptitude]
 9. Complacency-fighter – abhors, is repulsed by and challenges the status quo, stuck-in-the-mud or satisfied attitudes of fellow workers because without inspirational dissatisfaction, the organization will never want or be able to move towards any innovative opportunities [trait] – Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple Computers, refuses to accept the constraints of being a computer manufacturer

10. Opportunity-grabber – greedy, hungry and searches for new ideas, opportunities and possibilities by evaluating trends, studying technological developments and reading insightful, profound or forward-thinking literature [aptitude] – Barry Diller, multimedia entrepreneur, is an undisputed master of the “opportunity grab”
11. Cultural-architect – creates, constructs and maintains an environment, infrastructure and factory where creativity, innovation and imagination are supported and valued – a climate which encourages shared collective and cultural beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors [behavior] – Fujio Cho, CEO of Toyota, has grafted the DNA of product quality & innovative excellence into their culture
12. Grand-planner – refuses to think small, craves huge or super-sized gains, plans on grandiloquent levels and the loftiest plateaus, does not fear taking smartly calculated risks [trait] – Sergey Brin and Larry Page of Google hunger for their company to be a comprehensive library containing all the of world's knowledge
13. Catlike-curiosity – wonders what if, why, how does it do that thing that it does, where did it goes, who is that, when did it happen [aptitude]
14. Knowledge-sponge – studies a large base of subjects, enjoys being exposed to diverse types or different forms of experiences, realizes novel ideas come from seemingly unrelated, unconnected data and fields of knowledge [aptitude] – Larry Ellison, CEO of Oracle Corp., lives to soak-up and secrete any new ideas
15. Educationally-obsessed – driven to pursue every activity which stimulates the brains, moves the hearts and feeds the creative instinct of people, lives for the most visionary, entertaining, electrifying, exciting, exploratory and radically new kinds of ideas conceivable.[trait]
16. Innovation-survivalist – views innovating as the exclusive, most critical method for growth, prosperity and survival of the species, organizations, industries and even the world.[trait] – Brin and Page of Google can't imagine living in a world where product innovations and service evolutions don't exist
17. Effectiveness-junkie – addicted to producing and implementing ideas which make processes, policies, procedures, models, systems, products, services and living work better than before. [behavior] – Jack Welch, former CEO of GE Corp. spent every waking moment tweaking, tuning and adjusting his organization for peak, optimal performances
18. Creativity-capitalist – believes and trusts all investments of cash, time, systems, education and expertise devoted to increasing, improving and expanding the creativity of people will always pay large dividends and produce orders of magnitude returns on investment (ROI).[trait] – the 3M Corp., leverages its primary creativity and innovation asset, its employees, to excel in this trait
19. Innovative-collaborator – will tend to seek out, consult and hold hands with partners, allies, colleagues, constituents, competitors or even total strangers when working through the innovating process or on innovation problems.[behavior]

First Steps Towards Becoming An Innovative Leader

Dr. Napoleon Hill, the father of the modern self-improvement movement, usually told his audiences, *“Desire is the starting point of all achievement, not a hope, not a wish, but a keen pulsating desire which transcends everything.”* If you want to energize, improve or augment your innovative leadership, you will need to carefully and thoroughly review the traits, aptitudes and behaviors listed above.

As you study each of those 19 ingredients, ask yourself this question: *“If a journalist wanted to summarize my life's greatest achievement, would I choose this item?”* When you discover your inner voice answering “yes” to any of those items, I want you to imagine yourself being like the kind of person – acting out that behavior, operating through that aptitude or displaying that trait.

To avoid being trapped by an illusion, you should make yourself feel comfortable with drawing images of or writing out your impressions concerning any of those preferred behaviors, traits or aptitudes. By



transforming your thoughts into physical form, you will be able to see or feel the object of your desire – you will begin to visualize yourself using, incorporating and applying this trait, behavior or aptitude for your own situations.

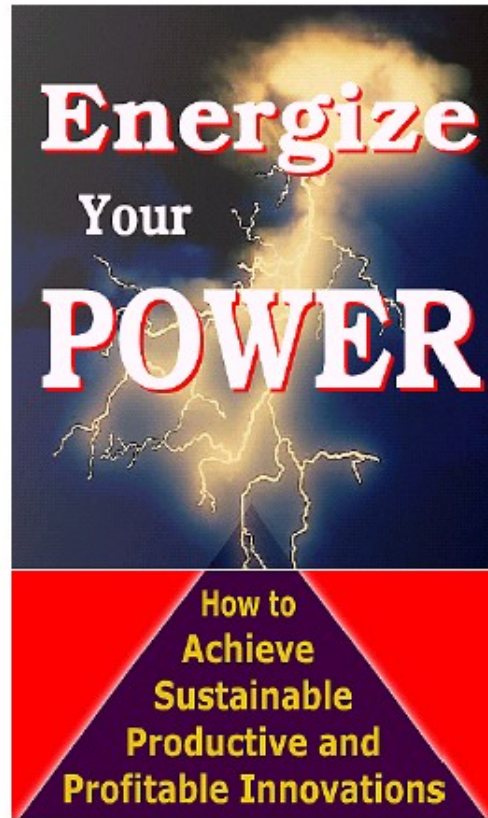
Most self-help experts recommend we find as many images related to our goals as we possibly can plus they always urge us to make extensive use of the visual representations of our desires. That's why people cut and paste photos of their dream homes or cars, buy posters and painted art with motivational quotes and words on them, and hang positive affirmation statements all over their living and working spaces.

The last task you need to perform in building a white-hot burning desire for your objective is this: meditate on and clearly say what you want to achieve to yourself everyday, and multiple [5 or more] times each day for at least 21 consecutive days. Saying your affirmations and goals first thing upon waking and last thing before falling asleep will super-charge the heated passions of your desire.

By focusing your thoughts and your physical body on the objects of your desires, you will strengthen your inner being and transform your outer behaviors to align itself with the deeds and kinds of things you dreamt of and hoped for.

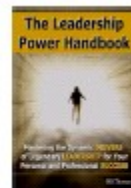
“Sometimes you have to look reality in the eye, and deny it.” - Garrison Keillor

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ABOUT YOUR AUTHOR

Bill Thomas is Managing Principal and Senior Vice-President of Mustard Seed Investments, Inc. He consults with clients in over 75 countries on business strategy, organizational leadership, entrepreneurship, innovation and technology issues. He also writes and lectures extensively on the new models, skills and resources needed for knowledge work, learning organizations and the **Imagination Economy**.

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