



Innovation as Usual: How to Help Your People Bring Great Ideas to Life

By Paddy Miller, Thomas Wedell-Wedellsborg

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Innovation as Usual: How to Help Your People Bring Great Ideas to Life By Paddy Miller, Thomas Wedell-Wedellsborg

Turn team members into innovators

Most organizations approach innovation as if it were a sideline activity. Every so often employees are sent to “Brainstorm Island”: an off-site replete with trendy lectures, creative workshops, and overenthusiastic facilitators. But once they return, it’s back to business as usual.

Innovation experts Paddy Miller and Thomas Wedell-Wedellsborg suggest a better approach. They recommend that leaders at all levels become “innovation architects,” creating an ecosystem in which people engage in key innovation behaviors as part of their daily work.

In short, this book is about getting to a state of “innovation as usual,” where regular employees—in jobs like finance, marketing, sales, or operations—make innovation happen in a way that’s both systemic and sustainable.

Instead of organizing brainstorming sessions, idea jams, and off-sites that rarely result in success, leaders should guide their people in what the authors call the “5 + 1 keystone behaviors” of innovation: focus, connect, tweak, select, stealthstorm, (and the + 1) persist:

- **Focus beats freedom:** Direct people to look only for ideas that matter to the business
- **Insight comes from the outside:** Urge people to connect to new worlds
- **First ideas are flawed:** Challenge people to tweak and reframe their initial ideas
- **Most ideas are bad ideas:** Guide people to select the best ideas and discard the rest
- **Stealthstorming rules:** Help people navigate the politics of innovation
- **Creativity is a choice:** Motivate everyone to persist in the five keystone behaviors

Using examples from a wide range of companies such as Pfizer, Index Ventures, Lonza, Go Travel, Prehype, DSM, and others, *Innovation as Usual* lights the way toward embedding creativity in the DNA of the workplace.

So cancel that off-site. Instead, read *Innovation as Usual*—and put innovation at the core of your business.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Refreshingly, this book forgoes the usual conceit that its readers are CEOs whose whims translate into immediate impact and aims squarely at ordinary managers...” — *New York Observer*

“*Innovation As Usual: How to Help Your People Bring Great Ideas to Life* is a handy resource for business people in leadership positions, its subtitle capturing its value brilliantly. Knowing how to help employees activate great ideas is the essence of what good managers do and the methods for doing it well are passed on in this how-to manual...Together the authors have compiled a concise collection of case studies involving businesses that have managed to make innovation a regular — and lucrative — part of their operations. It distills the wisdom taken from these studies into six points. This level of clarity and focus means you could finish the book in two to three sittings and be ready to mend “choke points” on your company's “creative path” the very next day.” — *The Big Issue*

“*Innovation as Usual* is a very useful book for leaders interested in building innovation into the DNA of their organization.” — **Research-Technology Management**

“Business leaders need to help people working for them to be innovative as part of their daily working lives rather than just during isolated brainstorming events.” — **The Future of Business**

“The book at first glance seems to be a light-footed management consulting book, you should not be deceived... The last part of the book is full of suggestions that the curious and diligent reader can dig into. It is a book that is solidly grounded and should be required reading for all CEOs who want to maintain their lead.” — *Berlingske (Denmark)*

“Professor Miller challenges thinking on the importance of innovation within organisations.” — **B&T (Australia)**

“In '*Innovation as Usual*', the authors argue that the art is not to treat innovation as some sort of fashionable accessory but to build it into a company's culture.” — *Sunday Times*

“Where *Innovation as Usual* really cuts through the white noise is that it is fearless in its message (the section on how to kill off ideas is particularly useful). And the message is loud, clear and simple. For innovation to happen in a meaningful way it has to be part of daily work.” — *Engineering & Technology Magazine, The Institution of Engineering and Technology*

“Miller and Wedell-Wedellsborg are world-class empiricists and diehard pragmatists” — **First Friday Book Synopsis (ffbsccn.wordpress.com)**

ADVANCE PRAISE for *Innovation as Usual*:

Vijay Govindarajan, Professor, Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College; bestselling author, *Reverse Innovation*—

“This book is about an idea whose time has come. An eminently practical guide on how to convert

innovative ideas into commercial success.”

Jørgen Vig Knudstorp, CEO, The LEGO Group—

“*Innovation as Usual* shows you how to make innovation happen within your team on a regular basis. A rich and fascinating read.”

Jessica Jackley, Cofounder, Kiva; venture partner, Collaborative Fund—

“*Innovation as Usual* is packed with powerful ideas and practical advice for aspiring innovators. A great guide for people who want to make the world a better place.”

Jacob Holm, President and CEO, Fritz Hansen A/S—

“I’ve been looking for this book for a long time! *Innovation as Usual* provides an easy-to-implement process on how to organize the innovative instincts of the people in your company.”

Frans Johansson, CEO, The Medici Group; author, *The Medici Effect* and *The Click Moment*—

“The authors challenge the notion that innovation cannot happen as part of every leader’s day-to-day responsibilities. It is packed with vivid examples and great tactics to ensure consistent execution of exciting new ideas for any leader within an organization. Great read!”

Joergen Bardenfleth, Strategy Director, Microsoft International; Chairman, Symbion—

“If you are tired of reading about innovation as fluffy stuff and want to create results by doing new things, this is the book for you.”

About the Author

Paddy Miller is a professor at IESE Business School in Barcelona. He has worked with senior executives in organizations such as Nike, Lufthansa, Henkel, Bayer, L’Oréal, Boeing, Citi, and the World Bank, and has led courses at MIT, CEIBS, Harvard, and Darden. Miller is the author of *Mission Critical Leadership*, and his work on global teams was awarded by the Academy of Management.

Thomas Wedell-Wedellsborg is a partner at The Innovation Architects, a management consulting firm in New York City. He is a frequent speaker at corporate events and has worked with managers in nearly all parts of the globe, including China, India, Russia, Singapore, Britain, France, the United States, and his native country, Denmark. He has founded two start-ups and serves as an adviser to BBC Worldwide Labs.

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