

News on Creativity and Innovation related topics

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News

Many of you know that Blogger is withdrawing FTP publishing support. This means that our blog has moved and it can now be found at <http://blog.creative4business.co.uk>. In

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the third edition of **Innovation Matters** for 2010. By the time you read this we will be officially into Spring here in the UK and Easter will be behind us.

If readers live in the West Country and would like to attend a reasonably priced one day seminar on using Creativity in Business at the University of Bath on June 9th, please [click here](#) for further details. Keen eyed readers will note that this was publicised last month, however it was rescheduled.

In this month's edition there are three more articles which I hope will get you thinking. The first, **Rockin' Chairs**, is about an exciting new **Welsh** company that has attacked the mobility market. If you want further details you can [click here](#) to go to their website. Last month I wrote about the state of innovation in the public sector. In **Yes There Is Hope** I talk about the BBC's recent '**Ban The Boss**' programme and how this approach can be used to good effect. Finally, the

due course the format will change to add more new features and widgets. The **RSS feed** has also changed and can be found [here](#).

There has been a minor update of the website. More will come shortly so watch out for more **free resources, podcasts** and of course new **content**.

Are you on Twitter? If so you can [follow Derek Cheshire](#) (only if you want to of course!).

metaphor of a **Detox Diet** is used to create a checklist of things that we should do, or perhaps avoid, to get the best out of our organisations.

Once again, if you have missed previous editions of Innovation Matters you can find them in our [newsletter archive](#).

As always, your thoughts and feedback are welcome.

Happy reading,

Derek Cheshire

Rockin' Chairs

I recently had the good fortune to bump into Mark and Jon Owen at a business event in Cardiff and was immediately intrigued by both their product, and the way in which they had developed it and got it to the market. Those with design heads will of course marvel about ergonomics, design and manufacturing but what about the human side, what about (dare I say it) Innovation? I'm sure that Jon and Mark did not really see themselves as innovators but they are doing something different and making headway, so what happened?

Mark had been a wheelchair user for over a decade and had been going with the flow. Wheelchairs were an engineering solution to a medical condition. Did that have to be the case? Had being confined to a wheel chair caused a major personality shift, changed his interests or priorities in life? No, but it had placed him in an entirely new bracket within society. He was now classed as disabled. One thing that struck Mark and Jon was the ugliness of mobility



products. Just as we feel close to our iPhone or other gadget, so Mark had a gadget that was with him all of the time which was transport, sofa and office chair - so why couldn't it be cool too?

Nomad was born! Why hadn't this been done before, why did nobody see this opportunity? Was it market, was it international conglomerates or blinkered stakeholders (you decide)? With an emphasis on design and with access to a unique perspective on the marketplace a unique wheelchair was born. Made of lightweight aluminium, engineered to provide day long comfort and requiring less effort it sure does look cool, even people who are not disabled will want to have a go! You can even propel yourself with one hand!

So how did they get here and more importantly how did Mark and Jon start out? A discussion whilst on holiday convinced them that this was possible. Time out to think is always important, without it the results could have been a badly engineered product in a garden shed!

[Download](#) the full article as PDF or [read more ...](#)



Yes There Is Hope - Public Sector Innovation

TV viewers here in **Wales**, UK may see a documentary entitled '**Ban The Boss**'. It was made in conjunction with Dr Paul Thomas at the University of Glamorgan. The title was a little sensationalist to say the least, but the programme itself was very interesting. Following my article last month on what is wrong with public sector innovation I thought it right to shine some light on how things could be fixed.

Despite the fears of those involved the idea was not to cause anarchy or make large numbers of people redundant but simply to make the changes necessary to create an organisational form that is relevant for the future. The programme focused on two main areas of **Blaenau Gwent Council**, Environmental Services (refuse collection) and Transport Services. Those who are involved in change know that there are essentially two options, top down and bottom up. In large inflexible organisations change orchestrated from the top can be so slow that it is ineffective. In the public sector the changes often take longer than the time for which key people are in post, making the whole effort grind to a halt.

Dr Thomas went into each department and effectively banned all middle and senior management from their posts

for a week. The idea was that the front line workers could organise themselves. As you can imagine, there were many different types of reaction. The bosses felt aggrieved, workers were suspicious and in some cases workers were wondering who would make the decisions. After a week workers were asked to vote to find out if they wanted their bosses back. Some were invited back, but not in their original capacity, and nobody was made redundant although some workers chose to leave of their own accord.

It was clear to see that in the cases where workers had made the leap, their workplaces were happier and more efficient places to work with flexibility to take on the challenges of the future. Rather like pouring concrete when building or filling a vessel with water, people and organisations find their own 'levels' and the previous structures were ineffective but were actually sapping the organisation of energy by just maintaining them.

[Read more ...](#)

The Creativity Detox Diet

My view of an organisation that exhibits creative or innovative behaviour is organic and focuses on people. It therefore seems a good idea to use metaphors that relate to the wellbeing and performance of people themselves. So what does make us feel good or energised and what is not so good?



How about a detox by way of a change in diet (as opposed to some of the unpleasant practices that exist at health spas)? As human beings we tend to feel sluggish when we have drunk too much alcohol or coffee or not enough water. We are told to eat foods high in fibre and cut out refined sugars and saturated fats. Lastly we can all eat less.

How does this relate to our organisations? Our organisations can feel sluggish and stodgy when:

- We all keep doing exactly the same day in and day out
- Bosses spend much of their time micromanaging and dictatorial
- Knowledge and opinions are not canvassed or allowed

- Lack of transparency cause workers to ask 'why bother'

... and how about having too much of the things that are bad for us:

- Too many initiatives and change programmes
- Over reliance on outside consultants
- Analysis paralysis i.e. analysing rather than doing
- Fear of making mistakes so we 'do not do'
- No strong vision or commitment (no diet plan)
- No shared responsibility (no commitment to our diet)

Readers can take this metaphor as far as they like, as with most things it is simply another way of looking at our organisations to find new and different solutions to our problems.

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