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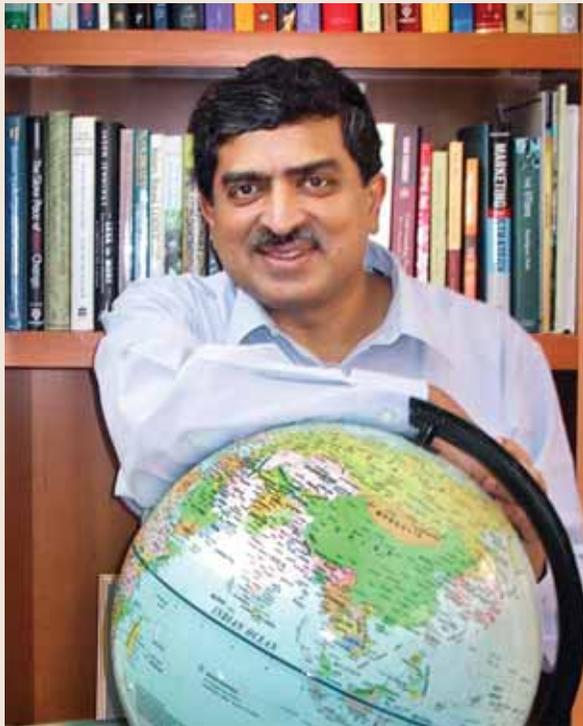
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OCTOBER 2008 Vol. 5 - ISSUE 3 Rs. 40/-

Innovation explosion

Nandan Nilekani, Co-Chairman of Infosys Technologies, is wildly optimistic about innovation in India. Excerpts from a chat with Benedict Paramanand



India is at an interesting point in innovation. Today, things like product quality and timeliness are taken for granted across all industries.

The new buzz in India is innovation. We are trying to harness the knowledge of our clients, knowledge of domains and the knowledge of technology trends. India is innovating at the market place in a big way.

The Indian market is fundamentally different because it has to be high volume and low cost, it has to be scalable, it has to have a national reach and it should be relevant to population that is not well educated. The unique demand of the marketplace is forcing innovation in this country.

We have a whole host of young people joining our companies and they are not burdened with the past. **I think there will be an innovation firestorm in India.**

Innovation is happening at the product level as well. It's happening in services, banking, microfinance and in cell phones, among other things. Business model is one part of it. It is certainly happening in products and services as well. It's happening in retail too. Subiksha, for example, has come from nowhere.

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what's in

FIND OUT HOW
INNOVATION WORKS.

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Have faith to face the world



IT can help India innovate faster

The rude shake-up of the American business environment has sent tremors along the Indian IT industry's spine. Even after calls for not to depend too heavily on one market for so long, the Indian IT industry went for low-hanging fruit. Now, whether they like it or not, they have to focus on the domestic market. And the good news is, it is not all that small and will only grow big.

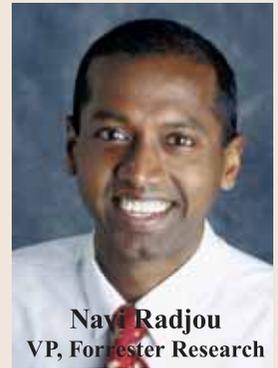
One of the ways the IT industry in India (including the MNCs operating here) can unlock or unleash the domestic potential is to work with Indian companies as partners and not like vendors. One area where they can make a big impact is by helping Indian companies become more innovative.

In a post in Harvard Publishing Online, Navi Radjou, vice president at Forrester Research, an Indian-born French national based in San Francisco, picks five areas where IT can help Indian companies innovate faster. On business model innovation, he thinks, consultants like Accenture and enterprise software players like Oracle "must share with Indian clients their latest technologies that give them broader possibilities to experiment with, and launch disruptive new business models more quickly. These vendors must back these tech offerings with a business road map for their strategic deployment."

As Indian companies evolve into globally adaptive organizations, infused with a collaborative corporate culture supported by a flatter decision-making structure, collaboration tool purveyors like IBM and Microsoft can equip Indian companies with enterprise Web 2.0-enabled employee motivation technologies like prediction marketplaces, idea management apps and employee blogs.

Supply chain application vendors like SAP can help Indian clients achieve operational excellence and help manufacturers run just-in-time factories by providing them with RFID-enabled visibility into their inbound logistics network. Radjou thinks outsourcers like Wipro and HP can go one step further by taking over their Indian clients' entire business processes and continually innovating them under a transformational outsourcing deal.

To help Indian companies launch new products, product life-cycle management vendors like Siemens PLM Software, and innovation management tool vendors like Imaginatik and NineSigma have a unique opportunity to introduce manufacturers to a structured and team-based approach. "Armed with these vendors' project management and virtual



Navi Radjou
VP, Forrester Research

Clearly, as India opens up and grows briskly in most sectors - retail to telecom to transportation to healthcare, IT providers have a responsibility and business opportunity to fulfill corporate India's huge appetite for innovation

collaboration tools, Indian manufacturers can effectively engage all internal and external Innovation Network partners to speed their time-to-market while curbing their overall development costs," says Radjou.

India lags way behind in social computing. Here, social computing tools and technologies are needed to reshape customer service by engaging Net-savvy, socially-aware consumers as value co-creators rather than as just passive buyers. "Tech vendors like Infosys with strong domain expertise in consumer product industries should help Indian firms deploy Web 2.0 tools like blogs and Second Life so that they can collaborate with - instead of just selling to - well-informed Indian end-user communities," Radjou adds.

India CIOs better than Western peers

This may come as a surprise. Radjou believes Indian CIOs are much more aligned to business strategy than their Western peers. The Western CIOs believe that their IT function is good at showcasing cool new tech inventions like RFID and Web 2.0, but it is unable to align these technologies with the firm's business processes in a way that boosts value and impact for the enterprise. As a result, in most US and European companies, the IT department is relegated to a support function, instead of acting as an innovation catalyst.

But in India, he found a totally different scenario: "Here, the IT department is actively driving business innovation. The Indian CIOs I met view themselves as change agents and strive to harness technology to continually transform their firms' products, services, processes, and even business models.

Next Issue **ERP** Special

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Vol. 5 - ISSUE 3

Printed, published and owned by Benedict Paramanand and printed at Rukmini Prakash & Mudra, 38, Behind Modi Hospital, Nagapur, Bengaluru – 560 086; and published at Bengaluru.
Editor – Benedict Paramanand, # 2, Bilden Park, G M Palya, Bengaluru – 560 075.

Mission

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Print : Annual Subscription: Rs. 400/- (12 Issues) Two years Rs. 750/-, Three Years Rs. 950/-

emagazine : Annual Subscription: Rs. 200/- (12 Issues) Two years Rs. 400/-, Three Years Rs. 600/-

Payment options: DD, Cheque, Credit card or PayPal

Send to

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Innovation is happening across the board in India. I'm amazed at what's happening in India. I see a burst of innovations not just in business but also in management practices and the social sector. People like Ramesh Ramanathan (Janaagraha) are changing the rules of the game in the NGOs. There are people in the government who are trying to beat the lethargy of the system. I think India is on the verge of innovation explosion.

Infosys' second innovation journey

Innovation continues to be a firm part of what we do. One, we think we can bring more innovation to our clients in terms of making their businesses more profitable, more efficient and more differentiated. Two, we are finding a great deal of interest among our customers in the innovations of our business model. Teams come to study our HR practices. They find that our HR systems are way ahead. They want to learn how we are sharing our intellectual capital and how we manage people.

You cannot build a business model without IT. If ICICI Bank is able to offer banking at one tenth of the cost of the US, it is innovation of technology. If Tata is offering Nano for One lakh, it is innovation in technology. The low-cost hotels such as Ginger and Lemon Tree are all technology solutions. Unless you have the underpinning of technology, you cannot do this

The other area teams come to learn is about innovations in our new product and services offerings. How do we make the non-linear. Others find it amazing how we are able to add 25,000 people every year and yet maintain quality. We have an excellent appraisal system where every body has an individual training plan. Treating human capital well and showing each individual where he/she has to improve are unique.

Innovation is not limited to a city or business. Look at Comat (a social enterprise and a leading provider of e-Governance solutions that enables sustainable socio-economic growth of the rural communities in India). Microfinance is another. I hear people telling they will open 500 schools. I've never heard these things before. William Bissell of Fab India is talking of starting a company in 500 districts in India.

The Philips Way

Open innovation seems to be an answer for increasing complexity of competition and short product life cycles

We don't need convincing on the fact that product life cycles are getting shorter and shorter, and margin erosion, as a result of price dip, is on the rise. VCRs, DVD players are perfect examples of this trend. Conventional R&D and Innovation methods can't keep up with the pace of shortening cycles. One of the answers is open innovation.

Philips seems to have mastered open innovation – seen in highest revenue from new products now than earlier. Philips has transformed Philips Eindhoven, its former corporate research campus, into a publicly-owned, hi-tech campus. This is a place where it works with many companies and research institutes which cross-fertilize each other.

The Philips InnoHub, an organization for Open Innovation, with branches in Singapore and Shanghai, is at the heart of this activity. It acts as the innovation melting pot for transforming ideas to business success.

InnoHub involves customers' right from the start and integrates user, business, market, and technology aspects of innovation. It works with external and internal clients, creating a network of experts. It utilizes product demonstrators for the proof of concept stage, validate with focus groups to garner customer insights and learn how the usability of new products can be enhanced. It also includes developing appropriate business models and provides management tools to clients to sustain and improve daily operations.

This clearly demonstrates a role model for other high-tech companies pondering over a way forward in the complex world of innovation.

Critical success factors for innovation management

A white paper by Project Leaders International, May 2008 (innovativeye.com), emphasizes on making Innovation a core business process, and lays down critical success factors for Innovation Management

Focus on opportunities of high value: Lesser ideas should be discarded quickly. This is done through a robust and widely understood filtering process.

Have the active commitment of top management: Through visible leadership and use of the process by senior management. As soon as an 'informal' process to fast track ideas from managers is used, the formal innovation process breaks down.

Build techniques into business processes: The most successful innovation cultures are those where the core innovation process

is as natural as all other business processes such as budgeting and planning. Easy to state – difficult to do!

Develop innovation as a core skill – in all staff and especially in managers! It can be done, and managers can be encouraged to put forward their and their staff's ideas. Thinking innovatively is a skill that can be acquired.

Tools to support the application of concepts – using the internet and some tracking software ideas can be tracked and innovations planned. You would not think of running any other core business process without a tool or system of some sort – so why should innovation be different?

Reward people for sharing ideas & knowledge – and this does not just mean a cash bonus! Performance can be improved through good management and a reward system that recognizes group effort and sharing ideas rather than just the individual.

Communicate successes – though all means possible. Let people know how innovative their colleagues are. Communication is the lifeblood of the process and is essential for positive reinforcement of good practice.

Apply Maths for innovation

A white paper by Kartikeyan Iyer shows how the principles of Maths can be applied as thinking tools for innovation

The use of triggers to stimulate new thoughts and innovate has been acknowledged as a useful practice for creativity. Kartikeyan shows how Vedic Maths can be used to generate the triggers.

The Principles of Vedic Mathematics or "Ganita Sutras" (as they are called in Sanskrit) are claimed to be a set of Mathematical principles rediscovered from the Vedas. And they can offer triggers or thought directions in contexts of ideation, brainstorming and problem solving. Sixteen of these triggers have been consolidated by Kartikeyan into seven broad directions of thought:

Observation is critical to create a broad perspective and open up multiple avenues for exploration. **Division** (Segmentation) helps slice a scenario in multiple ways. **Addition** looks at adding, merging or combining elements to create something new. (eg. Think Swiss knife, toothbrush with a tongue cleaner, cell phone with camera).

Subtraction looks at a perspective of removing or eliminating parts of the system in question. (eg. How do we manage the function with one less resource or accomplish the task in less number of days?). **Variation** talks about observing and causing change. (eg. what lies in excess or unutilized) **Rotation** looks at ways to re-orient the problem to create new perspectives. (eg. Road runs backward instead of you running forward –treadmill, escalator) **Equation** (Comparison) enables the ability to match, compare and choose.

Where are the venture capitalists?

Are managers trained only to manage? Not any longer. Managers who take risk, even if they don't possess the best of degrees from premium schools, are known to be more successful and climb the corporate ladder much faster

In a chat with ManagementNext, David Wittenberg, CEO of The Innovation Workgroup and the author of recent book The Executive's Guide to Innovation, shares his insights and experience of working with Indian companies such as Reliance Industries, Tata Group, SAIL, PNB Paribas and the Times of India since 2006



Since you have worked with Indian leaders, tell us how are they coping with the innovation imperative?

Some very exciting things are happening on the innovation front in India. Several top-tier companies have announced major innovation initiatives, and from what I've seen, they are following through with concrete actions and significant investments.

At the same time, the next tier has been somewhat slower to join the bandwagon. Many are talking about innovation, but I run across a lot of confusion, doubt and hesitation. It's a new concept to a lot of managers, and until they are convinced of the value, don't expect them to make much of a commitment or spend much money on innovation.

One thing that has always been true in India – innovation is strong among the poor. The National Innovation Foundation, Dr. Anil Gupta and Dr. C. K. Prahalad, have been doing some groundbreaking work to call attention to their inventions. Some of the most interesting efforts I've seen in India are by major corporations looking for ways to profit from the BPL class while helping them to improve their standard of living.

What measures can boost the innovation movement in India and how can they be aligned with global innovation?

We advise our clients that there are three critical success factors for corporate innovation. First, they have to define it, to make sure that everyone in the organization understands what they mean when they say innovation. If they don't do this, then they will probably aim too low and they will spend time arguing about whether each project was innovative or not.

The next key success factor is to demonstrate commitment. As I said earlier, there is too much talk about innovation – you can hardly see an advert without the word – but not really very much action to make innovation happen. Companies that are making that commitment are already seeing tremendous breakthroughs. This is consistent with what the world's

most innovative companies are seeing no matter where they are located.

Finally, to get to that level, you have to use the same tools, techniques and methods – global best practices – that the Procter & Gambles, the Nokias and the Apples of the world are using. When Indian companies succeed in these three areas, they are ready to compete and win anywhere in the world.

Insights from your book for India

In one chapter, I talk about the difference between a loan officer and a venture capitalist. Innovation often requires the risk tolerance and ambition of a venture capitalist. Just today, I was talking with an MBA student from Delhi on a plane. Although he is just 22 and has never held a job, he is already convinced that Indian managers are not risk-takers. Thankfully, not all Indian managers fit his generalization, but from what I've seen, the young man was basing it on a lot of evidence. The faster this attitude changes, the faster Indians will become successful innovators.

Five Indian innovations that have attracted your attention

The Nano is at the top of the list, if only because it's brand new. Next, I'd say that the BPO industry itself was a tremendous innovation that has grown and branched out quite successfully while creating a lot of wealth for many Indians.

Since I live in Delhi, I'm directly affected in a good way by the local government's decision to require CNG-powered public transportation. That innovation has vastly improved air quality in the NCR.

I credit Mr. Innovation of India, Dr. R. A. Mashelkar, with transforming CSIR from a loose network of narrowly focused laboratories into a leading global player and a patent factory through innovative management. There are so many that it would be hard to pick a fifth one.

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Innovation can save the Planet

If we can implement all our current knowledge, the world would already be much more sustainable. What's stopping us, asks Marilyn Mehlmann

Innovation has always been important for commercial survival, and indeed has played an important part in the competitive development of nation-states. But with

the advent of global climate change and the cry for sustainable, socially responsible development', it takes on a whole new dimension.

Previously a matter of competition, innovation is now a race against time to cooperate in securing a viable future for humankind. What do I mean by this? Some of the 'alarmist' reports about the state of the world – environmentally, socially and economically – may be exaggerated. But together, they incontrovertibly add up to something entirely new: the biggest challenge ever faced by humanity.

What is at stake is not certain endangered species or certain endangered low-lying coastal areas or particular peoples' ever-deepening poverty or the problems of specific cities in maintaining a safe urban environment. What is at stake is 'The Global Commons': the resources upon which all humans depend for survival, including not only air, water and land but also the social fabric of our diverse societies.

Securing the global commons is not a matter for individuals or groups, however powerful. They and we are in urgent need of the creativity of every person on the planet. Everyone has potentially something to contribute, from her or his unique perspective. So, 'social inclusion' and 'equal opportunity' become more than just nice sentiments – together they are one of the keys to our future.

No one knows how a 'just, sustainable society' could or should look like. We know some of its characteristics, but it's never been done with this many people on the planet. Maybe, it's never truly been done at all. But previously it didn't matter so much – you and your family could, in the best case, go somewhere else. Now there's nowhere left to go. We need to get our act together, and the planet is not waiting patiently for us to learn our lessons.

Two of the big unsolved questions for our time concern transport and liquid waste. As regards liquid waste, even the thinking is still in its infancy. Probably, in the future, it will seem totally incomprehensible that we once mixed up all kinds of liquid wastes, and then tried to separate them out again. The

question is urgent, because, in among this cocktail of toxins are things we urgently need: the only nutrients that will enable our food to grow, coming from urine, mixed with industrial and bacterial waste, and dumped in the sea. Who will solve the problem of recycling nutrients and thus secure future food supplies?

If we take a look at some of the characteristics of a just, sustainable society – one that has a chance of carrying humankind gracefully into the next millennium – we can see the need for innovations in almost every sphere of human endeavour

In a sustainable society, each student needs to surpass his or her teacher. This implies a radical change in the way teachers regard their student's and their own role. They are no longer purveyors of knowledge, pure and simple, but on a journey to develop new knowledge together with students.

We need to breathe new life into concepts like justice, democracy, inclusion, equal opportunity, participation and empowerment.

In this sphere, we can also find the keys to why technical innovations sometimes take so long to come into common use, while others – not necessarily the most sustainable ones! – seem to spread spontaneously. If we could implement today, all our current knowledge, the world would already be much more sustainable. What's stopping us?

Maybe, here we will find a key to how we can learn to cooperate rather than compete, in obedience to two of the most basic instincts of human beings: to help each other and to protect the weak. Without those two instincts, humanity would have perished long, long ago. Who will help us rediscover and honour them?

Yes, the current situation is undoubtedly the biggest challenge ever faced by humankind. It's also the biggest adventure. A journey into unknown territory, with plenty to lose but also unimaginable treasures to gain.

Can you imagine a world of people in harmony with themselves, each other and the Planet? If you can imagine it, maybe we can create it.

The author is the founder & secretary general of Global Action Plan. mmehlmann@gmail.com, <http://www.globalactionplan.com>

Analog to Digital

UFO Moviez is revolutionizing the Indian film industry through daring innovation

The dream of seeing the latest flick first-day first-show in the comfort of our homes is not too distant. We are almost there. While we wait for it to happen, we are already witnessing a revolution in the way Indians are seeing movies and the shake-up in the business-politics of the Indian cinema industry.

In just over two years, UFO Moviez has 1,100 digital screens across India and the growth will be exponential when smaller towns join the digital cinema revolution currently sweeping the country. While this may seem inevitable because technology is already here, making a viable business out of it needed an innovative and a gutsy mind.

For Sanjay Gaikwad, the brain behind UFO Moviez, this is his second big and perhaps much bigger than his first brush with radical business models. The first one was the online lottery 'Playwin' which caught on big time, but due to social pressure is under a cloud.

Before getting into a century-old business with the intention of transforming it, successful innovators like Gaikwad have to surmount mountains of constraints and rigid mindsets. Although the film industry is big in India, no one had a clue who would fund the phenomenally expensive migration from analog to digital.

For UFO Moviez, transforming a theater owner, who hardly knew how to use a PC - into a technology savvy entrepreneur has been a big challenge. The biggest constraint was who would foot the bill for replacing old projectors with satellites and servers, especially when some unknown company comes up with seemingly outrageous ideas.

UFO Moviez decided that if it had to grow quickly, it had to get extremely bold. The company decided to foot the entire bill of Rs. 15 lakhs a theater by taking only a refundable deposit of Rs. 2 lakh. Training the operators and ensuring a 24/7 service back up helped the company win the confidence of the owners who till then were used to showing movies with overused prints after investing a whopping Rs. 60,000 a print. The cost of operations for the owner has come down to one-tenth with assured release on the first day and flexibility of scheduling films depending on demand.

Rajesh Mishra, CEO - Indian Operations, told a CII Innovation Conference in Bangalore recently that one of the big reasons UFO was able to make inroads into the highly unorganized film business was not by competing with the existing players but positioning themselves as 'outsiders' and as service providers.

End of piracy?

UFO's innovative business model includes charging the



UFO was able to make inroads into the highly unorganized film business not by competing with the existing players but positioning themselves as 'outsiders' and as service providers

theater owners only for the number of times they play the film. Also, the distributors and producers are charged fees that do not pinch them. Revenue from these sources just about took care of the operating cost.

The real revenue is coming from advertising. For the first time, someone was offering such a big number of theaters as one media and negotiating with big advertisers on rates. The advertisers too got a new and powerful medium to target. Here, UFO shares the revenue with the theater owners so that they have a stake in it. Considering that India is still grossly under-screened, the opportunity is immense.

The coming to age of UFO Moviez is bad news for the movie piracy business which currently eats big chunks into the revenue sources. Digital movies are sent to servers encrypted on real time basis. So, there is no room for anyone to copy the print. Also, every image carries a certain number which gets copied if someone is filming it in theaters. This way it is easy to trace the origin of piracy, a big deterrent indeed.

UFO Moviez is en-route to opening up the mafia-ridden, closed, Indian cinema industry. This is good news for everyone. It also throws up hope for parallel cinema and also to smaller producers and low budget films which find it hard to screen. It is virtually redrawing the rules of Indian cinema. Mr. Mishra said the big challenge is to tell the industry how it benefits from the new digital era.

UFO Moviez has so far made everyone winners – more revenue for the governments, greater profitability for theater owners, wider spread of viewers for producers, distributors and a powerful organized medium for advertisers. For the company, the news has been all too good so far with more awards pouring in for its innovative approach.

The real revolution, however, will be when UFO and other digital players are able to deliver first-day-first show experience straight to homes at affordable rates, which seems pretty close. What will happen to theaters then? That's another story!



From L-R: Dr. Praveen Vishakantaiah is seen with a 12-inch silicon wafer, while R. Ravichandran, Director–Sales, Intel South Asia displays the six-core Intel Xeon 7400 microprocessor

Innovations in Intel's made-in-India chip

Intel India celebrated its proudest moment in its ten year history on September 17th 2008 when it formally announced the launch of the first made-in-India microprocessor. What's more, the 6-core x 86 microprocessor named Intel Xeon 7400 series, is supposedly the fastest chip in the market today.

When the euphoria of the achievement wanes, it's pertinent to check out what innovations have gone into this chip and what innovative practices the leadership applied to achieve this feat.

Intel executives say, the Xeon 7400 series is best-in-class for demanding enterprise workloads with almost 50 percent better performance in some cases and up to 10 percent reduction in platform power compared to previous generation expandable servers. One of the notable innovations is achieving greater computing performance without increasing footprint and power demands.

Intel India President Praveen Vishakantaiah said the made-in-India chip is “the best and latest design in enterprise servers incorporating innovations in design, process and power management.”

The more challenging innovation was in getting 300-member team in the Bangalore centre to work together in a complex project such as this. Vishakantaiah shared some of the innovative people management dynamics that went into the making of the chip with *ManagementNext*.

Upfront, it was clearly articulating to the team about the program priority. “I said quality is number one, schedule is second and cost is number three. Most projects get managed based on schedules, this was a deviation because we put quality first. The reason I did that is because every team member has to internalize this. Schedule is very obvious. This focus on

quality doesn't sound big but makes a big difference while setting program priorities,” he said.

To get people to extend beyond what they know is a leadership challenge: Praveen Vishakantaiah

Team collaboration is a big challenge because a lot of people are worried about individual growth and achievements. “The challenge is how you rally them together. We had innovative ways of achieving this. We had unified goals for sub teams and a mechanism where we put multiple people from different teams in a room (with a clear task).”

The other significant people management skills were applied in engineering rotation. “It is very hard to pick up this kind of complex design without having some planned rotations with existing teams. If rotations were not successful, it hinders the schedule,” he said.

“The other big challenge is managing expectations of people because each one thinks they are ready for the next break after putting in a few months in a project. And to the people who are aggressive, I challenge them to come up with innovations faster. To get people to extend beyond what they know is a leadership challenge,” Vishakantaiah said.

Perhaps because it was a first made-in-India chip project, the team has delivered the two-year project two months ahead of schedule. That's what a patriotic goal can do to an engineering-electronics dream project.

Ready to start the fire?

Erehwon Consulting is setting the innovative minds on fire through a unique initiative called FireStarters. Rohita Rambabu shares her reflections on the first series

Control and usage of fire as a source of energy marked the turning point in human cultural evolution. It began a movement where man impacted the environment rather than letting the environment impact him. In ancient communities, FireStarters were revered individuals responsible for starting the fire and ensuring that the fire was sustained, thereby benefiting the entire tribe.

This basic premise is what the FireStarter movement is all about. Just as fire in many ways helped create the Industrial Revolution, the purpose of the FireStarter movement is to create an Innovation Revolution across teams, businesses, industries, countries, the world and consequently on humanity.

Erehwon Innovation Consulting recently launched the Erehwon FireStarter open workshops in Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai with a clear intent of taking innovation to Individuals across locations and across industries launching the innovation revolution.

The FireStarter experience was developed over 16 years of first-hand research based on Erehwon Innovation Consulting's Orbit-Shifting Innovation™ methodology. The Erehwon FireStarter workshop is designed to equip and enable an individual to take on Orbit Shifting challenges by understanding their own mindsets and using innovation to leapfrog. The two-day open workshops focus on experiential simulations and exercises, surfacing mindsets that block an individual from innovating.

Subodh Kulkarni of Millipore (India) Pvt. Ltd. says: "I feel empowered to see things differently after removing the blocks."

Addressing these fundamental mindsets enables the participants to play with idea generation tools that increase the strike rate of Breakthrough ideas. An idea can create value and impact only when implemented and that often requires an innovator to engage with partners and other stakeholders. Along with idea generation tools, they explore principles and tools for engaging and enrolling at a fundamental level.

Akshay Cherian an entrepreneur connected with this strongly, says "We are now in the enroll - involve- stage seeking insights rigorously. We have met 40 companies in 30 days, seeking mindsets of companies and stakeholders. The big aha (challenge) for me was to combat dilution - where big ideas don't get killed, they get diluted. I realized we would keep lowering the bar until finally there was no bar to jump over."

Involving successful innovation leaders

Erehwon FireStarters challenge innovation myths through case studies of individuals and organizations that have consistently used innovation to deliver quantum results in the Indian context. While case studies present a clinical perspective of the innovators' journey, the FireStarter open workshops brought in live practitioners (FireStarters) who have lived the innovators life and created substantial impact through innovation. These included Ravi Ghate from SMS One –Use of mobile as a social media tool and impact over 300 communities for a social cause; Kunwer Sachdev- of Su-Kam Power Systems Pvt. Ltd - a leader in the power backup industry who took on global leaders; L.R Natrajan of Tanishq GoldPlus that revolutionized the traditional jewelry business by taking organized retail model to the rural market and C.K Ranganathan of Cavin Kare in Chennai who pioneered the sachet revolution in India. These sessions have given the participants an opportunity to gain first hand insights into the mindsets required for an innovator to succeed.

Bhawna Sinha, a participant, said after interacting with the innovators: "The workshop was an exhilarating experience that left me with a feeling of good uneasiness that pushes you to do something different. I came to the workshop with the mindset that said, innovation means more money. I realized everybody can innovate, if you have the passion to follow through. I now realize that I'm responsible for what is happening around me and now feel a strong urge to do something about my orbit shift challenge. I assumed that like most innovation workshops it would be a regular workshop with sessions on innovation trends and where it is going now and to my surprise it was very different."

Erehwon FireStarter goal is to enable and empower the participants to take on orbitshifting challenges. To sustain the momentum, an online forum allows the participants to put up their orbit shift challenges and fuel their innovation journey.

The Erehwon FireStarters aspiration is simple to make India synonymous with innovation and the launch of the FireStarter open workshop brings us closer to our mission of creating one million FireStarters by 2011.

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Think like a shareholder

Technocrat entrepreneur Ashutosh Humnabadkar is of a rare kind. Ashutosh shared his experience as an entrepreneur and the reasons for the success of his business with Surhuda Kulkarni

He is rare for another reason. There are only a handful of product innovators in India, which puts him into an elite league. As founder director of the Pune-based Aftok Ltd., and Digihomes Solutions Pvt. Ltd., his penchant for innovation has given birth to a high-end range of products and digital home solutions that include entertainment and automation among other things. The group's vision is to be a global leader delivering enterprise business management products and solutions. A bold vision indeed!

Entrepreneurial lessons for budding entrepreneurs

When I started looking at opportunities way back in 1985, things were quite different. Not too many youngsters would quit their jobs and venture into unknown territories. The present scenario is quite conducive, with finance being comparatively easy to raise.

Still, any business would have its ups and downs, so conviction and persistence are extremely important. At the same time, one needs to periodically review where you stand as compared to what you had planned when you started and make course corrections.

In some cases, I realized that things would not improve, and took the decision to close these companies, or retire from partnership. Though it is not very easy

to take these decisions, since you have an emotional attachment to a company that you have promoted, they need to be taken to restrict losses.

What prompted you to give up the CEO's position?

In my opinion, this is totally dependent on every individual. A very important point here is to distinguish between the roles of a shareholder and manager; or owner and CEO. An entrepreneur initially carries out both the roles.

As the company grows, it is important that the entrepreneur thinks more often as a shareholder than as a manager. If there are persons available with better networking, experience and track record, that the company can afford, it makes sense as a shareholder to invite such a person on board

What propels the success of the Aftok group?

Back in 1985, a group of five friends with demarcated areas of activity floated Aftok Computers. We didn't have high expectations. When we realized that the market development for PCs was tough, we switched over to software products.

In 1987, we developed a terminal for the National Informatics Centre. We started looking at indigenous software development. Our main thrust was on holding IPs to various products. This helped us grow without great marketing costs. There were better margins in our niche line than in the numbers game. We had ready IPs on various products. We never dwelt on the numbers game in software service.

Our products add value to the products of other product developers world over and thus we gain a loyal clientele. That is our secret. Being product focused, we can contribute a lot in defining customers' products.

What is your unique value proposition?

Being ahead of the competition, we have a unique level of integration. The ease in use of the product is our USP. Our product will be suited to any geographical area it is operating in. We had IPs when we developed this company. Now we have unique partnerships with companies like Bose Music Systems, Blue Star etc. Our costs are very competitive. You can choose the product and brand that you want and get it tuned to our system.

Outside India, only one company like LG or Samsung gives you all the products developed on the intelligent line. There is no such compulsion in our systems.

Carbon finance cuts project risk

Smart use of carbon finance can make a difference to the profitability of projects, says Dr. Jurg .M. Grütter and Rohini Balasubramanian

Climate change is a reality. For businesses, greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions have become an opportunity/challenge to reduce financial risks. GHG reductions offer important information and insights for guiding new strategic business models.

Carbon finance is a new instrument which can make a project more attractive. In the transport sector, which contributes to one-third of the world's carbon emissions, this potential has not been explored sufficiently. The Switzerland-based Grütter Consulting is one of the pioneers in this area and has so far realized 3 out of 4 approved CDM (Clean Development Mechanisms) methodologies and has registered large-scale CDM transport projects.

Carbon finance can be an important, albeit not the only primary contributor, to investment and can contribute towards making the project financially more attractive, less risky and more sustainable not only in environmental but also in economic terms.

The carbon finance market, through the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention in Climate Change), has to follow certain rules and regulations including usage of an approved methodology for calculating carbon offsets. This process is time-consuming and involves considerable risks and higher transaction costs. Projects have to be validated externally and have to produce monitoring reports which are again verified externally by agencies such as SGS or TUEV. (expansion please).

It's useful to know that carbon credits are not given on the basis of documents or models but on actual monitoring following a defined protocol. The carbon buyer again pays in general on delivery of the carbon offset credits which can be issued for up to 21 years for the same project activity.

To avoid risks for the project owner, very few consulting companies in the transport sector offer a comprehensive package from methodology development, registration of the project, identifying of carbon buyers until the successful issuance of carbon credits. The client incurs no financial outlays and no risks, i.e. consultants absorb all upfront costs and risks including those of validators or the UNFCCC, and receive a pure success fee in terms of percentage of carbon credits issued. This guarantees the client a straightforward and risk-free process to ensure his carbon credits. "Delhi metro rail corporation (DMRC) is one such organisation to have benefited from carbon financing in such a manner for their nodal shift project" says Mr.S.A.Verma, Head of Environment, DMRC



Opportunities to reduce GHG in the transport sector

- Mass public transit projects such as Bus Rapid Transits (BRTs), Metros, Light Transit Rails, inter-urban rail and ship passenger transport. These projects reduce emissions per passenger transport compared to conventional public transit.
- Freight mode shift from road to rail, road to ship or road to pipeline. The efficiency of transporting goods is improved by such projects.
- More efficient transport of passengers and/or goods as well as increasing passenger and freight numbers. The load factor/occupation rate of vehicles can be increased or absolute numbers can be improved through measures such as introduction of hassle-free electronic smart-cards for public transit.
- Production of efficient vehicles including alternative fuel vehicles such as electric or gaseous vehicles.
- Production of bio-fuels e.g. based on plant-oil. A project of this type based on non-edible oils produced between soya for soil regeneration is currently under validation.
- Infrastructure investments which reduce trip distances or make trips more efficient including tunnels, bridges etc
- Transit oriented development reducing e.g. the number of trips, changing the mode of transport and making trips shorter
- Increasing efficiency in aviation e.g. through improved air traffic control.

The carbon finance route has so far benefited more than 50 transport projects worldwide and its usefulness will only increase.

The authors are with Grütter Consulting, a Switzerland-based consultancy specialising in relating transport projects with carbon finance. jgruetter@gmail.com, www.transport-ghg.com

Downturn widows



Downturn widows are wives living with men who are starting early, working late, fearing for their jobs, constantly on the phone on holidays and withdrawing from social lives.

Granular Thinking

Always looking at things from "in the weeds". All the creative thinking in the world will be just that—thinking—unless we have someone "in the weeds" who is able to execute our ideas.

Emergence Theory

The essence of Emergence Theory is "whoever taps into the most brains, wins." It's no longer sufficient to have a smart

CEO or even a smart executive team - you need to tap into the collective wisdom of all your employees, customers and community.

Power Forward Initiative

The Power Forward Initiative's primary goal is to remove the barriers to automation of advanced low power design, and to provide a pathway to the development of a standards-based solution for storage batteries. The initiative aims to reduce the risks and costs associated with the design, verification, and implementation of designs, using multiple/variable supply voltages and power shut-off design techniques. This initiative is expected to open the door to a new era of innovation and profitability.

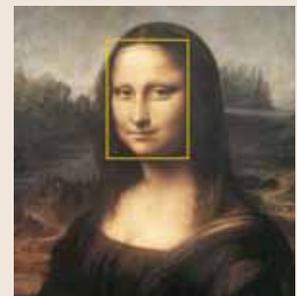
The PFI membership has now grown to over 30 companies around the world, representing a broad spectrum of semiconductor, IP, EDA, ASIC, design services and manufacturing providers. Wipro Technologies has recently joined the initiative and is offering Common Power Format (CPF)-enabled low-power design capabilities to its design services customers worldwide.

Strategic inflection point

Strategic inflection point is a time in the life of a business when its fundamentals are about to change. That change can mean an opportunity to rise to new heights. But it may just as likely signal the beginning of the end. According to Andy Grove (of Intel fame) a strategic inflection point can be deadly when unattended to. Companies that begin a decline as a result of its changes rarely recover their previous greatness.

Golden Ratio

Two quantities are in the golden ratio if the ratio between the sum of those quantities and the larger one is the same as the ratio between the larger one and the smaller. The golden ratio is approximately 1.6180339887.



Since the Renaissance, many artists and architects have proportioned their works to approximate the golden ratio—especially in the form of the golden rectangle, in which the ratio of the longer side to the shorter is the golden ratio—believing this proportion to be aesthetically pleasing. Mathematicians have studied the golden ratio because of its unique and interesting properties.

Mona Lisa's face is a perfect golden rectangle, according to the ratio of the width of her forehead compared to the length from the top of her head to her chin. And scientifically, her face actually appears in a golden rectangle, which also makes her face appear more beautiful to human eyes.

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Have faith to face the world

By Sri Sri Ravi Shankar



Mankind is passing through difficult times. The rising stress levels, terror attacks, environmental pollution... there are dangers lurking at every corner. When the times get difficult, we need to renew our faith. It's faith that pulls one through difficult times. It brings out the hidden courage and potential in more ways than one.

Another thing you need to have in order to sail through difficult times is a calm mind. When the mind is calm and you are centred, it's much easier to face any situation. For this, you need to train the mind a little to live in the present moment and drop the stress. This can be done by attending to your breath.

The breath has a great lesson which we have forgotten. For every rhythm in the mind, there is a corresponding rhythm in the breath and vice versa. You need to know a little bit about all the layers of our existence, that is, body, breath, mind, intellect, memory, ego and the self. This is what I call Art of Living! And that will make you be in the present moment and remain calm even in the face of adversity.

Combine the inner calm with your faith, and then you have a formula to face any situation. Having faith is to realise that God's protection is there for you. This much faith is enough to move ahead in life.

During the time of reaping the harvest, the farmer holds a broad sieve and puts all the grains into it and stands on an elevated platform and shakes the sieve. If it is mere husk, it just flies away in the air and is lost. If grain is present, then it falls to the ground and stays. If your faith shakes very quickly and too often, then you are akin to being like the husk.

If your faith shakes quickly when difficulty strikes, you will not be able to face it with your smile intake. If you do not have faith, you will go into fear and depression. You will not have anything to hold onto. If you have faith, you will be able to find a ground. And when you have faith that everything will be alright, everything will settle down.

Faith is not contrary to logic as is understood in the West. When knowledge lodges itself firmly in one's life, it is called faith. Make knowledge your companion and have faith in the Infinite. The feeling that "I am blessed" can help you overcome any difficulty. There is a saying: Behind every successful man is a woman. I will modify this: Behind every success there is the Divine saying "I am behind you".

In this world, everything cannot be perfect all the time. Even the best, the greatest of actions, performed with the noblest of intentions, will have some imperfections. It is but natural. But if you are grounded in faith, then you will progress and maintain your equanimity in this world. If your faith is deep-rooted, everything else moves on its own.

Once you realise that you are blessed, then all the insecurities disappear. Life is 80 per cent joy and 20 per cent misery. But we hold on to the 20 per cent and make it 200 per cent! It is not a conscious act, it just happens

The role of faith in the materialistic world is even more apparent as it saves one from suicidal tendencies and helps him or her see the cause of something beyond the apparent. When life is based on faith, one follows the philosophy rather than getting caught up in revenge and hatred. If there is faith that every thing be alright, then everything will settle down.

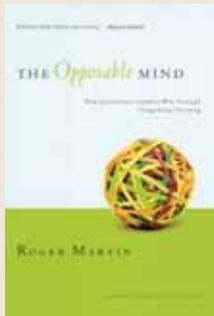
Another way to overcome difficult times is to expand your vision to include the entire humanity. When everyone comes from the point of contributing to society, you have a Divine society. We have to educate and culture our individual consciousness to expand in time with the knowledge from "what about me?" to "what can I contribute?"

If you are committed to taking care of your family, that much capacity or power you will have. If your commitment is for the community, you will get that much power. More will be given to you only if you utilise properly what you already have! This is another law of nature. Why should the nature give you more when you are stuck with your little mind? Be committed to serve the world, then you will be able to face any difficult time.

The Opposable Mind: How Successful Leaders Win Through Integrative Thinking

by Roger L. Martin, Harvard Business School Press, December 2007

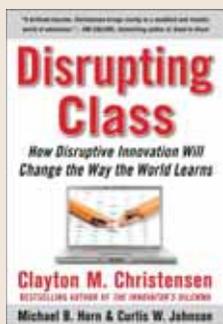
In this primer on the problem-solving power of "integrative thinking," Martin draws on more than 50 management success stories, including the masterminds behind The Four Seasons, Proctor & Gamble and eBay, to demonstrate how, like the opposable thumb, the "opposable mind"-Martin's term for the human brain's ability "to hold two conflicting ideas in constructive tension"-is an intellectually advantageous evolutionary leap through which decision-makers can synthesize "new and superior ideas." Using this strategy, Martin focuses on what leaders think, rather than what they do. Among anecdotes and examples steering readers to change their thinking about thinking, Martin gives readers specific strategies for understanding their own "personal knowledge system" as well as for taking advantage of the "richest source of new insight into a problem," the "opposing model."



Disruptive Class: How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns

by Clayton M. Christensen, Curtis W. Johnson, Michael B. Horn

According to recent studies in neuroscience, the way we learn doesn't always match up with the way we are taught. If we hope to stay competitive-academically, economically, and technologically-we need to rethink our understanding of intelligence, reevaluate our educational system, and reinvigorate our commitment to learning. In other words, we need "disruptive innovation."



Now, in his long-awaited new book, Clayton M. Christensen and coauthors Michael B. Horn and Curtis W. Johnson take one of the most important issues of our time-education, and apply Christensen's now-famous theories of "disruptive" change using a wide range of real-life examples. Good read not just for a school administrators, teachers and parents but also for business leaders.

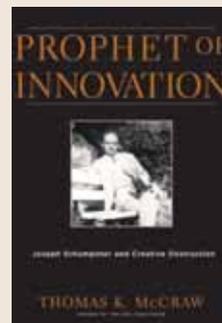
Prophet of Innovation: Joseph Schumpeter and Creative Destruction

by Thomas K. McCraw, Belknap Press, April 2007

Described by John Kenneth Galbraith as "the most sophisticated conservative" of the twentieth century, Schumpeter made his mark as the prophet of incessant change. His vision was stark: Nearly all businesses fail, victims of innovation by their competitors. Businesspeople ignore this lesson at their peril; to

survive, they must be entrepreneurial and think strategically. Yet in Schumpeter's view, the general prosperity produced by the "capitalist engine" far outweighs the wreckage it leaves behind.

Prophet of Innovation is also the private story of a man rescued repeatedly by women who loved him and put his well-being above their own. Without them, he would likely have perished, so fierce were the conflicts between his reason and his emotions. Drawing on all of Schumpeter's writings, including many intimate diaries and letters never before used, this biography paints the full portrait of a magnetic figure who aspired to become the world's greatest economist, lover and horseman-and admitted to failure only with the horses.



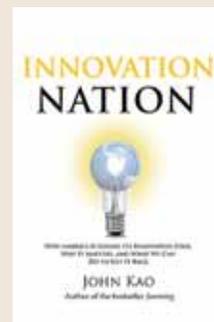
Innovation Nation: How America Is Losing Its Innovation Edge, Why It Matters, and What We Can Do to Get It Back

by John Kao, Free Press, October 2007

Even as the United States has lost standing in the world community because of the war in Iraq, Kao warns, the country is losing its edge in economic leadership as well.

Kao argues that the United States still has the capability not only to regain our competitive edge, but to take a bold step out ahead of the global community and secure a leadership role in the twenty-first century. We must, though, take serious and concerted action fast.

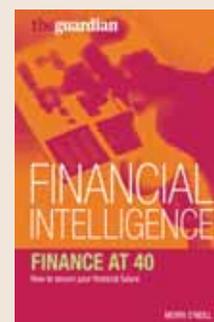
First offering a stunning, troubling portrait of just how serious is the erosion in recent years of U.S. competitiveness in innovation, Kao then takes readers on a fascinating tour of the leading innovation centers, such as those in Singapore, Denmark, and Finland, which are trumping us in their more focused and creative approaches to fueling innovation.



Finance at 40: How to secure your financial future

by Moira O'Neill, A&C Black, October 2008

By the age of 40 most people haven't yet given a thought to retirement planning: they've been too busy paying off debts and mortgages, and supporting a growing family. But with at least 25 years still to go, 40 is a good age to start planning for those golden years. Finance at 40 is aimed at anyone who wants to lay some secure foundations for the future but doesn't know where to start.



This book will help readers work out the value of retirement plans they may already have in place, and will then guide them through the basics of investments, pension plans, and managing savings. The Financial Intelligence series offers down-to-earth, practical guides to personal finance, aimed at anyone who wants to increase their financial IQ. These guides will help readers to feel confident about making the right decisions when it comes to spending, saving and investing their money.

The Peter Principle: Why Things Always Go Wrong

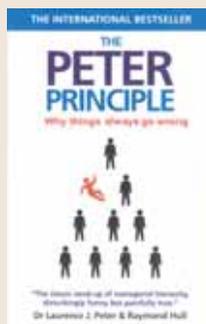
by Dr Laurence J. Peter and Raymond Hull, Penguin Books India, August 2008

In a hierarchy, every employee tends to rise to his own level of incompetence.

This dangerously simple maxim of organisational dysfunction, first spelt out more than thirty-three years ago, has wormed its way into everyday management vocabulary.

The Peter Principle is rife wherever hierarchies exist—multinational companies, local government, the Civil Service, hospital management, the groves of academe and public transport. There is no escape: promotion, like the paths of glory, leads but to the grave of over-promotion.

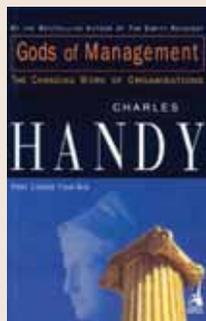
The Peter Principle is required reading for all those now setting their feet on the first rung of the promotional ladder, their starry-eyed gaze fixed on the heights above them. Do they really want to scale a peak from which their fate can only be a dismal shunting into oblivion?



Gods of Management: The Changing World of Organisations

by Charles Handy Penguin India, August 2008

The four gods of the title symbolize the very different styles of management and culture to be found in today's organizations. Zeus is the dynamic entrepreneur who rules over companies of the *club culture*, characterized by speed of decision and rapid, intuitive communication. Apollo, god of order and bureaucracy, is the patron of the *role culture*, based not on personalities but on definition of the jobs to be done.



Athena, goddess of craftsmen, recognized only expertise as the basis of power and influence: hers is the *task culture*. Dionysus is the god preferred by artists and professionals within the *existential culture*, people who owe little or no allegiance to a boss.

Under this witty and sparkling allegory, Charles Handy, Britain's foremost business guru, makes a serious analysis of the changing patterns of work and business.

Your Business Brickyard: Getting back to the basics to make your business more fun to run

by Howard Mann, Jackson Business Press February, 2008

This small book contains the secret basics to unlock the true power and potential of your business. Strategist, speaker and consultant Howard Mann has collected twelve bricks essential to any business foundation. Mann shows you how to get back to basics, reconnect with your purpose and grow your business, instead of getting stuck following the latest trend or innovation. Most important of all, *Your Business Brickyard* provides a game plan for how to make your business fun to run again.

You will learn how to Reconnect to Your Purpose and keep your goals uppermost in your mind. You will say goodbye to worries over competition when you 'Lose Your Nemesis'. You'll appreciate the powerful simplicity of Pay Fast, Get Paid Even Faster. You will learn how to 'Goaljump' and work backwards from your most ambitious goals to actionable tasks you can do today. The book shows how to eliminate whatever it is that hinders your ability as a business owner to enjoy your position properly. With practical, hands-on exercises and a fresh, concise format, *The Brickyard* will help you establish a brick solid foundation so your business can grow without limit while you enjoy the journey.

Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution - And How it Can Renew America

By Thomas L. Friedman, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, September 2008

Thomas L. Friedman's phenomenal number-one bestseller *The World Is Flat* has helped millions of readers to see the world in a new way. In his new book, Friedman takes a fresh and provocative look at two of the biggest challenges we face today: America's surprising loss of focus and national purpose since 9/11; and the global environmental crisis, which is affecting everything from food to fuel to forests. In this groundbreaking account of where we stand now, he shows us how the solutions to these two big problems are linked—how we can restore the world and revive America at the same time.

Friedman explains how global warming, rapidly growing populations and the astonishing expansion of the world's middle class through globalization have produced a planet that is "hot, flat, and crowded."

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iShirt

Want a new way to carry your iPod Shuffle? Check out the iShirt. It's equipped with a magnetic clamp system to ensure your iPod Shuffle stays firmly attached even during vigorous activity.



Orla Kiely Wottle - reusable water bottle



Useful and packing some retro style, the Orla Kiely Wottle could be just the thing for your work bag.

It's the work of Orla Kiely and Brita, offering you the option of a designer water bottle, instead of having to constantly reuse that old one. As well as featuring that classic Orla Kiely design and signature, it holds 500ml of water and is made from 100 per cent recycled materials. Don't be fooled by the Brita name though - this doesn't do

the filtering for you.

Find out more at the Ethical Superstore website.

Space age Lunar chair

A real throwback to the late 60s, the Lunar chair from Lunar Labs should make an impact both inside and outside the home - especially if you're going for that Space 1999 look.



The work of Claudio Cabaca, it's a lounge chair that apparently allows you to 'sit low in a comfortable position while relaxing'. Which simply means you can slump down in it. Made by hand in Holland, the chair is also weatherproof, so you can use it in the garden as well as the home.

<http://www.pid.se/en/seating/lounge-furniture/>

Louis Poulsen PH50 Lamp - 1950s light gets a makeover

It's 50 years since Poul Henningsen designed the PH5 lamp for Louis Poulsen. And to celebrate this milestone, Louis Poulsen has introduced a special edition - the PH50 lamp.

The light is designed to hang low over tables, using three reflective shades, a cone and two smaller shades to produce bright, glare-free light. The 2008 version steps away from the minimalist looks of the past, offering five bright colors - Chilli Red, Mint Blue, Wasabi Green, Coconut White and Olive Black - for the modern age.

<http://www.louispoulsen.com/in.aspx>

Eero Aarnio Swan Lamp



He might be in his 70s and still shifting a number of his design classics, but **Eero Aarnio** is still producing interesting and eye-catching items for your home - including the recently-launched **Swan Lamp**.

No prizes for guessing where the name came from - those swan-like curves made from a moulded plastic body that 'scatters light' around the room, the light coming from an energy-saving compact fluorescent bulb.

<http://www.designeeroaarnio.com>

Herman Miller LED

Leaf Light



Liven up your workspace with Herman Miller's LED Leaf Light, which combines a metallic crane body with an energy-saving LED. Simple yet very stylish.

The Dhoni effect



The Dhoni effect has clearly bowled over Indian cricket and he is today a big hero especially to a small town boy. The effect doesn't end there. The leadership in the corporate world is today looking beyond the big cities and top business schools to build its future leaders. What they are looking for is genuine, effective, and most importantly, unconventional leadership qualities, which they believe, will give Indian companies the edge. Didn't these qualities win India the first T20 World Cup?

Several senior leaders like Piyush Pandey, executive chairman and national creative director, O&M, are dispatching their HR teams to pull the hiding Dhonis out of smaller towns to groom them to leadership roles. May many Dhoni's bloom!

One-minute stress management

Improbable as it seems, here's the one-minute stress management therapy which seems to be working for a lot of people. What's more, it can take even less than a minute, say, 30 seconds—or even 15 as you get used to it.

You can find all this in *Freeze-Frame: One Minute Stress Management: A Scientifically Proven Technique for Clear Decision Making and Improved Health*, by Doc Lew Childre

and Bruce Cryer. "There may be more than you want to know in this book, and you may be skeptical—I was—but I will stick my neck out and call "it" "revolutionary;" it's lasted over 5 years for me and gotten better with age," say the authors.

It works in traffic, before a speech, during a meeting when something pisses you off, in the airport when something really pisses you off, in the middle of a delicate phone call, before your next serve, etc. It's good for your professional life—and your health. However, it's not all that easy. It does take practice.

Vote and drink more Tata Tea

Last year, Tata Tea launched the 'Jaago Re' campaign, which aimed at awakening the masses and alerting them to their responsibilities as citizens, one of which was to question the political leaders.

Now, the company has announced a new initiative, One Billion Votes, which will encourage people, especially the youth, to not simply complain but to have the conviction and courage to go and vote. Even a three percent more votes, it is said, makes a big difference to the results.

Smart social marketing indeed !

Troubled investment banks downgrade blue chips

It's worse than the kettle calling the pot black. As the saga of the once-feared investment banks going belly up continues, what hasn't stopped is these fallen angels downgrading renowned companies. The best example is that of Merrill Lynch and J P Morgan downgrading General Electric from buy to neutral citing growing fundamental pressures. Its high time investment banks stopped making a mockery of themselves.

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