UNTAPPED INNOVATION
Autumn 2021

SNAPSHOT

Welcome to our autumn showcase of the best of our blog and news from Untapped

If you enjoy this newsletter, check out www.untappedinnovation.com for more articles like this

Innovation Gym: A new way to improve your Innovation Skills

Innovation is all about seeking out new and better ways to do things. So when it came to creating our innovation training, we also looked for new and better ways.... asking ourselves how we could help clients build innovation skills, even when they tell us that they are pushed for time and also have to cope with home or hybrid work scenarios? We worked with thought-leaders in new educational and training principles to develop a different type of innovation training session where learning actually sticks to improve your innovation long term, not just during the Innovation Gym session. Here's how....

Gym vs "Classroom" Training

We've called our flexible training sessions the Innovation Gym for a reason – to move away from the traditional classroom form when learners are in passive "receiving" mode. We've all experienced sessions that use only a single stimulus which drains engagement and causes fatigue. We know from neuroscience that this approach doesn't strengthen our neural pathways or muscle memory; instead, it leaves us feeling overwhelmed as we try to "take it all in". So just like a gym session, we want to ensure learners are engaged, energised and pumped up to follow the session through until the end.

The Four Principles Of Innovation Gym

Simple

These are highly focused sessions with a targeted 'Warm-Up'. The principle behind this is in "Made to Stick" by Chip Heath & Dan Heath, in which the laser focus on one core topic increases the ability to learn.
Simple = Core + Compact

Story-led

You learn by example using a 'story' of a real-life innovation case study to connect ideas and bring the core principles to life. This is the high-intensity section of the Gym Session, based on the last principle in "Made to Stick".
'Story' is how people relate and connect ideas.

Active Learning

Here, we build the "muscles" (neural pathways) through "reps". We create time for learners to practice the new skill repeatedly, so attendees leave the session with good 'muscle' memory.
Repetition is how we build and strengthen neural pathways in our brains, which is the biology of learning.

Multiple Stimulus Formats

We use a variety of 'gym equipment' (video, discussion, story (case studies), exercises) to drive engagement and stimulate learning.
A variety of formats enables repetition to continue to be exciting and engaging.

The Science And Education Principles Behind Innovation Gym

The Neuroscience of Learning

As women in STEM, we have to delve into the neuroscience of learning, and this is where the training expert, Laura Flessner of Mindtap, has mentored us to create our Innovation Gym Principles. What we've rediscovered is that the act of doing what you're getting taught is proven to activate more parts of the brain, making learning even more effective.

Education 1.0 vs Education 2.0

Digital tools enable a greater variety of learning and help shift the trainer from a teacher to a coach/ orchestrator of learning. The learning is less of a push onto the student and more of a pull from the student.

Our approach allows participants to own their learning as we guide the process. We look for participants to show their learning through discussions and the Reps (exercises).

Arrange your first Innovation Gym Session

We have several resources available for you to learn more about our Innovation Gym. Watch the video, read through our brochure or get in touch to arrange a call with one of our partners.

We are future-proofing innovation sessions and guaranteeing a return on innovation thanks to our approach. Be bold, and come on the journey with us.
Suzanne Allers

WEBINAR EVENT

Wed 6 Oct
12.30pm - 1pm

Setting up research for success in a time and budget starved environment

Increasing pressures on time and budgets highlight the importance of getting value from research money you invest. Join Untapped Innovation's Sally Kemkers and Reckitt's Lucy Lindsley who will discuss:

- How to plan and write a great research brief to deliver deep, actionable insight
- Effective ways to get the most out of your agency or research partner

You'll also get the opportunity to present questions to our two insight experts at the end of the webinar.

Academic Theories On Innovation

We were delighted for Rob Morgan, Sir Julian Hodge Chair and Professor of Marketing & Strategy, to join us on our recent Innovation Gym Webinar. His academic insight into the world of asset mining is fascinating. Here are some of his best quotes from the webinar, as he delves into research findings, empirical data and academic theories on innovation.

A business case and an organisational case for innovation

The evidence is clear on asset mining from the empirical data: it's not the size of the asset-base but 'how' it is then orchestrated that creates differential advantage for firms in competitive product-markets. We see this consistently in our data across time, industries and asset class.

There are two cases for asset mining: the business case and the organisational case.

The business case is straightforward. When we generalise from all the management practices a business can engage in, asset mining to deliver innovative products to market consistently deliver greater elasticities than any other option. When we examine these innovative practices we find they deliver a 22% performance advantage according to Nick Bloom, Stanford Professor in the department of economics and at the Graduate School of Business. This is a significantly greater return than similar investments in human capital and twice that for information and communication technologies – yet firms spend a disproportionate amount of effort improving these capabilities often at the expense of innovation.

From an organisational case, the knowledge spillovers created from asset mining don't always realise an immediate return and so often innovation outcomes are seen as a 'black box'. There is clear evidence that if firms both explore new innovations while exploiting existing innovations performance improvements follow. However, there is a time lag in this relationship as employee behaviours, cultural norms, incentive structures, etc evolve to support these innovation inputs. Rarely, nowadays, does any strategy deliver so-called 'sustainable' competitive advantage and this is seldom immediate. At best, we seek temporary or transient competitive advantage. The key factor driving these windows of advantage then is innovations that are brought to market constantly driving new points-of-difference in the market and triggering customers' switching behaviour. Developing these organizational factors and context that support asset mining is imperative to the conversion process from great ideas to innovative products.

Asset mining constraints when it comes to innovation

The metrics for asset mining aren't always clear – in fact they seldom are. However, the process constraints sure are! We see all too often competitors mimicking each other in process as well as the products they bring to market. This is especially the case when economic conditions are challenging or competition is fierce. It's ironic that times like these we would expect to witness significant innovative behaviour but it is rare and sporadic – or at least this is what we have observed in the competitive markets we have studied over the last forty years. What is critical is creating more clear and immediate metrics and understanding the cause-effect relationships between innovation efforts and their returns. Also, given that innovations are characterised by both novelty and meaningfulness we find that effort is often spent on the costly and high risk novelty of product technologies while insufficient attention is given to their meaningfulness to solving customer problems. Meaningfulness is too frequently overlooked in favour of novelty. The former typically costs a fraction of the latter.

The juxtaposition of exploration space

Meaningful innovation often comes about by creating a culture of innovation – "the exploration space to be creative". However, studies indicate that ideas truly are getting harder to find. Again, Nick Bloom and his colleagues recently wrote in the American Economic Review that whilst R&D effort is rising substantially, R&D productivity is declining sharply. For example, the oft-quoted Moore's Law predicts innovation development capacity over time – nowadays the number of R&D specialists required to achieve the famous doubling of computer chip density is more than 18 times larger than the number required in the early 1970s.

Beware when capabilities become rigidities – 'the capability trap'

There is systematic evidence that in most product-markets we find that ideas are getting harder to find. One of the reasons for this is that managers often looking at their customers through the lens of their product suggesting that they have gained deep insights of their customer base but their view of their customer is clouded by the product currently being provided, thereby limiting new and adjacent opportunities for innovation from asset mining. Another reason is firms encounter 'capability traps'. While organizational capabilities are desirable, this is only the case until they lose value. Once this occurs, firms can become trapped by being good at something that has lost its relevance, currency and strategic value. Worse still, these former capabilities can prevent or limit the firm's ability to respond to new and innovative opportunities – here the core capabilities have become core rigidities.

Girls in STEM role models

Join our panel of STEM mentors to inspire the next generation

"Play is magic! The reason I say that is because it transforms people who participate in it. It takes them to a timeless, safe journey so that they can discover who they are."
YESIM KUNTER

"Everyone being the same and thinking the same would result in products and services that were all 'the same'! This is why it is critical for girls to continue to embrace STEM and push the boundaries of the next generation of science and technology."
ELAINE BAXTER

"I'm spurred on to find new and engaging ways to talk about science; bringing out the passion, excitement and confidence and to support women and girls to follow their dreams."
JO COLES

"No matter what you have studied or have not been able to study, there will always be a path unique to your circumstances that leads to your dreams."
TOLÚLỌPẸ́ ÒGÚNRẸ̀MÝ