

# INNOVATION

EXPLORING NEW IDEAS



## IT'S NOT EASY BEING SANTA CLAUS

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In a recent conversation with Santa (he was following up on a lost order) the jovial fellow shared a few thoughts with me. He had some very good advice for those in a leadership role in any organization.

"Believe you me, having to smile and be jolly every day when you're wearing the same thick, hot, red-wool suit (that itches like crazy) is no picnic."

"I am after, after all, running a business here. I'm a boss. I've got responsibilities - both to the gift-getters and the gift-makers. There are workers to lead, letters to read, orders to fill, processes to manage, stuff to buy, stuff to make, standards to maintain, new technologies to adopt, skills to develop, elf problems to solve, and reindeer droppings to scoop (although I delegate that one). Trust me, I've got some big and not-always-easy-fitting boots to fill!"

### How to get **BIG** things done in **YOUR** workshop all year long!

#### 1. Build a wonderful workshop!

- Make the MISSION the MAIN THING
- Focus on your PEOPLE as well as your purpose
- Let VALUES be your guide

#### 2. Choose your reindeer wisely!

- Hire TOUGH so you can manage EASY
- PROMOTE the right ones...for the right reasons
- Go for the DIVERSITY advantage

#### 3. Make a list and check it twice!

- PLAN your work
- WORK your plan
- Make the MOST of what you have

#### 4. Listen to the Elves!

- OPEN your ears to participation
- PAY ATTENTION to how you're perceived
- Walk awhile in THEIR shoes

#### 5. Get beyond the red wagons!

- Help everyone accept the reality of CHANGE
- Remember: The CUSTOMER is really in charge
- TEACH "The Business" of the Business

#### 6. Share the Milk and Cookies!

- Help them see the difference THEY make
- DO RIGHT by those who do right
- Expand the reinforcement POSSIBILITIES

#### 7. Find out who's naughty and nice!

- Confront performance problems...EARLY
- COACH "The Majority in the Middle"
- DON'T forget "The Super Stars"

#### 8. Be Good for Goodness Sake!

- Set the EXAMPLE
- Establish GUIDELINES and accountability
- Remember that EVERYTHING counts
- Never forget that getting big things done all year long isn't about magic. It's about Leadership

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE  
INNOVATION TEAM!



## INNOVATORS AROUND BC PLUG INTO ELECTRIC VEHICLES

**Ministry of Labour and Citizen Services, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources News Release**

**November 26, 2008.**

The Province is investing nearly \$400,000 to support plug-in electric vehicles and related monitoring equipment around B.C., Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Minister Richard Neufeld and Labour and Citizens' Services Minister Iain Black announced today.

"Schools, communities, and businesses around the province are leading a grassroots effort to innovate to reduce emissions and tackle climate change" said Neufeld.

There will be up to 34 plug-in electric vehicles in operation and being monitored in British Columbia. The initial vehicles are four Toyota Prius converted to plug-in hybrid

electric and two pick-up trucks converted to plug-in battery electric.

"By converting government's vehicle fleet to plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, we are showing commitment to sustainable transportation and infrastructure," said Black. "Through the use of new technologies, I am confident government will achieve its goal of being carbon neutral by 2010." The investment is part of a broader plug-in electric vehicle program led by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

The program has the plug-in electric transportation working group, led by the Province, and includes the ministries of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure, Environment, and Labour and Citizens' Services, as well as the Climate Action Secretariat, City of Vancouver, Green Fleets BC, BC Hydro, the British

Columbia Transmission Corporation and the University of Victoria's Institute for Integrated Energy Systems.



The increased use of plug-in electric vehicle technology is part of a broader sustainable energy strategy that will help the Province reach its goal of curbing greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. In addition, plug-in electric vehicles support the Province's goal as outlined in the speech from the throne to reduce the carbon intensity of all passenger vehicles by 10 per cent by 2020.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DM

**The following excerpts are from a message Lori Wannamaker, Deputy Minister, Labour and Citizens' Services sent to staff - Nov. 25, 2008 concerning the Government's Second Quarterly Financial Report.**

In the regions outside Victoria and the Lower Mainland, we will continue to work with ministries, through Service Delivery Networks (cross-ministry teams), to achieve economies of scale by sharing space and corporate support services.

But we have another important role to play, too. This is an opportunity for Citizens' Services to demonstrate real leadership. We need to lead the way for our customers by looking hard for any inefficiencies in our own internal processes and we need to be prepared to eliminate unnecessary operating expenditures. Where we can achieve internal efficiencies, we must pass those savings on directly to our customers.

Through formal programs like CS Innovates and through individual work per-

formance, you and your ministry colleagues regularly demonstrate genuine creativity and innovation. This is the energy that we need to harness, to look at our business through a different lens and to help all of government to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

**"This is an opportunity for Citizen's Services to demonstrate real leadership."**

## INNOVATION REQUEST FORM NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

**"If you're not failing every now and again, it's a sign you're not doing anything very innovative."**

~Woody Allen

The Innovation Request Form is now available on the GAB under: <http://gww.lcs.gov.bc.ca/servicebc/sdo/ref/orientation/innovation.html>

If you have an idea you would like to submit, you can fill out the form and it will be sent directly to Jim Hay. At this time, only the Vancouver Island South Coast Region is able to submit an idea for this pilot, but we hope to have it open to the rest of the regions by mid 2009.

## INNOVATION CORNER

Innovation Corner is a section in the newsletter to report on innovation through articles, websites and other media.

*The following articles have been reprinted with the approval of Jim Carroll a leading international futurist, trends & innovation expert.*

### Why high-velocity makes innovation THE word for 2007 ....

Here's a reality that you need to think about: 2007 is the year in which most every organization and individual will begin to focus all their energies on innovation.

As someone who spends a lot of time helping some of the world's largest organizations adapt to and understand the new high-velocity economy, I've long realized that there are big, creative-stumbling-blocks that

have restricted the type of thinking that is necessary to "doing-things-differently."

Yet, I am encountering a new group of leaders who know that the emergence of the high-velocity economy means that they must have a team that can constantly adapt and evolve, coming up with a regular stream of new ideas on how to better run the business, grow the business and trans-

form the business.

There are several reasons why innovation will be the word, and the primary area of focus for every business, throughout 2007:

- **people are finally "getting it":** They are realizing that innovation isn't just about new products ; it's about looking at what you do, how you do it, and how you can do it better.
- **people are realizing that innovation isn't optional:** They have come to realize that in the fast paced world in which we find ourselves, with multiple competitive threats and unprecedented new opportunities, those who can think differently and who can do things differently will be those that make the leap from potential failure to massive success
- **people are realizing they can "do" innovation:** they're realizing that innovation isn't some dark, mysterious ancient

ritual: they're realizing that it simply a mindset that involves constant probing to see how we can fix things, find new things, or transform things: whether those things be business processes, customer service methods, new products, marketing and distribution channel concepts, or just about anything else.

- **people know that innovation is driven by extreme velocity:** In every industry, the certain minimum expectations which have long existed are now constantly rising. Whether it issues of cost/price, customer service/support, logistics/delivery, brand coolness or new products, the rule is simple: to compete today, you have to keep up with high-velocity change. If you don't innovate to maintain the same velocity as everyone else, you get left behind. It's that simple.

- **people know it becomes easier to be innovative if you plug into the global innovation idea loop.** Despite all the press foo-fah-rah about Web 2.0 and all that junk, what has happened in the last decade is quite simple: there is now a huge and massive global discussion underway. If you can learn how to tap it, you can discover a wealth of innovative ideas and thinking, new knowledge, wonderful insight and creativity.

- **people know that demographic change brings about more innovative thinking:** quite simply, as change adverse baby-boomers begin to retire, they are being replaced by change-adept Gen-Connects: individuals who view innovative opportunities in the context of connectivity. They are always asking themselves, how can I do something cool with this business problem if I layer connectivity on top of it? Whether it's supply chain reorganization, collaborative tools or something else, they bring a whole new innovative perspective to the game.

- **People are learning that innovation is not a one time thing:** when it comes to innovation, the idea of a "suggestion box" is just so "20<sup>th</sup> century." There is now an understanding that a company must live a culture of innovation: everyone must be completely and fundamentally focused on the new things we need to do to stay in the game, and excel at what we do.

- **People know that innovation has gone mainstream:** Everyday people are starting to use the i-word in conversation, and it's becoming natural. Innovation has left the realm of the esoteric, and has become the next natural area of focus in business.

- **Management is now focusing on the attributes of an innovation team:** agility, insight and execution have become their guiding principles. They know that they must have agility to respond to the rapid change that constant innovation demands; they know they need depth of insight to discover where innovative ideas can work; they know that it isn't just coming up with the ideas, but making them work, that is so critical to their innovation success.

- **People are seeking a head start on how to make the leap to innovation:** A guy like me, who makes his living helping organizations understand innovation, now finds that 07 is already heavily booked. Management everywhere has put innovation on the agenda for 2007, and they're doing what it takes to get a kick-start on the process.

The most important thing? People are discovering that if you focus on innovation, you can break away from the dull, restrictive, boring routine activities that shackle you to the past. Instead, by focusing your energies on ideas, creativity, challenging the status quo, constantly seeking how you can do things better, grow things, or transform things, you ended up having a lot more fun -- and see a lot more benefits.

People have come to realize that being innovative is just plain fun.

That fact, more than anything else, signals that innovation is the word of 2007.

**More Innovative thoughts and ideas from Jim Carroll will be in our next edition!**



*People are realizing that innovation isn't just about new products ; it's about looking at what you do, how you do it, and how you can do it better.*

**"The world doesn't need many more folks with a Masters of Business Administration -- it needs a lot more with a Masters in Business Imagination!"**

~Jim Carroll, imagining what it would be like if we could earn our MBI

## USING HUMOUR TO INNOVATE

On November 14, the Ministry of Labour and Citizens Services put on a workshop called “*Activ8 - Celebr8 & Cre8 Innovation at Citizens Services.*” The morning workshop was run by Rock, Paper and Scissors, a corporate entertainment and training committee. They create engaging training seminars by using humor. By drawing in the crowd, using suggestions by audience members and even audience members themselves, they create a very memorable experience.

Their training exercises are developed to bring out the creativity in people. The following are some principles of their Working Better Together; Working Smarter with Humour & Creativity sessions.

### Principle One:

#### **Creativity and Innovation:**

- ◆ Identify when you are placing yourself in a “box”, for example operating under false assumptions. When you assume things, you may be missing out on opportunities to expand your knowledge, or find new ways of doing things.
- ◆ Look for more than one answer, don't limit yourself. You may come up with a better idea the more you think of it.
- ◆ Being engaged and having fun leads to more learning and higher retention; don't be afraid to have fun and be creative.
- ◆ The simple act of moving has been shown to help with creativity and innovation; so get up and move—it's as simple as that.

- ◆ Look for different ways of doing things when you come in contact with different people.

### Principle Two:

#### **The Strategic Use of Humour**

- ◆ The part of our brain that we use to interpret humour is the same part of the brain that we use for critical and creative thinking.
- ◆ Incorporate the principles of improv comedy, such as:
  - no whipping out
  - listen carefully and be present (don't drift off)
  - accept and say “yes and ...”
  - don't leave people hanging...continue your thoughts
  - no ‘pimping’ = forcing stuff on other people, don't push

### Principle Three:

#### **Assumptions**

- ◆ What assumptions are you making that are inhibiting your creativity?
- ◆ Think beyond your assumptions and ask questions like “What about”, “What if” and “Why not.”

### Principle four:

#### **Non-linear**

- ◆ Things don't always have to travel from point A to point B in a straight line, some of the fun and enjoyment comes from the unknown paths we take

- ◆ A culture of innovation supports non-linear thinking.

### Principle Five:

#### **Cooperate**

- ◆ Be strategic about when to maintain ownership of an idea, a concept, a product or a service and when to share
- ◆ There is a subtle line between competition helping or hindering creativity; take care

### Principle Six:

#### **Look for Reasons to Celebrate**

- ◆ Be present, focus on the here and now
- ◆ Have an open mind
- ◆ Make the other person look good
- ◆ Don't hold back, share information
- ◆ Be flexible and adapt to change

### Principle Seven:

#### **Focus and Make Space**

- ◆ Do it now—don't procrastinate
- ◆ Ask yourself: Have you supported/engaged in dialogue the person whose tip you received?
- ◆ Remember to focus

If you want to find out more information about Rock, Paper and Scissors, visit their website at [www.rpsinc.ca](http://www.rpsinc.ca) or contact Lee Anne Ragan at [laragan@rpsinc.ca](mailto:laragan@rpsinc.ca). All above information is copyrighted by Rock, Paper and Scissors and was used with their permission.

## EXERCISING YOUR INNOVATION

**Wendy Robinson, Project Director at Service Solutions and Planning gives us some exercises she uses to get her teams' creative juices flowing.**

An easy and simple way to practice creativity is to do some fun group exercises where joking, laughter and free flowing spirits are the order of the day. These two exercises will stretch the team's imagination and literally help the team leap into creative thinking mode whenever real problems need to be tackled and solved.

By doing exercises that challenge your team's creative abilities, they are also practicing collaboration. Make sure everyone is relaxed before you get started. You may want to check the ambience of their envi-

ronment - taking the team out of their usual meeting setting can make a huge difference. Remember, these exercises are meant to be silly and light but they do spark people's imaginations. Try them the next time the team gets together. Don't forget the trick is to let it flow and acknowledge when people are really stepping out on a limb with their ideas.

### **Exercise 1**

Take a piece of paper, and in one minute, list as many uses for a paperclip (or cereal like cheerios) you can think of.

- Write down every idea - don't judge or criticize
- Go for quantity, not quality of ideas
- Be relaxed, playful, perhaps even silly

- Switch your perspective; look at it from a different point of view (how would a child see this?)
- Ask the "what if?" questions; what if it were straightened out" what if it was bigger (thicker, heavier, stronger)?" etc.

### **Exercise 2**

Come up with 100 low or no-cost ways to improve customer satisfaction or product quality without needing to ask management's permission.

**“Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.”**  
~Steve Jobs



## THE BOOK CORNER



“Ready, Set, Done” How to Innovate When Faster is the New Fast by Jim Carroll

This book sets the pace for leading edge innovation. In the book, Jim Carroll provides insight on the key innovation success factors for the high velocity economy.



“What I Learned from Frogs in Texas” Saving Your Skin With Forward Thinking Innovation by Jim Carroll

Jim Carroll provides concrete guidance on how to turn challenges into opportunity.



“The Art of Innovation “ Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, Americas leading design firm By: Tom Kelley

Amazon comment: "Fine examples of how to design winning new products from the legendary IDEO."

The above book is available from our Corporate Library. To order books, go to <http://www.corporatelibrary.gov.bc.ca/know/>

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Who Invented Velcro?

The idea of Velcro was developed by a Swiss Engineer named Georges de Mestral in 1948. While hiking with his dog he realized that burrs and fabric formed a superior bond. With the help of a textile company velcro was completed and patented in 1955.

### How 1-800 Got Junk started:

Brian Scudamore started his company [1-800-GOT-JUNK?](http://www.1-800-got-junk.com) in 1989 straight out of high school with \$700 and a beat-up old pick-up truck. Today they have 95 franchise partners across North America with a true national presence — they are in 47 of North America's top 50 cities.

Scudamore was a risk-taker, but firm in his vision. "With a vision of creating the 'FedEx' of junk removal," says Scudamore, "I dropped out of University with just one year left to become a fulltime JUNKMAN! Yes, my father, a liver transplant surgeon, was not impressed to say the least." He chuckles, "He is onside now."

Many entrepreneurs minimize their risks by outsourcing to contractors. Scudamore chose a different route.

"I hired my first employee a week after I

started. I knew I needed the help. His name was David Sniderman — a good friend of mine. I really didn't know yet how to hire so I just asked a buddy." It may have started as a matter of simply not knowing what else to do, but it became a philosophical issue for him. "On a bigger level, I always believed in hiring people vs. contract or consultants. I felt that if I wasn't willing to make the investment then I was questioning my own faith in the business."

On the other hand, he's a big believer in letting other people share some of the risk. His choice of franchising as a business model allowed him rapid growth without having to turn to outside investors or other funding sources.

"It's the ultimate leverage model. People pay you a fee up-front to help them grow. Rather than lose control my vision by going public — I chose franchising. It's the ultimate growth model."

Their recipe for success has been simple. Take a fragmented business, add clean shiny trucks that act as mobile billboards, uniformed drivers, on-time service and up-front rates, and then mix in with a culture that is young, fun and completely focused on solid,

healthy growth. He has managed to retain 100% ownership and bootstrapped the business solely out of cash flow — something that is very rare these days.

Although this is a simple business, they couldn't possibly have grown this quickly without technology. Taking a low tech business and putting a high tech spin on it allowed them to rapidly distinguish themselves from their competition. All calls come into a central 1-800-GOT-JUNK? call center where they do all the booking and dispatch for their franchise partners. Franchise partners then assess all of their real time reports, schedules, customer info, etc., off of JUNKNET, their corporate intranet. This allows franchise partners to get into business quickly, and to focus solely on growth — working on the business vs. working in the business.

1-800-GOT-JUNK? will do about \$32 Million in 2004 — not a bad return on a \$700.00 investment! Brian's BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) is \$100 million and 250 franchise partners by Dec 31st, 2006. He says confidently, "We will get there."

### Your Innovation Newsletter Team

Please contact one of the team members below for feedback, suggestions and comments:

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**“When you innovate, you've got to be prepared for everyone telling you you're nuts.”**  
 ~Larry Ellison