



Identifying & Overcoming Barriers to Innovation

Marcus Barber

www.lufg.com.au

Monash Berwick Business Seminar

17th October 2007



Overview

- What 'it' is (and isn't)
- Likely Barriers
- Whether You Need 'it'
- Tools



ETR

- Specialist in Advanced Organisational Strategy, using a Values and Futures framework
- Small private firms to large corporate and Government entities across numerous sectors
- Founder of the Australian Strategic Planning Institute; Advisory board member of the Australian Bill of Rights Initiative; professional life member World Future Society; Fellow of Australian Sales and Marketing Institute
- Numerous presentations and training nationally and internationally on Innovation, Organisational Change, Futures and Sustainability
- Articles and papers published in Journals and magazines around the world
- Author of 'The Money Tree & How to Grow One – Creating Success in Your Business' and the soon to be finished 'Killing Trends: The Graceful Art of Innovation'
- MSc Strategic Foresight; G.Cert Teaching & Learning; M.Prac NLP; Multi Certification in the Spiral Dynamics framework
- Pragmatist – helping organisations see the road ahead more clearly such that they can make better decisions and take more effective action today



What is Innovation?



C v I

- C

- I



Definitions:

‘Whilst all Innovation is Creative, very little creativity is truly Innovative’

And

‘An Innovation is anything that makes an existing trend redundant’



Barriers



Typical Barriers

- Loss of Control
- No Clear Starting Point
- 3 Wise Monkeys
- Capability



Typical Barriers

- No shared and clear definition
- No Explicit Permission
- Shifting Goal Posts
- Unrealistic Expectations; Invalid Assumptions



Typical Barriers

- Loss of Control
 - Micro management = ‘safe stuff only’
- No Clear Starting Point
 - Need identified but not sure where to begin
- 3 Wise Monkeys
 - No one sees the need, no one discusses the need, no one hears the need!
- Capability
 - Lack of internal skills or structure



Typical Barriers

- No shared and clear definition
 - ‘anything and nothing could be ‘Innovation’ aligned’
- No Explicit Permission
 - A lack of organisational support means death for any Innovative approaches and programs
- Shifting Goal Posts
 - Chasing fads and worse – Trends! Focus shifts away from productivity to activity!
- Unrealistic Expectations; Invalid Assumptions
 - Poor assumptions means poor initial thinking. Unrealistic expectations means dissatisfaction



Need

- Increased Customer Service Demands
- Increased Competitive Activity
- Vanishing Product/Service Offering
- Crisis



Need

- Increased Customer Service Demands
 - Same customers wanting more
 - New customers wanting different
- Increased Competition Activity
 - Erosion of market share via similar offering
- Vanishing Product/Service Offering
 - Alternative products or services
 - Death of a Trend
- Crisis
 - Internal or Externally derived (usually all internal)



How to Hurdle



Tools

- Snack or Smorgasbord?
- Jump Starters
- Programs
- Capability or Purpose Driven



Tools

- Snack or Smorgasbord?
 - Small bite
 - Enterprise wide
- Jump Starters
 - Information sharing; idea gathering; permission zones; test markets;
- Programs
 - Target a specific area for intervention
- Capability or Purpose Driven
 - Is it internal skills driven or specific outcome driven?



Clues

- Define what is meant by
- Gain **EXPLICIT** permission from those who count
- Seek to build internal capacity rather than fixate on 'hire-in' approaches



Clues

- Have a
 - ‘Innovation Failure of the month’ award
 - ‘Weirdest idea ever heard’ award
 - ‘Most effective cross unit’ suggestion award
 - ‘Worthy of the Nobel Prize’ award



Leverage

- To Innovate you need awareness
- Once you have awareness you seek understanding
- Once you have understanding you seek leverage
- Once you have Leverage, barriers can be leapt, moved and by-passed



Expectations & Assumptions

- Are your assumptions about the future Valid?
 - Upon what information are you basing those assumptions?
 - Is your interpretation of that information ‘complete’?
- Are your expectations of the future Realistic?
 - Based on the assumptions you have made, are your expectations for the future reasonable?
 - What ‘unexpected’ are included in your thinking?



3 Keys to Good Strategy

1. Well Informed
2. Well Considered
3. Well Designed
4. Well Implemented



Trends are the antithesis of Innovation

“Trend reliance is the Art of Praying that
History repeats itself!”



Trends are Historical

- There is NO such thing as a ‘future’ trend
- Trends extrapolate yesterday’s data
- We bet the farm on trends too often
- Wildcard events bite us on the backside!



View Over Time





Summary

- Define; Identify; Permit;
- Select method; build internal capacity;
- Test expectations & assumptions; Trends prevent Innovation;
- ‘C’ is not the same as ‘I’
- Kill a Trend!
- 3 Keys to Good Strategy 😊

- Call me if you’d like some assistance



Questions?