

Scott Anthony

Guest Speaker



It is well recognised that we, as human beings are creatures of habit who long for PEACE in our daily lives, but to keep up with the fast pace in today's society, the old paradigms are going out the window. Taking a fresh look at this ever changing world is Scott Anthony, an enthusiastic young man AND an expert on the cutting edge of what is now referred to in the business world as INNOVATION.

Scott is a Strategic Transformation and Disruptive Innovation Expert with degrees at Dartmouth and Harvard, and is a Managing Partner in the Singapore firm called Innosight, a company that assists businesses to bring ideas into action. His company has advised some of the world's top businesses in the US and throughout Asia and has helped many to find solutions and start up new ventures. Highly sought after as a speaker in growth and innovation and for training workshops and master classes Scott returns to Australia in November for the Creative Innovation Conference which is held in Melbourne every year.

New Land spoke to Scott via telephone from his Singapore office about the value of the work of his company and how it helps other companies and organisations to succeed.

Interviewed by PHILIPPA RAYMENT

NL: What is a Strategic Transformation and Disruptive Innovation Expert?

SA: It's a challenge for those of us in the consulting, advice giving, writing and speaking business because we sometimes wrap, what really aren't that complicated topics, in big sounding buzz words. People can get put off. I fall prey to this too, I freely admit it. The disruptive part goes back to Clay Christensen who studied what it was that caused formerly great companies,

well known companies, the Kodaks and General Motors of the world, to suddenly fall off the rails. What he found again and again is that, in their markets someone came in with a solution that was much simpler, that was much cheaper, that was much more accessible, so for Kodak that was digital imaging - taking pictures on your cell phone, and for General Motors it was Toyota's very simple and affordable cars. When we talk about disruptive change that's what we mean by it - someone who comes in and does things in a very different

way that makes the complicated simple or the expensive affordable. When these changes happen it leads to massive change in markets and the displacement of historical market leaders.

NL: At the Creative Innovation Conference last year the audience feedback said that you were one of the most popular speakers how do you inspire people to think differently?

SA: There are two things that I try to do well.

- I try to make complicated material as accessible as possible – something that anybody can pick up and understand.

- I try to incorporate my own personal stories – experiences I have had in the business world or as a parent or just living life.

NL: What prevents people from making changes?

SA: The biggest thing is LACK OF CONFIDENCE. Innovation in the corporate sense is coming up with a new product, service, process, new business model or a new idea. People are frightened because they don't believe they have the capacity to do the things they read about.

NL: Is there a secret to business success in modern society?

SA: What's really different now from 30 years ago and will continue into the future is you just can't go and create a business that has a strategy and then go put it into place and milk that strategy for decades.

The reality is we live in a world of temporary competitive advantage where the second you start succeeding all of a sudden you've got all these competitors to deal with. So the secret to success today truly is being COMFORTABLE with CHANGE.

NL: You have made speeches and given workshops many times and in different countries. What was your impression of the Creative Innovation Conference 2012?

SA: I was delighted to be asked back to speak again. The thing that really struck me about the conference is the diverse nature of the audience and the speakers, and I can't think of another conference in the world that features that combination of artists and entrepreneurs,

scholars and government officials. The magic of innovation breakthroughs happens at intersections and the thing I love about this conference is it has tons of intersections. I think that breaths a dynamic that is palpable and you can feel it and it is exciting and you get tons of new ideas from it.

NL: What's new in your book of tricks for the 2013 Creative Innovations Conference?

SA: There are two things. I have a book that is coming out this year called the *First Mile*. What the book describes is in my mind the biggest value point for innovation. People often think the biggest innovation challenge is coming up with an idea but the reality is the biggest challenge is taking the raw idea and turning it into something that actually goes into market or gets implemented. I call that the First Mile – to try to essentially breathe life into an idea. I describe a specific process and then, if you're in a big company, some of the systems you can put in place to do this repeatedly. So this is the workshop I'm going to run. The second thing is I had a *Harvard Business Review* article that came out last year called the New Corporate Garage. World changing innovation is increasingly coming not from start-ups but from large companies that figure out how to combine together unique assets that only they have with just enough entrepreneurialism.

NL: Why is your company Innosight so successful?

SA: I think above all else the thing that makes us unique is our culture. And at the roots of that culture is a deep intellectual curiosity where we recognise that we don't have all the answers, we are not smarter than the clients, we work with them – a really deep ethos of collaboration. If you strip everything away, the culture and the people is what allows us to succeed.

SCOTT'S TIP

• If you really want to innovate, you really want to create something new – this is not a Friday topic, it's something where somebody has to wake up every morning and go to sleep every night obsessing about innovation. It doesn't have to be the entire company it can be one person but if you don't have that then your odds of success are pretty close to zero.

PROFILE

NL: You are a Baker Scholar, Ba. Economics at Dartmouth, MBA at Harvard but can you tell *New Land* readers a little about your early life?

SA: I have two older sisters and two younger brothers and I think that has left a lasting impact on me; as a middle child I always sought out PEACE. The other pertinent thing from my background is that both of my parents are psychiatrists. So I have two shrinks as parents and I am a middle child (laughing) so that pretty much explains everything you need to know about me.

NL: What is your passion?

SA: The thing that gets me motivated every day is helping individuals in organisations to reach their full innovation potential. By giving people the tools and the confidence to succeed we allow them to do things that they could not have done on their own.

NL: The best advice you have received?

SA: There are two:

- One from my mother and this goes back to my mission and purpose 'helping people realise their potential'. In fourth grade, I hadn't done a book report on Sir Francis Drake and the weather forecast was for a big snowstorm so I was counting on school being cancelled. The forecast was wrong and I still had to go to school, so I just wrote the report in pencil that morning and I did a very poor job. My mother didn't yell, which was unusual for her, but she said, "The greatest person in the world is that person's unfulfilled potential" and that really stuck with me. If you have any kind of talents or skill or ability or opportunities and you throw those away it's just a tragedy.

- The second piece of advice came from the co-founder of Innosight Professor Clayton Christensen from the Harvard Business School. One of the things that Clay says is 'be really clear about things that truly matter in life'. Following Christensen's guidance has made me try to be as balanced as I can. I've got three young children and I adore them. As a parent, I look at my kids and say 'yes to excel at school' that's obviously important but having a balance as a person, having other activities, whether it's sports or music or community service or something else I think that's just incredibly important.