



The

IMAGINE**NATION**TM

Story

*A true story of disruption, reinvention,
innovation and start-up entrepreneurship!*

By Janet L Sernack

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The ImagineNation™ Story

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About Janet Sernack

How I made the leap from Qantas air hostess to Founder and CEO of an Israeli start up!



I have always sought to balance my intuitive, emotional, heart and keen intelligences and creativity with my innate restlessness and rebelliousness. Somehow my possibility mindset and achievement motivation have both also served me well!

I am at heart, a maverick, and a misfit, who enjoys exploring, and playing in uncharted waters and doing the unexpected.

I find change and challenging the status quo intoxicating, fascinating and stimulating.

Flying around the world as an international Qantas hostess gave me the chance to rebel against my upbringing as well the freedom to make my own choices and learn from my own often, very naughty, experiences. I discovered and explored the world, on my own terms and had amazing adventures, with lots of fun loving friends, in faraway lands. I also met incredibly diverse groups of people, from different cultures and interesting backgrounds, with very few or no boundaries - as I was very, very young, just 19 years old when I started flying!

In the mid seventies, we enjoyed long stopovers, all expenses paid for, in exotic lands. There were almost no constraints, and this liberated me from my very troubled upbringing, from other people's expectations of me, and from having to conform to anyone else's standards or rules. As a result I developed a strong sense of autonomy, independence, freedom, resourcefulness and self reliance that has served me ever since.



Working in the fashion industry, as a designer, product and marketing development manager, in both the wholesale and retail sectors, for the next 10 years introduced me to my first real taste of innovation. Achieving the top role for a female executive in the Coles



Myer Group of department stores in Australia exposed me to many of the rigors, challenges and opportunities corporate executives' experience as they climb the ladders to success.

Studying part-time, whilst working full time enabled me to structure my thinking, and



develop strong business management and marketing skills that I applied when I developed the first design management consultancy to the fashion and lifestyle industries in Australia in the late 1980's.

Someone I met again recently, who knew me from those days, and is aware of my seven career changes, suggested that I have completed a full circle in that I am now teaching organizations, teams and leaders how to be innovative and entrepreneurial.

It seems that many of the very qualities I developed as a result of my rebelliousness, maverick and deviant nature, and fashion and consulting careers are what make innovators and start-up entrepreneurs successful.

“Learning by doing” is my mantra, so what better way is there than by taking on another seemingly impossible challenge, from which to learn and to then teach others.

Becoming a start-up entrepreneur has been another enormously challenging, and yet liberating learning journey. It has enabled me to become a more courageous, composed and resourceful misfit, to consolidate and focus all of my knowledge, skills and experience towards one direction and have a fabulous (and challenging) adventure creating it!

I work hard at congruently walking my talk; I somehow manage to learn from my failures and happily teach from my own personal experiences.



As these are what have enabled me to develop the emotional agility, authenticity and leadership and coaching presence which are at the core of my work.

My vision is to re-invent corporate learning, and I bring to my work an enviable depth and breadth of knowledge, skills, experience and wisdom including:



- ***A fresh and pragmatic perspective towards corporate learning that is holistic and systemic.***
 - Acknowledging that each individual, leader and team brings a diverse set of needs, beliefs, values, knowledge, skills and experience as well as distinct cultural attributes to the table. These can be deciphered, merged and integrated to intentionally create innovative or entrepreneurial corporate cultures and business eco-systems.
- ***A solutions oriented and outcome focussed and collaborative approach to all her work.***
- Involving cutting edge adaptive and emergent processes to flow with uncertainty, instability and chaos.
- Integrating design, associational, convergent and lean thinking with provocative competence to generate new business models and start-up solutions.
- Assertive, candid and generative debate processes to create imaginative and surprising solutions to business challenges and wicked problems and unexpected and random events.
- ***Adults learn by doing and learn best when they experience safe yet uncomfortable and disruptive learning processes.***
 - When people are able to observe and acknowledge feeling uncomfortable, making mistakes and failing, can they move towards understanding, and embracing desired or useful mindsets, thinking strategies and behaviours that generate more positive and useful outcomes.

Having been a “corporate career” woman, and marrying later in life, meant that, without the responsibility of a family, there was nothing concrete to hold my husband and me in Australia. Whilst we had all of the wonderful trappings of material success, and having risen to the top of my career as a corporate consultant, facilitator, trainer and executive coach, there was always a sense of ‘something missing’. The intention was to co-create a more meaningful life, make a significant ‘sand change’ and to ‘play’ in a ‘bigger game’.

Initially, I naively expected to offer my knowledge, skills and experience to contribute in some way to ‘the peace process’ here in Israel. Only to quickly find out how complex the geopolitical situation is, and how impossible it is to create even a mutual understanding between two different people with two very contradictory narratives and differing value systems.



Interestingly, other opportunities that I had not previously imagined ultimately emerged, and this is what The ImagineNation™ Story is all about!

Other information

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Introduction

McKinsey on Building Management Muscle

"In the years ahead, acceleration in the scope, scale, and economic impact of technology will usher in a new age of artificial intelligence, consumer gadgetry, instant communication, and boundless information while shaking up business in unimaginable ways. At the same time, the shifting locus of economic activity and dynamism, to emerging markets and to cities within those markets, will give rise to a new class of global competitors. Growth in emerging markets will occur in tandem with the rapid aging of the world's population—first in the West and later in the emerging markets themselves—that in turn will create a massive set of economic strains.

*Any one of these shifts, on its own, would be among the largest economic forces the global economy has ever seen. **As they collide, they will produce change so significant that much of the management intuition that has served us in the past will become irrelevant.** The formative experiences for many of today's senior executives came as these forces were starting to gain steam. **The world ahead will be less benign, with more discontinuity and volatility and with long-term charts no longer looking like smooth upward curves, long-held assumptions giving way, and seemingly powerful business models becoming upended.**"*



And that there is even more to come!

“Those who understand the depth, breadth, and radical nature of the change and opportunity that’s on the way will be best able to reset their intuitions accordingly, shape this new world, and thrive”.

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entrepreneurs excel at! Innovation and entrepreneurship will enable organizations to create exciting disruptive new business models, transform their business games and shape this new world to build the landing strips of the future.

What is required are fresh, agile and nimble 'not knowing' approaches involving co-sensing, co-creating and co-presencing new ways of understanding customers problems, how they perceive value, and how to create memorable experiences for them. By generating innovative ideas to solve these problems and aspirations and then transform them into commercially viable innovative entrepreneurial solutions.

This is because most people know that creativity and innovation are key catalysts required for economic growth, social change, and business success and job satisfaction. Recent challenges to modern capitalism and the slow decline of industrial manufacturing in developed nations have also compelled us to seek innovative new business models that will help sustain healthy economies and high standards of living.

The rise of high technology companies, especially those like Amazon and Google - which didn't exist 15 years ago - and companies like Facebook and Twitter - didn't exist 10 years ago - have compelled us to re look at how we develop and communicate within businesses, and to seek new business models for cultivating and maximizing innovation and entrepreneurship.

The incidence of high impact 'Black Swan' events, like the Japanese Tsunami, Icelandic volcano, and the rise of fundamentalism, have compelled us to seek radical new responses to global problems, as well as to these unexpected and random high impact events. The global war for talent, increasing competition and rising costs have made employee engagement the number one global issue for organisations. They will need to confront and resolve if they want to grow and flourish within the constraints of the 21st century.

We can no longer predict, or accurately forecast what the future might be like, and McKinsey offer us a really interesting one-

http://www.mckinsey.com/Insights/Strategy/Management_intuition_for_the_next_50_years?cid=mckq50-eml-alt-mkq-mck-oth-1409. We can, however, maximise our creative potential to take advantage of the discontinuity and volatility and develop an innovative set of scalable, sustainable and systemic solutions to flow with it. Letting go of the strategies that we habitually and traditionally implemented to maintain balance, reduce risk and create a sense of equilibrium in the past, as they will no longer work in this brave new world!





Chapter One

Making the sand change

When I arrived in Israel in 2010, I faced a harsh new reality, which defied most of what I had been taught and experienced about high performance organizational cultures, leaders and teams. Aptly illustrated by Dov Frohman founder of Intel Israel in his book 'Leadership the Hard Way' where he states that *"leadership in today's economy is a lot like flying a plan through a thunderstorm."*

I quickly realized that most of the approaches to organizational development that I had learnt and applied in Australia were irrelevant to potential clients inside and outside of my new homeland.

So in the first year I immersed myself in a variety of online learning programs as well as deeply into Israeli culture. I sought to research and identify the key cultural drivers, mindsets and behaviors driving this tiny "huge" country with its unique set of adaptive challenges. I found that its success as The Start-Up Nation, and its ascension in The Global Innovation Index, defied most of the consulting models I had learnt and was attached to.



As I had also studied cutting edge emergence principles when attending a leadership program based on Theory U, at MIT in Boston, I knew that, to allow the new to emerge, you have to let go of the old. Ultimately I let go of almost everything I knew and practiced, and completely re-invented myself by massive amounts of reading, field researching and debating. I sought to understand, decipher, integrate and generate new approaches to developing innovative organizational cultures, leaders, teams within a holistic innovative business eco-system approach.

I knew, intuitively, that the world, with globalization, rapid advances in technology and fracturing global demographics needed ways to be, think and act differently to understand and solve problems and transform them into innovative solutions.



Israel became my case study, which I researched to reveal the 'secret' success formula for adapting and flourishing in the face of complexity, at the edge of chaos, with extreme turbulence, whilst surrounded by local and global hostility and daily uncertainties.

I knew that if I could see this with fresh eyes, then I had an opportunity to teach others the 'how to's in an increasingly volatile and turbulent world!'

Whilst my husband sought specialized work in his field, I realised very quickly that, to succeed and flourish in this brave new world, I would also need to manage my own deeply profound change and reinvention process. This offered me an opportunity to experience



and take personal responsibility for manifesting my own change process as a way of transforming my career.

The immediate challenge was to flip my own inner and outer games and re-invent myself as a person (and not being my role) as a start-up entrepreneur and as a global and authentic leader and coach.

Israel is a unique Start-Up Nation!

I became quickly intrigued initially by the incredible creative energy I encountered in Start-Up Israel, which was completely different to what I had experienced in corporate Australia.

So I began by researching why is such a source of creative energy and disruptive high tech innovation, as illustrated by the sale of WAZE to Google for \$1.03 billion. I sought to discover what might be some of the cultural factors and key drivers that deliver such game changing and paradigm shifting outcomes? I chose this because Israel constantly provides evidence of economic success, authentic entrepreneurship, cutting edge inventiveness and 'out of the box' thinking, which is something every company and country in the world needs to learn to cultivate in the 21st century.



Israel has a population of only 8.3 million people, is surrounded by hostile neighbors and is



contained in a land the size of Tasmania where;

- *Innovators know how to use constraints and generate possibilities and transform them into innovative solutions.*
- *Entrepreneurs know how to execute these transformations into lean and agile companies that deliver commercial outcomes.*
- *Enabled by a unique and enviable innovative and entrepreneurial ecosystem.*

The culture is exemplified by a state of constant 'conflict' and 'argumentativeness' at all levels; between individuals, peoples, groups the government and neighbouring territories. In a unique way, this makes Israel and many Israeli's expert and masterful in challenging the status quo (no matter what it is), convention and in generating imaginative 'out of the box' thinking through their assertive and creative problem solving.

However, this also comes at a cost; as there is a distinct set of polarities that arise from the constant emotional and physical states of conflict in Israel, that are accentuated by its relative smallness and its Jewish people hood resulting in;

- A predominantly aggressive defensive and intensely competitive culture.
- A seemingly traumatized population, with a deep sense of urgency, self centeredness and an overall impatience.
- An incredible ability to adapt, be resilient and deal with adverse situations whilst sustaining an inherently optimistic outlook.
- A society focussed on families and communities, with an inherent ability to co-operate and bind together under pressure.
- Yet there is also a constructive, imaginative, creative, improvisational and collaborative ability to zoom in and zoom out through generative debate to solve problems and get things done.

I sensed that Israel provides the world with a microscopic, adaptive and replicable example of how to adapt to discontinuity and volatility, and generate innovative solutions that will enable leaders and organizations to flow and flourish within it, and in spite of it!



More on my sources of inspiration

Attending to our core needs, developing new friendships and associations, business networks and joining community groups all helped and enabled us to settle in and adapt to the Israeli 'Salad Bowl' culture.

Israel, the start-up nation, with its unique set of problems, constraints and changes, its extreme diversity, as well as the heroism and drive of its people both inspired and energised me to find out more! Somehow, this also served to enable me to deal effectively with the volume and speed of change that was occurring in every aspect of my life. The vibrant energy of this *"embattled sliver of a country-home, being only one thousandth of the world's population"* totally captivated me. Its capacity and appetite for creativity and disruptive innovation, its exuberance, optimism and comradeship all prevail against seemingly unreasonable odds.

So I invested three years in conducting my own intense culture research study to identify, define and model the Israeli 'magic formula' for balancing chaos and order. To develop a learning model and learning system that supports and generates high levels of adaption, creativity and innovation in organizations, leaders and teams, which has become the basis for the world's first innovative leadership curriculum.

Some short facts about Israel - innovation is part of Israel's culture

Dr. Yossi Vardi is one of Israel's first high-tech entrepreneurs. For over 40 years he founded and helped to build over 60 high-tech companies in a variety of fields, among them software, energy, Internet, mobile, electro-optics and water technology.



A quote by Israeli start-up guru Yossi Vardi explains:

"This is a start-up country, socially and culturally. It is in our heritage, our ethos. . . . The country is constantly renewing itself all the time."

- Israel has the highest number of university degrees per capita worldwide.
- Israel has; per capita; the most scientists and technicians in the world.
- In 2006 Israel ranked third in the world in registered patents per capita.



- Israel has the highest number of home computers per capita in the world.
- Israel has the third highest rate of entrepreneurship; and the highest rate among women and among people over 55; in the world.
- Israel ranks as the top country for scientific publications. Almost 60 percent are in biology and related medical or agricultural fields.
- Over 25 percent of the workforce is employed in technical professions.
- Israel is one of eight countries in the world that have the technological ability to build and launch their own satellites.

Israel is the 'Start-Up Nation' (www.startupnationbook.com) where:

- Authentic entrepreneurship emerges spontaneously,
- Cutting edge inventiveness leads to evidence of success,
- 'Out of the box' thinking is a 'way of life'!
- Generative debate delivers results beyond expectations!

"Israel is in the estuary region where rigid order and random chaos meet and generate high levels of adaptation, complexity and creativity."

The last thing that I had expected when we relocated to Israel was that I would start a new business, never mind become an Israeli start-up entrepreneur! Little did I know that I would become totally immersed with seeing this 'huge little' 'Start-Up' Nation with fresh eyes, and become besotted and entrenched with innovation and start-up entrepreneurship on a global scale. As with Israel, defeat is not an option, so I pressed on and ultimately created ImagineNation™.

What drives Israeli innovation?

I initially found that Israel defied any kind of traditional culture model definitions, whilst it is essentially driven by a strong survival need; this is strangely balanced by an equally strong need for self actualization and self transcendence. Whilst this creates entropy that some suggest is not sustainable for the long term, it results also from a collision between "necessity" (survival) and "possibility" (optimism).



Added to this is raw courage and chutzpah to do the unexpected, to disrupt and challenge the status quo, take intelligent risks and being willing to fail by experimenting and improvising – making Israeli's masters of disruptive high tech innovation.

Also add very high levels of competence from attending a range of world class universities, a deep sense of responsibility and 'networks for life' acquired by serving in the Israel Defence Forces. These factors help Israeli's maximize the differences and diversity that exist in an essentially migrant culture, Israel seems to be always *"simmering and on the constant boil"*.

Israel became innovative as a result of maximizing its constraints, where entrepreneurship is part of the national DNA, an envied lifestyle where the seemingly impossible is often achieved on a daily basis.

Israeli culture is a "melting pot" of differences, and as a young country, is still in an early stage of its cultural evolution. This tends to make it more flexible and adaptive, nimble and responsive to change, as well as a hot bed of inventiveness and entrepreneurship.

The key piece in my research jigsaw puzzle was developing a systemic perspective understanding that a key factor behind its disruptive innovative success is its innovative eco-system.

So I set about exploring and defining what constitutes an **Innovative business eco-system** and drives innovative success;

- To explain why business eco-systems are critical to develop and to help organisations be adaptive innovative entrepreneurial sustainable and successful in the face of the generative challenges and wicked problems of the 21st century.
- To explore the trend globally towards collaboration and the opportunities offered by the 'internet of everything' which are also driving the development of industry ecosystems.
- To explain what a business eco-system looks like and its key components.

Finally how do you build an innovative business or personal culture and/or eco-system, how can it be replicated and leveraged to change



the business game and succeed in an uncertain chaotic and unstable world?

How the Israeli innovation model works



“Israel’s ability to continuously produce high quality innovative products is fundamental to its capacity to compete globally and the Israeli government considers it high priority to ensure Israel’s future competitiveness”.

Shalom Simhom, Minister of Industry, Trade and Labour

Government Support for Innovation

Key Government Initiatives: the Israeli Government has been, and still is very proactive in enabling the development of the high tech sector through specific program based funding via the Office of the Chief Scientist.

Development of the local Venture Capital Industry: the government established in 1992 the Yozma (meaning "initiative" in Hebrew) program. It was intended to jump-start the

venture capital market in Israel. Since then the venture capital market in Israel has boomed, with hundreds of funds in operation, having raised close to \$5 billion for hundreds of start-ups by 2002.

Need for development of military technology: due to the unreliability of foreign supply, pre and post the 1967 or Six Day War, Israel decided to invest significantly in the development of high-tech military industries. This helped to jump start the Israeli technology scene. As a result, and perhaps not surprisingly, Israel has become a global centre for military innovations, most recently The Iron Dome.

The supportive Israeli economic cluster

“An economic cluster is a dense network of companies and institutions in a certain geographic sphere. An economic cluster that is based on the region's unique assets is an appropriate structure through which to promote regional leap frogging.”

Reut Institute, Israel <http://reut-institute.org/en/Publication.aspx?PublicationId=3753>

Israel has the inherent cultural attributes to produce economic clusters and operates effectively within its own unique economic cluster.

The innovative Israeli eco-system

One of the key critical success factors behind Israeli Innovation and Entrepreneurship is the successful Israeli business eco-system.

This can be described as the cluster of world class universities, government agencies, venture capitalists, large organisations, the (IDF) Israel Defence Forces, Start-Ups, and the eco-system that connects them.

Israel has developed the concept of an ‘economic cluster’ into a unique collaborative and competitive innovative eco-system. This is a result of its unique cultural attributes and government support initiatives.

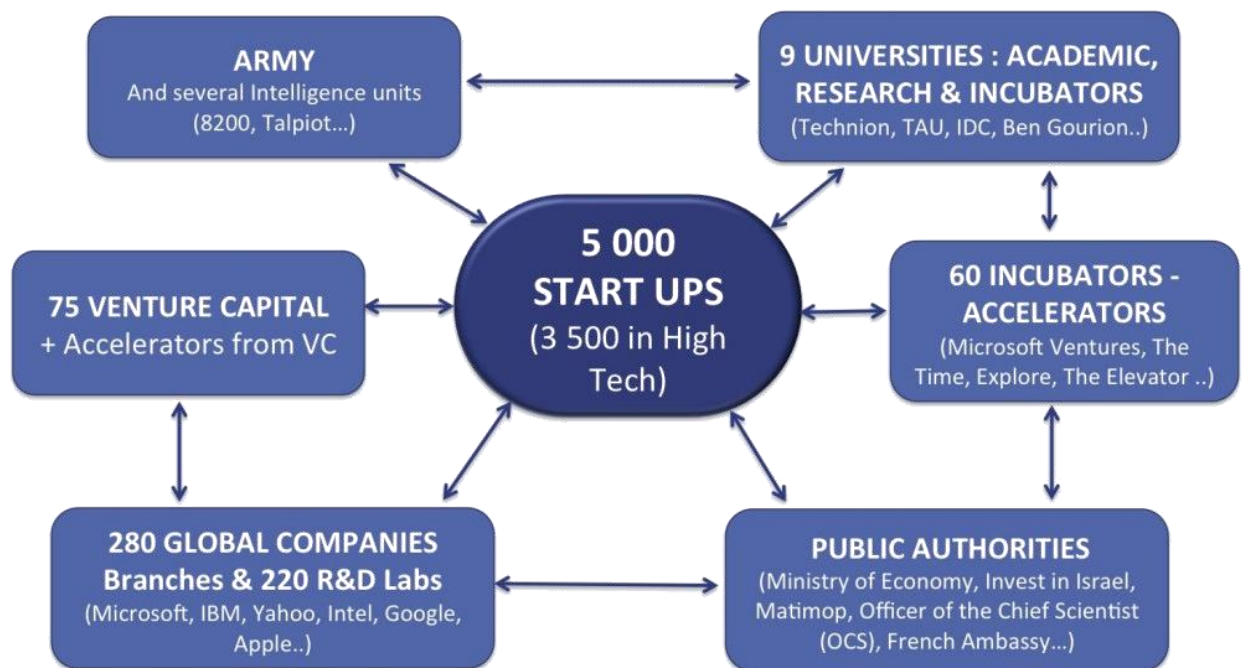
Israel has created a business environment where all of the pieces and parts support and enable businesses to be adaptive, sustainable and successful in an uncertain and unstable world



We have deciphered and defined the key attributes that enable this eco-system to be adapted to suit specific individual and organisational needs.

The design and development of each individuals and organisations eco-system can be customised to align to the business strategy to embody the identified critical success factors and desired cultural or business eco-system attributes.

THE ISRAELI ECOSYSTEM OF INNOVATION :



The key attributes of an innovative business eco-system

- **Passionate** means being deeply intentional and committed to the organizational purpose and the leadership cause in ways that are dynamic, inspirational, transparent, candid and adaptive.
- **Emergent** means operating systemically and playing the space of mindful discovery to see what might be appearing, arising, occurring, or developing, especially for the first time
- **Experimental** means pushing the boundaries to create, explore, test and iterate unrestricted ideas and solutions whilst being willing to fail to learn fast.
- **Courageous** means challenging the status quo, convention and operating models, being disruptive and assertive, orchestrating conflict to debate and create new paradigms, solutions and inflection points.



Benefits of understanding developing and leveraging innovative eco-systems

- Finding new ways of responding to and balancing the fluctuating levels of uncertainty and instability now occurring at all levels of society globally.
- Generating innovative solutions to wicked problems, generative challenges, business dilemmas and improbable and unexpected events.
- Building something memorable that may not have existed previously.

- Re-inventing or reenergizing products, organisations and industries.
- Getting to the future faster and outthinking the competition.
- Ultimately to build something worthwhile, sustainable and enduring.

How Israeli Start-Ups benefit for the eco-system approach

The start-up eco-system in Israel is a subset of the larger innovative business ecosystem where;

- Intrinsic motivation is developed at home, in school, in the IDF, as an essential part of the Israeli entrepreneurial culture.
- Ideas get incubated, in high school or the IDF, at university, or in the many start-up hubs that exist in the major cities.
- The start-up gang gets together to discuss wicked problems and seed the start-up hypothetical solution. As they do this they begin to structure their unique collaborative DNA. They learn how to work together, to maximize difference and diversity by arguing and debating, mostly as a result of their service in the IDF.
- The business model is then debated, tested, validated and prototyped, through rapid experimentation and improvisation. The intent is to give the market something disruptive and innovative, of significant value that is accessible and may not have previously existed.
- They may now join an incubator to seek business mentoring and/or financial support. They may also decide to self fund through bootstrapping or by making initial customer sales.
- The gang is constantly testing and their ideas and minimal viable product through customer and market feedback to continue iterating, pivoting and prototyping their business model whilst iterating their business strategy.
- They will pivot successes & failures, as learning opportunities and may remain in stealth mode, until they have finally validated their proof of concept.
- They may now join an accelerator to seek business mentoring and/or financial support or seek to obtain VC investment.
- They will continue to develop their minimal viable product, business strategy and accelerate their business model until it is finally realized via a sale to an external third



party. They may seek market success, or drop the whole business idea if it fails significantly and start all over again with a new problem for which they will see an innovative solution.



Chapter Two

The Innovation Opportunity



Dealing with Change Overload!

Once I managed to get myself out of ‘change’ overwhelm, I started to take responsibility for managing my survival and learning anxieties. I set about defining specific and clear personal change goals and a clear intention and vivid description of my desired future state in my new homeland.

The first step in my action plan was to acknowledge the confusion and the chaos going on in my mind. To then make sure that I continued to practise, my daily silence, stillness and mindful meditations, to keep me present and connected to a positive possibility, rather than submit to the confusion and the chaos my new life had thrown me into. To allow myself to let go of my old ways of thinking, sensing and perceiving things, to let go of my old business, training and consulting models.



I sought to keep myself out of the 'fog' by constantly maintaining my composure and focussing my attention on my passion to make a difference and my goal.

Using this deep personal experience as my own unique case study, and applying Professor Edgar Schein's methodologies I was able to deeply explore the energetic and volatile dynamics that underlie and characterise the Israeli Culture.

This became the key which opened the door and enabled me to cross the threshold towards identifying, understanding and modelling the patterns, intrinsic motivators and underlying mindsets, thinking strategies, behaviours and practices of innovative leadership and start-up entrepreneurship.

Why Focus on Innovation?

Once I managed to clear the 'fog', I realized that I had landed in completely new and radically different Innovation and entrepreneurship space. I became fascinated with the whole concept of Innovation as it touched every aspect of my new life from mobile phones to car alarm systems; absolutely everything was fresh, creative, different and new!

I explored and experimented with applying this pragmatically to the corporate learning and leadership context.

This was because I realized that global organisations, leaders and executive coaches could learn from Israel as it is such a surprising microscopic national and economic success story.

HSR.ORG
**Harvard
Business
Review**

MARCH 2013
REPRINT #13038



Apart from being exposed to Innovation in Israel at the grass roots level, Israel Post, and later Kindle, benefited enormously from my multiple Amazon purchases which included the latest, cutting edge, books on innovation, leadership, management and entrepreneurship.

I also discovered to my dismay that whilst many Israeli's are very clever and creative, however, they are not always competent at completing the task at hand, so after much heartache my new website launched. I then had to deal effectively with preventing the nebulous range of piranhas seeking to take bites out of my

exciting new innovation cake!



Learning to navigate marketing on the internet

When I arrived in Israel I wasn't even on Facebook, so began another huge learning process in how to adapt my marketing knowledge to the internet, and especially in how to work with the social media and lately in e-learning.

I initiated a monthly blog on innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as an e-newsletter with the intent of building an online ImagineNation™ community and my reputation as a subject matter expert. The Internet also provided me with the opportunity to discover the best and most innovative bloggers, groups and articles as well as MOOCs. I had to learn how to network both offline and online to build my Linked In Group to find and collaborate with my online community.

In Israel, there is a mantra – if you don't network, you don't work!

So, I set about networking within the vibrant Israeli start-up community, attending weekly events largely based in Tel Aviv, on my own, with limited Hebrew, often being the oldest (and female) start-up entrepreneur present.

I also somehow managed to get involved in setting up an English speaking networking group in the central north that meets weekly and has over 150 people on the list. There are some amazingly creative, resourceful and talented people in the group, ranging from business coaches, to happiness facilitators, artists, therapists, designers and authors, just to name a few. I am constantly surprised by how passionate and excellent most of our group members are, and how they are willing to help and support each other to be successful.

It has taken an enormous effort to feel comfortable networking in the Israeli start-up community and a long time to build my credibility and reputation as an 'outsider' (as I am from Oz, they call us 'Anglo's here) as a female (also very gender biased here) and an older (not many over 45 years old).

Fortunately I survived the filtering and blending processes and have made many new wonderful friends and associates. ImagineNation™ was even invited to exhibit recently at the Israeli Innovation Conference, Mixii, in the Start-Up Pavilion.



So here is the Core Problem I identified - HOW can organizations be enabled to respond, flow and flourish within the wide range of 21st century challenges and wicked problems. Whilst simultaneously generating business growth, increasing business value and competing locally and globally and still generating a significant ROI?



These converging forces have created a new context for leadership where leaders are required to operate effectively in an;

“age of upheaval, to master personal challenges, to be in the limelight constantly, to make decisions under extreme uncertainty.”

Here are the bare bones of our Solution - to enable organizations to respond, flow and flourish with the wide range of 21st century challenges and wicked problems by teaching them;

- HOW to develop innovative leadership and entrepreneurial capabilities, innovative organizational cultures, and innovative business ecosystems!
- HOW to transform constraints, challenges and wicked problems into user friendly innovative solutions, products and services that people value and cherish.
- HOW to fearlessly experiment with and execute innovative prototypes that cause them to fail fast to learn quickly and deliver innovative solutions.

Chapter Three

The Birth of ImagineNation™

Disruptive provocative and generative

I sailed around in the volatile, uncharted waters that this amazing learning journey took me on, with its high emotionally challenging peaks and deep visceral troughs. Whilst not really intending to, I become an Israeli start-up entrepreneur, and created an innovative global learning company that built on the strengths and successes of my Australian learning and development company, Compass Learning Pty Ltd.



It's called Imagine Nation™, a play on Israel as the imaginative nation!

I sought to find a new non prescriptive, adaptive and innovative way of disrupting prevailing leadership, culture and corporate learning paradigms. To devise creative and innovative ways for organizations, manager, leaders to learn, lead and thrive in this bewildering, uncertain and discontinuous environment.

This makes ImagineNation™ the first global learning company to research, decipher and replicate the Israeli innovative and entrepreneurial start-up phenomena.

We developed a unique disruptive innovation learning system and created a non academic pragmatic 'how to' innovation and entrepreneurship corporate curriculum.

ImagineNation™ is a generative and provocative global learning company using the latest technology and thought leadership to develop innovative leadership and entrepreneurship capability enabling people and organizations to become paradigm pioneers.



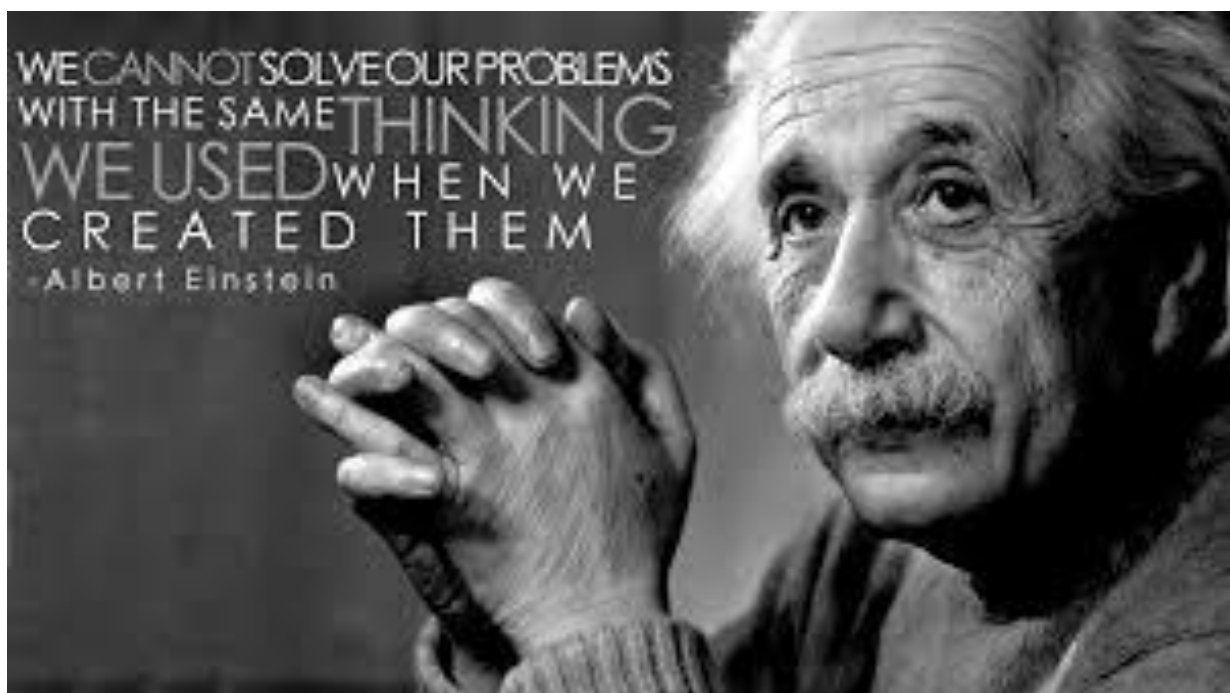
We co-create with our client's necessity driven, passionate, emergent, experimental and courageous cultures or business eco-systems where Innovation is part of everyone's jobs every day.

Our clients are global corporations learning & development practitioners and executive coaches and consultants who want to develop innovation and entrepreneurship capabilities.

We enable organization to flow and flourish with the volatility, discontinuity and wicked problems and 21st century challenges by:

- Igniting and harnessing the capacity that creates mindset flips and fresh lines of sight to perceive the world differently.
- Developing innovative leadership capability, innovative organizational cultures and innovative business eco-systems.
- Making Innovation everyone's job, every day to create highly engaged and passionate work environments.

We enable managers and leaders to be intentionally & constructively



disruptive to create the collisions for innovation to occur!

Our unique learning products focus on developing people's abilities to intentionally disrupt the status quo by ***knowing how to be different, think different and act different to make a difference.***

We enable our clients to lead from the future!



We lead people through a range of powerful visceral, experiential and emergent learning journeys.

Our learning journey framework includes;

- The Presencing and the U-Processes which incorporate the latest thinking in social technologies.
- Lean and agile start-up thinking and methodologies.
- Gamification.

This enables them to safely *deviate from the norm, experiment and take risks that disrupt existing mindsets, perspectives, habits, paradigms and processes.*

We have developed a set of generative methodologies that integrate adult and experiential learning principles with either gamification processes via The Start-Up Game™.

We also incorporate the Presencing process in our online learning programs via The Coach for Innovators Certified Program™ which has been certified by The International Coach Federation as a Continuing Coach Education Program.

We are currently co-creating a new corporate MOOC ImagineNation™ Innovation with Cahoot Learning, an innovative Melbourne based e-learning platform.

Our focus is to enable and empower people to;

- *Challenge assumptions as well as the status quo to unpack and reframe the systemic issue or problem as a generative challenge and an opportunity for innovation.*
- *Learn new ways of paying deep attention to see and perceive the world through different lenses resulting in multiple perspectives that create openings and thresholds for innovation.*
- *Inquire by knowing how to ask deep, intentionally disruptive and generative questions, to then deeply observe, reflect, retreat & operate at the generative level where Flow is likely to occur.*
- *Debate to use conflict and the potential for conflict, and disagreement and dissent to question, deviate, disrupt and challenge the operating logic, feeling and thinking patterns.*
- *Create a lean start-up approach to new business development.*

We are not teaching anything I have not personally experienced and applied to creating, pivoting whilst developing ImagineNation™.

We may also be the first global learning company to teach both the front and back ends of innovation, that is not process or idea platform focused.

This is because we teach the *both the Discovery and Delivery phases* of innovation to develop and apply to real life; the emotional agility, mindsets, lean, design and associational thinking strategies with the behaviours, skills, strategies, practices and habits of innovative leaders and start-up entrepreneurs!

The ImagineNation™ Offering

The Start-Up Game™



<http://www.imaginationation.com.au/the-start-up-game/>

The Start-Up Game™ is a unique business simulation, co-created in Israel, between



ImagineNation™ and The Playful Shark, one of Israel's leading game design studios.

It integrates adult, experiential and gamification concepts, principles and techniques into a corporate learning context in the form of a one or two day live workshop.

The aim of The Start-Up Game™ is to enable players to know how to see business opportunities and how to pursue them in innovative, lean and agile ways! It enables people to think and act differently!

Innovators & entrepreneurs 'learn by doing' to iterate (repetition) & pivot (make an improvement) their ideas & solutions! It has also been proven that adults learn best 'by doing' to close the gaps between what they know and what they do. By experimenting with, and making mis-takes to make distinctions (that increase their knowledge) on theories presented to apply them in 'real life'. Games are used as metaphors or mirrors for what happens in 'real life' and business simulations allow failures without the real life consequences.

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The Start-Up Game™ transcends typical existing experiential learning activities, business simulations and competitive corporate board games based on the old “Monopoly” paradigm.

It uses the foundational game structure of a business simulation, with both achievement and competitive elements. It provides players with key prestige and privilege elements by badging reputation points and start-up strength or value.

The Coach for Innovators ICF CCE Certified Program™

<http://www.imagenation.com.au/coach-for-innovators/>

The Coach for Innovators Certified Program™ provides the ultimate toolkit for executive and leadership coaches and corporate consultants, who want to help their clients succeed, flow and flourish by *transforming complex business dilemmas and wicked problems into innovative solutions.*

The program is cutting edge in the emergence and disruptive innovation space!

It enables coaches and their clients to see and work with their whole system to generate innovative responses that transform the business game in the face of most of today’s key business challenges.

It focuses on developing people’s abilities to *intentionally disrupt the status quo by knowing how to be different, think different and act different and make a difference* by leading them through a powerful experiential and emergent group coaching and learning journey through the Presence or U-Process, Lean and Agile Start-Up Thinking Strategies and Innovative Thought Leadership.

It enables them to deviate from the norm, experiment and take risks that disrupt existing mindsets, perspectives, habits, paradigms and processes.



The program is delivered online globally and consists of 8 two hour interactive group coaching webinars and generative discussions.

There are 4 one on one individual online coaching sessions to further tailor and customise each person's learning experience and business applications.

It typically is run four times a year and is accredited by the International Coach Federation as a Continuing Coach Education Program (CCE) to enable coaches globally to earn points towards their ICF reaccreditation process. People can choose from either an innovative leadership or a start-up entrepreneurship leaning stream.

ImagineNation™ Innovation

<http://www.imagenation.com.au/imagenationinnovation/>

This extraordinary and unique online course is designed to enable global corporations to connect, engage and achieve organization wide learning in innovation and entrepreneurship. This enables them to align their business and innovation strategies to thrive in a highly competitive world of ever quickening change, instability and uncertainty by making the shift from incremental to breakthrough innovation.

ImagineNation™ has developed this course with Cahoot, a collaborative, and in itself an innovative online learning environment that is quickly being recognised as a true disruptor in the world of education. This co-creation results in the online delivery of high touch innovation and entrepreneurship learning that generates high impact outcomes and provide outstanding results. It enables learners to truly collaborate in order to produce inspirational and transformational learning experiences.

This course is cutting edge in the technology and online learning space!

It offers organizations the opportunity to engage in a faster, scalable, cost effective, customized learning solution that equips their managers and leaders with the 21st century tools to adapt and flourish within a world where circumstances change in an instant. It achieves this by teaching them to how be different, think different, act different to make a difference - through enabling them to discover, identify and resolve business issues, wicked problems and transform them into game changing ideas and solutions.

It encompasses a structured weekly schedule, a range of interactive media, rigorous and relevant assessment, review and measurement, tracking and reporting processes.



It also provides an unrivalled capacity for collaborative individual and group learning cohorts. It takes participants through the Presence or U-Process, lean and agile start-up methodologies, creative thinking strategies and innovative thought leadership.

It enables them to deviate from the norm, to experiment, fail and take risks that disrupt existing mindsets, perspectives, habits, paradigms, practices and processes.

Innovation Labs

Innovation Labs use awareness-based social technologies to enable executive, leadership and product and service teams to connect, reflect, engage and inspire one another to experiment and explore possibilities for change and innovation.

The intent is to generate ‘a problem rich environment’ which focuses on what ‘jobs need to be done’ for customers?

People are encouraged and enabled to play ‘at the edge’, by experimenting and exploring with a range of mindfulness, humorous, sound, art, dialogue and silence practices and processes - to invent, ideate, re-invent and innovate new ways of responding to the challenges, wicked problems and opportunities emerging in the 21st century.

Innovation Labs create the ‘safe space’ for deep listening and dialogue, for playfulness, dreaming, storytelling, improvisation and reframing.

- To awaken and hear peoples voices, to allow people to think for themselves and collectively to realise the potential of the group or the team.
- To elicit more and different multiple perspectives from the group or team, by maximizing cognitive diversity and dissonance by creating intentional and disruptive ‘collisions’ between what is necessary and what is possible.
- To raise the consciousness and collaborative capacity of the group or team, to ignite their courage and draw on their competence to identify new possibilities to experiment with and to learn from.
- To create openings and thresholds that perceive complex and wicked problems in new ways resulting in breakthrough and game changing solutions that can be synthesised into an innovative vision, start-up, product or service prototype and implementation plan.



What does an Innovation Lab involve?

Innovation Labs use a wide range of technological, emergence and experiential processes that focus on the 'how to' of innovation.

The intent is to generate, ideate, iterate and experiment with different and disruptive ideas, methods and unexpected ways of doing things to generate game changing ideas and solutions.



Innovation Webinars

Innovation webinars provide participants with bite size, simple and relevant introductions to the latest thinking and global developments in innovation and entrepreneurship.

Our innovation webinars are cutting edge in innovation content and provide bite size online learning.

Our webinars enable participants to explore and understand key innovation themes, ideas, trends and patterns to see these with fresh eyes and the possibilities they offer them individually or as an organization.

Our webinars are designed to run for approximately 45-60 minutes and operate from an interactive online learning platform in a visual format that engages participants and encourages deep listening, group discussions, team learning and business application and transfer.

Chapter Four

The ongoing learning journey - deciphering 'how' to be innovative!

When I began my research process almost four years ago my initial focus was on deciphering the core motivators behind Israeli Innovation.

Interestingly when using the Maslow Hierarchy of Needs as a context for understanding and exploring the underlying needs, I noticed a serious mismatch and deviance between what is



generally accepted by most culture development consultants and what actually happens between the levels.

Whilst there are strong survival physiological and safety needs in Israel, there is an even stronger need for self actualisation and self transcendence which tends to throw the hierarchy out of balance.

This was the first clue why the Israeli culture is so innovative. Whilst it appears to be externally aggressive defensive, internally its people are clever, confident, candid (sadly often to the point of rudeness) courageous, individualistic (sadly often experienced as arrogant) and assertive. They are always on the lookout for new possibilities, solutions and opportunities that solve problems and add value to the quality of people's lives.

People in the disruptive high tech industries are driven by a desire and passion for excellence as well as by a sense of urgency to achieve and getting the job done.

Also as part of the Jewish peoplehood tradition, there is an inherent desire to somehow make a difference towards serving humanity and change the world for the better.

Researching, deciphering and debating the 'how to'

Starting with an intuitive sense as to what might be the key intrinsic drivers; I researched and debated the key attributes of the creative and innovative Israeli culture. The intent was to decipher the artefacts, espoused beliefs and the basic underlying assumptions. I participated in endless debates, with a vast number of people, including start-up entrepreneurs of all ages and diverse industries, to decipher and describe the key cultural attributes of Israeli Innovation.

The next challenge was to debate and agree on the defined innovation mindsets and behaviours.

- To collate all of my reading, research and observations into a series of innovation practices which would then make Innovation easy to do as well as habitual.
- To build an innovation learning system and learning delivery system that in itself would 'walk the innovation talk' and embody the key elements of the vibrant and fresh Innovative Israeli Model, as well as the latest, cutting edge thought leadership in innovation and entrepreneurship.



I discovered along the way just how difficult it was to stay on track, especially around sourcing the English speaking professional resources I needed to assist building my Israeli Start-Up. It became a hard core networking task that required unlimited flexibility, resilience and continuous learning, with both significant successes and failures, along the way.

The development of the ImagineNation™ learning system

The best conceptual framework that I have encountered, for the creative or innovative process, is the outstanding work of Otto Sharmer, in his book 'Theory U'.

<http://www.presencing.com/node/109>

<http://www.ottoscharmer.com/publications/summaries.php>

I am very grateful for the experience of studying with Otto Sharmer and Peter Senge when I attended the 'Presencing Program' for 'Leadership for Profound Innovation and Change' at MIT Massachusetts, USA in December 2006.

I had always had a desire to fast track consciousness to develop it as a leadership capability, and I found that the U Process was an elegantly formulated and acceptable process for structuring this. Little did I know that I would spend the better part of the next 6 years 'unpacking' Theory U, and learning how to make it a more accessible, pragmatic and useable process in the corporate culture, leadership and coaching context.

A colleague suggested that I incorporate into my new Israeli Start-Up; the powerful emergence process that I had successfully designed and developed for leadership retreats, as an experiential process that would bring Theory U and Presencing to life. I had also been successfully using the Theory U framework in my transformational leadership executive coaching programs and found that it created extraordinary outcomes.

I realised how important it was to integrate all of my major and most profound corporate learning's into my new business, especially my expertise, knowledge and experience in adaptive, responsible, accountable, high performance leadership and emergence.

I designed, developed and built the innovation learning process to 'bring to life' adaptive accountable and achieving mindsets, behaviours and practices. These create foundations for the development of innovative leadership and entrepreneurship.

Core philosophy - learning by doing



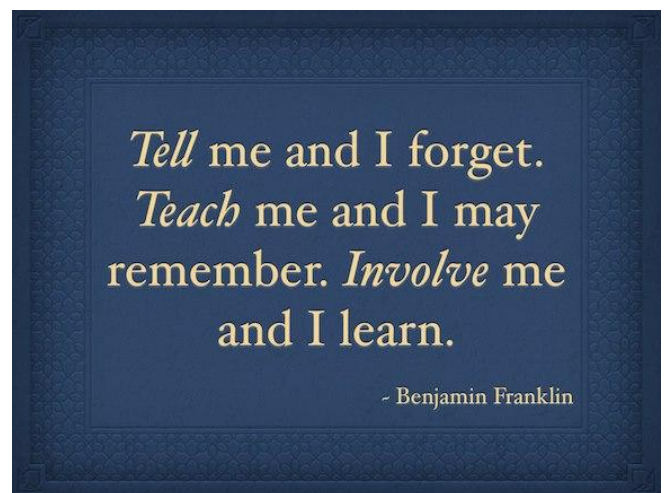
During my 3 years of research, I found out that most approaches to teaching innovation and entrepreneurship are theoretical and academic.

I also noticed that whilst most authors and academics covered **‘why’** and **‘what’** companies do to innovate, they seemed to be missing the deeper, unconscious yet practical **‘how to’** pieces of this vitally important jigsaw puzzle.

To teach anyone, especially, a leader or a manager, something new, they will engage at a deeper level if;

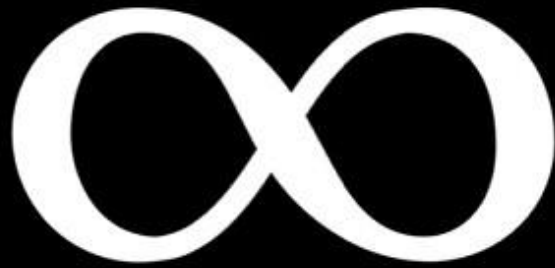
- They have an opportunity to experiment or ‘play’ or experiment with the new ideas, concepts and principles.
- They experience the ‘pain’ of disruption and discomfort to experience mistakes and failure at least once, and do ‘not die’ be punished.
- They are encouraged, motivated and rewarded to experiment in ‘real life’ situations.

They will become less avoidant, conventional, perfectionistic and risk adverse.



Neuroscience has also proven that before we can learn something new, we need to make the neurological ‘space’ for it. This is typically the space where mindset changes and ‘flips’ occur.

To affect brain plasticity, people need to keep on repeating the new thinking, behaviour or skill until they become reasonably competent.



EXPERIMENT.
FAIL.
LEARN.
REPEAT

Closing the knowing-doing gap

Most leaders and managers know ‘why’ their roles are critical to their business and organizational success and most of them know exactly ‘what’ they need to do to be successful.

However, from experience, getting them to actually do and practice it; habitually; is another matter!

One of the biggest challenges of my 25 years in the corporate culture and learning space has been experimenting with ways to work with; and to close; the ‘**knowing-doing gap**;’



- To bring 'theory to life' evidenced and demonstrated by people's emotions, thoughts, behaviours, actions, practices and ultimately, habits in real life situations.
- To transfer, apply, integrate and assimilate learning's at the mind (intelligence), heart (emotion) and body (hands) levels on a daily basis as habits and practices.

Developing a blended learning approach

The actual blended learning system embodies design, associational and lean thinking strategies that results in an iterative and non prescriptive approach. It is customised to understand, identify and solve client's and participants specific business dilemmas, wicked problems and generative challenges. It enables them to experience a deep and profound generative learning process that enables them to transform these into innovative solutions that people value and cherish.

I designed and developed the core curriculum initially as The Coach for Innovators Program™ to test, prototype and iterate the key concepts, principles and techniques to a diverse global audience. I did this over three years and six programs which later became the basis for ImagineNation™ Innovation.

The Start-Up Game™ was designed and developed in collaboration with the 'Playful Shark', part of the Israeli based, creative 'Jivy Group'. It incorporates experiential and adult learning principles with gamification processes in creative, energetic and playful ways to bring selected concepts, principles and techniques to life.

Some of the key challenges I mastered in building the Blended Learning System included flipping my own mindset around building corporate games and learning programs, and letting go of my old judgements and beliefs around how the learning process needed to be.

I also had to invent new online marketing and learning distribution channels and explore and learn about applying the whole new concept of gamification to my Israeli Start-Up.

Finally, I had to learn how to master the social media, how to design, market and deliver online webinars, how to build and sustain an online and authoritative and credible reputation and targeted network of contacts in the innovation and entrepreneurship space.

Dealing with resistance to change and innovation



Living here in the chaotic, volatile and complicated Middle East constant change and conflict sadly and tragically have become a way of life. This has given me the opportunity to



observe people's reactions and resistances this first hand.

I noticed that people en masse globally operate in this kind of "stuckness" and make generalized 'right/wrong' judgments about almost everything that occurs here.

Whilst being blind to the deeply complex and systemic issues that are at play.

Being a bit of a learnaholic, this caused my fascination with the phenomenon of resistance to change, learning and innovation to accelerate.

So I invested some time researching, studying and exploring what could be the impact of the generalizations and judgments we habitually make, even when we don't have the facts at hand.

How these blind us to the possibilities and opportunities available, to us, individually and collectively in embracing and harnessing the benefits that change, learning and innovation can bring.

This is what I discovered in very simple layman's terms:

- Psychological inertia creates many barriers to personal creativity and problem solving and is rooted in cognitive inertia.
- '**Cognitive inertia**' refers the tendency for beliefs or sets of beliefs to endure once formed. In particular, cognitive inertia describes the human inclination to rely on familiar assumptions and exhibit a reluctance and/or inability to revise those assumptions, even when the evidence supporting them no longer exists or when other evidence would question their accuracy".
- This results in a kind of "blindness" which inhibits us from seeing possibilities and opportunities, it restricts our ability to see options, it keeps us inside the conventional box, and it causes us to miss seeing obvious data trends and patterns, factual information and effectively switches off our sensory perception.

If our sensory perception is switched off, we do not question or challenge the status quo or take in any new data or factual information. In other words we experience cognitive inertia which causes us, often unconsciously to resist change, learning and innovation.

For change, learning and innovation to occur, we have to break this inertia to see and sense patterns, to perceive and experiment with options, to play and think outside of the box. To associate and link possibilities, ideas, patterns, trends and data sets in new and unusual ways.

Motivation for change and innovation

Ed Schein suggests that for the motivation for change to be strong enough to effect a change, very different processes need to be at play:

- *Enough disconfirming data to cause serious discomfort and disequilibrium.*
- *The connection of the disconfirming data to important goals and ideals, causing anxiety or guilt.*
- *Enough psychological safety, in the sense of being able to see a possibility of solving the problem and learning something new without loss of identity or integrity.*

These three processes are evident in Israel for a number of reasons:

Firstly, there is the constant threat by unfriendly neighbouring countries and the constant daily barrage of rockets from the Gaza Strip into all areas of Southern Israel. These incidents periodically send over 2 million people to live temporarily in bomb shelters.

Secondly; every time the Israeli government and Israeli Defence Forces attempt to minimise threats and protect and defend its citizens, it faces a severely critical world press and a hostile United Nations.

Finally; because of the adaptive and resilient nature of its citizens, the power of the intrinsic motivators and innovation mindsets, Israel constantly surprises the world by somehow dealing with adversity whilst achieving the seemingly impossible, especially in creating game changing high tech innovations.

Research also shows that when people are in survival or learning anxiety mode, people need what Ed Schein calls 'psychological safety'. The brains neuro plasticity is inhibited by the brains fear response mechanisms. These mechanisms inhibit the learning and change processes. When people have some sense of safety, they will engage and fully participate in the overall learning or change process. If the learning process explicitly includes the desired



mindsets and behaviours that will support and enable the skills to be developed, people will have something to focus on, and to play and experiment with.

Also, if experimentation is not allowed and framed positively, and there are no negative consequences for 'failure', people will feel safer to be less perfectionistic, to be 'out of control' or temporarily 'incompetent' and be more willing to stay in the 'learning game.'

Changing and flipping mindsets

Mindsets are a key part of our personalities and are based on our belief systems.

Carol Dweck, in her book 'Mindsets' describes two prevailing key mindsets, and she states that *'The most important point is that they can be changed'*!



1. **The fixed mindset:** is judgment based with a constant need to evaluate everything. People believe their abilities and intelligence are set in stone, and that they have an innate set of talents that they need to repeatedly prove.

- This mindset inhibits innovation because it blinds people to

possibilities, options and choices, and therefore any opportunities that may exist. People have a deterministic view of the world. People have cognitive inertia.

2. **The growth mindset:** is attuned to and monitors the implications for learning and constructive action. People believe that intelligence and abilities can be developed through their own efforts, and tend to view failures as opportunities for growth.

- This mindset supports innovation because it opens people to possibilities and to options. They become resilient in the face of setbacks and will make the efforts

necessary to pursue greater and creative success. People have a great sense of free will and achievement focus.

This also sets the context for successful entrepreneurship.

- Those who have a growth mindset will 'see' the opportunity, take positive actions and intelligently considered risks.
- They will persevere and be resilient in the face of adversity, failure and challenge.

I knew that just enabling leaders and managers to change their mindsets to become more innovative was not enough, to deal with the challenges and wicked problems emerging in the 21st century.

I sought to discover and learn how to 'flip' mindsets; to create 'altered states of reality', and deep perceptual shifts about peoples way of 'being and doing' in the world.

Mostly because the challenges, wicked problems, business dilemmas, random and unexpected events occurring at the beginning of the 21st century required a whole new way of responding, and not reacting.

A new way of be-ing that requires us to be, think and act differently, to make a difference through systemic and generative problem solving processes that enable us to transform these into innovative solutions that people value and cherish.

The ImagineNation Learning System

I ultimately used these key elements as the basis for designing and developing a unique and comprehensive learning system to teach innovative leadership and start-up entrepreneurship in global corporations. It includes the core attributes of innovation and entrepreneurship, the being states, the innovation mindsets and thinking strategies, the innovation behaviours and skills and finally the practices, processes and habits.



Chapter Four

The Obstacles to Success

1. Not heeding the 'wake-up call' and 'call to action'!

If individuals, coaches, leaders and organisations remain task focussed towards delivering short term results and working the same way, they will not create the space and capacity for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship to occur.

As already stated, for people and organisations to be motivated to change, there has to be enough disconfirming data to cause discomfort and disequilibrium, to 'unfreeze' people and the organisation out of their current states.

Some of the obstacles that inhibit heeding the 'wake-up call' include:

- **Complacency and arrogance, Avoidance and denial, Power and fear based cultures**
- **Change overload and Blindness**

2. Resistance to change and innovation:

Once people 'unfreeze' they are generally able to understand the need to change at the cognitive level, and yet may still resist at the individual, team or organisational levels.

They may experience a different type of overwhelm and anxiety that challenges their personal survival needs and perceived learning abilities.

3. Forcing the change or innovation process

Command and control approaches to change often alienate people, who will resist both passively and aggressively to 'being changed' or having change 'forced' onto them.

This type of process also tends to make deviants and disrupters 'wrong' because they don't fit into the mould, and will resist being controlled. Improvisation, which emerges from a delicate balance of control and freedom, will not occur.

4. Lack of Positive Role Modelling and Sponsorship

The ability of the senior or top teams to set and live the vision for change or innovation and to then role model the desired mindsets and behaviours is one of the most important critical success factors.



Chapter Five

What can we learn from this?

Here are some suggestions for advancing innovation and entrepreneurship in your country, community or business practice;

- Start teaching your children how to dream, question and debate the status quo, as early as possible at school, encourage them and teach them how to take responsibility for their own futures to nurture their intrinsic motivation.
- Work towards transforming the education model, shifting it from creating production line workers, towards a balance between arts and sciences (right and left brain integration). Make learning and school more creative and collaborative and less competitive and more inclusive. Allow children to experiment and fail without making them wrong by reframing what risk and failure mean. Teach teamwork at home and at school.
- Create innovative ecosystems between the key universities, a selection of larger successful global companies, the defence forces, government agencies, investors and the federal government. Within a strategic framework and an innovation plan, teach them a way of working together and assign accountabilities.
- Introduce community entrepreneurship programs for kids to experiment with risks and failures; this could be a collaborative effort between schools and local councils.
- Stop the government from always focusing on the negatives and enable them to role responsibility and to seek possibilities, to think strategically, make politicians go through an adaptive leadership program as part of their induction process and shift the debate paradigm from right/wrong towards a more generative process.
- It is great to allocate funds to incubators and accelerators, and to various innovation and commercialization grants, be less risk adverse by reducing the number of compliance factors. Ensure that these programs are not run by conventional “my rules for you” based consultants (as was my experience when I applied for an innovation grant 2 years ago) and make it easier and less intimidating for people to apply.
- Create subsidized Start-Up Hubs, with business coaching and mentoring support.
- Reduce the number of compliance factors for small businesses and make it easier for them to get loans.



- Make market research and business coaching facilities accessible and affordable for small businesses.
- Introduce subsidized (not fully paid) and accountable internships for budding entrepreneurs in successful larger businesses with assigned mentors.

Somehow safely disrupt people out of their comfort zones, to awaken them to the fact that there are other possibilities for generating and sustaining wealth, other than digging it out of the ground.

Here are some suggestions for getting started on your own innovation and entrepreneurship journey:

1. Make it emergent and Iterative

From my experience, most planning and change processes are initiated and implemented with the same kind of thinking that created the problem or need for innovation in the first place.

This suggests that the current reality and the desired end state of the planning process are defined in the same linear thinking process, and are therefore limited in terms of the possibilities and opportunities that get generated through integrative and 'meta thinking' processes.

Our approach incorporates the U Process, which is both emergent and iterative. It creates the openings for 'mindset flips' and new ways of being, thinking and doing.

- ***Come from an Open Mind***

No matter who you are or what you do, at an individual, team or organisational level, the starting point is at beginning, observing and being present to what is really going on!

This means opening your mind to the range of needs, values and beliefs that are driving your moods, mindsets and behaviours, which of course, create the results you get. With masses of self compassion and by suspending judgement and paying deep attention, you become a detached observer, and simply be present to 'what is' really going on for you and the eco-system in which you exist.

- ***Come from an Open Heart***



Once you have completed the downloading process and suspended judgement of it, the capacity for 'seeing with fresh eyes' is developed. This creates openness and mutuality around 'what is and what could be' for yourself, your team or your organisation.

- ***Be willing to let go of control and operate from an Open Will***

Letting go of the old is necessary to create the space for something new to emerge. To let go of control and wilfulness and be present and connected to Source, or the divine, to deeply attend to, inquire and listen to what is wanting to emerge.

2. Crystallise an Innovative Vision

After spending time cascading down the left hand side of the U process, as well as deep reflection in the 'presencing space' most people, teams and organisations will achieve a deep sense of presence and are able to 'meta think'. This is the desired state for allowing something new to emerge that will ultimately lead towards the creation of a profoundly new vision for Innovation.

3. Experiment and prototype the Vision for Innovation

This is possibly the most critical and challenging phase in the U process as it is a phase when we enact and actually start to build 'something' innovative. It requires a massive amount of experimentation and a significant amount of prototyping.

4. Experiment with agile and lean start-up methodologies

Explore business model options, develop and iterate a 9 step business model and lean one page blank canvas to guide the development of your minimal viable product or service. Get out of the office to test and validate it with your target market. Focus on adding value and providing real benefits.

5. Adopt simple business planning processes

Build it on the run, keep it simple and understandable, ensure that it articulates your story and attracts interest of your intended partners or investors.



6. Create and plan the development and implementation of an innovative culture or business eco-system

The final two phases of the U Process include embodiment and enacting. This involves integrating Innovation as a way of Being, authentically practising the mindsets, behaviours and Practices of the ImagineNation™ Learning System.

By being the change we wish to see in the world, when we can congruently role model these, we become the most adaptive and integral part of the Innovative Eco-System. Alternately, we are attuned and connected to, and operate from the whole.

This ensures that when we enter the Enacting phase, we take 'right action'. Because we are so intentional, aligned to our vision, strengthened by the Prototyping phase and attuned to take 'right action', we can now also adopt an iterative and generative approach to the planning process.

Knowing that *"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them"* we have completely shifted our thinking as a result of our journey through the U Process.



Chapter Six

So what next?

The most important part of any change or innovation process is to start by taking the first 'baby steps' steps.

In this case making a conscious choice or decision that to change or innovate something important to you. It maybe a personal relationship, or something to do with your family, career, business or organisation. One of the most challenging aspects is awakening to 'what is really going on' for you, your coaching practice, your leadership style, your team or your organisation.

To be present to the patterns and to discern whether these are causing the outcomes or the results you want to have.

You will have the opportunity to:

- *Take personal responsibility for choosing to manifest a different set of positive or more useful outcomes.*
- *Really decide what you want and who you are prepared to step up to Be to have it.*
- *Ignite your passion by being open towards creating something that you can align to with your intellect, heart, body and soul that somehow adds value to your clients, families, organisations and communities lives.*
- *Find your 'yes' work that aligns your story to the global story.*
- *Pay attention and be open to seeing your world with fresh eyes and to the possibilities that may exist for you.*
- *Question and doubt everything, be willing to challenge provoke and disrupt.*
- *Carefully listen to the possibilities as they emerge and allow them to be present.*
- *Create a clear intention for the future.*
- *Be open and flexible in manifesting your intention, especially in the enacting phase.*
- *Be courageous, persistent and resilient as you improvise and experiment in the prototyping phase, do not rush it, and be present to the distinctions as they emerge.*



- *Practice a healthy balance control and freedom in the experimental, enacting or planning phase.*
- *Practice healthy self compassion and trust your sense of purpose and intention.*

Finally, change and innovation are amazing and powerful learning journeys, so make sure that you have the chance to enjoy it!

I hope that you have found this e-book useful as well as enjoyable and wish you all of the success you deserve to have!

Please contact me personally at janetsernack@gmail.com with any questions you may have and feel free to enrol in one of our free monthly webinars <http://www.imagenation.com.au/free-monthly-webinars/> to find out more about how you can *be different, think and act differently to make the difference you want to make in the world!*

With love and appreciation

Janet Sernack

Founder and CEO

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