How do good ideas occur and how we will facilitate this process today?

Where do ideas come from?
Allowing lateral thinking, stimulating co-creation
How to have conversations safely
Achieving real engagement
The physiology of ideas

• In a human brain, there are approximately 100 billion of neurons.

• How we think, what we think, and what we’re capable of are largely a consequence of the connections these neurons make with one another.

• The human brain has the ability to rewire these connections and to make new connections.

• The more experiences we have and the more changes in behaviour or environment that we encounter, the more capable we are of making new connections and rewiring old connections.

• The same applies to social networks.
Bricolage

- Ideas are works of bricolage, old parts strung together to form something radically new.
- They are, almost inevitably, networks of other ideas.
- We take the ideas we've inherited or stumbled across, and we jigger them together into some new shape.
- They are the building blocks that create—and limit—the space of possibility for a specific problem.
- The trick to having good ideas is not to sit around in glorious isolation and try to think big thoughts. The trick is to get more parts on the table.
Liquid networks

- The best networks are liquid: they make it possible for its elements to make as many connections as possible, and they provide a random environment that encourages constant “collisions” between all of its elements.
- They provide more stability than gas, where there’s not enough time for meaningful connections to happen, and less rigidity than solids, where there’s not enough randomness.
Platforms

• A platform encourages and amplifies hunches and allows those hunches to be connected with other minds. An environment that encourages the chance collisions between different fields. They make people think differently, because they create an environment where different kinds of thoughts can productively collide and recombine.
  • The eighteenth-century English coffeehouse
  • Homebrew Computing Club in Silicon Valley
  • Lunar society
  • Bioactives workshop
These companies now produce 2/3 of the world's patents

- Diversity, not just scale, is important for innovation, and seemingly getting more important
- Internationally, firms are using open innovation practices to manage diversity, with a focus on complementing their core technologies
A + B = C

Internal + Resources = Meeting Needs
Contrasts: open and closed innovation

Closed innovation principles

• The smart people in our field work for us
• To profit from R&D, we must discover, develop and ship it
• If we discover it ourselves, we will get it to market first
• If we are the first to commercialise an innovation, we will win
• If we create the most and best ideas in the industry, we will win
• We should control our intellectual property so that our competitors don’t profit from our ideas

Open innovation principles

• Not all of the smart people work for us, so we must tap into the knowledge and expertise of bright individuals outside our company
• External R&D can create significant value; internal R&D is needed to claim some portion of that value
• We don’t have to originate the research in order to profit from it
• Building a better business model is better than getting to market first
• If we make the best use of internal and external ideas, we will win
• We should profit from others’ use of our IP, and we should buy others’ IP whenever it advances our own business model
Collaboration: “soft” issues predominate

- **People/relationships**: issues involving problems related to communications, cultures and uncertainty over roles and responsibilities.
- **Operations**: issues involving problems related to the technical details of implementation (e.g. technology transfer, scheduling, etc.)
- **Strategic agenda**: issues or problems concerning the goals and objectives of the venture
- **Results**: problems related to the performance of the venture

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<th>Issues</th>
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<td>Results</td>
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People/Relationship issues: Communications

- Communication issues are 50% of relationship issues and 25% of total.
- Good communication signals commitment, enables transparency, few misunderstandings and less uncertainty.
- Lack of good communications (frequency and quality) can cause mistrust and suspicion.
- Poor communications can be exacerbated by:
  - Distance, time frame
  - Personality
  - Language (e.g. “essentially”)
  - Organisational impediments
  - Processes (e.g. goal setting, decision making, rewards and recognition, etc.)
  - Internal communications often as important as external communications

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People/Relationship issues: Culture

• Cultural differences (e.g. beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviours, customs, ways of thinking, etc.) account for almost 30% of relationship issues.
• Can affect communications and separation.
• Mismatches in culture can originate from:
  • National differences
  • Differences in size, complexity, venture experience, perspectives, ownership
  • Business focus (i.e. Manufacturing, service, etc.)
• Potentially beneficial (i.e. greater range of ideas and enhanced innovation) but requires bridging mechanisms and the problem is often disregarded.

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How we will facilitate this process today

• Attendees to form groups based on topics of common interest
  • Indigenous/exotic plants and tree extracts
  • Honey/dairy
  • Marine/Algae
  • Berries/Fruit
  • Fungi
• Identify and discuss areas of potential opportunity
• Report back to the workshop
• Summarise topics of high potential
• Outline a process for reducing to practice after the meeting
How to present an idea safely

Safety is relative
Give and take
Features, attributes and benefits

- **Benefits** answer why someone should value the advantage. It connects the facts about your product to a solution for your client. For example, “when you’re camping, you’ll have a nice warm sleep at night so that when you wake up you’ll be well rested and ready for a day of fun activities.”

- **Attributes** are what the features do. These tend to be factual, and aren’t connected to a prospects need... Yet. For example, “helps retain body heat on cold nights” (sticking with our sleeping bag example).

- **Features** are one of the easier things to identify. These are facts or characteristics about your business, products, and services. For example, a “1 inch insulation layer” on a sleeping bag is the feature.