

Editor's letter



his issue continues *Strategy & Leadership's* focus on models and best practices for promoting continuous innovation by featuring five articles showing:

- How Agile methodologies and mindsets to promote continuous innovation flourish or miscarry, depending on the way they are introduced and who champions them.
- How leaders can harness innovation's paradoxical tensions productively.
- How established companies can maximize their learning from partnering with innovative startups.
- How a company used the concept of front line "manager personas" to better aim its introduction of innovative products.
- How company innovation plans can take cues from a scenario map to the roadblocks and the richest prospects arising from breakthrough technological change.

In his article "**Lessons learned from mapping successful and unsuccessful Agile transformation journeys,**" Forber.com essayist Stephen Denning explores how "Pioneering companies have adopted a post-bureaucratic mindset that is focused on continuous innovation. Its purpose is to delight customers and produce solutions for the jobs they need to do... The dynamic achieved by the Agile management processes that promote the continuous innovation system is enablement, rather than control."

In his masterclass "**Leading innovation – resolving creativity's paradoxes,**" Dublin City University Professor Emeritus Brian Leavy illuminates "The indispensable capabilities that leaders need to develop in their organizations to navigate and leverage innovation's paradoxical tensions productively: creative abrasion, creative agility and creative resolution. "He notes that, "One of the main paradoxical challenges in leading innovation is the need to cultivate 'both cohesion and dissent' in the company culture."

"As a guide for practitioners the field-tested Culture Comparison and Integration Model offers firms a methodology for comparing and integrating the organizational cultures of combining firms using twelve 'cultural levers,'" advises Timothy Galpin, Senior Lecturer of Strategy and Innovation at the Saïd Business School, University of Oxford. His article "**Avoid M&A assimilation heartburn: an actionable model for cultural due diligence and integration,**" suggests "Applying an integrated set of 'cultural levers' that can be used to shape collective workforce behavior... a pragmatic approach to conduct pre-deal comparison and post-deal integration of organizational cultures, so that culture does not eat their M&A strategy for breakfast."

"A critical question that has been neglected by the business literature is: how can collaboration with startups systematically yield innovative growth for the bigger partner?" In his article to answer this question, "**On a growth track with startups: how established companies can pursue innovation,**" Rudolf Freytag, CEO of Siemens Technology Accelerator, suggests that, "Established companies can develop and implement innovative growth-through-learning strategies in a highly systematic way when they collaborate with startups." He offers the Strategic Startup Toolbox – four individual tools: scouting, collaboration, minority investment and majority investment – that established companies may use for exploration and learning with startups.

In their article, "**Identifying a set of line manager personas to guide new product introduction strategy,**" Karla Straker, Genevieve Mosely and Cara Wrigley, design innovation researchers at the University of Sydney, Australia, describe a new strategic management use for personas,

originally a marketing tool. Their case illustrates the development of a set of front line manager personas to aid with strategic workforce decisions involving innovative products.

Given the speed with which business leaders today must assess and react to the business risks and opportunities engendered by breakthrough technological change, a research guide to the evolving hurdles and potential prospects could be a valuable aid to decision making. In their article, **“Mapping technology roadblocks and opportunities in the transportation revolution,”** Amy Blitz, professor of Economics and Strategy at Babson College and Khurram Kazi, a senior researcher at Draper Labs, illustrate how, “The advent of autonomous electric vehicles (AEV), piloted by artificial intelligence and serviced by other ‘intelligent’ machines, poses vast implications for business strategy in many industries.”

And don’t miss this issue’s “The strategist’s bookshelf” column: **“When information technology succeeds as good medicine and effective strategy,”** Robert Chapman Wood’s review of *World Class: A Story of Adversity, Transformation and Success at NYU Langone Health* by William A. Haseltine.

Good reading!

Robert M. Randall

Editor

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