



Business “as usual” isn’t likely to keep an organization competitive.

Book Corner

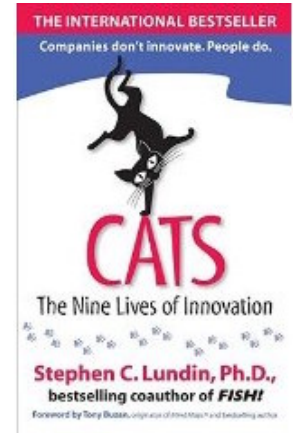
Cats-The Nine Lives of Innovation

by Stephen C. Lundin, Ph.D

Stephen Lundin co-authored *FISH!*, a book about teamwork. Now, he has taken on innovation. He reminds us that in challenging times, “business as usual” isn’t likely to keep an organization competitive.

The focus of the book is on individuals becoming innovators, because as Lundin says, “companies don’t innovate, people do.” The book helps us see what the challenges are to innovation and then teaches us how to think and act in innovative ways. Specifically, Lundin offers techniques to

- Be brave (If you are afraid, you won’t innovate.)
- Stop being “normal” (Learn to make your own rules.)
- Embrace failure (It’s the only way to learn.)



Cats are used as a theme throughout the book, and it adds some fun. If you or someone you know needs to be more curious, pick up this short book to get some ideas how.

Leadership is...

In our last issue we argued that ‘mediation’ is the heart of leadership. In that article we suggested a definition of leadership that we think is exceptionally good. We said we would parse the definition in a later issue, so true to our word - and in less that the nine years it took us to get back to the critical importance of mediation...

(As we start we want to acknowledge and give full credit to the work of the [SYMLOG Consulting Group](#) for the definition and original thinking we will be trying to do justice to in this discussion.)

Why try to define leadership?

First, the importance of having a definition, i.e. a clear mental model of leadership, is that it is what guides your daily behavior as you work with organizations, groups and people.

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Second, we do not know if leadership can be taught, however we are absolutely certain that leadership can be learned. It requires a deep desire to improve one's 'leadership' abilities, self discipline, clarity of thought, and purposeful action.

Third, we would argue that if you cannot define leadership; then you cannot measure leadership; and you therefore cannot effectively train leaders. We offer that argument in the face of an enormous body of work, effort, and opinions about 'leadership' - most of which are somewhat vague; and the vast, vast majority of which do not offer a definition of leadership that is measurable. And without that kind of a metric, and the clarity it produces, training and development efforts cannot be finely tuned and focused.

Fourth, we do believe that people instinctively recognize good leadership - and good teamwork. However, the adage, "I know it when I see it,

private endeavors. Voluntary or non-voluntary. There is a need for effective leadership in any and every *circumstance*.

...through the 1.) elimination of scapegoating, 2.) judicious use of power, and, 3.) a maximization of mediation."

For a discussion of the three means of unifying people we refer you to the articles in the **Fall 2000**, and **Summer 2009** issues of **Collaborations**. These issues are available on our web sites.

Please note: this definition of leadership implies that there are only three ways to unify people: with scapegoats, through the use of power, or, through mediation. (If you have other ideas as to how to unify people we would love to hear from you.)

There is a need to 'define leadership.' With clear definition, one can then measure, feedback the results, and focus developmental efforts.

How do you define leadership? What comprises your working 'mental model' of leadership? Send us your thoughts.

Assumptions and Expectations

Recently, my husband and I were in Northern California tasting wine. We stopped in to taste at a favorite winery called Papapietro Perry. We've been enjoying their Pinot Noir and Zinfandel wines for several years. We've always especially liked the wines they produce with grapes from the Russian River and Sonoma Coast areas. In the past, we haven't really liked the ones from the Anderson Valley.

So, at this tasting, when one of the three Pinot Noirs offered for tasting was the newly released 2007 Charles Vineyard Pinot Noir made from Anderson Valley grapes, we were disappointed. Dave and I didn't expect to like the wine, but we decided to taste it anyway. To our surprise, our expectations of the wine were wildly exceeded. It was delicious! We were so glad we didn't turn down the opportunity to taste it. Clearly the 2007 grapes as well as the wine maker's treatment of them were different from previous years.

How often do you let your expectations influence whether you will do something? Are you missing opportunities?

How does this apply at work? Do you ever assume that a particular employee won't do well on a new task, so offer it to someone else? Or do you have low expectations of someone based on a previous experience so "write them off?"

Our expectations are often based on past experience. We tend to make assumptions that influence those expectations. Dave and I expected to not like the wine. Our assumption was that it would be the same as previous years. We were wrong.

In our situation, fortunately our expectations didn't keep us from trying the wine. As a manager, I hope you will check in with yourself to determine your expectations for a given situation or person and then try to ascertain what assumptions you are making that may be false. That will let you adjust and probably identify a more realistic expectation.



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is the president of Gerke Consulting & Development and “helps people work better, together.” Susan's focus since 1989 has been in designing, customizing and implementing leadership and teamwork programs meeting the needs of executives, managers, and employees in a wide number of companies and industries.

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A graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Dave is a retired Navy Captain. As a Navy pilot he was shot down and spent 5 & 1/2 years as a POW in North Vietnam. His book *The Ways We Choose: Lessons For Life From A POW's Experience* is in it's third printing.



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Performance Management—What to Measure?

One of the keys to successfully managing an employee's performance is determining the right thing to measure. Last month, my husband and I attended an event for Guide Dogs for the Blind. At the event, we had the opportunity to meet Captain “Sully” Sullivan – the gentleman who piloted the plane that crashed in the Hudson River in January. He and his wife were being recognized for the great contributions they continually make to Guide Dogs by raising puppies and breeding guide dogs.

After a delightful conversation with Sully, I got to thinking about how his performance appraisal at work might be handled this year! If he had a goal to protect company assets, he failed. If he had a goal to always deliver his passengers to their destination on time, he also failed that day. If, though, he had a goal to protect the safety of his passengers and crew, he exceeded expectations – every person survived the crash.

So, how thoughtful are you about the goals you set for your employees or for yourself? Are you clear about what is important? And, are you writing those goals in a way that makes it the measurement clear? Give it some thought!