

# THE WOW THINKING

How to improve innovation within your organization





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What you will learn?

1. The definition of Innovation.

1. The WOW environment.

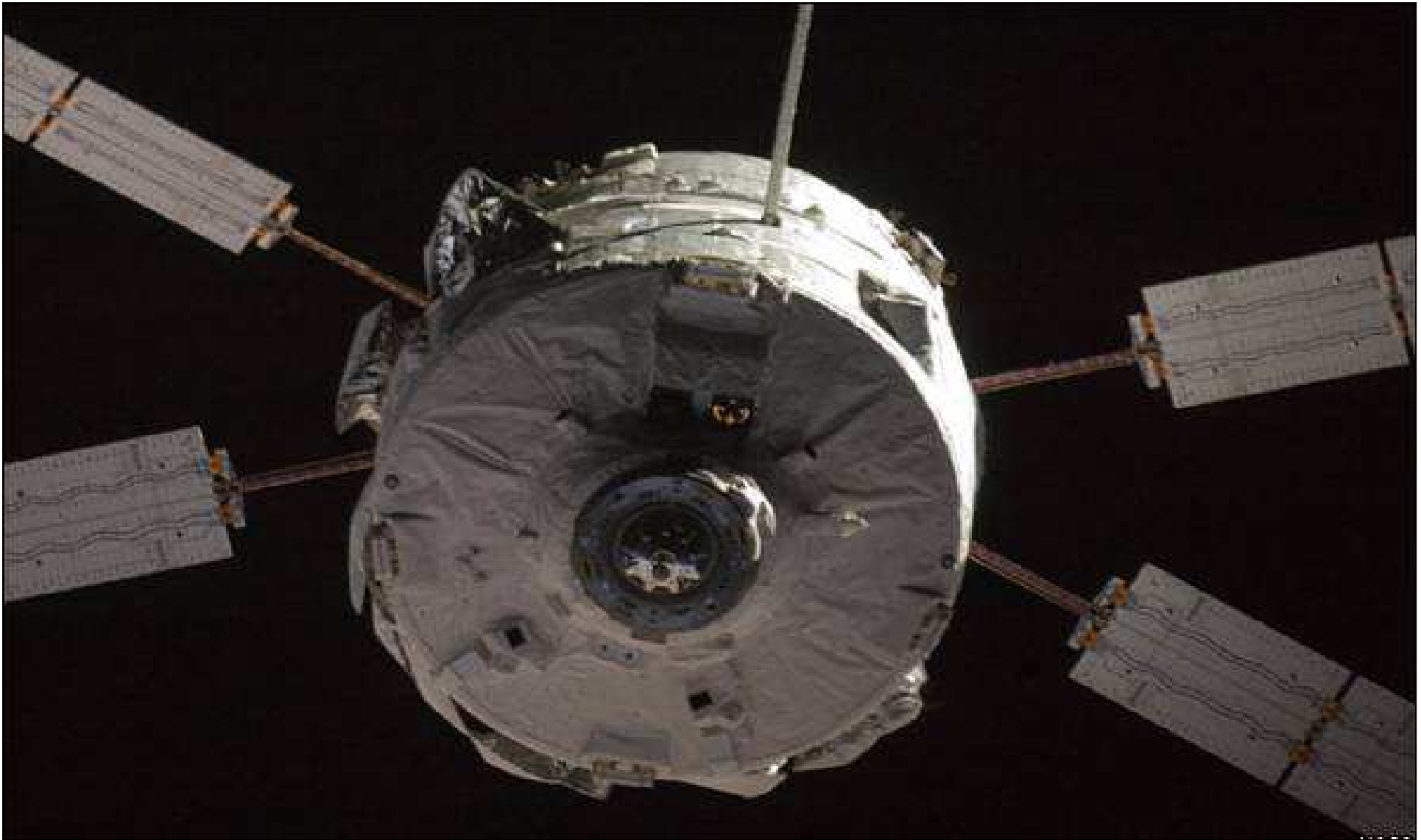
1. Lessons learned from WOW.

Ready?

LET'S START BY CORRECTING SOME DEFINITIONS

FIRST

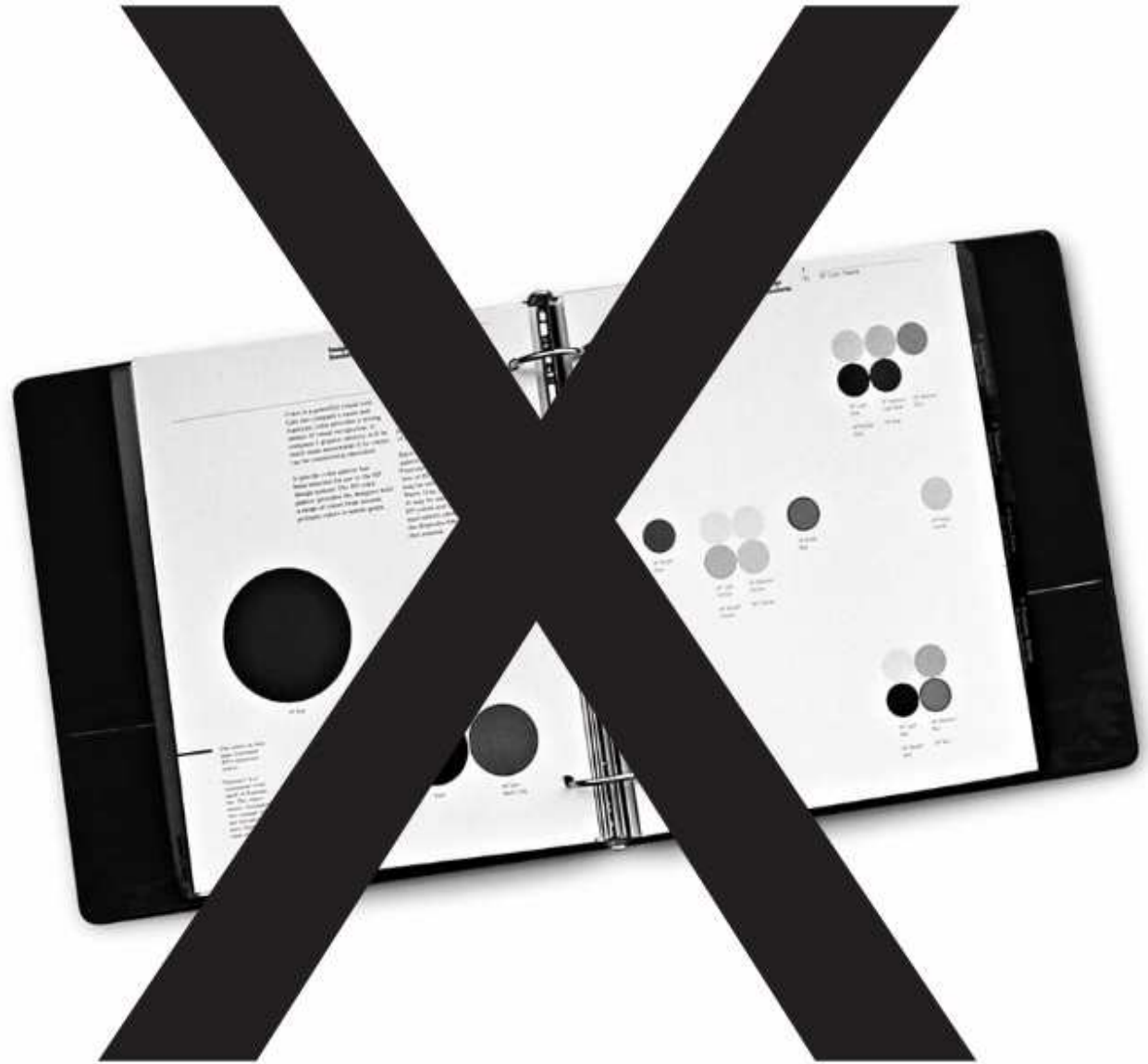
Innovation is not an INVENT.



**Dies ist nicht der innovation**

SECOND

Innovation is not an ART.



FINALLY

Innovation is not a PRODUCT.



So what exactly  
is Innovation?

Innovation is a **process** of the successful implementation of **creative ideas** within an organization.

It's **CREATIVE IDEAS** by individuals and teams.

The first is **NECESSARY** but  
**NOT SUFFICIENT** condition for the second.

In other words....

**IT'S NOT A NEW THING.**

**IT'S A NEW WAY.**

# WHY IS INNOVATION SO IMPORTANT?

1. We are living under performance pressure.
2. We are living in an accelerated changing world.
3. We are under competitive advantages pressure.

WHAT WE KNOW TODAY,  
IS BECOMING LESS VALUABLE TOMMOROW.

We are living with the challenge of  
**INNOVATING** faster and **LEARNING** faster  
to perform more **EFFECTIVELY**.

Why do companies have so much trouble with innovation?

Because **innovation** is **right-brained**  
and **strategy** is **left-brained**

THE REASON THE BEATLES WERE WILDLY SUCCESSFUL  
IS BECAUSE "THEY NEVER DID THE SAME THING **ONCE.**"



Question:

How do you know when an idea is innovative?

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ANSWER:

WHEN IT SCARES THE **HELL** OUT OF EVERYBODY.



The three most important words in innovative organization:

# 1. MOTIVATION

## 2. **MOTIVATION**

# **3. MOTIVATION**

$$M = E \times I \times V$$

**Motivation**

**EXPECTANCY**

**INSTRUMENTALITY**

**VALENCE**

**If any one is zero, motivation will be zero.**

What does improve innovation?

Learning

Mention learning to any **senior executive**,  
he will talk about **training programs**.

# PROBLEM

Training programs are effective **ONLY**  
at transferring what **we already know**  
to others.

Question:

How do we create powerful platforms jointly  
to innovate and develop **new knowledge**  
that **NO ONE** had before?

ANSWER:

Executives would be well advised to look at **World Of Warcraft (WOW)**.



Few executives have heard of this game,  
much less **participated** in it.

# LEARNING CHECK 1

Make sure that you are able to:

- 1- Define innovation.
- 2- Importance of innovation.
- 3- Define motivation.
- 4- Organizations problem with innovation.

It's time to ask if you didn't get any of the above points!

# DEFINITION

**WOW** is a massively multiplayer online game with 10 million players are active in it around the world.

Executives will think that these players are **TEENAGERS**,  
that they are video gaming **GEEKS**.

# FACT

The **MAJORITY** of the players are

Between **23-39 YEARS.**

# FACT

The **AVERAGE** player invest

about **23 HOURS** per week playing **WOW**.



WOW ENVIRONMENT

**Performance** is measured in terms of experience points

Players accumulate these by performing a variety of **tasks**.

**Tasks** become more **challenging** as the game advance.

As players accumulate experience points,

They **advance** to **higher levels** in the game.

The degree of **complexity** and **challenge** increases,

as you **advance** across levels.

The number of experience points needed in order to **advance**,

also **increases sharply** with each level.

# UNLIKE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

**WOW** has an environment where

there are **increasing returns** to learning

**Learn faster = advance faster**

# LEARNING CHECK 2

Make sure you are able to:

- 1- Describe WOW environment.
- 2- Differ between business environment & WOW environment regarding the return on learning.

It's time to ask if you didn't get any of the above points!

# LESSONS

From **WOW** to promote **innovation** within your organization

# **LESSON 1**

**MINIMIZE LIMITS TO ENTRY AND EARLY ADVANCEMENT**

**WOW** is well structured so that

anyone can join and gain a feeling of accomplishment **fast.**

The beginning tasks are **kinda easy**.

New players can learn fast how to **improve** and

**innovate** in their approach to **performance** challenges.

# LESSON 2

PROVIDE

**A CLEAR & FAIR**

METRICS

**TO MEASURE PERFORMANCE**

**WOW** gives players an overall measure of **performance**  
using **experience points** and **levels**.

The game enables players to

**MONITOR** their performance via **DASHBOARDS**

LATELY,

Some companies started offering dashboards

**to the executives**

to monitor the major factors of performance.

# WHAT IF

We make these **dashboards**  
available to **every** employee in the company?

# WHAT IF

Every employee can **design** his own dashboard?

# WHAT IF

The dashboard gives **live feedback**  
on the **employee and team performance?**

# WHAT IF

This feedback is available for **ALL** employees  
**NOT** only the contributing employee?

This **live** performance feedback helps employees to **focus** their innovation in working on the areas with **greatest** impact.

# LESSON 3

keep

raising the bar

**WOW** has an environment that

always **challenges** players to **develop** new skills

No player can be

**SATISFIED**

nor

**BORED**

Players don't feel **frustration**,  
because challenges **fit** the players' **abilities**.

Every player can **SEE**,

the next level of **ACHIEVEMENT.**

This **motivate** the players to **invest** more **effort** and **time** to **achieve** this next level.

Companies have to provide a **continuing** pool of new **challenges** to drive **innovation** by their employees.

# LESSON 4

DON'T NEGLECT THE BASIC MOTIVATORS.

Mention **incentives** in a business firm,  
and the talk will fall back to **cash**.

**WOW** players don't get cash by playing it.

They **PAY** cash.

Players get **RECOGNITION**  
As they learn new **skills** and  
pass every new **challenge**.

As the game moves on,

players learn to **cooperate** and start participate in “GUILDS”.

As relationship and **TRUST** increase inside the teams,  
every one is **motivated** to **innovate** to not let the **TEAM** down.

# LESSON 5

Provide opportunities to develop **tacit** knowledge,

**BUT**

don't neglect the expansion of knowledge **exchange**.

Guilds improve the **relationship** and **trust**,  
required to **generate NEW TACIT** knowledge.

# **TACIT knowledge**

Is the knowledge that develops through shared practice and can't be easily expressed.

THIS IS WHERE MOST OF THE  
INNOVATION IN GAME PLAY OCCURS.

The game has a rich online forum where:

Players can **share** experience,

**learn** from each other,

and post requests for **help** in new challenges.

These

forums provides a

**pull** platform.

# CONTRAST WITH KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN COMPANIES

A part of players **recognition** and **status**  
Is **gained** from **participating** in these forums.

# FACT

These forums have become a **primary** source for **identifying high performing** players to be recruited in guilds.

# LESSON 6

**encourage**

frequent and strict feedback.

WOW environment provides detailed performance metrics specific

**to the individual,**

**the role,**

**and the guild.**

These

give the basic information

For regular after-action

**REVIEWS**

All the participants come together  
after major initiative  
to **review** how they performed  
as **individuals** and as **team**.

**HINT:**

**The main focus  
is on how they  
can do better**

This is main supporter to innovation in game play

as players can see

performance gaps that are holding back the progress of the team.

These 360-degree performance reviews ensure  
that every one from

**THE GUILD LEADER**

to

**THE NEWEST MEMBER**

receives feedback

**CONCLUSION**

WOW not only encourages players to develop new skills,

it developed a new disposition that is called ...

**GAMER**

**DISPOSITION**

Gamers who embody this disposition are better able than their non gamer counterparts to thrive in the 21 century.

WHY?

BECAUSE

They thrive on change.

They see learning as fun.

They are bottom-line oriented.

They understand the power of diversity.

Look for

**G A M E R S**

And the disposition they will bring you.

YOU BUILD

A sustainable competitive advantage

# THANQ

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Resources:

[www.BusinessWeek.com](http://www.BusinessWeek.com)

[www.HarvardBusiness.org](http://www.HarvardBusiness.org)