Centre for Learning Innovation & Quality

AIT

2nd panel discussion

"Innovation, creativity and education"

Wednesday 2nd December, 10.00-11.30

Milton Bender Auditorium

Through millennia of human history the *new* has fascinated. Whether in technology, in fashion or in politics, people have always sought change and created something novel in order to achieve that change. 'Innovation' has come about in myriads of ways: by accident, or through hard work. Or, by taking in something which someone else possessed or practiced, but with a shift: travelling East to West, from fireworks to artillery, gunpowder had a profound impact on history.

Some innovations end up as passing fads, and die, while others take root. And often, communities clamour for things new, and see their emergence as the only way forward. Business and education, in our times face constant calls for innovation. In the words of an American strategist, Gary Hamel 'Innovate or Die'! Interestingly, one of Hamel's admirable cases in the 2002 book was Enron... So, you can innovate and still die and take others with you. The obvious and oft-used metaphor is that of the dinosaurs and I cannot resist the temptation to paste the book cover of a post-Hamer publication here:
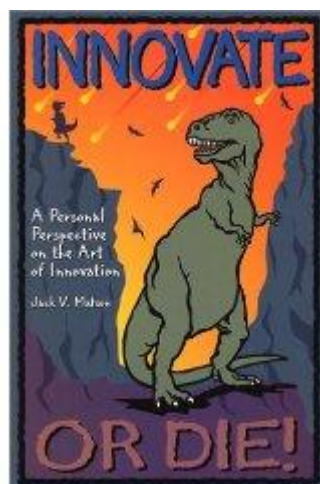
On the other hand, a critique of the call for innovation in business or management is exemplified in a recent publication in the dedicated journal of Management of Creativity and Innovation:

> *"Innovate or Die: Is that a Fact?"*
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> **Issac Getz**
> European School of Management (ESCP-EAP)
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> **Alan G. Robinson**
> University of Massachusetts at Amherst - Eugene M. Isenberg School of Management
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> *Creativity and Innovation Management, Vol. 12, pp. 130-136, September 2003*
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> **Abstract:**
> 'Innovate or die'. This mantra has been repeated so many times - by the media, governments, business leaders, business professors, consultants and management gurus - that people have come to assume it is actually true. This article explores why have business leaders been so prone to fall for such a naive message, and shows how it has caused them to overlook the true sources of long-term high performance.

This just arrived: http://knowledge.insead.edu/social-innovation-isirc-091120.cfm

In education too 'innovation' has been much sought after. A number of Higher Education Providers have Offices, Centres, grants or awards for teaching/learning innovation. And our own CLIQ was conceptualised with similar objectives in mind.

But, first, what does our community think about the desirability of **Innovation in learning/teaching**? Do we all think it is important or do we question it, just as in the case above, do some in our midst consider it a '*naive message' that 'has caused (us) to overlook the true sources of long-term high performance'*?

And then, even if some of us do believe in the need for teaching/learning innovation, or at least the need for change, what do we mean by it?

The very few responses I have received on this from our students demonstrate to me that they do not define innovation the same way as I do. So, should we not explore this multiplicity of perceptions, and perhaps arrive at a range of understandings through discussion?

It is to this purpose that we call for participation in the 2nd Panel Discussion on the topic:

"Innovation, creativity and education"