

# an Innovation orientated environment

## *sharing some ideas.....*

*elaboration Giovanna Combatti*

These days Innovation is one of most mentioned words when it comes to organizations and business. The question is who should take a commitment towards innovating? and should the answer be "everyone" , then how do you create an environment that allows people to be creative and "produce" a real innovation advantage ? What is the one most impacting action that produces that innovative way of thinking and acting at people side?

In a recent discussion on a group a country manager stated that innovation mindset has to typically start from the top. Again product innovation depends a lot on the R&D. At the same time feedback from Sales & marketing is also important.

Another interesting different point of view was the one of a professional consultant who added that he doesn't see innovation as something arising easily in one organization or a business. Whilst innovation may be used to characterize a new, creative or unique product, true innovation can only be found in new, creative or unique thought. Businesses must look beyond their products, core competencies and historical realms that bind them and utilize the fresh ideals, passion and knowledge of the individuals. Innovation is best found in the people, not the product. Freedom to follow one's passion, promoting the entrepreneurial spirit and allowing a free flow of ideas will nurture innovation in any market. The bottom line is an excellent metric for profit and business but can detract innovation if left to its own controlling devices. The one's who will provide the innovation are critical (R&D, Sales, and Marketing), but equally important may be those who simply let it happen. "Those that say it can't be done should get out of the way of those doing it"-Chinese Proverb.

"I am afraid that the way the Chinese proverb is practiced in large corporations is "Those that say it can't be done fire those doing it"", adds a former manager in a large company, now an University professor in the medical field. He agrees that innovation is about passion and fresh ideas, two things old managers hate the most. Innovation might work best in small companies, start-ups or academia. In large corporations, the leadership defines what "new" ideas you should have and how innovative you can be which is the opposite of free innovation. They are actually right because the company's financial goals have to be reached with or without your "innovation". In general, at present there is no infrastructure to allow free innovation in corporations. Maybe someone may know of some exceptions that would be worth sharing "but I am not aware of them." "What you now have in corporations is what I would call: "directed innovation"."

Maybe the need for innovation is really personal and maybe at the end of this "innovation revolution", the large corporations as we know them will disappear. Maybe employees will realize that retirement is a little too late to start doing something innovative that they really enjoy. There is only so much innovation you can do in the evening after you come back from work....