



### Innovation Perspectives - The Power to Innovate

This is the second of several '[Innovation Perspectives](#)' articles we will publish this week from multiple authors to get different perspectives on '**What is the most dangerous current misconception in innovation?**'. Now, here is Holly Green's perspective:

by **Holly G. Green**



What is the most dangerous current misconception in innovation?

...that innovation can only be done by a few, naturally talented individuals

Each of us has the power to be innovative. There are some simple ways to use the power of your brain to innovate every day. Doing them becomes complex and infrequent not because they require deep expertise or innate abilities, but because we have stripped away the time to pause and ponder. The moments to wander, explore, connect, and trigger our brain to do it differently have been almost completely eliminated from our lives. Think about how filled your current day is. If you aren't engaged actively with a customer, supplier or employee, you are checking you PDA and responding to the hundreds of emails in your inbox. You might even be doing both at the same time.

We have created a belief structure that it is more valuable to check our PDA constantly even though it is estimated 80% of all email today is spam. We behave as if the most important things to focus on and do are located on that device or in meetings or on email. We feel guilty or believe somehow there is less value in sitting quiet every now and then to ponder future possibilities or get clear on winning or explore alternatives.

Learning how to think differently requires time. Your brain needs a trigger and then some space to think. I am not talking about a lot of time, so don't panic. In only 10 seconds or so every now and then, you could effectively think differently.

Keep in mind, however, the more successful you are, the less likely you are going to **want** to pause and consider thinking differently. This is the underlying reason so many people keep doing what they have always done, even when they see it is no longer working or everything around them has changed.

Learn to ask yourself: "What if...?"

...my competitor had this choice? What would they do?

...my employees could change one thing? What would it be?

...the same data can be looked at from a different perspective or angle? What would I see if I were older, younger, a customer, a supplier...?

...my assumptions are wrong? What else is possible?

...I step back and look at the big picture?

...I am wrong and there is another way?"

The most powerful way to trigger your brain is to simply ask it a question. You naturally attempt to answer questions almost immediately. Your brain responds instinctually. Make your questions ones that open you to possibilities, to new ways of looking at the same data, to new interpretations of the same old thing. To do this, you must pause from the running and doing we have often decided has more value.

It's amazing what you can come up with when you realize your mind is a very playful and interesting place. And you should visit more often. Go brain go.

You can check out all of the ['Innovation Perspectives'](#) articles from the different contributing authors on **'What is the most dangerous current misconception in innovation?'** by clicking the link in this sentence.

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Holly is the CEO of THE HUMAN FACTOR, Inc. ([www.TheHumanFactor.biz](http://www.TheHumanFactor.biz)) and is a highly sought after and acclaimed speaker, business consultant, and author. Her unique approach to creating strategic agility, helping others go slow to go fast, will change your thinking.