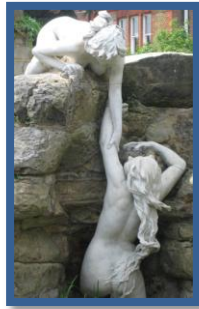


YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 32

You're never too old for innovation, but age is a great excuse to stick your head in the sand...

Innovate whatever your age...

"I never feel age...if you have creative work, you don't have age or time" [Louise Nevelson](#) (Sculptress, aged 80)



"I'm not too old for this"

Are you writing off yourself or others as too old to innovate?

I was facilitating a workshop recently when the discussion moved to innovation. One opinion was that "Most of us ("us" as in the people in the room) are too old to make this an innovative company; we need to bring in young managers at senior level."

As a facilitator, I do not involve myself in the content but when the point was raised I wanted to whisper "NO!"

You might understand why people think innovation is for the young. People over forty...they've more important things to think about than younger workers... they're set in their ways... the young have plenty of energy and more time to pursue new things... innovation needs young minds...only the young can understand these new gadgets...the young sense the new trends first...

I can understand why people think it, but I don't agree with it. The sceptic in me believes that "Sorry, I'm fifty, I'm too old for innovation" means: "I've never done innovation and now I'm fifty I can blame it on my age"

This could be a light hearted pub conversation but in reality is very important.

We have a rapidly aging population in the West. Our average age in the UK is 39. In the US it is 36 and in India, 25. [Source: [CIA World Fact Book](#)]

Are we going to avoid innovation because we haven't enough young people? Are we going to sit back and let the emerging markets with their booming populations (the UK has 18% of its population aged between 0-14, the US 21% and India 31%) become the innovators?

Might that approach threaten the Western economies?

SO

Let's break this paradigm that says innovation is for the young.

Let's replace it with a new one that says we can all be innovative or we can encourage and support others to be innovative. And if we can't do that, let's get out of their way.

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ACTION

Perhaps change your mind set? And if you don't want to be innovative, keep up to date on some innovations. I suggest in the next week you look up some new innovation you have heard about. What ideas does this give you for your business?

TO CLOSE

I appreciate that I have a vested interest in changing the paradigm that innovation is for the young. I've had a few birthdays with "0" on the end and love the whole innovation environment and ethos. But I honestly believe that we can change the paradigm if a few more people change their mind sets.

Here is how the inventor of the idea of the "[The Million Dollar Home Page](#)" came up with his idea, in August of this year:

"...there I was, lying on my bed with a notepad, brainstorming ideas to make money for university....."

So anyway, after an hour of two of jotting random things on paper, the idea seemingly popped out of nowhere. Almost like my subconscious mind had been ticking over in the background, working it all out. So it just kind of happened. That's about it."

He had a mind set that said "I don't want to end uni in debt so let's kick around some ideas and see what would result". He then used some creative thinking and implemented his idea.

True, he's 21 but tell me something he did that someone a lot older couldn't have done? And take a look at how old [Trevor Baylis](#) was when he invented the clock work radio.

Whilst writing this, my nine year old daughter just shouted to me to turn my music down. I can't tell you how GOOD that made me feel!

"May you be in innovation heaven before the devil knows you have stopped creating", to bastardise an old Irish saying!

[.John Brooker | Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.](#)



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