

Innovating over breakfast sets a new perspective for the rest of the day

I recently attended the Innovation by Design breakfast run by the Business Results Group at the Hilton. The idea that innovation can happen by design was intriguing and I was not disappointed.

 By [Richard Clarke](#) 19 May 2004

Nicola Tyler, Chief Idea Generator at Competitive Thinking Company, gave a presentation on the need for companies to reward as well as support innovative thinking and behaviour.

The challenge that faces companies is not simply idea generation. That is only the first step as you then have to get everybody else to buy into it. Verimark, as an innovative company that gets many people to buy in was used as an example by Tyler, as she pointed out that regardless of what you think of their products, they are innovative.

Tyler went on to stress the tendencies of adults to become socially engineered not to innovate. Children make up words and she used the word 'conversate', as a verb from conversation as an example from her youth.

The four types of innovation that Tyler has identified are incremental, monumental, entrepreneurial and social. The first is improvement to what already exists, the second raises the bar, the third creates new revenue patterns and the last changes the way we live.

The message that came through for me from this list is the fact that innovation is not only about mind blowing inventions and everybody therefore is capable of innovation.

Itha Taljaard, Manager at Standard Bank's Department of Innovation and Foresight, spoke about the need for innovation in the banking industry and the methods that Standard Bank have used to combine innovation and creativity in practical ways. Standard Bank has an innovation focus which rewards people for creative and innovative ideas and thinking - not just the results.

Taljaard also spoke about the modelling process to test hypotheses and one of the modelling tools used at the bank is Lego. This highlights one of the recurring themes throughout the breakfast of teaching adults to create and innovate like they did as kids.

The end result for me was a different perspective and angle on things which after all is basically what innovation and creativity are all about. Highlighting innovation is something that is critical, as most people regard it as an esoteric subject or else take it for granted.

ABOUT RICHARD CLARKE

Richard Clarke founded Just Ideas, an ideas factory and implementation unit. He specialises in spotting opportunities, building ideas and watching them fly. Richard is also a freelance writer.
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