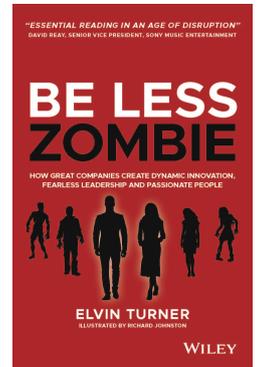


LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS



Innovation Leadership Questions

What follows is a quick-reference list of key leadership questions that keep innovation focused in the right direction, and the zombies at bay.

You might consider scattering the questions across your calendar, one-per-week, so that the principles regularly pop-up for your reflection and action.

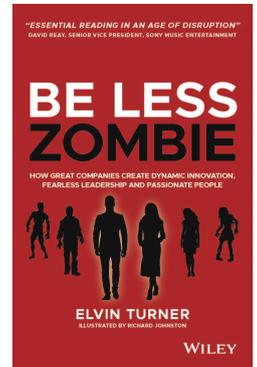
Innovation Strategy

1. What clear lines have we drawn around who owns and funds innovation in our organisation?
2. The innovation strategy is fundamentally about progress: What important 'units of progress' are your customers trying to make? What important progress are your employees trying to make? How can we reduce friction and increase flow for both?
3. The "Department of the Future" asks: *What's happening, what does it mean, what should we do?* Do you know?
4. Working back from a likely future scenario, what needs to be true for us to succeed? How do we need to organize?
5. Is our innovation strategy continually evolving or stuck in an annual process?
6. Is our innovation portfolio appropriately balanced to deliver our strategic goals?
7. Are we deliberately lowering the stakes, the risks, and the ambiguity of innovation?

Process

1. Do we have enough bold ideas coming down the pipeline?
2. What is the problem / opportunity? Who wins, how, and by how much?
3. Which 'needle' are we trying to move?

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS



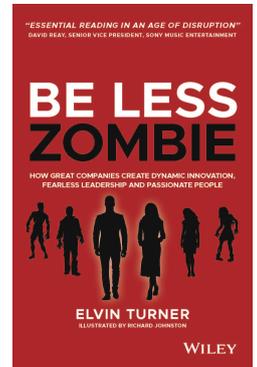
Process (continued)

4. How well do we understand the problem / opportunity context?
5. Is this a feature, a product or a business?
6. What catalytic question are we trying to answer?
7. Are people in the right state to generate great ideas?
8. How effective are our creative sessions at generating bold ideas?
9. Are we identifying the 'leap of faith assumptions' that our ideas hinge upon?
10. Do we 'spend a little, learn a lot' with our experiments?
11. Is our innovation investment 'pay as you learn' i.e. learning unlocks investment?
12. What is the data telling us about the desirability, feasibility and viability of this idea?
13. Can our people tell compelling stories around opportunities, ideas, experiments and business cases?
14. What's the business model?

Capabilities

1. Where might your personal innovation leadership capability be constraining your team's performance?
2. Is our innovation ambition supported with adequate training and development opportunities for employees?
3. Are our innovation outcomes, processes and capabilities aligned?
4. How capable are we in designing and sustaining innovation-friendly environments?
5. Is our dependency on internal resources constraining our ability to discover, develop and deliver truly differentiated ideas?

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS



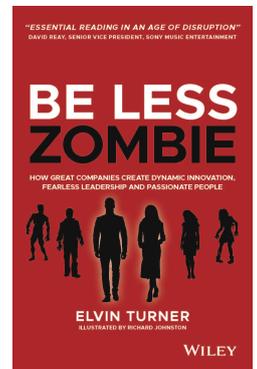
Culture

1. Are we calibrating culture to innovation outcomes or hoping a one-size-fits-all culture will deliver incremental *and* disruptive innovation?
2. Are leaders and managers deliberate about creating 'rehearsal spaces' around innovation projects that don't neatly fit into the status quo?
3. Do our people have the 'kindred connections' with colleagues, their work and our purpose that are necessary to fuel bold innovation?
4. Do people feel safe enough to propose the ideas the future needs from them?
5. Are we continually tracking down and driving out sources of friction in our organisation?

Resourcing

1. Are we strategically funding our future or placing sporadic bets?
2. Are we thinking beyond money to resource innovation?
3. Do we have enough 'make-it-happen' people facilitating innovation around the organization?
4. Does our planning process help or hinder innovation (speed, quantity, boldness)?
5. Are we relying on too few people to deliver too much of our innovation?

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS



Leadership

1. Are we adequately stewarding the fortunes of the company with sufficient backing for innovation?
2. What is the maximum amount of time that leaders should spend on running today's business vs pursuing strategy and innovation in a given month?
3. Are we being strategic enough about innovation or relying on ad hoc approaches?
4. Are we genuinely holding ourselves to account for the outcomes of our innovation strategy?
5. In what ways is the leadership team a constraint on our future prosperity?
6. Who will have to change, and how, if we pursue more innovation? What dynamics might we need to prepare for?
7. What profile of leaders does our future need, and how actively are we developing them?

For more approaches, resources and programmes that are specifically designed to increase the innovation performance of leaders, contact: elvin.turner@belesszombie.com