

## **BUSINESS CONCEPT INNOVATION SEMINARS and COURSES – OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Business Concept Innovation (BCI) is a relatively recent notion, introduced by business strategists such as Gary Hamel and others. It was intended to supersede the more “static, chess-board” approach developed by the previous generation of strategy gurus such as Michael Porter. Whereas Porter proposed the “five forces arena of competition” and the generic strategies to deal with each one of these, Hamel suggested the much more revolutionary concept of escaping from the arena of competition by redefining the complete business concept, thus becoming the leader in a radically new competitive environment.

Hamel et al arrived at innovation at the “level” of the business concept from the field of strategic business management. He was therefore not necessarily aware that he had arrived at the same “station” as a number of system engineers, who had been moving “up” the system hierarchy – from components to products, product systems and user systems. The system engineers were mainly interested in designing complex systems at business level, for which they selected the term “enterprise architecture”. One of the main drivers of the design requirements for enterprise architecture was the technological means available to system designers. So the third community that was involved, were the creators of technology, better known as the R&D community. Although there is a need for these participants to collaborate to arrive at an integrated, optimal new enterprise, there are indications that this synergy is seldom achieved at present.

This course on BCI is intended to provide practitioners at corporate management level with an insight of how the formal innovation process of (system) engineering could be utilised to ensure efficiency and integrity in the non-technical activities of BCI. This introduction should enhance the utility of more comprehensive textbooks on the subject.

The introductory course on MoT, offered by VanThinking, is considered to be a prerequisite for this course, since it provides a significant part of the understanding of the process of innovation.

### **2 MANAGEMENT AND LANGUAGE**

The terms “innovation” and management imply conceptual work by individuals and teams and communication among individuals. This course introduces the essential, formalised language to deal with the practice and

management of innovation to novices and seasoned practitioners, in a structured manner.

The key tasks of the innovation manager are to be aware of market needs and opportunities, trends and potential utility in (new) technology, the way of obtaining and developing teams to perform the relevant processes, dealing with procurement and exploitation contracts of technology and intellectual capital, and management of the interface between new parts and existing structures of the enterprise.

**Upon completion of the course, participants will clearly understand the tasks of the innovator – manager and performer - and they will be able to apply and tailor proven innovation principles and techniques to suit their environment, application and size of business.**

### 3 COURSE TOPICS

One essential aspect of the transfer of knowledge on a given subject is the structure within which the content matter is arranged – often referred to as the “subject taxonomy”. For so-called “mature subjects” like physics, mathematics, and engineering, there is an almost world-wide agreement on subject taxonomies. For more recently developed subjects, such as BCI, taxonomies tend to be more the result of personal preference. For the purpose of this course, the main topics follow the themes addressed in the book “Leading the Revolution” by Hamel [1]. This is preceded by a brief overview of Management of Technology (as presented separately) and an introduction to System Engineering concepts. The following topics are addressed:

- **Innovation concepts and context**
- **Innovation and Technology Interaction**
- **Innovation practice**
- **Business concept innovation**
  - General observations
  - Framework for BCI
  - How to be your own seer
  - Igniting and sustaining the Revolution

### 4 COURSE OPTIONS

We offer 3 options to study this subject:

- **Option 1: Compact course**, consisting of 8 hours of voice and Power Point presentations, with notes on selected topics, not available in open literature, and copies of the Power Point slides. The course is presented on our website and could be completed at the desired rate determined by each client.
- **Option 2: Full course**, consisting of 16 hours of voice and power point presentations, with notes on selected topics, not available in open literature. Several assignments are included. These need to be completed and submitted for comments by the course presenter via the VanThinking website. It is suggested that the material be accessed and studied over a period of about 6 weeks, to allow submission and commenting on assignments.
- **Option 3: Tailored, in-person course**, presented at an appropriate site of your choice, where the course presenter will present the material in 16 hours, over a period of 4 days, roughly 4 hours per day, plus some time to comment on assignments, and coach learners in the application of the concepts presented in the course lectures. Students should therefore budget for 4 full working days to attend the course. The number of persons in the class will be limited to 10 for the standard fee. The cost for additional learners could be negotiated in advance.

These courses are based on practical experience over more than two decades and have been presented at many locations, from academic programs at University Engineering Schools to tailored interaction with private enterprise teams.

We look forward to hearing from you!

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