



***The Medici Effect* by Frans Johansson**

Think you might want to read this book?

How do foraging ants relate to telecommunications? Or health care with violence prevention? Frans Johansson tells stories that illustrate connections across seemingly dissimilar disciplines in order to emphasize his main idea: Intersection is the key to innovation. Most of the book is spent guiding the reader in terms of how to create the Intersection as frequently and efficiently as possible. Perhaps the most pertinent example is that at its core, Socrates- Head of School is an attempt to find the Intersection between new ideas and the way we lead and learn in education.

What would Socrates ask?

- How do we design courses where diverse concepts and facts are relayed in a way so that intersections of knowledge are discovered?
- What if we designed a curriculum where students who discovered intersections could spend as much time as they wanted pursuing them?
- Should schools have more departments that are intentionally multi-disciplinary (like Humanities or STEM)?
- What if all high school graduates have a cross-disciplinary connection as a requirement for graduation?
- How can schools more readily learn from the experience of schools from around the world?
- Should schools eliminate traditional departments as they imply divisions that don't exist in the real world?
- What if all teachers first did a project before building out the rubric?
- Could re-assigning courses to different teachers for a year (within a department) spark innovation long-term?
- Should we hire great teachers and let them design and offer courses as they see niches that would fulfill student demand?
- What are the long-term benefits of having courses that are team taught?
- If generating many ideas are key to getting a good one, how do we embed and respect that into the learning process?

Research

- "Computing power has doubled every 18 months (since the microchip) and will continue to do so."
- "Moore's Law"- the idea that the speed and capacity of computers will continue to double about every two years.

Concepts

- Leonardo da Vinci, the defining Renaissance man and perhaps the greatest intersectionalist of all time, believed that in order to fully understand something one needed to view it from at least three different perspectives.
- Jokes often get a “haha” reaction, artistic originality an “ah!” reaction and scientific discoveries an “aha!” reaction.
- The Intersection will be found more often if work/project topics/roles are diversified as much as possible.
- There is some research that suggests you should hire a great person and then see what role they organically fill in your organization.
- “The strongest correlation for quality of ideas is, in fact, quantity of ideas.” (Picasso had 20,000 pieces of art, Einstein wrote more than 240 papers, Bach wrote a cantata every week, Edison filed 1,039 patents and Branson has started over 250 companies).
- While expertise is needed for the Intersection, too much of it or too narrow a focus can create associative barriers that prevent innovative connections.
- Most people will generate 3-6 ideas as part of a brainstorming session. You can increase the number by setting a group goal for ideas generated and identify quality by acknowledging that the first couple ideas are usually the most common and the last set tend to be the most creative.
- The total number of good ideas is often greater when individuals are given the task and the ideas are collected vs. people working together as they have to share verbal space/time and limit each other’s thinking.
- Writing down or diagraming ideas AT THE MOMENT YOU HAVE THEM is probably the most efficient way to increase the chances that your ideas will one day lead you to the Intersection.
- An incubation period is key to creativity. Think about it for a while and then let it rest when the time is right so your brain can come back to it when it is ready.
- Rewards impair creativity.
- “Risk Homeostasis” is when people compensate for risks in one area of their lives with a lack of risk in another. Happens within the same concept as well (e.g.s, baby jogging strollers, anti-lock brakes that don’t result in reduced injuries but rather people driving faster, driver’s education and painted speed bumps having no effect on safety- best e.g., after childproof caps on prescriptions there was an INCREASE in child poisonings because adults took less care to keep them out of the way of children).
- “Prospect Theory” is the idea that losing to a certain degree hurts more than winning to the same degree feels good.

Quotes from others

- “The best way to get a good idea is to have a lot of ideas.” - Linus Pauling

Gateways to further learning

- [The Smartest Kids in the World](#)
- [What School Could Be](#)

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Gladwell	<i>The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference</i>
Friedman	<i>The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization</i>
Michalko	<i>Cracking Creativity: The Secrets of Creative Genius</i>
Sutton	<i>Weird Ideas that Work: How to Build a Creative Company</i>
Simonton	<i>Origins of Genius: Darwinian Perspectives on Creativity</i>
Adams	<i>Conceptual Blockbusting: A Guide to Better Ideas</i>
Kelley	<i>The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO</i>
Christensen	<i>The Innovator's Dilemma: The Revolutionary Book that will Change the Way You Do Business</i>
Collins	<i>Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't</i>
Bernstein	<i>Against the Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk</i>
Osborn	<i>Applied Imagination: Principles and Procedures of Creative Thinking</i>

The applicability of this book to education is



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