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Why this book?



It is up to us to train our brains to be strong. Einstein's brain, for example, was surprisingly small. This book contains creativity exercises that relate directly to business creativity and various business-related problems. In addition, it describes how and why you might use a number of classical creativity exercises.

What is the body's biggest muscle? A lot of people think it's the brain, but this is not true. The brain is not a muscle, but like a muscle it can be trained. And although it cannot be flexed like a muscle (it would look rather odd if your head swelled up every time you did some serious thinking, in the way that your biceps increase in circumference when you tense your arm) your brain can be made stronger. This occurs in exactly the same way in which a muscle becomes stronger, namely by creating more connections between the cells.

The thing that distinguishes 'strong' brains from others is not that they are bigger, but that they are denser. In spite of the tendency to describe the geniuses and thinkers of the past as having 'big brains', research

has found no evidence that their brains were particularly large. Einstein's brain, for example, was surprisingly small – it weighed a mere 1230 grams, almost one-fifth less than the average brain. A rather comforting thought, isn't it? We are not, in other words, born with differing potential ('Lisa was obviously bound to succeed in life, she had such a large brain'). Instead, it is basically up to us to strengthen our brains by training, by maximizing the number of connections between our brain cells (yes, this was the special feature of Einstein's brain). That is why I have written this book.

My goal is not to strengthen the *whole* of your brain. Many others have had this goal and many (though not all) have failed to achieve it. Instead, I want to help to make you a better business creator (and this includes chief executives, developers and public sector decision-makers – those whose job it is to create better business opportunities for the Nation/Region Inc.). The work demands only a limited amount of your mental capacity and small improvements can produce big results.

Let us permit ourselves a small digression. In general, it is fair to say that our body, with certain exceptions, has a reasonably constant number of cells. Therefore our muscles do not increase greatly in size when we train them. Any increase that results from training depends mainly on the muscles binding more water and sugar. The

reason for the increase in muscle size through training is not the formation of new cells; rather, it is due to the creation of more connections between our current muscle cells. All these connections make the muscle denser (as you know, a well-trained muscle feels harder than an untrained one, just as it is more difficult to squeeze a carrot than a marshmallow).

If you have seen body-builders or athletes at close quarters, you know that their muscles are not actually very big (except during the off-season when they store water and sugar in their muscles, and perhaps some fat as a 'shock absorber'). Their muscles only look big because they are so dense and well-defined. This is a result of the muscle cells contracting and giving the muscles a definite shape. It is the same with the brain. Whenever I summarize my years of research and teaching, I usually arrive at the conclusion that marketing and business creation (the two are inseparable, which we will come back to later in the book) consist in constantly reinventing oneself. All my research results point to the importance of challenging conventional wisdom and breaking patterns and habits in order to reach out to people, attract their interest and gain unique advantages. Just knowing more than others is not enough. You must also be able to use your knowledge in a new way. All the information stored in the cells of the brain must be combined through new connections.

My research is concerned with developing and testing new opportunities and goals for companies and brands. It might, for example, be a matter of redefining a brand, changing product category, shaking up customer relations or evaluating business results on completely new grounds. This looks promising in theory, but the feedback I have received from companies and experts in marketing and business creation who consider these questions every day of their working lives has indicated that it is not always easy to put these theories into practice. I have therefore spent more and more time developing exercises and ideas about how to put together the challenging results of my research and finding out how, as marketer and business creator, you can continually reinvent yourself.

Trying 'merely' to make you more creative is not enough. If it was, I would not be writing this book. Thousands of books on how to increase your creative powers have already been published. While there is always room for further texts on the subject, this book is about creativity *and* business creation. The difference may be slight, but oh so important. I have read all the books I could find on creativity and have discussed them with students and businessmen. In many respects, we have reached the same conclusion: the most important problem is that most of the books contain valuable and entertaining insights and exercises,

but unfortunately often end up as being only 'entertaining'. The reason such books do not lead to concrete results is due to the fact that the exercises are not directly linked to business creation.

This book presents a collection of exercises that I have partly gathered from elsewhere and partly developed myself. It contains exercises that relate directly to business creativity and various business-related problem scenarios. In addition, it describes how and why you might use a number of classical creativity exercises. This book is in five parts and can be used for a number of different purposes. The book's *Introduction* (Parts I and II) is there to provide you with arguments for yourself and others as to why it is important to let both the particular exercises in the book and creativity in general become part of your daily work. The exercises in the *middle part* (Part III) can be used as regular training to develop your creative powers, and also for warming up in various group contexts and in teaching or as metaphors in your daily work (thinking points). The exercises in *the final parts* (Parts IV and V) are intended for use directly in your strategy and tactics development to help you to find new angles and develop new solutions and business.

Welcome aboard! Let's go.
