



# The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm

*By Thomas Kelley, Jonathan Littman*

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## **The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm** By Thomas Kelley, Jonathan Littman

IDEO, the widely admired, award-winning design and development firm that brought the world the Apple mouse, Polaroid's I-Zone instant camera, the Palm V, and hundreds of other cutting-edge products and services, reveals its secrets for fostering a culture and process of continuous innovation.

There isn't a business in America that doesn't want to be more creative in its thinking, products, and processes. At many companies, being first with a concept and first to market are critical just to survive. In **The Art of Innovation**, Tom Kelley, general manager of the Silicon Valley based design firm IDEO, takes readers behind the scenes of this wildly imaginative and energized company to reveal the strategies and secrets it uses to turn out hit after hit.

IDEO doesn't buy into the myth of the lone genius working away in isolation, waiting for great ideas to strike. Kelley believes everyone can be creative, and the goal at his firm is to tap into that wellspring of creativity in order to make innovation a way of life. How does it do that? IDEO fosters an atmosphere conducive to freely expressing ideas, breaking the rules, and freeing people to design their own work environments. IDEO's focus on teamwork generates countless breakthroughs, fueled by the constant give-and-take among people ready to share ideas and reap the benefits of the group process. IDEO has created an intense, quick-turnaround, brainstorm-and-build process dubbed "the Deep Dive."

In entertaining anecdotes, Kelley illustrates some of his firm's own successes (and joyful failures), as well as pioneering efforts at other leading companies. The book reveals how teams research and immerse themselves in every possible aspect of a new product or service, examining it from the perspective of clients, consumers, and other critical audiences.

Kelley takes the reader through the IDEO problem-solving method:

- Carefully observing the behavior or "anthropology" of the people who will be using a product or service

- Brainstorming with high-energy sessions focused on tangible results
- Quickly prototyping ideas and designs at every step of the way
- Cross-pollinating to find solutions from other fields
- Taking risks, and failing your way to success
- Building a "Greenhouse" for innovation

IDEO has won more awards in the last ten years than any other firm of its kind, and a full half-hour *Nightline* presentation of its creative process received one of the show's highest ratings. **The Art of Innovation** will provide business leaders with the insights and tools they need to make their companies the leading-edge, top-rated stars of their industries.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

IDEO, the world's leading design firm, is the brain trust that's behind some of the more brilliant innovations of the past 20 years--from the Apple mouse, the Polaroid i-Zone instant camera, and the Palm V to the "fat" toothbrush for kids and a self-sealing water bottle for dirt bikers. Not surprisingly, companies all over the world have long wondered what they could learn from IDEO, to come up with better ideas for their own products, services, and operations. In this terrific book from IDEO general manager Tom Kelley (brother of founder David Kelley), IDEO finally delivers--but thankfully not in the step-by-step, flow-chart-filled "process speak" of most how-you-can-do-what-we-do business books. Sure, there are some good bulleted lists to be found here--such as the secrets of successful brainstorming, the qualities of "hot teams," and, toward the end, 10 key ingredients for "How to Create Great Products and Services," including "One Click Is Better Than Two" (the simpler, the better) and "Goof Proof" (no bugs).

But *The Art of Innovation* really teaches indirectly (not to mention enlightens and entertains) by telling great stories--mainly, of how the best ideas for creating or improving products or processes come not from laboriously organized focus groups, but from keen observations of how regular people work and play on a daily basis. On nearly every page, we learn the backstories of some now-well-established consumer goods, from recent inventions like the Palm Pilot and the in-car beverage holder to things we nearly take for granted--like Ivory soap (created when a P&G worker went to lunch without turning off his soap mixer, and returned to discover his batch overwhipped into 99.44 percent buoyancy) and Kleenex, which transcended its original purpose as a cosmetics remover when people started using the soft paper to wipe and blow their noses. Best of all, Kelley opens wide the doors to IDEO's vibrant, sometimes wacky office environment, and takes us on a vivid tour of how staffers tackle a design challenge: they start not with their ideas of what a new product should offer, but with the existing gaps of need, convenience, and pleasure with which people live on a daily basis, and that IDEO should fill. (Hence, a one-piece children's fishing rod that spares fathers the embarrassment of not knowing how to teach their kids to fish, or Crest toothpaste tubes that don't "gunk up" at the mouth.)

Granted, some of their ideas--like the crucial process of "prototyping," or incorporating dummy drafts of the actual product into the planning, to work out bugs as you go--lend themselves more easily to the making of actual things than to the more common organizational challenge of streamlining services or operations. But, if this big book of bright ideas doesn't get you thinking of how to build a better mousetrap for everything from your whole business process to your personal filing system, you probably deserve to be stuck with the mousetrap you already have. --*Timothy Murphy*

#### From Publishers Weekly

"Routine is the enemy of innovation," declares Kelley, general manager of IDEO, in this lively and practical guide to nurturing that elusive quality in all organizations. Dubbed "Innovation U." by Fortune and lauded as "the world's most celebrated design firm" by Fast Company, IDEO, through its work on over 3,000 new product programs, has developed a system for staying on the creative cutting edge while keeping clients happy. Kelley handily parses the components of this system--understanding the market, observing real-life users, brainstorming new concepts and developing and refining prototypes on a tight schedule to come up with a commercial product--with examples from the development of such pathbreaking products as the original Apple mouse and the Palm Pilot V. Kelley vividly conveys how "hot teams," assembled for specific projects with concrete goals and deadlines, are the foundation of IDEO's performance-based reputation.

While he recognizes that not every organization is a hip design firm, Kelley believes that all organizations can gain an edge by innovating; among the successes he cites are Amazon, Igloo, Shoebox Greetings and Sephora. IDEO has learned and profited from maxims like "Fail often to succeed sooner." Many who previously feared change may answer his unpretentious call to "Start by following your customer journey, breaking it down into component elements, and asking yourself how you can deliver a better experience." Illustrations. (Feb.) Forecast: Featured in a half-hour segment of Nightline last year that ranked among the most popular aired on the show, IDEO's culture of innovation has received broad exposure. This well-written, well-organized and energizing guide will be a magnet for more attention, and could have a shot at business bestseller lists.

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## Review

Advance praise for **The Art of Innovation**:

"Tom Kelley has unlocked the magic box of innovation for corporate America. At a time when creativity and innovation are the driving forces for the New Economy, Kelley shows how IDEO does it - and how companies everywhere can learn to build the products and services we all crave. If you're trying to create product lust, *The Art of Innovation* shows you how to do it."

-- Bruce Nussbaum, *Business Week*

"Everyone talks about innovation and creativity, but IDEO has actually done it. **The Art of Innovation** provides detailed, actionable ideas about how to build an innovative culture and an organization that makes creativity seem routine. Its well-placed emphasis on management practices makes it a great read for anyone in any organization who wants to get better at what they do."

-- Jeffrey Pfeffer, Professor, Stanford Business School, and author of *The Knowing-Doing Gap*

What the world has been saying about **IDEO**:

"IDEO Product Development is the world's most celebrated design firm. Its ultimate creation is the process of creativity itself. For founder David M. Kelley and his colleagues, work is play, brainstorming is a science, and the most important rule is to break the rules... Can this formula for creativity work in other places? Some of the world's leading companies certainly think so."

-- *Fast Company*

"One of the hottest product development firms on the planet."

-- *Production Magazine*

"The fuel that starts the design engine is innovation, and, for once, the creative and business departments seem to agree: innovation is good. By definition, design is about change; this is what drives clients to IDEO. For the people at IDEO, change is interchangeable with progress."

-- *Graphis3 magazine*

"The ultimate candy store for design-t..."

## Users Review

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**Denise Dennis:**

Reading a publication can be one of a lot of task that everyone in the world likes. Do you like reading book and so. There are a lot of reasons why people enjoy it. First reading a reserve will give you a lot of new data. When you read a guide you will get new information mainly because book is one of a number of ways to share the information or perhaps their idea. Second, studying a book will make you actually more imaginative. When you examining a book especially fiction book the author will bring you to imagine the story how the people do it anything. Third, you could share your knowledge to other folks. When you read this The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm, you may tells your family, friends as well as soon about yours guide. Your knowledge can inspire the others, make them reading a publication.

**Carroll Boggess:**

Is it anyone who having spare time after that spend it whole day by watching television programs or just laying on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm can be the answer, oh how comes? A fresh book you know. You are so out of date, spending your extra time by reading in this fresh era is common not a nerd activity. So what these guides have than the others?

**Raymond Albanese:**

In this era which is the greater person or who has ability in doing something more are more important than other. Do you want to become one of it? It is just simple method to have that. What you need to do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. One of the books in the top list in your reading list is actually The Art of Innovation: Lessons in Creativity from IDEO, America's Leading Design Firm. This book which can be qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking right up and review this e-book you can get many advantages.

**John Wilson:**

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