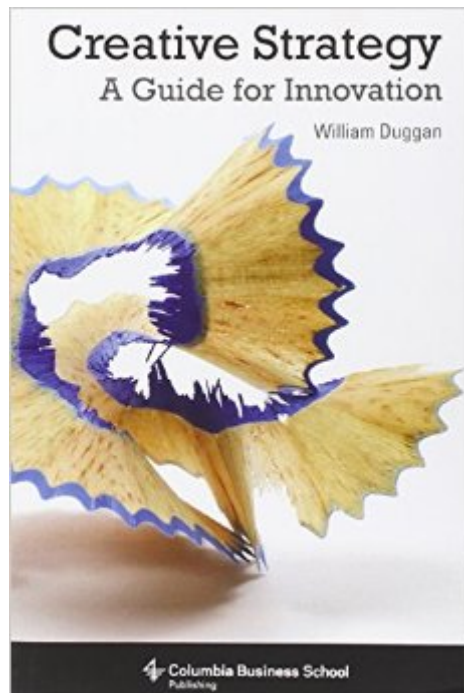


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Creative Strategy: A Guide For Innovation (Columbia Business School Publishing)



Synopsis

William Duggan's 2007 book, *Strategic Intuition*, showed how innovation really happens in business and other fields and how that matches what modern neuroscience tells us about how creative ideas form in the human mind. In his new book, *Creative Strategy*, Duggan offers a step-by-step guide to help individuals and organizations put that same method to work for their own innovations.

Duggan's book solves the most important problem of how innovation actually happens. Other methods of creativity, strategy, and innovation explain how to research and analyze a situation, but they don't guide toward the next step: developing a creative idea for what to do. Or they rely on the magic of "brainstorming" — just tossing out ideas. Instead, Duggan shows how creative strategy follows the natural three-step method of the human brain: breaking down a problem into parts and then searching for past examples to create a new combination to solve the problem. That's how innovation really happens. Duggan explains how to follow these three steps to innovate in business and any other field as an individual, a team, or a whole company. The crucial middle step — the search for past examples — takes readers beyond their own brain to a "what-works scan" of what others have done within and outside of the company, industry, and country. It is a global search for good ideas to combine as a new innovation. Duggan illustrates creative strategy through real-world cases of innovation that use the same method: from Netflix to Edison, from Google to Henry Ford. He also shows how to integrate creative strategy into other methods you might currently use, such as Porter's Five Forces or Design Thinking. *Creative Strategy* takes the mystery out of innovation and puts it within your grasp.

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Customer Reviews

I learned about this book before it was published and eagerly awaited its release. I've read all of Duggan's other books (Napoleon's Glance: The Secret of Strategy (Nation Books), The Art of What Works: How Success Really Happens and Strategic Intuition: The Creative Spark in Human Achievement) and enjoyed them. In fact, I've recommended them to influential strategic thinkers at my company and have pushed to incorporate their ideas in our strategic principles. Before I critique this book, allow me to give you a bit of context I've earned after having read all of Duggan's books. First, all of his books make the same points. He refreshes the examples, which is appreciated, but the ideas are the same. Each book puts a new wrapper on these ideas by relabeling them. What was Napoleon's Glance was relabeled as "the art of what works." The art of what works was revealed to be "strategic intuition." This most recent book's contribution is to tell us that one develops creative strategies by using strategic intuition. In each successive book, Duggan allocates more pages to explaining this semantic tableau without advancing any new thinking. Old wine in a new bottle. That's probably my biggest disappointment. I should have stopped with the first book.

"Creative Strategy" uniquely contributes to the body of innovation literature by answering some of the toughest innovation questions of them all: How? How do you get innovative ideas? How do you decide on which ideas to pursue? How do you bridge from analysis to execution? How exactly? Traditionally, we have held that creativity is open and strategy is focused - generating from two separate parts of our brain. We manage them separately and then try to combine the results in some way at a later stage. "Creative Strategy" makes this a one step process by marrying creativity (the generation of new ideas) with efficiency (based on what we already know is working elsewhere) and strategy (addressing only the key elements that are at the core of our challenges). The fusing of these domains into one guided process provides the missing piece for many innovation efforts. Most importantly, Professor Duggan's Creative Strategy process could spawn even greater corporate acceptance for more organized innovation efforts as it is a more "prudent way to experiment". Following his suggested what-works matrix and process will allow you to explain why your new idea is worth a try since it is a creative combination of past elements that have worked. The process essentially, then, provides a potentially better ROI - return on ideas - for management than random "try anything" notions, "wild ideas" or purely imaginative flights of fancy. The second part of the book

bravely dedicates itself to pointing out the flaws of the major business methods being used and touted today and explains how to alter them to make room for the creative strategy process. Duggan reviews a cross-section of creativity methods such as design thinking, Dragon's Den, mind mapping, play, time off and TRIZ.

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