

Stand Up and Innovate

A WHITE PAPER

BACKGROUND

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As a Corporate Strategist and Innovation Thought Leader, I have had the tremendous honor of working with some of the best brands in the world including: Gatorade, Polaris Motorcycles, CIGNA Healthcare, Celgene Pharmaceuticals, Shire Pharmaceuticals, Siemens, Microsoft and 3M. I have discovered that there is a new trend of “hyper-competition” principally driven by the effect of the connected economy. The current state of market disruption mandates that companies deliver layered and dynamic value faster than ever before. Moreover, these new economic trends also require that companies deliver exceptional experiences across the entire customer journey. In a nutshell, we need to gain far better insights quicker and we must transmute those insights into layered value. We need to outthink the competition. There is no question that enterprise culture plays a tremendous role. In my book, *The Innovation Playbook*, I outline the steps of achieving a culture that drives world-class innovation.



Photo courtesy of Ergotron

INNOVATION LUCIDITY

Recently, however, I discovered a new secret weapon—let’s call it “Innovation lucidity”. As an innovator, I’ve been awarded over 40 patents by the US patent and trademark office and I have discovered that mental energy is the secret. Obviously, market and customer insights and technological knowledge of your product category is mandatory, but that’s just your entry pass to the new disruptive market. To give your organization a competitive edge, your key thinkers must be lucid and have the mental energy to transmute market insights into world-class products and services.

CLEAR THINKING RESULTS IN GOOD STRATEGIC CHOICES

Healthy innovators are far more productive and, in my opinion, better at innovating. But it’s not just about innovation; it’s about enterprise leadership and better strategic decisions. As a strategist to multibillion-dollar corporations, I have found that all companies have essentially the same mechanics when it comes to the resources of market insights and new product development. In its simplest form, strategy is nothing more than the choices that executives make to drive enterprise goals and objectives. So if they have the same mechanics and resources, how can they out-invent the competition? The answer is painfully simple. Make better choices. So how do you make better choices? You must be clear in your thinking and remain mentally alert. Studies show that this drives unprecedented levels of enterprise value. This is my formula for strategic and innovation success.

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Health and fitness + innovation and strategic infrastructure = Enterprise Success

THE POTATO ZONE

After uncovering research about mental alertness, I decided to change my workday by removing all the desks in my office. They were promptly replaced with standing desks. I personally like the full range of Ergotron Products. And I had the most successful thinking year of my professional career. I wrote two major books and developed a consumer product line that received the “Best Product of The Year Award” among five other prestigious industry awards. I believe that getting up from my desk and getting out of, what I call, “The Potato Zone” was the secret to this year’s success.

“...A person who works at a desk job might burn 300 calories during a work week, Ravn wrote, while those in jobs that require physical effort can burn 2,000 calories more. Sitting also harms circulation, leads to aches and pains and also increases the risk of diabetes, heart troubles and premature death,”

Brown, AMA to Offices: Don't make workers sit all day

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF STANDING

This amazing transformation of my personal thinking and energy has put me on a mission to incorporate standing as part of my client’s innovation and strategic initiatives. As an innovator, there is no question in my mind that staying out of the “The Potato Zone” will help you and your key leadership teams make better choices. As a Certified Management Consultant, just incrementally increasing the productivity of key thinkers within your enterprise could have tens of millions of dollars of enterprise benefit.

THE INTEGRATION AND CULTURAL SHIFT OF STANDING

Let’s face it; the overwhelming majority of our stakeholders have been trained to settle into a chair and desk. Asking them to stand up is typically received with a comment like, “Are you kidding me?” Many wellness and health initiatives within enterprises fail because they have not leveraged the power of Socialization and Gamification. Now I know these words sound like buzzwords, but I use game mechanics and socialization to drive higher levels of initiative engagement and standing is no exception. So here’s how you get started...

THE STANDING COMMUNITY

Depending on the scope and breath of your standing initiative, you may want to start with a Beta-Group—a group of people who are influential and inclined to participate. The beta group will help you develop a strong brand around the concept of standing while folding it into your enterprise culture. Your beta community will serve as “standing ambassadors.” Sounds corny, I know. But the benefits are real. One final word of wisdom regarding your standing community—it is absolutely imperative that you develop a powerful and sustainable brand around your standing initiative. So follow these three simple steps:

1. Recruit influential members to participate in your beta standing community.
2. Develop a comprehensive initiative and brand plan.
3. Leverage socialization and game mechanics to drive sustainable engagement.

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THE DIGITAL STANDING COMMUNITY

Chances are your organization has an Enterprise Social Network (ESN) such as Yammer or Sharepoint. These digital communities can leverage game mechanics to engage stakeholders to participate in your standing community and other strategic initiatives. I would suggest that you use good off-the-shelf solutions, such as Qmarkets, because their solution has game mechanics built-in. You can also use initiative measurement tools, such as ForwardMetrics, to measure and manage your standing initiative.

RETURN ON STANDING (ROS)

I believe that standing, in hand with other health wellness and disease management solutions, can significantly reduce healthcare cost for your business. When you combine those proven benefits with the ability of your key thinkers to make better strategic decisions, it's pretty clear that standing delivers a remarkable return on investment. If you're reluctant to go it alone, we provide a full range of strategic management and health and wellness consulting services.

"The Take-a-Stand Project was designed to reduce prolonged sitting time at work and improve selected health outcomes for employees with sedentary jobs. The installation of a sit-stand device in the context of a corporate health and well-being program (10) was effective at increasing nonsitting time, reducing upper back and neck pain, and improving mood states. Furthermore, the removal of the sit-stand device largely negated all observed improvements within a 2- week period,"

Reducing Occupational Sitting Time and Improving Workers Health

THE STAND PLAN

My last word of advice is to look at standing as an important strategic initiative. Don't just take a swipe at this. It's too important. Develop a comprehensive strategic initiative plan around standing. Your plan should include:

THE VISION -

What a more lucid and energetic team would mean for the enterprise. (Never start an initiative until you have clearly identified the "why".)

THE GOAL -

Standing provides measurable improvements in productivity. That should be your goal, so frame up in your plan with the specific details of the goals around this important initiative.

GOVERNANCE-

All successful strategic initiatives have a governance structure. Don't make it sluggish and bureaucratic. Instead, make it fun and interesting. The idea is to provide the life-support system for the initiative through executive sponsorship and funding.

THE COMMUNITY -

All strategic initiatives require an engaged and socialized community. So build a branded community that encourages other stakeholders to get on board.

THE GAME -

Use game mechanics to drive higher levels of engagement and sustainability.

MEASURE AND REPORT -

When deployed correctly, you will be able to measure the success of this initiative. Measurement will provide greater stakeholder and leadership support while ensuring you're prepared for course correction as needed.

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You don't have to do it alone. We provide a wide range of management consulting services to assist you if you don't have the internal resources to make it happen.

NOW GO STAND UP!



Photo courtesy of Ergotron



NICHOLAS WEBB

is a business strategy and innovation thought leader. He is the author of *The Innovation Playbook* and the *Digital Innovation Playbook*. He currently serves as a Senior Partner at Lassen Innovation where he provides management consulting services to Fortune 500 companies.



Eryn Brown June. "AMA to Offices: Don't Make Workers Sit All Day!" Los Angeles Times. Los Angeles Times, 18 June 2013. Web.
Pronk NP, Katz AS, Lowry M, Payfer JR. Reducing Occupational Sitting Time and Improving Worker Health: The Take-a-Stand Project, 2011. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2012;9:110323. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888.pcd9.110323>

