



Stanford eCorner

Creating the Center for Edge Innovation

Teresa Briggs, *Deloitte Silicon Valley*

January 28, 2009

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2162/Creating-the-Center-for-Edge-Innovation>

Teresa Briggs, partner at Deloitte Silicon Valley, talks about the Center for Edge Innovation, an in-house think tank that seeks to shape, rather than follow, broad market thinking with some of the brightest minds in technology. Here, Briggs outlines some of the goals and accomplishments of this cutting edge organization of study, and talks about how it allows VC's to vet potential business and technology opportunities with experienced industry leaders.



Transcript

Another example I mentioned is our research center. We have this belief that thinking needs to be at the edge in order to really ultimately add value to our clients. So we formed the Center for Edge Innovation. And this center is helping technology companies shape their market place versus being shaped by market forces. So to be out in front and actually leading in the change instead of following market trends. And that's the basis of what the center is really studying. Our center leaders are responsible for over 500 papers and six bestselling books. And I want to tell you a little bit about them because this is again, one of my examples of being able to innovate inside a big organization. So we went out and decided we wanted to find some of the most eminent folks in technology to bring into our center. So how many of you have heard of John Seely Brown? Anybody? A few of you? OK.

So John Seely Brown co-leads our center. John Seely Brown was the Chief Scientist at Xerox for many years and he ran Xerox Park right here in Palo Alto. And you guys know that Xerox Park was responsible for many of the innovations that we take for granted even today in Silicon Valley. So John, or he's referred to as JSB, ran Park and now he co-leads our center. John Hagel was a partner in Mackenzie for a long time. He was a very prolific writer, speaks a lot and really comes more from the business angle and JSB comes more from the technology angle. So the merger of those two is a really great combination. And then Lang Davison was the editor of the Mackenzie Quarterly for 12 years and we were able to hire him away and the three of them make up the leadership in our center. Their work can be found in BusinessWeek.com every month. They're in Fortune, Forbes and that periodical on the other side of the country, Harvard Business Review.

And so they're very well respected for their writing. They've a lot of active blogs as well. Their ideas are not just the subject of papers and books, though. Their ideas are actually put into motion through vetting their ideas with Silicon Valley business leaders and iterating on their ideas so that when we're ready to actually take something to market and help companies actually drive some changes in their strategies, we know that it's going to work because we've vetted it with businesses. So it's a very collaborative process with our clients. Now we have a program inside the Edge Center called our "Edge Fellowship Program". And what's neat about this is our senior consultants and our managers. So, folks like you who have been out of school for three to say seven years can take a six month or 12 month spin into the center and work side by side with John, JSB and Lang. And work with them on the research themes, work in the field with clients, conducting interviews and really helping to drive the themes of the center. And then they go back into their client work and bring all that knowledge with them.

So within our research center, we have this neat little program called the Edge Fellowship Program. So again, an example of how inside of a big organization you can carve out these niches. And in this case it's a niche research center that's focused on tech and strategy.