



Stanford eCorner

How to Act in Revolutionary Times

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Citi Chief Innovation Officer Deborah Hopkins offers ten lessons on how to act in revolutionary times, which include re-learning to trust your intuition, striking when you see an opening, and carrying the banner for creative chaos.



Transcript

You have to have a front line and a front guard. So put people out there that are out, finding out what's going on and that's frankly what my team does. That's part of meeting with 600 startups, that's part of really being out here and what's percolating? What's happening on big data? Where is the cloud going? How is that going to impact the way companies work? So that becomes really important. It's trust your gut. It's so funny and frustrating to me that I think our educational system has drummed out of you the concept of your intuition. Every single person I know in this room has intuition and you can learn to make it work better for you. So in the work that many of you are hoping to do, it's important. When it feels right, it usually is, so learn to trust that feeling. Strike when you find an opening, I mean you got to go, you see a slide and I often say to my team, the window is open, but not for long; go. And that's when you've got to have your plan ready and go and really find the opportunity in front of you.

As leaders in this kind of work, you have to be fearless and inspiring and off kidding your side about the revolution you think about people really trying to lead teams through things like this. They need your inspiration; they need your courage because it's scary. It is really, you're fighting against this huge thing that human nature hates change. We all just wanted to go back to the way it used to be. Wouldn't it just be easier? Yes, maybe. I think this is a lot cooler. And then, carry the banner for creative chaos. It's funny that - one of the things about these vertical things in corporations, it's all this little orderly kind of stuff. And the reality is; innovation is messy. You got to get in the dirt.

You got to roll around in the dirt. And you got to be willing to fail. And you got to be willing to get back up again and you got to do it over and over and over. And that's the fun of it. But it's not something that traditionally I think companies have thought about as, an okay thing to do. Those are the people who used to get, up them in the resource room because they're causing too much trouble, but this is really I think core to thinking about creative chaos leads to creative confidence. Share your intel, again knowledge is power when it's in the network. And I think that is really critical to what you're doing. Going armed, I mean, I think you all know this, this is that what you learnt here, know your stuff, think through what the unintended consequences, when my guy say, what should I do, I'm getting ready, I'm going in for this big pitch, what are the unintended consequences. If you can get good at thinking about that, it will help you a lot, as you think about really pursuing some of your dreams in this arena.

Everybody goes through basic training, so don't forget that man. I mean we all fall down, we all look silly, we all make a mistake and we have to say to the next guy; it's okay, come on, let's go. We'll get on to the next thing, don't worry about it. And don't worry about the sound didn't work. It's okay. I mean I'm dealing with it, I have no idea why I'm holding on to this wire right now, but I'm going with it. And fight for the customer. I mean this is really, I swear to God, we're going to get little flags that say; we're fighting for the customer. We really believe that and in our team and I believe you'll see as the few years go by here, this

will be the rallying cry, is really being able to demonstrate not with words, but with real deeds that, that is the case. And finally you got to celebrate the victories because the fighting is hard.

We work really intently, it's really tough, but it is the best work I've ever done. And my hope for all of you is you get to do the same.