



## BECOMING MORE INNOVATIVE IN 2015

INFLUENTIAL THINKERS SHARE THEIR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS TO  
INNOVATE MORE

By IMD Professor Bill Fischer – January 2015

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What are you going to do this year to be more innovative? Innovative organizations deserve innovative leaders and members. If you're not consciously thinking about how you might improve your own personal innovativeness, you're abdicating on an important managerial responsibility.

In the belief that organizations don't innovate, people do, I have asked a group of highly innovative individuals who I admire to think about how they will become even more innovative in the upcoming year. What follows is a thoughtful selection of global and ambitious good advice, all of which has one overall objective: to make us all more innovative in 2015! I have also included their twitter address so that each of the contributors can be followed throughout the year.

Without further ado, good innovating and good fortunes for 2015!

**Abhijit Bhaduri (@AbhijitBhaduri):** Blogger, social media influencer and a creative thinker, Abhijit is the Chief Learning Officer of Wipro

I want to create a conference featuring speakers who can reframe conventional problems through the eyes of a curious novice." This follows Abhijit's 2014 resolution: "I will hold weekly conversations with millennials to understand how they dream." Building upon last year he said: "I have had enough conversations with twenty somethings at Wipro to know that we should create a Curious Novice Conference this year. These young people have solutions for problems that experienced professionals can't reframe.

**Estelle Métayer (@Competia):** founder and Principal of Competia, former McKinsey consultant and educator, corporate director/board member, painter, pilot and trend-spotter

My resolution is to increase my circle of knowledge and disrupt familiarity. This includes:

- Attending at least one new innovative meeting
- Learning about new fields
- Organizing "walking meetings" with people from my network who work in industries I know nothing about
- Subscribe to one unusual magazine
- Connect with science journalists and science-fiction writers
- Study street art movements

**Shaun Coffey (@ShaunCoffey):** experienced company director and Chief Executive of a variety of Australian & New Zealand private and public organizations

There is a desperate need for better ways to make sense of the world. My enthusiasm for 2015 is to bring good quality critical thought to the public dialogue on the wicked problems we face. Most of these "debates" – covering topics from GMOs, climate change, water, radicalism, violence, gender and other issues – can be characterized as ideological positioning. I'll be slower to offer opinions, and more deliberate in crafting, explaining arguments and presenting ideas. I'll explore thought processes, challenge poor logic, and gather evidence more rigorously, so that ideas can be contested rather than ideologies narrowly protected. I will pay particular attention to views contrary to my own so that I can critically challenge my own ideas and positions. Most of all, I will share the experience, not just the conclusion.

**Steve Denning (@stevedenning):** Forbes contributor, author of "The Leader's Guide to Radical Management: Reinventing the Workplace", formerly Program Director, Knowledge Management at the World Bank

My innovation resolution for 2015 is: to get firms to put customers first! That builds on my 2014 resolution which was: "to catalyze, reinforce and accelerate the coalition of thought leaders who embrace the ongoing economic phase change that is based on continuous innovation."

During 2014, a study by Aspen Institute revealed that a majority of thought leaders believe that the primary purpose of the corporation is to serve customers' interests.

During 2015, I hope to nurture the transition among firms through a Learning Consortium.

**Haydn Shaughnessy** (@Haydn1701): author of the forthcoming “Shift: a User’s Guide to the New Economy” and co-founder of The Disruption House.

One of the major insights to come my way in 2014 was that noise now makes it almost impossible to find the right signals for change out there. I resolved already to stop being part of the noise and to curate my work more thoughtfully and to search for ways to connect it to other people who are creating the right signals.

**Tim Kastle** (@TimKastle): Teacher of innovation management at the University of Queensland Business School

In 2015 I will try to improve the quality of ideas that I come up with by seeking out the voices of people who aren’t like me. It’s so easy to only pay attention to those with similar backgrounds and experiences, and I want to fight that easy habit. As someone who is both an academic at a business school, and also an experienced manager, I know the value of crossing boundaries. Next year I also want to try to ensure that my ideas do all the work they’re capable of – they need to have impact.

**Greg Satell** (@DigitalTonto): Forbes contributor, publisher of digitaltonto.com blog, formerly holding strategy and innovation roles in Publicis Groupe

My resolution for the next year is to be a better communicator. Innovation, in essence, is about connecting ideas. The better we can communicate our ideas—and listen to those of others—the more stuff we can make happen.

**Sergio Monsalve** (@VCSerge): Silicon Valley VC — Partner, Norwest Venture Partners (&, full-disclosure, my son-in-law)

To help me generate new ideas and different ways of thinking, once a day I reach out and talk to someone in my social network who I know may have the opposite view to mine on a specific current event or controversial subject, which I know that person is particularly interested in. While it is uncomfortable for some people to debate and disagree, if done in a friendly way I think it is a key ingredient to innovation; I often see people get set in their ways and become too insular. I will continue to avoid that by reaching out and engaging in friendly debates to remain sharp in your thinking.

**Bart Doorneweert** (@bartdoorneweert): Value Chain Developer at LEI-Wageningen UR, and founder of Value Chain Generation

Partnerships are kind of tucked away in the backend of the business model. However, I expect a lot from new partnerships this coming year. With investment capital being (treated as if it were) scarce and the dynamics in the global landscape, innovation will be high in demand regardless, and partnerships will be just the thing to feed the innovation machine. Personally, I will work on building new value networks, that can help take the partnership design tools I’m working on to the next level.

**Tania Dussey-Cavassini** (@TaniaDussey): Ambassador for Global Health, Vice-Director General of the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health

For 2015, I will continue to ask the questions that feed my daily musing: “Who will be my customer today? What added value will I bring? And how will I reach my goals?” In order to come up with creative solutions to answer the “how” question, I will spend more time reading authors who grapple with philosophical questions, and spend 15 minutes every day practicing a new activity.

**Josie Gibson** (@JosieJosieg): co-founder of transformation venture, wheretofromhere?

The top issue for 2015 will be leadership. In a recent World Economic Forum survey of global thought leaders, 86% said we have a leadership crisis. We do. We see it in sluggish innovation rates, in poor enterprise productivity, in record low workforce engagement levels. Our default model is from the industrial era and is way overdue for an overhaul. We need leaders with vision and courage, with digital literacy and a strong sense of purpose. We need people comfortable with complexity, who understand the connected world we live in. In the Asia-Pacific, we see new

leadership styles emerging with an emphasis on loose structures, rapid responses, self-organizing teams and broad-based collaboration. It demands very different leadership skills. Most of us realize that the only sustainable competitive advantage is people. The difference is that smart leaders are actually doing it, finding new ways to tap that huge pool of latent talent.

**Bill Fischer** (@bill\_fischer)

This year, I resolve to live more innovatively; to personally practice what I preach in my innovation sessions and to be more thoughtful in how I think innovatively about my own activities. I will follow Estelle M tayer's admonition to "disrupt my familiar" by participating more in new ventures with new collaborators and new material, in new venues and to return to such "higher-variance" activities as: painting, French and meditation. I will try to prototype something new every day. I will add more discipline to my innovation, so that I may raise the likelihood of achieving coherence. I will rewrite my notes more faithfully, and, in the spirit of Idea Hunting, I will be more interested in the work of others. I will try to be bolder with a broader portfolio of social media.

This is an extract of a blog post by [Bill Fischer on Forbes](#)

*[Bill Fischer](#) is a Professor of Innovation Management at IMD. He co-founded and co-directs the [Driving Strategic Innovation](#) program in cooperation with the Sloan School of Management at MIT.*

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