

**BETTER  
IDEAS.  
FASTER.**

An Introduction  
BY MATT HART

# THIS IS THE SOLUTION

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Everyone is creative.

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Anyone can be  
an innovator.

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You just need to  
learn how.

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Better Ideas Faster will  
show you exactly how.



# PROBLEMS

We solve problems through the substance of our ideas - using our capacity to think creatively on our own, and together with others.

But getting in rooms to generate so-called 'out of the box' ideas summarises all that's wrong with enterprise creativity and innovation.

It's like trying to make a diary appointment for a moment of creative genius - postits, bland meeting rooms, stale brainstorming?!

It's a tragic waste of people's innate creativity; both the quality of ideas created and people's confidence to innovate them.



# BRAINSTORMS. IT'S WHERE GOOD IDEAS GO TO DIE!

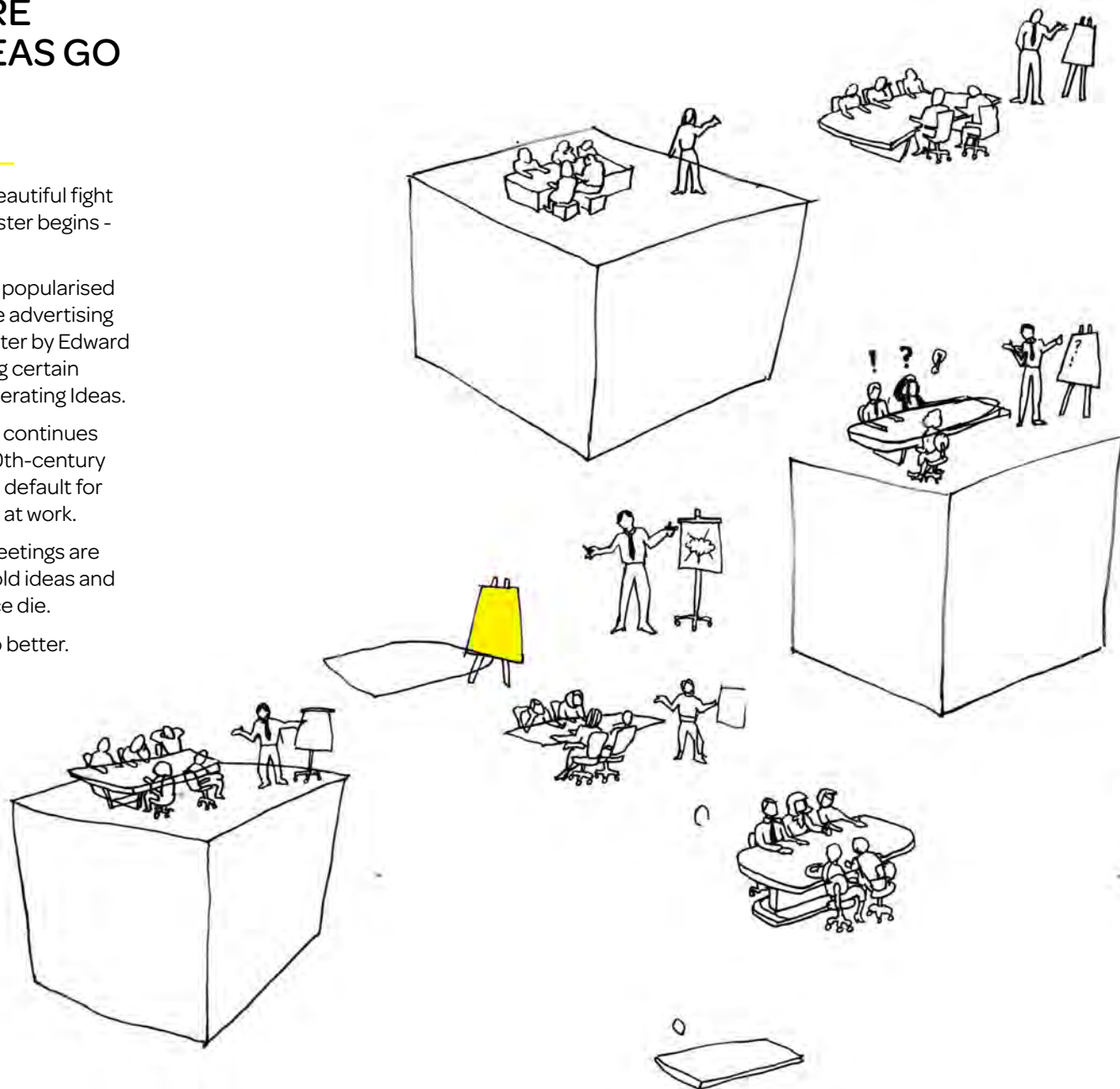
This is where my beautiful fight for Better Ideas Faster begins - the brainstorm.

Brainstorming was popularised in the '50s by some advertising 'mad men'. Then later by Edward De Bono describing certain techniques for generating Ideas.

Modern enterprise continues to use outdated 20th-century brainstorms as the default for new value creation at work.

For many, these meetings are the place where bold ideas and creative confidence die.

It's high time we do better.





# I'M MATT HART.

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I've been making innovators since 1998.

Central to this work has been reinventing how individuals, teams and organisations create and innovate ideas.

And central to that is what I call Better Ideas Faster (or just BIF).

This ebook is your Masterclass introduction. Enjoy.

# LEARN TO SOLVE 1 PROBLEM. LEARN TO SOLVE ANY PROBLEM.

I get asked what I do a lot. The easiest answer is to say that I solve problems.

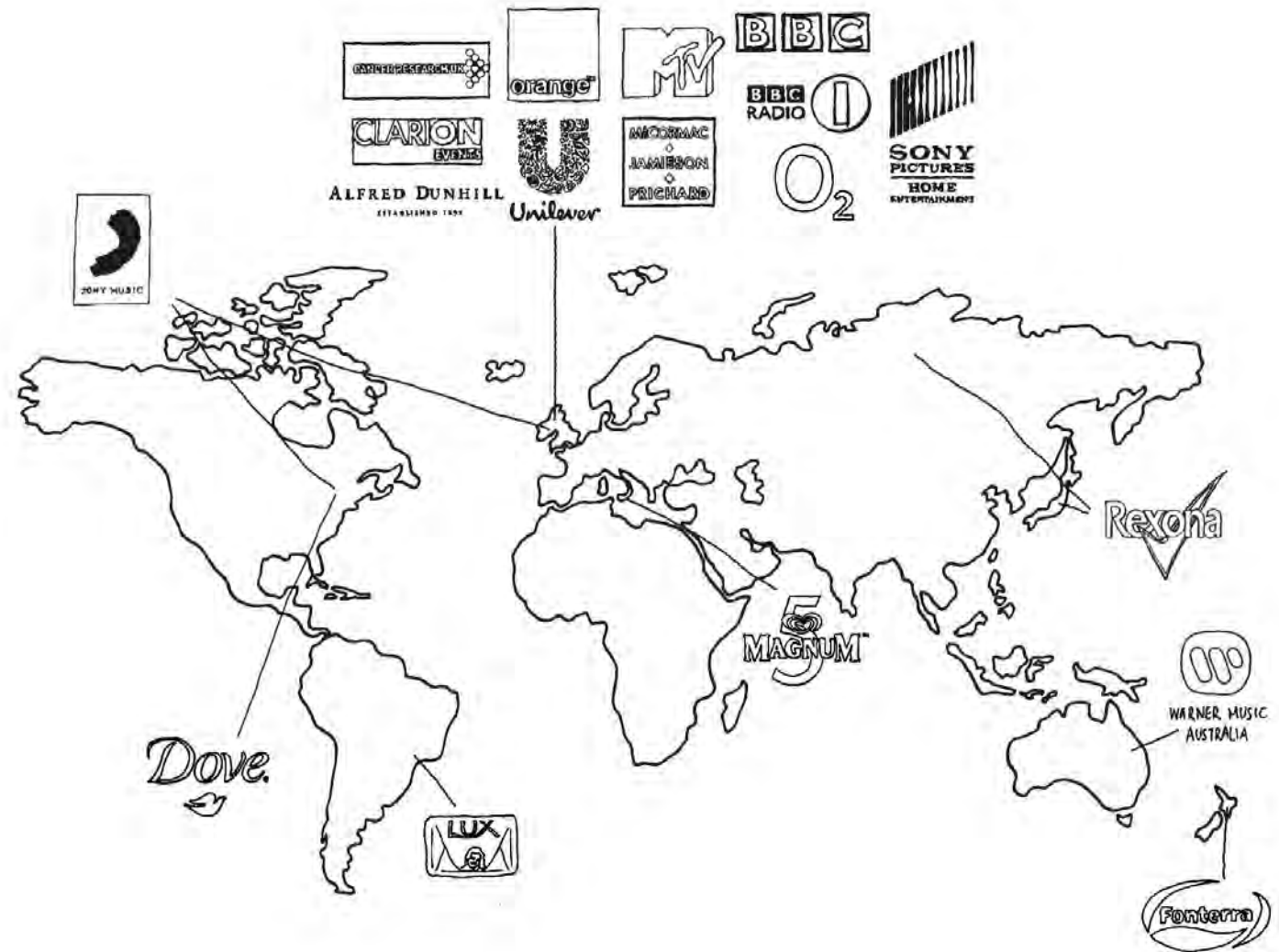
When the next question is who for, I rattle off clients like BBC, Cisco, Spotify, Unilever, etc.

What always follows is 'but how? they're so different'.

My answer is that when you know how to solve one problem using innovation, you can then solve any problem.

Better Ideas Faster is creative intelligence, applied.

This handbook is your start to unleashing your creative intelligence, with others, as defining advantage that's both purposeful and profitable.



# LET'S GO...

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Part 1.

## **BETTER IDEAS**

it starts with process and  
creative thinking

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Part 2.

## **FASTER**

then it's unleashing better,  
faster creativity with others

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Part 3.

## **ON-PURPOSE**

to then underpin all of that  
in a culture that innovates  
on-purpose



Part 1.

BETTER  
IDEAS.



## OUT OF THE BOX. IN A ROOM.

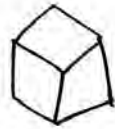
The work of ideas starts with a challenge. And then someone saying to others "we need to think out of the box".

What follows are email efforts to organise the date for everyone to get in the same room. After which not much happens. Then the time arrives - and it's all get in a room to brainstorm ideas.

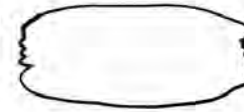
This is what makes up today's out-of-the-box thinking.

People, we can do soooooooooo much better.

WHAT'S THIS?  
**A BOX**



WHAT'S THIS?  
**THINKING**



SO WHAT'S THIS?



**THINKING OUT OF THE BOX**

Which is the creative thinking  
that generates creative ideas... and that's **BRILLIANT**.  
And pretty much most people think that this is ideas done!  
Thing is,

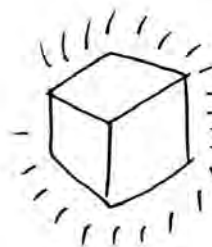
An idea is still only an idea  
until somebody makes this creative idea  
**HAPPEN**  
And this happens...

... Over here.

**SO**



**THIS WILL GET YOU IDEAS**



This will get you  
**INDUSTRY APPROVED IDEAS**

NO-ONE HAS  
TIME FOR  
CREATIVITY.  
THEY'RE  
TOO BUSY  
WORKING ON  
SHITE IDEAS.





## RUSHING TO HOW

The problem with thinking out-of-the-box is that it's often a fast jump to solutions.

I call it 'rushing to how'. People immediately go to complete solutions for whatever the problem might be. It's like 'here's one I've prepared earlier'.

It's a cheat. The real gold of creative exploration, collaboration and general mulling things over is missed.

Unbeknown to most, there's little out-of-the-box thinking going on when this is happening.



# THE PROBLEM IS NOT IDEAS. THE PROBLEM IS BETTER IDEAS.

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Unless you know better, you're a creative 2 stepper:

*What's the problem?*

*I already know the solution!*

The brain hears the problem. In the blink of an eye the brain gives a solution - an idea. Which might feel fresh. Others might even like it!

These kinds of ideas are not good. Because ideas generated this way are derived from what people already know. Meaning they're ideas based on things people have already seen. In the past. Meaning they're not so much ideas as they are memory recall.

Yet there goes people running off making these assumed ideas happen.

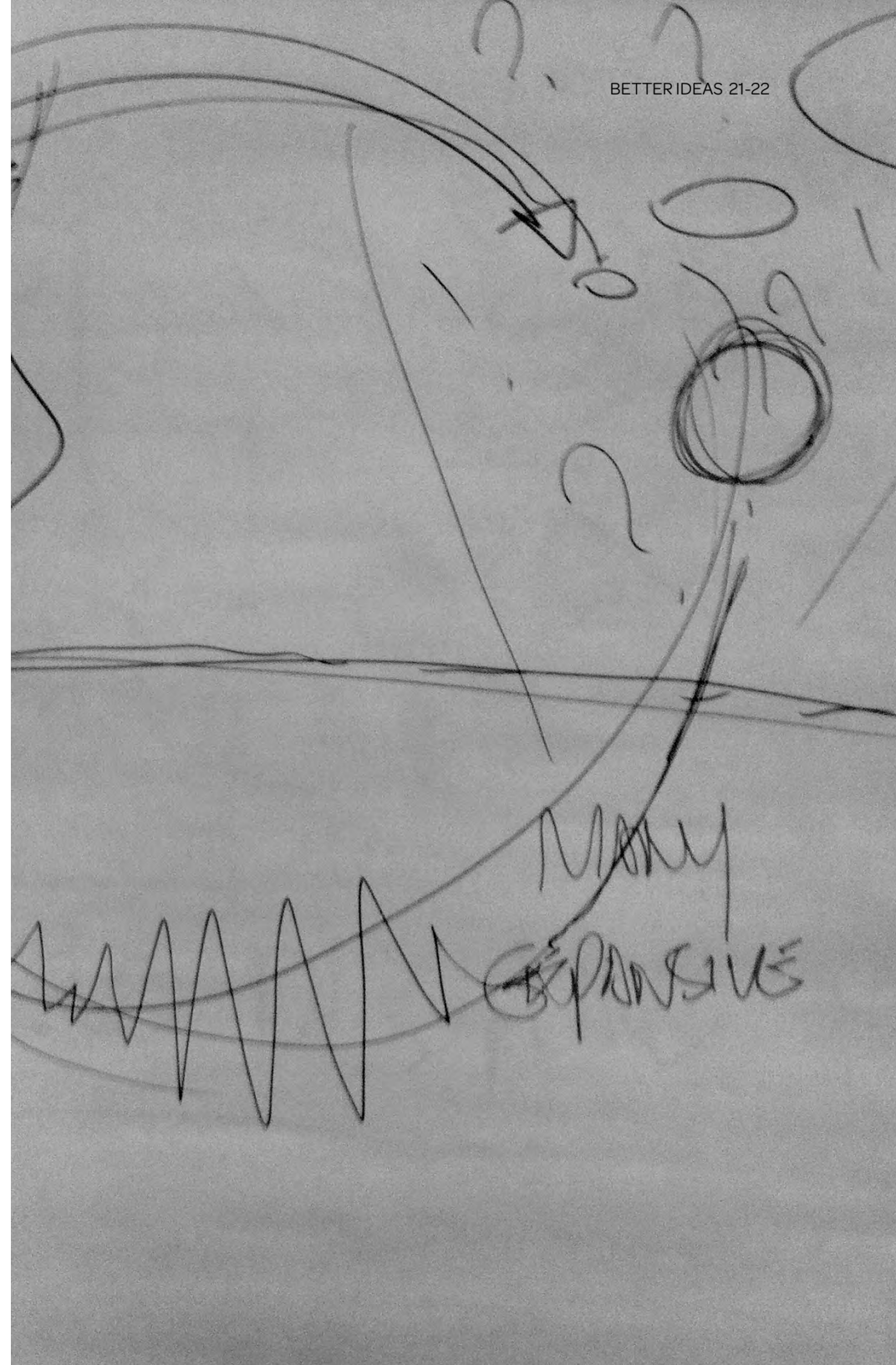
It's not people's fault. It's how one part of the brain works. There's other parts that can help us - we'll explore these soon.

For now, what we need is a way to prevent us rushing to assumed solutions.

What we need is a process.

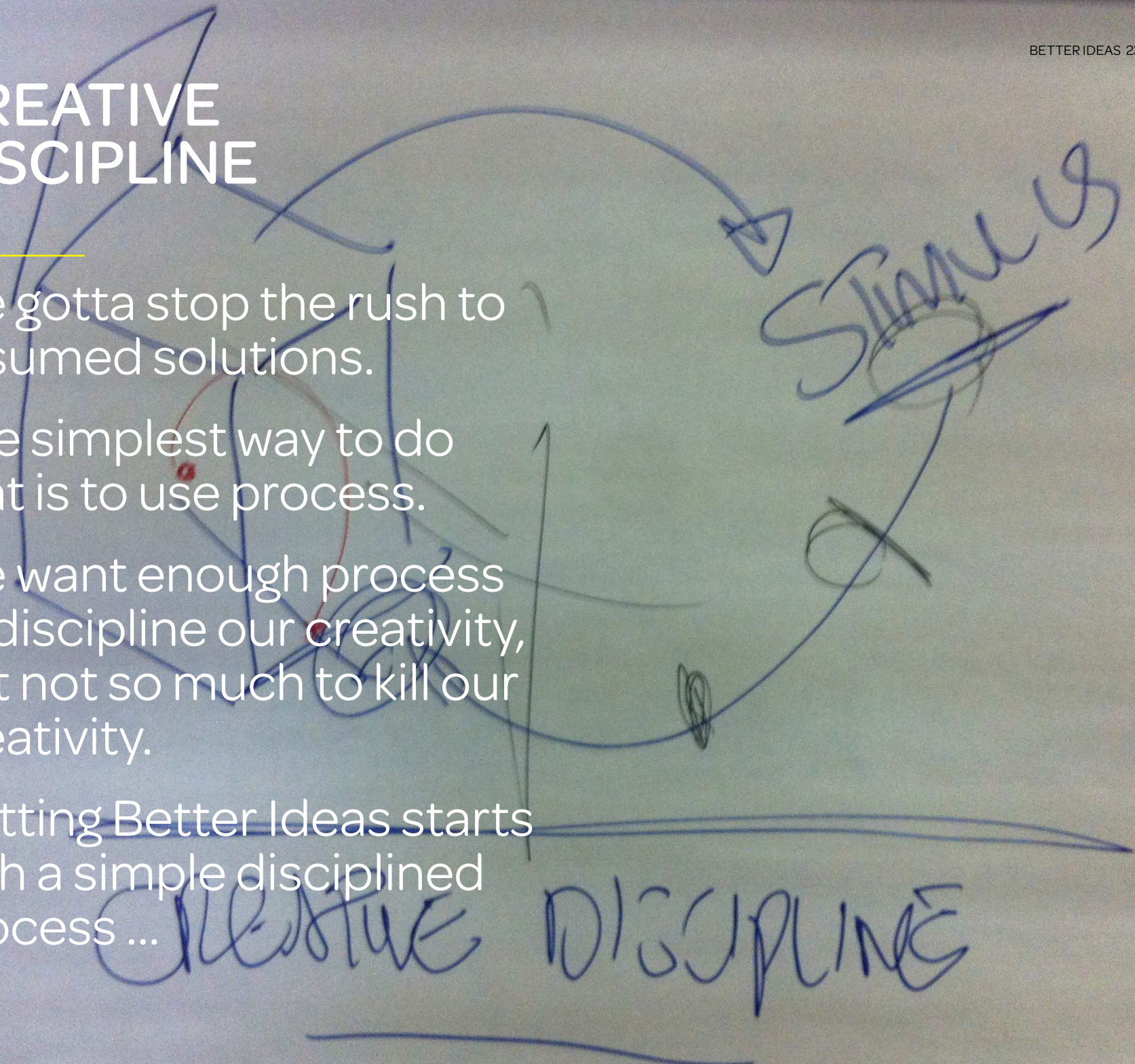
A process that helps manage our assumptions (they can come later).

A process that helps us point forward for Better Ideas rather than reaching back to what we already know.





# CREATIVE DISCIPLINE

A hand-drawn diagram in blue ink on a light-colored background. It features a large circle with an arrow pointing clockwise from the top right. The word 'Simple' is written in cursive inside the circle, with a small circle around the 'i'. Below the circle, the words 'CREATIVE DISCIPLINE' are written in a stylized, blocky font. There are also some scribbles and lines around the circle.

We gotta stop the rush to assumed solutions.

The simplest way to do that is to use process.

We want enough process to discipline our creativity, but not so much to kill our creativity.

Getting Better Ideas starts with a simple disciplined process ...



# IDEAS MIGHT BE THE ENGINE. BUT INSIGHT IS THE REAL POWER OF BETTER IDEAS

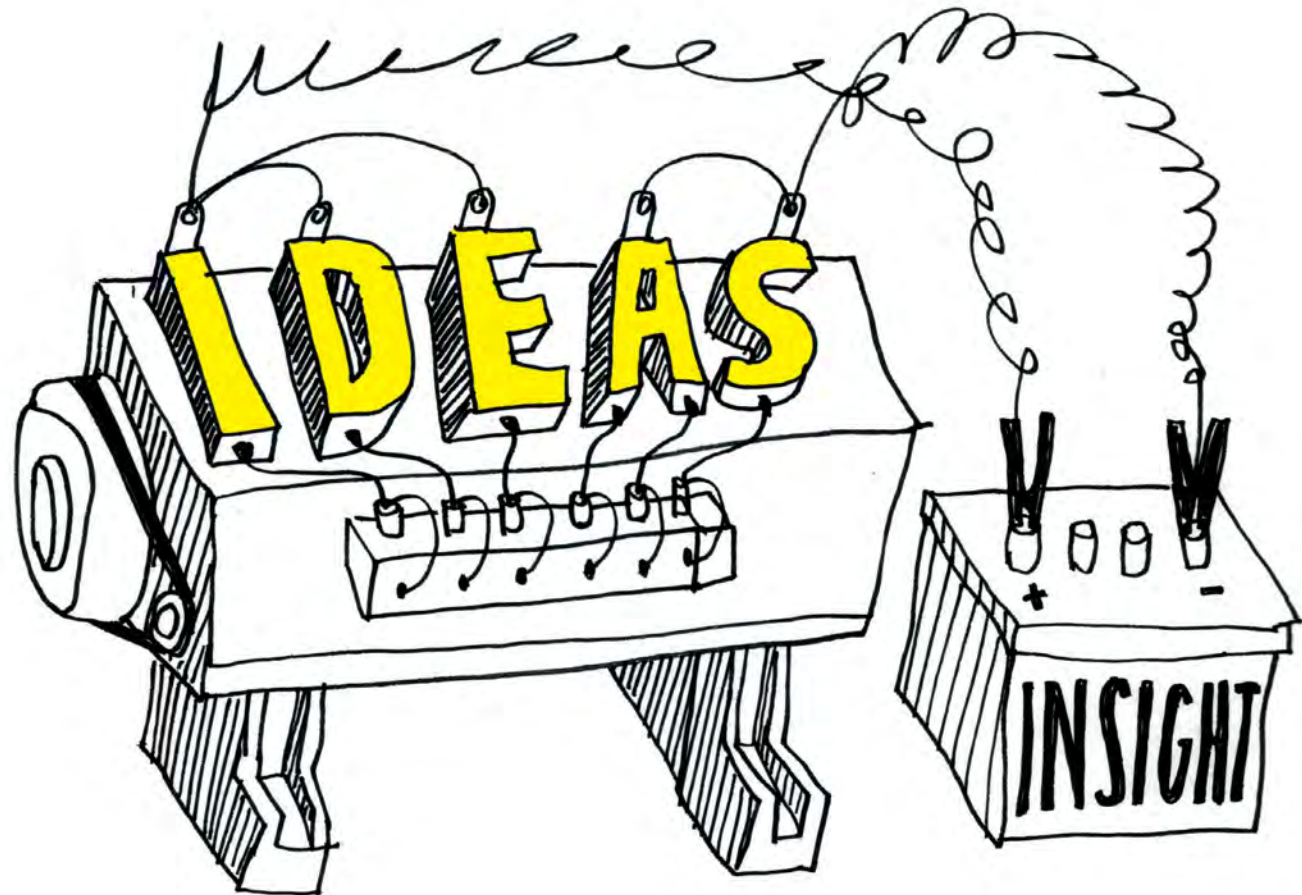
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At the heart of any decent process is insight.

Because it's new insight that inspires creative out-of-the-box ideas.

Insight powers Better Ideas.

And it's insight that is at the heart of BIF (as you'll soon see).





# FMCG\*

## THE COAL FACE OF BUSINESS INNOVATION

I count myself lucky. I started my innovation development at the coal face of \*Fast Moving Consumer Goods. Think any ideas that end up on supermarket shelves, corner dairies, etc.

This is where the fight for audience attention and wallet is most competitive.

The ideas investment in FMCG businesses is fierce. There's a world of science going on to have you notice and choose brand X or Y.

So it's a great place to learn innovation via so called NPD - new product development. It's where you get to learn about people's needs, wants and behaviours. It's where you spend time hanging out to observe what people actually do versus what they say or think they do. Then use all this insight to inspire new creative Ideas, products, brands and services.

It's at this NPD coal face that I first intuited the 6 Steps of Better Ideas.

The opposite page shows the 6 Step summary for a Magnum Limited NPD project in 2005. This was before putting *accelerated* into innovation - but it gives a feel for the 6 Steps in action.

### MAGNUM LIMITED INNOVATION 2005

#### BRIEF

- The 'to-do'; create a pan european Magnum Ice-Cream limited range for launch summer 2005
- New product range and creative campaign must do better than Magnum 7 Sins limited campaign 2003
- Targeting young european women (profile & segmentation not shown) who associate Magnum with a premium chocolate, sensual eating experience

#### INSIGHT

- Pan-European consumer insight to understand 'Magnum moments' for use as springboard for Ideas
- Learned that modern women's lives are very busy and as such they lose connection with their inner feminine selves
- Small sensual moments (bath, massage, hair salon, manicure etc) reconnect women with their deeper feminine selves

#### IDEAS

- Explored sensuality (and link into seduction) as Insight themes and created 4 Idea concepts:
  - *Show your True Colours - using colour codes to embrace different moods*
  - *5 Senses to Bliss - a magnum journey of sensual awakening*
  - *Art of Seduction - Magnum as seducer*
  - *Food of the Gods - Magnum co-opting Greek God status*

#### TEST

- Pan European qualitative testing, using interactive conversations with target audiences

#### DEVELOP

- Best Idea - 5 Senses to Bliss - the journey through 5 new products as 'senses' re smell/touch/smell/hear/taste is engaging & believable
- Most easily supported through packaging and ingredients
- However 'Bliss' not believed - challenges about ice-cream giving you a blissful moment
- Drop 'Bliss'. Develop 5 Senses proposition as 'the trigger to unleash the unexplainable seductive power of sensuality' by heightening each of the five senses

#### LAUNCH

- Activation strategy focused around highly visible, glamorous TVC that make the products covetable. Also in-store activities supporting summer competition (in some markets).
- '5 Senses' limited product range & campaign returned the brand to its former strengths and beyond; increasing sales overall by 6.2% vs 2004 and all achieved on a budget that was 32% less than the budget for 7 Sins.

# **BRIEF INSIGHT IDEAS TEST DEVELOP LAUNCH**

## **SIX STEP PROCESS**

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These 6 Steps are the process for getting Better Ideas.

They've been crafted from working with lots of different industries over the past 20 years. They worked for them. They'll work for you.

These 6 Steps narrate exactly what's required i.e. the step names describe exactly what to do:

Do the Brief

Get new Insight

Use to create Insight-inspired Ideas

Test and learn to make the Ideas Better

Use learnings to Develop the Best Ideas

Launch the Best Ideas

It's this 6 Step process that applies an easy discipline to creative efforts.



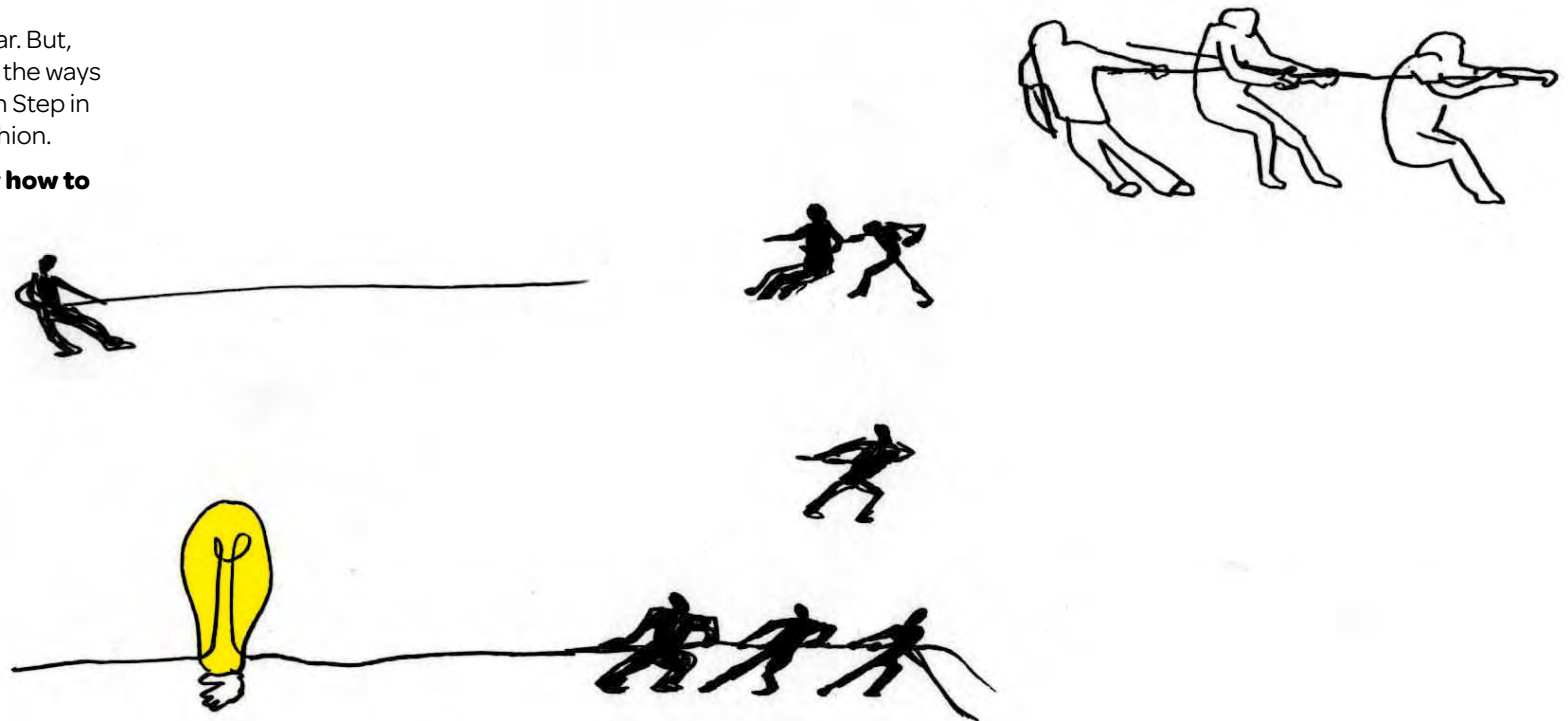
## WORKING THROUGH 6 STEPS

To begin with, 6 Step work is linear.

It starts with clarity on the problem, articulated as the Brief. This sets up new Insight work. Insights then inspire new Ideas, etc (adding Faster the Steps will eventually become non-linear - but that's outside our current BIF scope).

The task of each Step is clear. But, the danger is we fall back to the ways of rushing to complete each Step in the 'assumed solutions' fashion.

**So, now we need to know how to think through each step.**



## 6 STEP THINKING

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Doing each of the 6 Steps is to think through each of the 6 Steps.

For example, doing a Brief is to think through the problem to ensure getting to the right problem to solve.

As much as the Steps tell us what to do, it's our thinking that determines how well we do it.

Meaning getting Better Ideas needs process and thinking.

**"WE HAVE NO  
MONEY SO  
WE'VE GOT  
TO THINK"**

Ernest Rutherford  
New Zealand Farmer, first atom splitter,  
nobel prize winner, named his own element.



## IN THE BOX IS A BIG FILING CABINET

Everything we've ever learnt is filed, stored and ready for daily use.

And use it we do.

Whenever pressed for solutions, we draw on the files we have so we know what to go do.

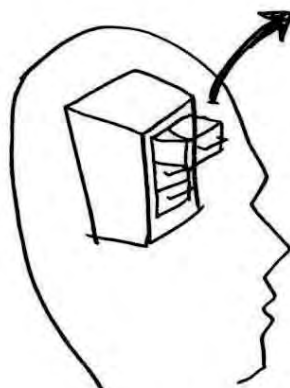
It's a brilliant, fast system. It's so fast we do it without thinking. Meaning for everyday tasks we don't have to relearn things from 1st principles. We just draw on what we know. We use what we've learnt before.

*Scattergories.*



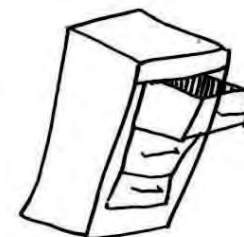
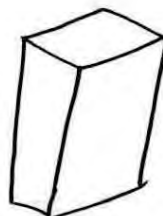
*game packaging*

*Same kind of imagery*



But - and this is a BIG but - it's no good for creative thinking. At least not for new creative thoughts. Because drawing on this knowledge will give us ideas based on what we already know. They're ideas from the past.

And generally speaking we want our Better Ideas to be new things for the future.



# 1 BOX.

## 4 THINKING STATES.

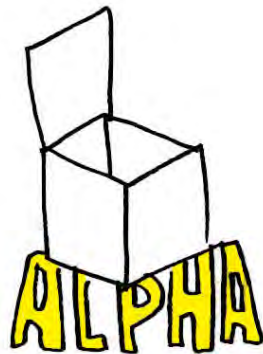
Here comes the neuroscience.

We don't need to be brain surgeons to understand it. But understand it we must if we're to reconnect with our creativity. And use it.

The Box is a dumb re-expression of the brain science for how we think. And for where our creative thinking comes from.

Fact is, we all experience 4 different brain states that inform our range of thinking. Here they are:

1. **Beta** the busy brain that gets things done in the same known ways
2. **Alpha** our creative brain where new thoughts and ideas happen (dreamy zen like, important for BIF)
3. **Theta** the dreaming brain we know as REM sleep (important for BIF but we won't dive into that)
4. **Delta** comatose sleep when body recovery happens (important for a good, long life)



There's much to say, but a few critical things we should note:

*being in Beta (in the box) means you don't have access to your creativity (you're closed to Alpha)*

*to get into Alpha (creative mode) you need to do something that gets you 'out of the box'. It's doing things that make you feel creative; seeing, hearing, reading, experiencing, etc*

Now ask yourself, what 'head' did you have on last time you went to a brainstorm?

Or, where did you last feel creative?

Where did you last experience a feeling of new thoughts, ideas and possibilities? Was it at work? I doubt it.



## IDEA DREAMING

You know when you've been driving.

And you drift off, lost in some creative place imagining all kinds of creative things.

And then you come back - and think what the heck! Who was doing the actual driving for the past ten minutes (at least that's what it felt like, but was probably seconds at best).

That's your creativity - open, fresh, metaphysically wonderful.

Now imagine using that talent at work?

That's what BIF is about!

# BETA TO ALPHA. AND BACK.

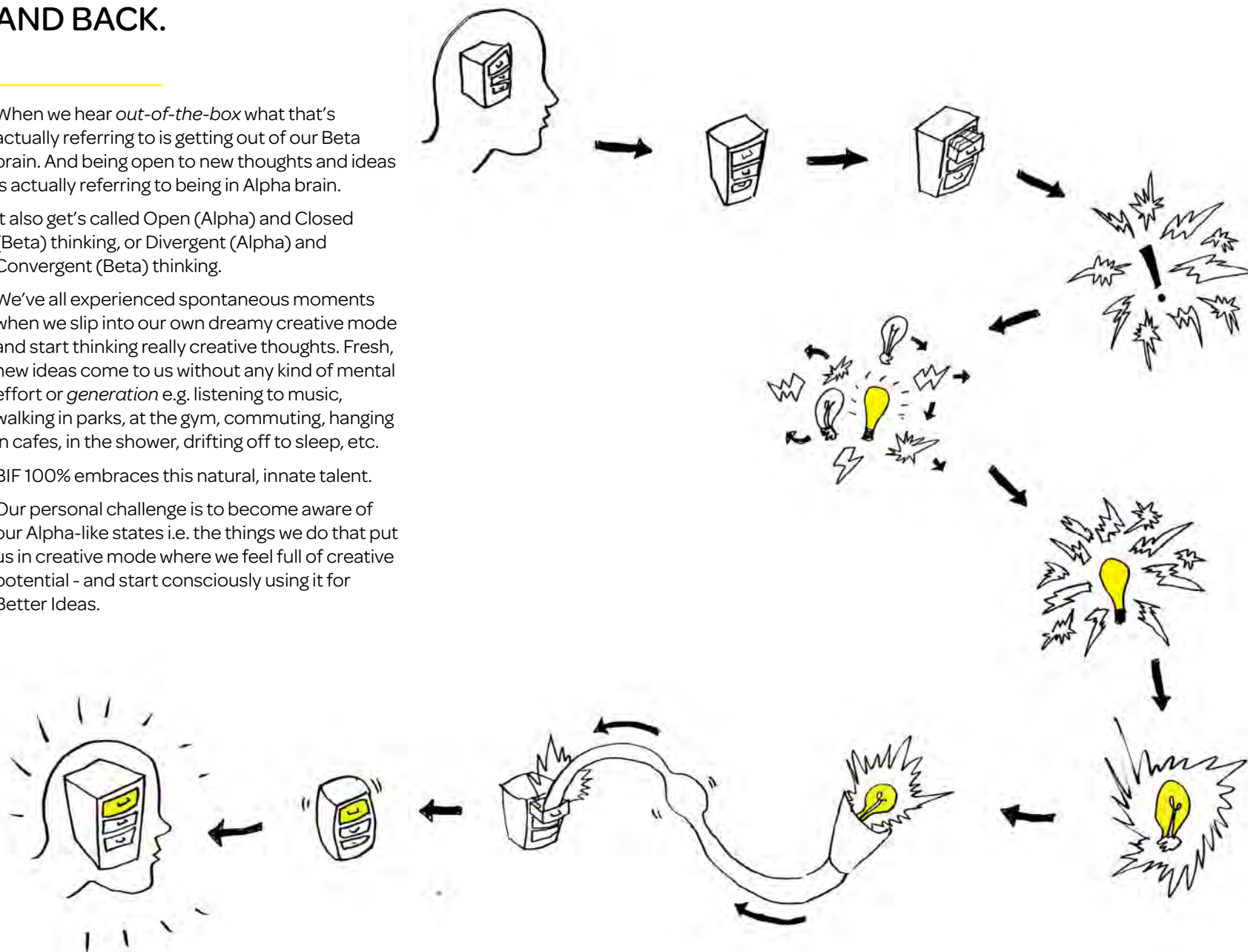
When we hear *out-of-the-box* what that's actually referring to is getting out of our Beta brain. And being open to new thoughts and ideas is actually referring to being in Alpha brain.

It also get's called Open (Alpha) and Closed (Beta) thinking, or Divergent (Alpha) and Convergent (Beta) thinking.

We've all experienced spontaneous moments when we slip into our own dreamy creative mode and start thinking really creative thoughts. Fresh, new ideas come to us without any kind of mental effort or *generation* e.g. listening to music, walking in parks, at the gym, commuting, hanging in cafes, in the shower, drifting off to sleep, etc.

BIF 100% embraces this natural, innate talent.

Our personal challenge is to become aware of our Alpha-like states i.e. the things we do that put us in creative mode where we feel full of creative potential - and start consciously using it for Better Ideas.





# THE INSPIRATION OF DATA

This making sense? Good, lets keep going.

Doing certain things gets us out-of-the-box (Beta) and into a creative state (Alpha). It opens us to our creativity.

When it comes to Better Ideas at work, we do this for 2 reasons:

Firstly, we want new inspiration as relates the specific problems and projects we're working

Secondly we want new inspiration from being curious about the world in general. We need to be feeding and refreshing our internal creative resources.

So, it's about data:

data we see

*data we hear*

*data we smell*

data we touch

*data we feel*

*data data - as in stuff trawled from the interweb*

If we gather all of this:

that which pertains to our projects and the  
general stuff of the world that surrounds us  
at any given time

Then we will gain insight.

Which will inspire Better Ideas.

That we can make happen Faster,  
with others.







## TATIANA'S LOUNGE

We took this picture in the course of doing eastern european innovation for a global deoderant brand.

It shows unused personal care products on a shelf in the lounge of this woman's home.

This single picture informed the key Insight that underpinned our BIF creative work.

It was a single, powerful observation. Noticed. Applied. And later Launched.

Project case study:  
<http://ow.ly/otxJE>



# CONNECTING UNCONNECTED THINGS

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Connecting unconnected things creates new Ideas. The connecting of things happens in 2 ways:

The first is within you as an individual:

*You know stuff. You set out to know some new stuff. Within your own resources - mental, emotional, intuitive, etc - you combine data in new ways. You make new connections and so start creating new, fresh thoughts and Better Ideas.*

The second is with others:

*You start capturing your individual thoughts and ideas and share them with others. Others do the same. Then data builds upon data so that together 'we' are collaborating still more connections.*

Here's what's important.

**When we collaborate our thoughts and ideas this way, the magic of innovating Better Ideas Faster happens.**





Part 2.

**FASTER.**

# IT'S NOT SCIENCE OR ART. IT'S BOTH.

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People and organisations break into 2 types; the scientists and the artists. Here's what I mean ...

The *scientist* types are all about the process. They embrace pipeline milestones and stage gates for added robustness. But often these processes over engineer and weed out the creative and imaginative.

The *artists* among us are all about intuition. They abhor any constraints on their creative prowess, especially process. Yet intuition can be wrong, especially if they're mentally stuck in familiar worlds.

The challenge then is to:

*bring imagination where science dictates*

*and discipline where intuition rules*

It's an ideas conundrum; how to embrace the tension between science and art?

Good news is Better Ideas Faster works for *scientists* and *artists*. The BIF creative discipline allows both to come at the same approach of ...

*applied creative thinking  
through a simple,  
disciplined process.*



# BIF IS CATCHING & SHARING OUR IDEAS WITH OTHERS

Our creative thoughts & Ideas are  
fleeting.

The BIF creative discipline is to  
catch our creativity:

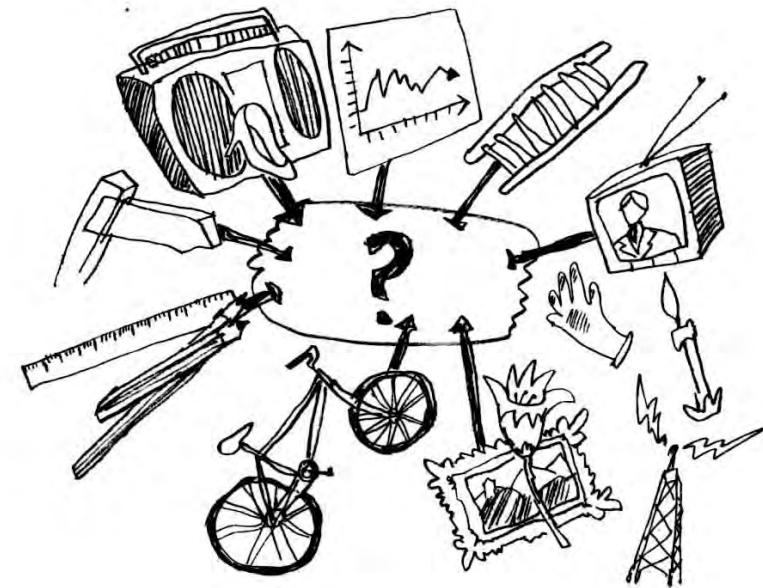
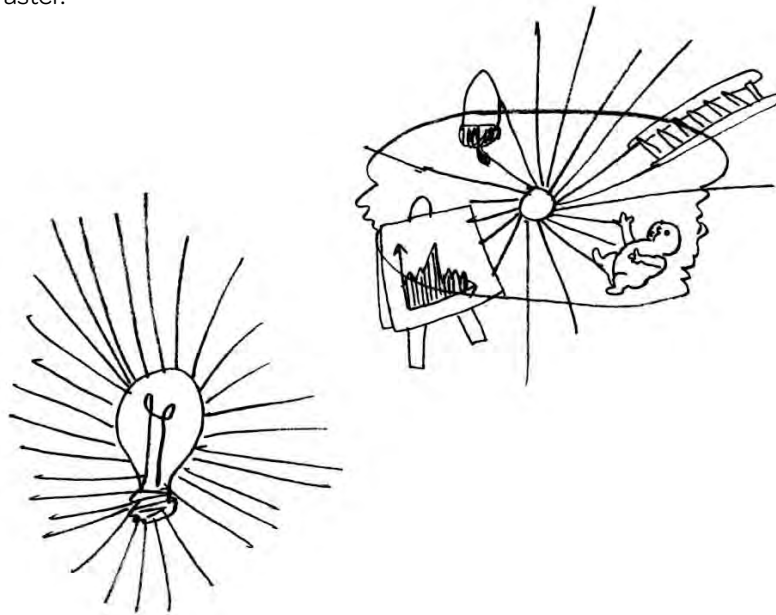
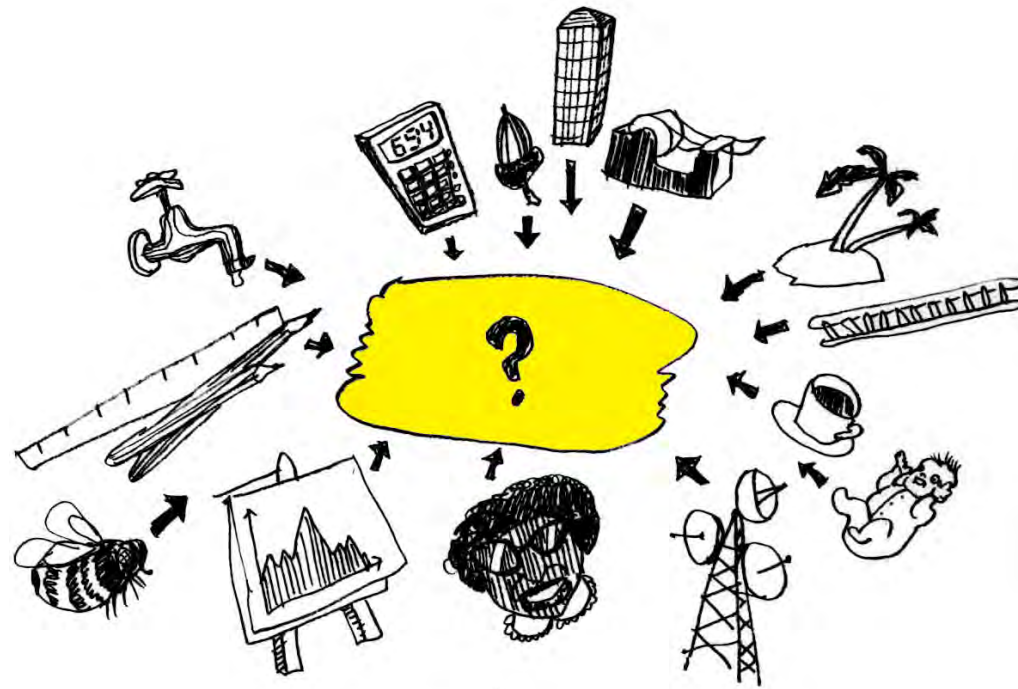
**what stimulated us**

**and what that made us think**

Then share our thoughts and  
Ideas with others.

So that we can collaborate around  
them.

And co-create Better Ideas Faster.



**YOU**  
ARE WHAT  
IS WANTED.  
**YOUR**  
THOUGHTS  
& IDEAS.  
**WE**  
CAN'T DO  
WITHOUT  
THEM.



## CREATIVE MEETS FOR IDEAS YOU'VE ALREADY HAD

The challenge is how to make best use of our individual creativity. Then collaborate this with our colleagues and apply it through the 6 Steps.

The first thing to say is we'll still need creative meetups. We still need to get together, share and build upon creative thoughts and ideas. And then determine the next right things to do (in light of whatever Step we might be working).

Here's how in the simplest of terms:

Don't diarise a brainstorm. Don't book the meeting and then do nothing. Don't wait and expect the solution to be generated in that meeting.

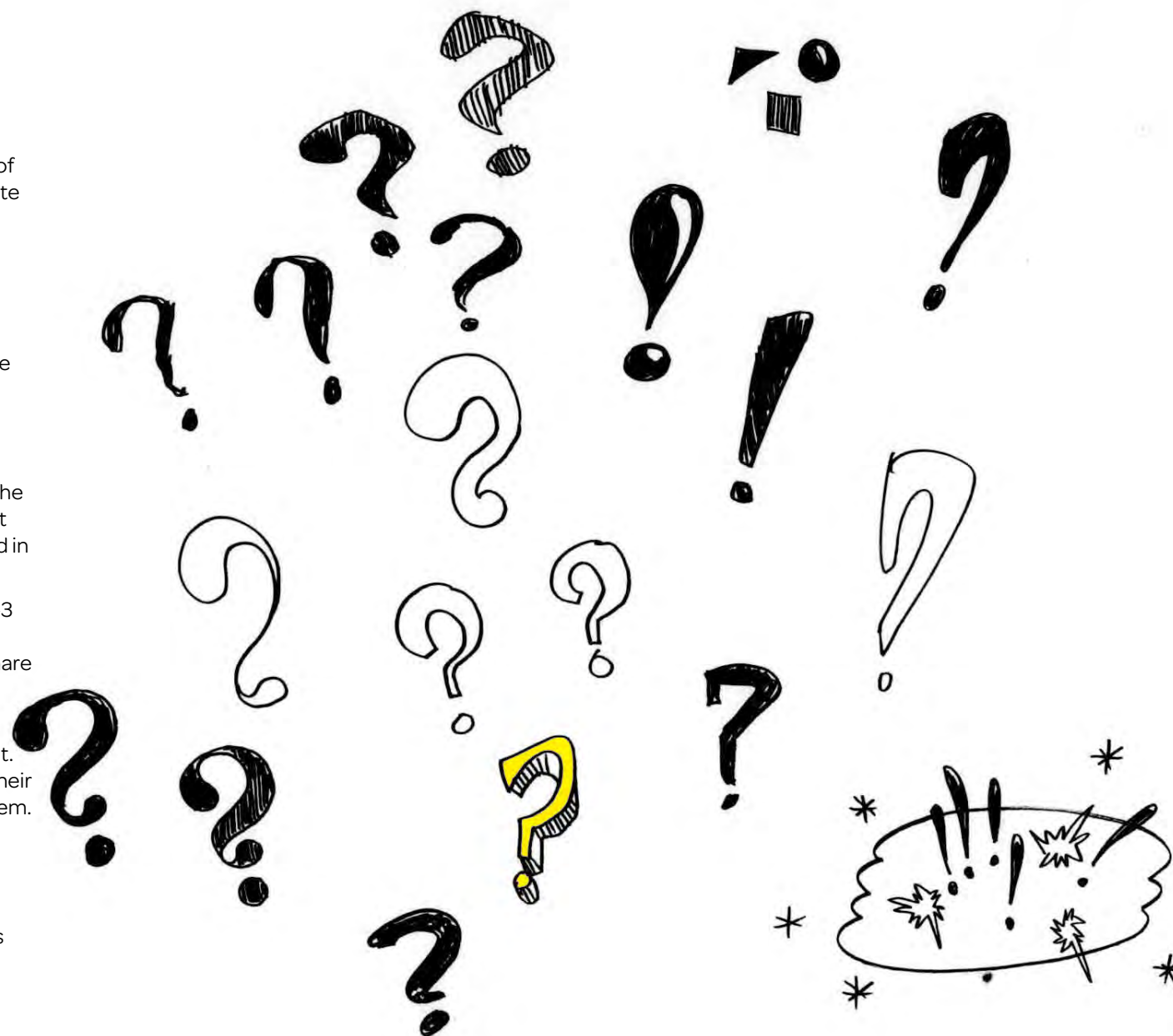
Do this instead. Pre-share everything 2-3 weeks out and ask people to digest the task. Ask people to think about it and share thoughts and ideas before the meetup.

What that means is people's creativity (their Alpha talents) will make sense of it. Encourage people to catch and share their spontaneous thoughts that come to them.

It's a subtle but radical shift. It means you're not trying to solve problems in a brainstorm from 1st principles.

It means you are picking up on thoughts and ideas people have already had. Meaning you will create Better Ideas. Faster.

**It's proven. It works. It's the BIF way called Prep/Meet/Follow-up.**





## IT WORKS. IF YOU WORK IT.

I've been designing and leading so called brainstorms for nearly 20 years. Here's truths you don't hear:

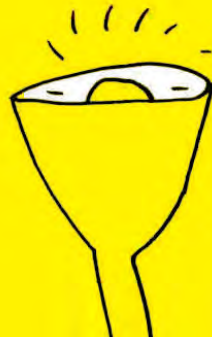
*Quantity of ideas does not improve quality - in fact it tends to do the exact opposite!*

*No brilliant idea I've ever worked had it's spark in a brainstorm. The breakthrough spontaneous moment happened outside of work. The 'brainstorm' was about sharing the inspiration and everyone collaborating upon it.*

Making Prep/Meet/Followup work is about us taking responsibility for our own creativity. Finding ways to continually feed our curious Alpha selves. To trust that new connections are being made and that the right ideas will come to us.

All we have to do is be ready. To catch the spontaneous moment when it happens, and share it with others.

It works. If you work it.



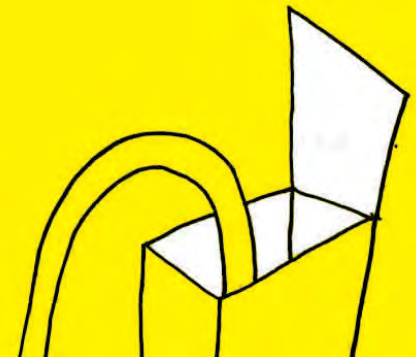
# THE BEST IDEAS ARE SPONTANEOUS AND SHARED. THE BIF APP DOES JUST THAT.

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I've been testing how to get the power of Better Ideas Faster into people's hands.

After many false starts, the BIF App is now live in the iOS app store.

It's designed to do 1 thing well - capture spontaneous ideas, fast. Try it free now :)





Part 3.

ON  
PURPOSE.

## BAKING IN BIF INNOVATION

Having Accelerated Innovation deliver all it can requires creating a place of work in which innovation happens right through the organisation. It means baking creativity and innovation into the DNA of the culture. Which is no small task!

From 20 years experience, I've distilled 5 characteristics of innovative cultures where #BIF happens. These are them ...

- 1. Live Your Purpose**  
have your deepest beliefs infused through everything you do
- 2. Entrepreneurial Learning**  
use real project work as the touchstone for learning-by-doing
- 3. Leading for Creativity**  
understand your creativity and be a role model for leading creativity in others
- 4. Be Open**  
be open, be honest and share with others what's happening - so people can get involved
- 5. Quantify the Important Stuff**  
measure the inputs to the work as well as the outputs - and incentivise/reward results



## BIF BY DESIGN

To truly create a culture that has innovation baked in it's DNA, a few things need to be in place.

Smart people have researched the foundations of purposeful organisations - it goes something like this:

**Core Purpose** *know your business truth (the why)*

**Values** *your enduring beliefs that inform behaviours*

**Strategies** *creative strategies and goals going forward*

**North Star** *know what guides you onwards*

If any of these aren't known - or being lived - that's where you start. Start the work to craft the above.

If you do know your core purpose & values & strategic path etc, then you need to start somewhere slightly different.



## LINE OF SIGHT INNOVATION

The #BIF approach of getting *on purpose* is what I call *doing the first right thing*.

This starts by *using* your purpose. Great brands, people and organisations align around their core purpose. But rather than hope this happens, they internally innovate to make it culturally inevitable.

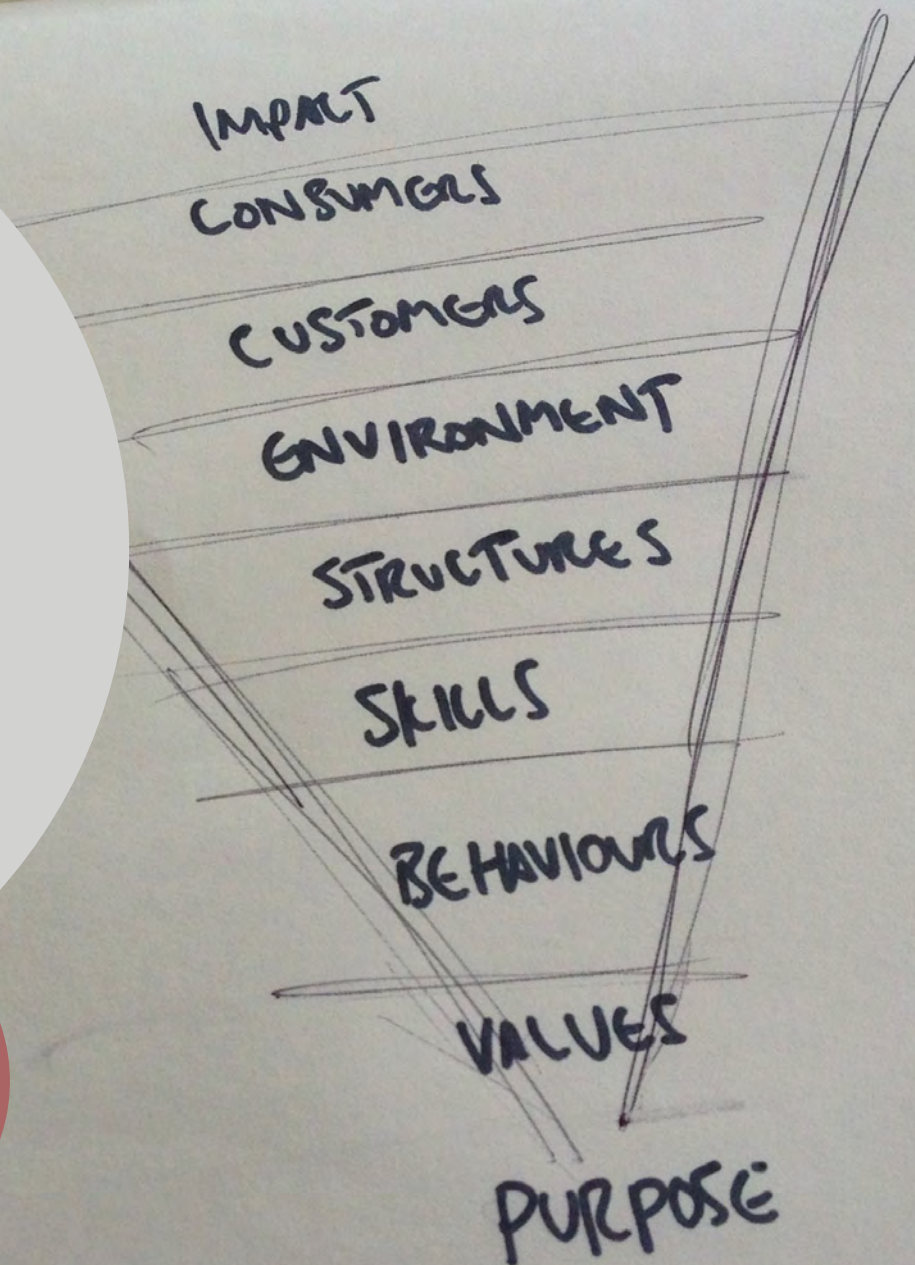
Using purpose in this way creates a clear *line of sight* from the purpose, through the organisation and outwards to customer and fan impact.

This corrals the business forward, helping innovate *#BIF Ideas on purpose* - and importantly agree Ideas that are *off purpose*.

Doing the first right thing? It's somewhere along this *line of sight*. The task is to decide where to make the greatest impact, how - then do.

Do that first right thing.

Missed the opening case study? Cultural innovation will make sense by viewing this:  
<http://vimeo.com/51102555>



PURPOSE



# ONE MORE THING

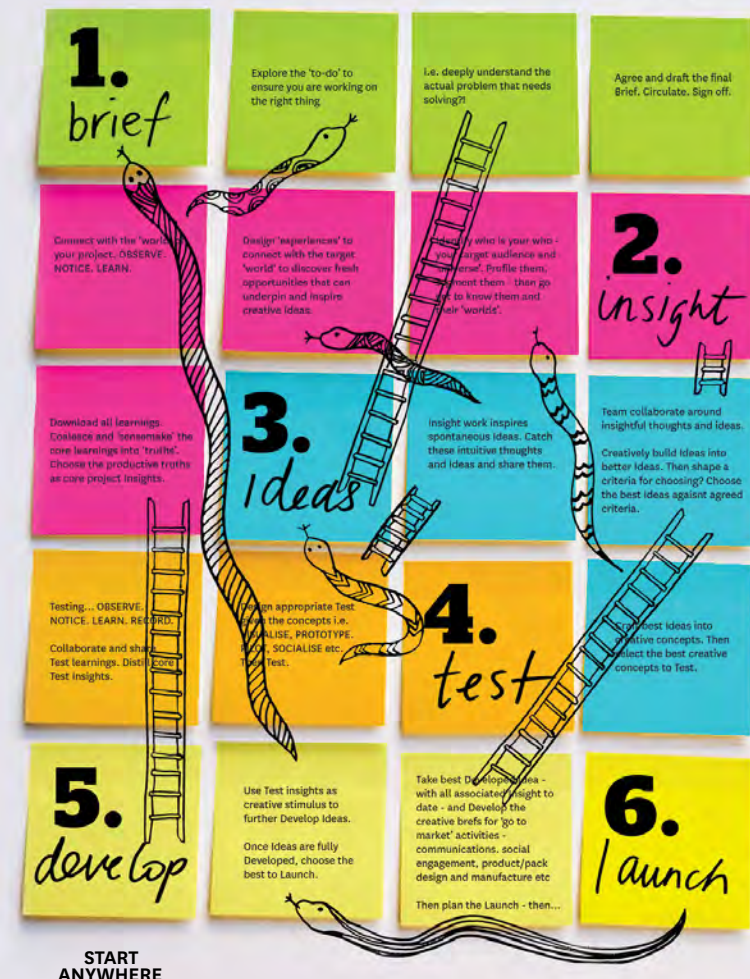
BIF is the simplest way everyone can reconnect and apply their creative smarts at work. But BIF for Enterprise is just the start.

As important is helping develop the next generations of problem solvers. So coming soon are programs for kids, youth and parents - BIFKIDS, BIF101, etc. If you've enjoyed this introduction, please sign-up, follow and come with. Your creativity and our world need you to!

## FROM A SIMPLE 6 STEP PROCESS...



## ... TO ACCELERATED INNOVATION





# LOVE THIS? THEN LOVE THIS NEXT...

If you've got this far, why not a little further...

This has been a short intro to the urgent need of prioritising your creative intelligence today, and so empower your better tomorrow.

**JOIN THE PEOPLE PROGRAM**

Use the button above to explore our People Program that will activate BIF knowledge as defining advantage for you/team/organisation over 10 weeks of 'learning and doing'.

If you have any queries please drop a line and I'll personally answer soonest I can.

Aroha,  
Matt Hart

[betterideasfaster.com](http://betterideasfaster.com)  
[bifkids.com](http://bifkids.com)  
[matt-hart.com](http://matt-hart.com)

<yawn>

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