CREATIVELY CONFIDENT GROUPS

While unlocking our own individual creative potential generates positive impact on the world, some changes require a collective effort. You need teamwork—the right combination of leadership and grassroots activism—to achieve innovation at scale. Change within organizations and institutions is seldom a solo activity. If you want your team to innovate routinely, you’ll need to nurture a creative culture.

Take, for example, the cultural transition at Intuit shepherded by its vice president of design innovation, Kaaren Hanson. Back in the 1980s, Scott Cook had founded Intuit based on simplicity, beginning with its flagship Quicken product and expanding into now-familiar software programs like QuickBooks and TurboTax. But eventually the company’s growth slowed, and its executive leadership realized Intuit needed to go beyond incremental improvements to create breakthroughs. So Scott asked Kaaren—a young design director at the time—to help him reinvigorate the cycle of growth and innovation that had fueled the company’s dramatic rise in its early days.

Looking for new tools, she took a course on customer-focused innovation at the d.school and learned about the principles described in this book. Kaaren also brought together ideas from such influential business thinkers as Geoffrey Moore, Fred Reichheld, and Clayton Christensen. The result was a way forward that the company called “Design for Delight”—referred to internally as D4D. For the employees at Intuit, design for delight means “evoking positive emotion by going beyond customer expectations in delivering ease and benefit so people buy more and tell others about the experience.” Among the principles are: 1) deep customer empathy; 2) going broad to go narrow (i.e., seeking many ideas before converging on a solution); and 3) rapid experiments with customers.