

Opportunities and the Communities that Enable them

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First Coffee House England 1650

- Enlightenment
- Alcohol
- Entire Population
- Switch from depressant to stimulant = better thinking?
- Conversations that are collaborative and absent fighting?

Fostering Innovation

- Space where different people from different backgrounds could share ideas, conversations, dream .....
- Enroll others in creating new futures.
- Innovations of the time in coffee houses

Fostering Entrepreneurship

- What types of communities foster conversations that enable individuals to act and experiment with uncertain ideas that can potentially be formed into opportunities?

Fostering Innovation

- Communities that do away with:

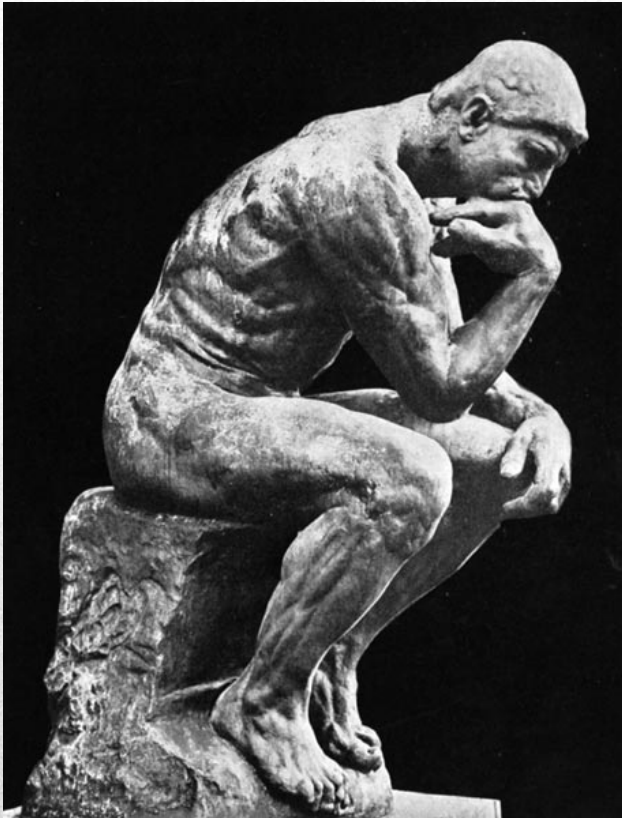
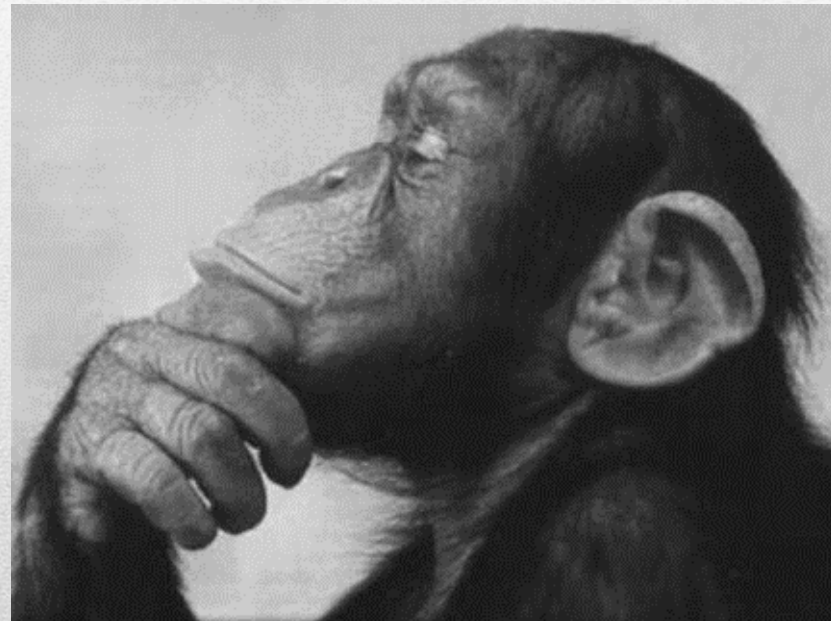
- Flash
- Stroke
- Epiphany
- Eureka
- Light bulb
- Discovery
- Recognition
- Alertness

**Metaphors and Language that
describe moments of inspiration**

- Language & metaphors developed in entrepreneurship have led us – academic community – and entrepreneurs – the practitioner community to believe opportunities are a single “ah ha” event.
- Opportunities evolve through human conversations and interactions, action and experimentation, the goal often changes (pivot)

Communities that recognize the socially constructed and evolutionary nature of opportunities can be more entrepreneurial

An Opportunity is not a single event!



Need to move beyond

- Entrepreneurs report their experience as an “ah ha” or Eureka moment – ignoring all of the experimentation and pivoting that went on before.
- They want to tell their story as “there I was and it became obvious to me what to do” Condensing the time it took to get “there”

Retrospective Reasoning



Edison and Electricity



Interaction and Enrolling

- 
- Important breakthroughs do not happen in isolation
  - Often the “ah ha” moment happens out of frustration and mistakes and conversations with others

From Thinking – Action & Enrollment

- Enrolling others – of different backgrounds, experiences, and interests in a new socially constructed reality
- Steve Jobs called it the reality distortion field
- Often slow to emerge and take shape
  - Many take years to fully emerge
  - Many evolve from other uses

Creating a new reality

- Instead of the alert entrepreneur
  - Discovers and opportunity through serarch
  - Writes a Business Plan
  - Hires the right people and exploits
- Leaders
  - Experiment in uncertainty
  - Teams that are comfortable with uncertainty
  - Leaders that are persistent
  - Leaders that can enroll others in their vision
  - Leaders and teams that act

Communities that Foster

- No longer do we train people to look for great opportunities and then write a business plan
- Encourage people to be comfortable with missing data
- Encourage people to be intellectually curious
- Encourage people to take action and experiment

Train Individuals

- October 4, 1957
- Sputnik
- Scientists at MIT – Having lunch with colleagues
- Frequency of the radio signals transmitted by the small Russian satellite increased as it approached and decreased as it moved away from earth. The Doppler Effect

Nerds having lunch

- Satellites could be tracked from the ground by measuring the frequency of the radio signals they emitted, and conversely, the locations of receivers on the ground could be tracked by their distance from the satellites.

Experimentation

- **1959** The Navy built the first real satellite navigation system, which it called TRANSIT. The system was designed to locate submarines

Novelty

- The conceptual foundation of modern GPS.
- That GPS receiver in your phone or on the dash of your car learns its location, rate of speed, and elevation by measuring the time it takes to receive radio signals from satellites.

Change in Reality



Skinny Latte
