Trend Report:

HOW CREATIVITY IMPACTS INNOVATION

About Ebco

We're a women-owned innovation firm bringing together decades of experience as consultants, in-house innovation leaders, and trend experts. Ebco was founded on the principle that innovation requires a new way of thinking that connects trends with user-centered design research. All of this is reflected in our name.

Our Evidence-Based and Culturally-Observed (EBCO) approach to innovation leads to breakthrough insights and inspiration for our clients.

OUR APPROACH

Quality is our compass, curiosity drives us, and excellence is our standard. Founded in 2015, founders Erin and Kalyn set out on a mission to change how companies address innovation in a rapidly changing world. Our services bring to life the translation of this quest as we deliver on your innovation needs.

FOUNDERS,
Kalyn Rozanski
and Erin Mays

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WELCOME!

Understanding why creativity is important to drive better business outcomes

Priming the pump for inspiration for the next big idea

Concrete frameworks that you can use to drive creativity in business

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THE SHIFT

We live in an increasingly VUCA world.

The pandemic, and the rise of remote work.

Increasing threats of climate change.

Increasing competition from even outside category and new sources (ex. D2C brands or consumers themselves).

New technologies redefining what's possible.

Creativity will increasingly be THE differentiator for companies—whether that's creativity in marketing, product innovation, or business model.

"According to an IBM survey of more than 1,500 CEOs, creativity was ranked as the number one factor for future business success—above management discipline, integrity, and even vision. This is partly because creative people are more comfortable with ambiguity—a defining characteristic of our times and the business landscape."

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BUSINESS

| 1500	1790	1920s	1990s	2022 *NOW*
Dutch East India Company and British East India Company	*the Industrial Revolution*	*rise of professionally managed corporations*	*tech-inspired growth*	*the pandemic, the Great Resignation, increasing gig workers and startups*
Global trading companies, reliant on colonialism, military might	Reliant on standardization, assembly line thinking, rigid hours and processes	Management as a career, set norms and much of what we know today, including an emphasis on short-term gains (as buyouts became common)	Design and engineering —tech with all the bells and whistles, user testing, how to iterate product	**Need for creativity to make it through uncharted waters!**

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52%

Fifty-two percent of the Fortune 500 companies from the year 2000 are now extinct.

Fifty years ago, the life expectancy of a Fortune 500 brand was 75 years; now it's less than 15.
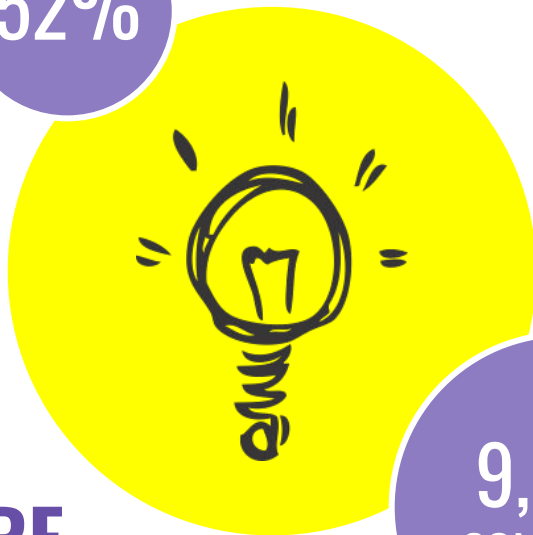
9,000 COMPANIES

It has been predicted that an estimated 9,000 companies could find their way on and off the Fortune 500 list over the next six decades.

WHAT GOT YOU <u>HERE</u> ISN'T GOING TO BE ABLE TO TAKE YOU <u>THERE</u>.

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A FEW CHALLENGES BUSINESSES FACE AROUND CREATIVITY...

1 *Being virtual causes people to be creatively stuck*

2 *Teams are not diverse and don't have the expertise or broad views of a more diversified or cross-functional team*

3 *No inspiration or time to get in a creative mindset*

4 *Too many constraints*

5 *Tunnel vision - TOO MUCH expertise in the category*

HOW MIGHT WE REMOVE OUR CATEGORY BLINDERS, SET ASIDE OUR CONSTRAINTS AND PRIME THE PUMP FOR CREATIVITY?
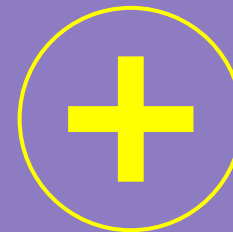
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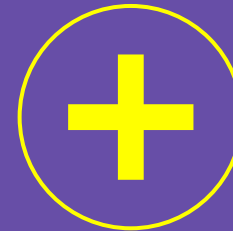# HERE ARE SOME TRIED AND TRUE WAYS EBCO HAS BUILT IN CREATIVITY:

We step out of our comfort zone. We try to discover what's changing, not just what's here now.

We are comfortable with ambiguity—we find comfort in discomfort!

We listen to the extremes and foster collaboration/ diversity.

We go out of our way to support creativity.

FIND WHAT'S CHANGING

Creativity starts with curiosity. Being widely read and thinking about what the implications goes a long way to priming the pump for creativity.

10+ YEARS OUT

big societal changes, generational changes, infrastructure change

HOW EBCO DOES IT:
book club, webinars, expert interviews, desk research

A FEW YEARS OUT

concept models, expert predictions, patents

HOW EBCO DOES IT:
expert interviews, conferences, book club, webinars

A FEW MONTHS OUT

latest product launches, newest D2C companies, latest TikTok trends

HOW EBCO DOES IT:
Slack channel, fractal map

WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT TODAY

Category landscape, consumer insight, sales data

HOW WHAT YOU KNOW IS CHANGING

LISTEN TO THE EXTREMES AND FOSTER DIVERSITY

THE PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH...

Including cross-functional teams in brainstorms, co-creating with consumers

THE EXPERTS YOU LISTEN TO...

Sourcing diverse experts (venture capitalists, lobbyists, activists, startups...)

THE CONSUMERS YOU INTERVIEW...

Sourcing diverse consumers demographically but also finding extreme users

EBCO CASE STUDY:

CANCER CARE

Some experts we spoke to:
A lobbyist, an integrated medicine practitioner, a mental health expert

Some consumers we interviewed:
Consumers with several different types of cancer, in different stages, as well as caregivers

...Landing in co-creation with extreme consumers, a diverse team during ideation

Results:
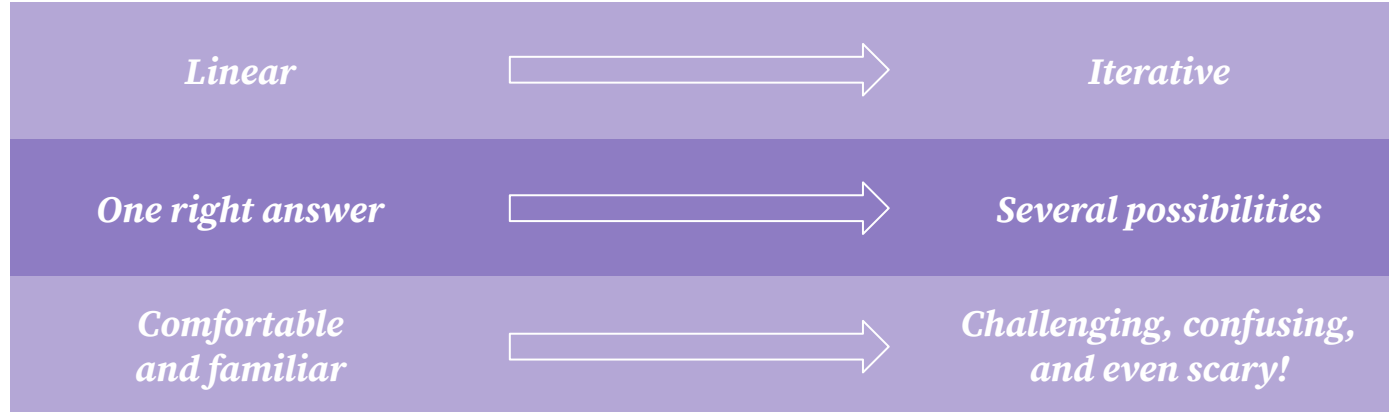Concepts that test higher than the client's benchmark!

Companies like linear processes with clear answers.

Creativity requires a different mindset!

"One doesn't discover new lands without consenting to lose sight, for a very long time, of the shore."

André Gide

FIND COMFORT IN DISCOMFORT

Linear	→	*Iterative*
One right answer	→	*Several possibilities*
Comfortable and familiar	→	*Challenging, confusing, and even scary!*

HOW EBCO DOES IT:

1 Guided exercises

2 A sense of PLAY is essential—you need psychological safety

3 Experience!

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GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO SUPPORT CREATIVITY

ALLOT TIME FOR CREATIVITY TO BLOOM

People need time to warm up, to feel psychologically safe being creative, and to change mindsets from logical/judgmental to creative and open.

HOW EBCO DOES IT: Sessions just for sharing and play, tactile exercises

PROVIDE FERTILE SOIL FOR CREATIVITY

Creativity is an investment. People need to be inspired and have a basis on which they can ideate.

HOW EBCO DOES IT: Consistent book clubs (even internally) and webinars, trend boxes

REWARD AND CELEBRATE CREATIVITY

Are you shining a spotlight on those that are creative and rewarding them? Are you focusing on creativity in dedicated sessions? Do you make creativity feel like an incentive and not a chore?

HOW EBCO DOES IT: Workshops, constant desk research, company culture

SOME EXERCISES TO SPARK CREATIVITY THAT YOU CAN DO <u>NOW</u>:

1. *Mind Mapping*

2. *STEEPC exercise*
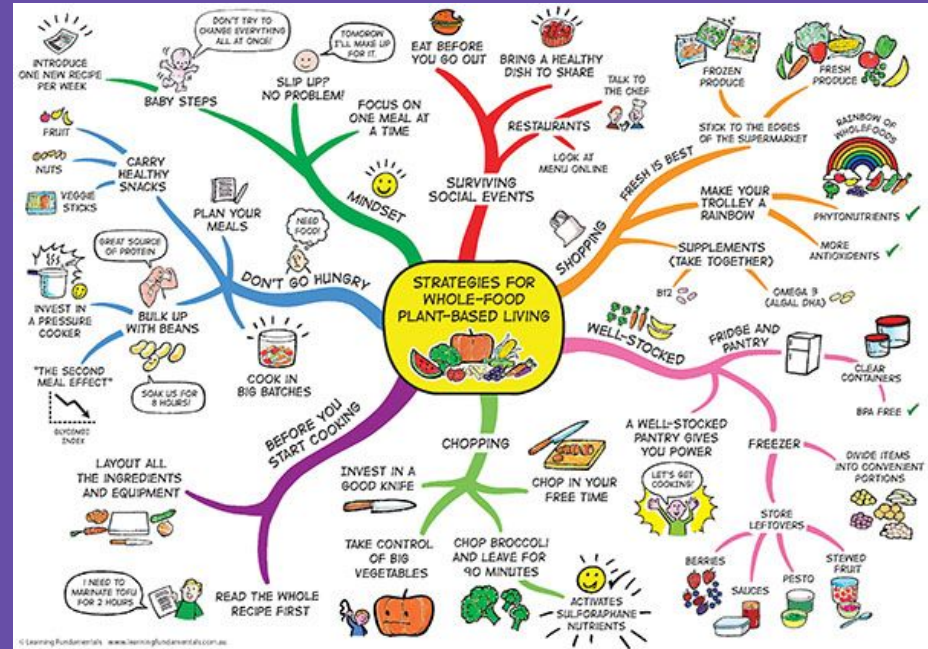
3. *Backcasting*

4. *Futures Wheel*

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1 MIND MAPPING

By its very nature, mind mapping breaks you out of linear and rigid thinking. It shows where ideas might connect in surprising ways, and lets you go deeper into adjacent categories.
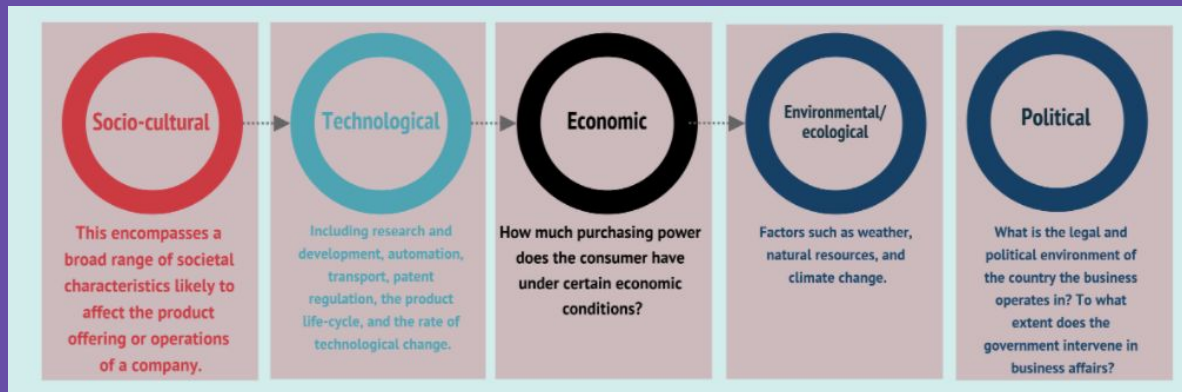
Mind mapping is best done when you push yourself beyond what is comfortable, so set a timer or a set number of "nodes" before you stop.

Ebco starts most projects with mind maps, whether individually or together.

2 STEEPC FRAMEWORK

Socio-cultural — This encompasses a broad range of societal characteristics likely to affect the product offering or operations of a company.

Technological — Including research and development, automation, transport, patent regulation, the product life-cycle, and the rate of technological change.

Economic — How much purchasing power does the consumer have under certain economic conditions?

Environmental/ecological — Factors such as weather, natural resources, and climate change.

Political — What is the legal and political environment of the country the business operates in? To what extent does the government intervene in business affairs?

STEEP+C (Category) Benefits:

- Help you mitigate bias—many of us are biased towards tech as a driver of change for example

- Socio-cultural change can be massive but harder to detect

- In many cases, several factors across STEEPC will reinforce each other—these are the ones more likely to happen and should drive action

How are people changing how they think about health?

SOCIO-CULTURAL	People are **increasingly** aware of the importance of their health. There are also more elderly but less social nets.
TECHNOLOGICAL	Technology is **increasingly** able to monitor us anytime, anywhere. On the other hand, people are **increasingly** worried about privacy.
ECONOMIC	Healthcare is **increasingly** expensive and **increasingly** shouldered by the consumer, who is already monetarily stressed.
ENVIRONMENTAL	The world is **increasingly** polluted and dangerous- again, the pandemic!
POLITICAL	The public sector is **increasingly** stressed and not much investment is being made into infrastructures of care.
CATEGORY	Big companies are **increasingly** being disrupted by health startups, but there is also maybe a **lack** of regulation (see: Theranos)

Combining two or more of these factors leads us to different futures and opportunities.

S+T = opportunity for tech to solve consumer's need for reassurance, also ability to solve for elderly without care.

T+E+C = opportunity for low-cost tech brought to you by a trusted name.

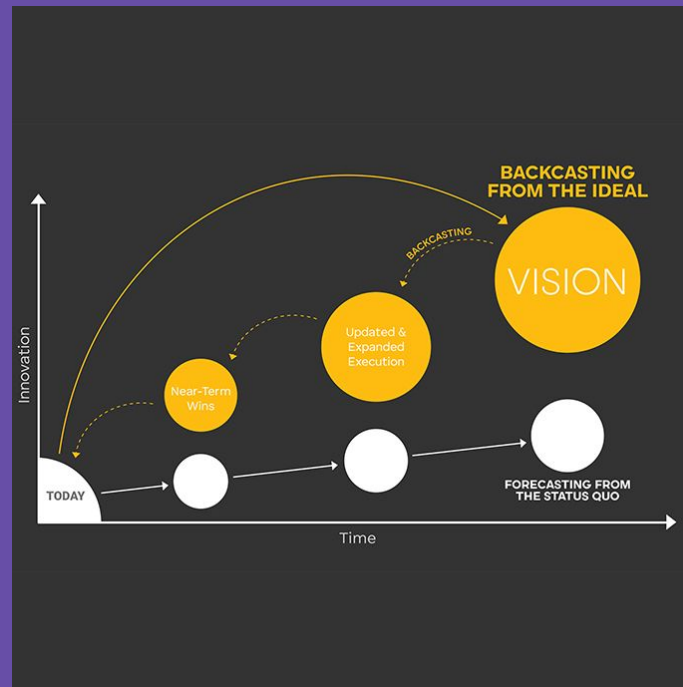E+P = a rock and a hard place—what role does private sector play?

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

3 BACKCASTING

We've all heard of forecasting, but have we heard of or done backcasting?

Backcasting is useful when we have a clear vision of a specific future we want to achieve, rather than building incrementally from today.

This requires some creativity up front—what MIGHT the future look like, in the first place?

BACKCASTING FROM THE IDEAL

Innovation

BACKCASTING

VISION

Updated & Expanded Execution

Near-Term Wins

TODAY

FORECASTING FROM THE STATUS QUO

Time

4 FUTURES WHEEL

Futures Wheels help us think through all the implications of a change or decision—whether it's one we make, or one we observe.

This can help us find opportunities or threats that we might not have seen if we focused only on the immediate implications of our action.

**Let's do one now.**

Sample Futures Wheel

4 FUTURES WHEEL

1. Get out a pen and paper.

2. In the middle of the paper, draw a circle and write down "the rise of the metaverse" in the center of it.

3. Think of as many consequences to this phenomenon as you can. We'll spend a few minutes here.

4. Next, think of as many consequences as you can for each bubble in the SECOND layer that you have. We'll spend more time here.

5. Last, do this one more time for the bubbles in the last layer.

6. **What new implications did you arrive at that you hadn't thought of when we began this exercise?**
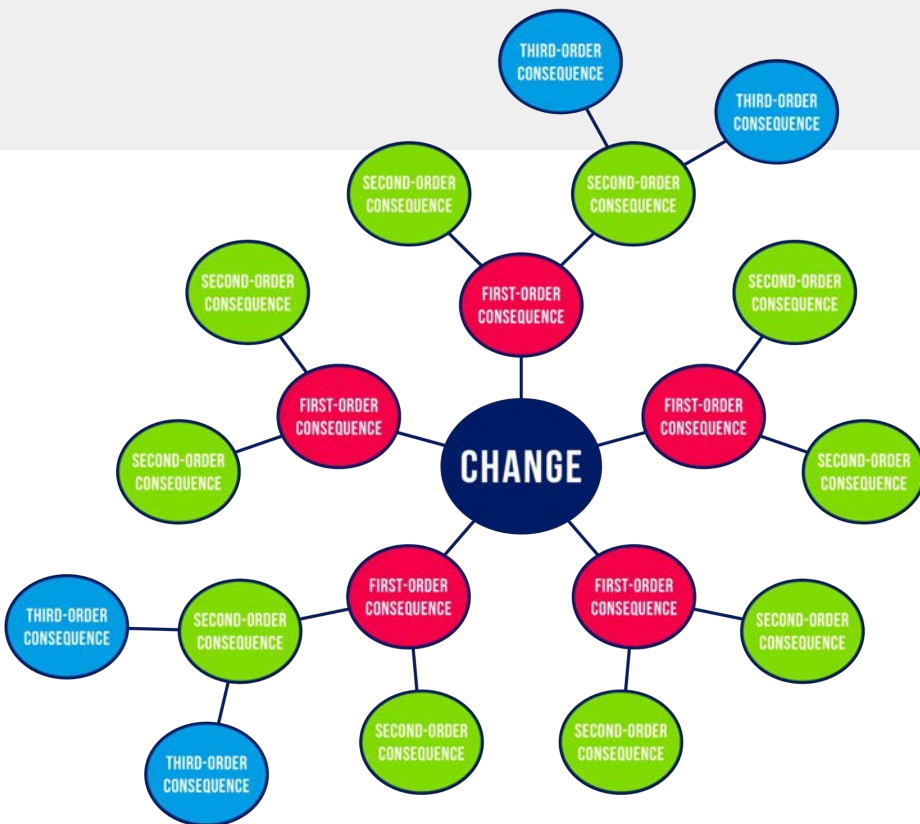
THE LEARNING DOESN'T STOP HERE! BOOKS WE RECOMMEND:
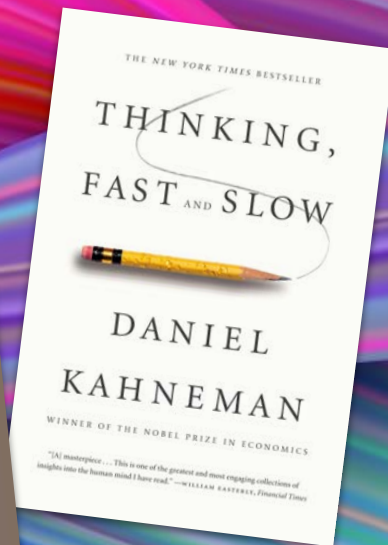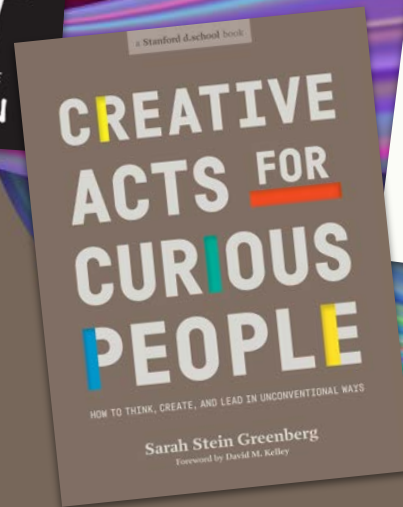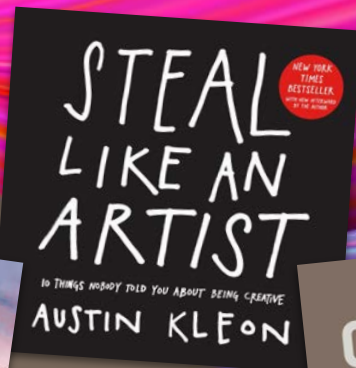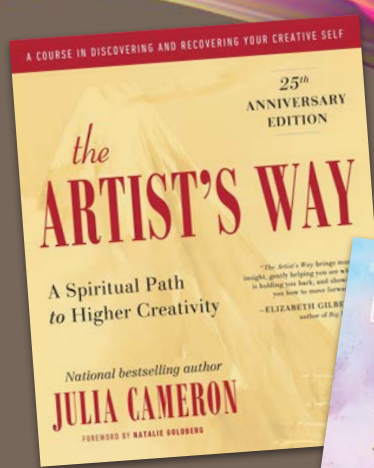
WE CAN HELP TOO! CLIENTS WE'VE WORKED WITH TO JUMPSTART CREATIVITY:

THANK YOU

Questions or comments?
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