

TEI 056: 5 Steps to Becoming an Innovative Company

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Michael Wynblatt

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Chad: Hi, this is Chad, your host and founder of Product Innovation Educators where I turn product managers into product masters. If you haven't heard about my product mastery roadmap for product managers, please check it out. The roadmap guides product managers to become product masters, showing them the path to doubling and more their product success rate. If you are product manager that wants to create products customers love and want, have more influence in product strategy and stop being overwhelmed, you'll want this roadmap. Get it for free at theeverydayinnovator.com.

My guest today is the Vice President of Innovation and Emerging Technology at Ingersoll Rand. And by the way, Ingersoll Rand is number nine for innovation and Fortune's most admired companies 2015. This year is the first year they have made the list for innovation. He has led innovation at several companies, helping more than 40 technology-based products come to market. This includes serving as the VP of Innovation for Eaton Corporation and the VP and Chief Technology Officer At Siemens Technology-To-Business Center. His name is Michael Wynblatt. And throughout these roles, he has learned a great deal about helping companies become more innovative and specifically how to create a culture that breeds innovation.

To get the show notes for the discussion, go to theeverydayinnovator.com/056. I hope you enjoy the interview.

Michael, thanks for joining me today and the everyday innovators that are listening to us.

Michael: Hi, Chad. Thanks for having me on.

Chad: So your role is the VP of Innovation and Emerging Technology at Ingersoll Rand. What's your responsibilities in that role?

Michael: Well, I think you can divide it into two buckets. The main job is to try to build the innovation capability of the whole organization, so that means developing processes and tools and methods. I'm responsible for training, building training programs and I personally do a lot of that training and then also talent development of the key folks who are involved in innovation. And then it's one thing to have all these methods and tools but I also have a team to try to really role model and demonstrate what good looks like, how to apply those tools and methods and really do some innovations, create some new products, new services to grow the business.

Chad: Very good. This seems to be the year that people are creating innovation groups if they don't have them already inside medium and large companies. So I've seen this more often. But how long is that role been around in your organization?

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Michael: I've been in this role for about three and a half years and the role was created when I joined the company.

Chad: And what was going on to bring that into existence?

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Michael: Well, the company has been undergoing a transformation where we've been trying to go from a traditionally diversified company where the businesses were very independent of one another to a company where we're really taking advantage of the synergies between the businesses through a business operating system. So we're creating functional expertise around a lot of different areas: human resources and engineering and operations, and innovation was one of those.

Chad: Apparently, your efforts are working as I shared in the introduction that you've been recognized in Fortune's most admired companies. So something is working there for sure.

Michael: Yeah, we're really proud of that. Ingersoll Rand is often on the list of most admired companies but that's the first time that we've been on the list for innovation and right up there with some of the famous innovative companies like Apple and Google and others.

Chad: It's not a bad list to be in the top 10 of.

Michael: Oh, we're pleased.

Chad: Very good. So at a conference recently called The Back End of Innovation, you spoke on creating an innovative culture inside organizations. It's actually something that you do know a lot about because you've done it in at least three large industrial companies. So it's kind of part of your DNA I suspect now. What does it mean to have that culture of innovation? This is a term that's come up a lot this year, fostering a culture of innovation. What does that mean?

Michael: Well, I guess if you think about culture, what we do, culture is how the company behaves and what we do, then I think maybe to have an innovative culture or a culture of innovation is really about three things. One is that your leadership is aggressively promoting the idea that you should identify new ideas, that they see new things as an important part of the business. And then the second is that resources actually get prioritized for those kind of groundbreaking opportunities. And maybe the third thing is that your employees prefer to join the teams that are working on those game-changing kind of topics. So if the leadership is pooling for new ideas and the employees want to work on new ideas and resources are prioritized with those big opportunities, then you really have that culture of innovation.

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Chad: And that last one, is that really about employees being empowered to kind of self-select the projects they want to work on when it comes to innovation?

Michael: Yeah, I think that's a big piece of it so employees getting involved. But I think it's also just the culture that that's what they want to do given the choice. That's where they would lean.

Chad: Yeah. Because then at some companies employees, we start down this path of wanting to be more innovative as an organization and employees are encouraged to do so but then they don't really have a way to follow through on that because the organization, the leadership isn't promoting it to the extent that they really are saying they want to and the resources aren't getting prioritized. So I see how the pieces work together at an important way.

Michael: Exactly. If you're missing any one of those three that, then you probably aren't going to get too far.

[06:02]

Chad: You're not really serious about a culture of innovation.

Michael: Or at least you don't have one.

Chad: Right. You need to get there. So how do we get there? You talked through at the innovation conference a series of steps to make this happen. Take us through that. Where do we start?

Michael: Well, I'm a computer scientist by training so I'll start with step zero.

Chad: We should make good use of zero. It is part of the number line. Why not?

Michael: There you go. But you have to think about the foundation. I think the first part of the foundation is setting expectations that the kind of culture that I just described, if you have it already, it's great, then you don't need to follow the steps. But if you don't have it, it's going to take a while to get there and it's a multi-year journey. When I say multi-year, I don't mean two years. It's going to take a number of years and the expectations have to be clear that we're in this in the long run. Because this is a multi-year journey, it's really important to have strong support from the leadership, that the leadership says, "This is an important change that we're trying to make and we're in it for the long haul." And that's kind of your step zero foundation.

Chad: So it's really studying the expectations and that no matter what kind of change you're

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trying to make inside an organization when it comes to culture, this is not something that happens overnight. Culture takes a lot of push on.

Michael: That's right. I can give a nice example of that and one of the companies that I was in previously, we started a new innovation group and during the first three years of this kind of transformation, we didn't really have a lot of success. Of course, we had some success on paper, some things we could point to that we've done well, but we weren't having a huge impact.

In the next three years, we actually started to produce some pretty good cases but they were still kind of ad hoc. And finally, in the last three years, we were really able to on a sustained basis create consistent business impact so we'd be able to say, at the beginning of the year, this year we're going to create six new innovative businesses. I'm not sure what they are yet but we're going to apply our method and sure enough at the end of the year, we'd deliver six or, being good corporate guys, we deliver seven.

The funny thing about that story is that group, we actually had an audit in year four and in year four they decided that we'd just produced enough return on the investment that they'd put in that it made sense and that we should keep going. If they had done that audit in year three, we probably wouldn't have made it and then they would have lost out on those last three years of really consistent impact to the business.

Chad: So that investment had to be made but how worthwhile to get to the point where you really have the confidence as an organization that you can go out and build that many new businesses in such a short timeframe. That is a significant change in the culture to build that kind of confidence and have the tools and processes in place and support it.

[09:07]

Michael: But it took awhile to get there.

Chad: Exactly. As you said, the rock could have been pulled out from under you if that audit was done just a little bit earlier. So it's a good reminder that this is a journey. It doesn't happen overnight. Good. So we have the foundations in place and you called that actually step zero. So now we must be a step one.

Michael: That's right. Well, I think that the first real step is to get your innovation process in place that if you want people to innovate, then you need a methodology for them to know how to do that. There are all kinds of research that says that any innovation process is better than none and a good one is better than a bad one. So that's pretty critical. And one element of that that I would highlight as a culture change is what I call standardizing the antidote. So if you

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think about your business and you say, "Well, what are some of the real barriers that are preventing us from innovating today?" Pick one or two of those that are really critical and make doing the opposite the standard in the company so that everyone is required at least to fix that one problem as they're working through that innovation process.

Chad: What's an example of that for us?

Michael: So in one of the companies that I worked in, one of the standard failure modes was that technology was overweighted in terms of its importance compared to developing a business case. So they kind of got in love with their cool technology and developing the customer feedback and the market opportunity and that was sometimes not done as correctly as it should have been. So we made part of the standard work that you had to create a commercial hypothesis as a very early step in the process. You weren't allowed to invest dramatically in technology until you're able to say, who's the customer? What's the problem that we're solving in? What's the market opportunity for that?

And just by putting in that one step, saying, okay, you can't go to your failure mode until you've done this one thing, we were able to get a lot of change in the way that people approach innovation and overcome that particular problem to a significant extent.

Chad: So it is setting up that innovation process in the step one but also recognizing where the weakest parts of that are going to be for the organization. So in that example, part of your process I'm sure was some kind of business case and ID selection type process. And in that example was they got started on the technology even before -- I mean a business case the people believed in.

Michael: That's exactly right. And to your point, not every company has the same failure modes or the same barriers. So you have to think a little bit about what's important in your company that you really want to focus on as that antidote that you're going to standardize.

[12:00]

Chad: Yeah, it's a great point. It doesn't make any sense to make one element really strong. Maybe we are really good at technology. We know how to develop and we know how to break through problems we run into. We feel that really strong when we don't know how to get ideas. We don't know what the next breakthrough idea is going to be. And the whole thing has to be made at a reasonable level of confidence for it to be effective.

Michael: Exactly.

Chad: Cool. So step one then as getting those processes in place and standardizing the antidote,

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you said, right?

Michael: That's right.

Chad: It must bring us to step two.

Michael: Yeah, exactly. So step two you could think of as sort of building the army. So before you're going to get very far, you're going to need some examples of success. You're going to be able to show some wins and you could think of that for your army that's sort of your ammunition. Hey, this is why we're doing this. This is a demonstration of what we're trying to accomplish. But just because you've deployed a new process doesn't mean that everybody in your organization is going to be very skilled at it. So you need soldiers for your army. You need to train or hire some specialists, some folks who really understand the process and can hit the ground running in a very short order to get to some of those success cases. The specialists are the soldiers and the success examples become their ammunition.

Chad: What's your experience been with that in terms of the specialists? Have you had examples where you've been able to identify people inside the company that can contribute in that role or do you really find that you need to bring in, in a sense, new blood, a new thinking and hire in for this?

Michael: Well, I've had a lot of success with both. So we found internal people who had an interest or an aptitude and we brought in people from the outside. I think the key thing there is you think about what's the difference between inexperience and experience? The difference is practice. In business, we don't usually get a lot of time to practice because we're too busy doing the real work. Think about playing a musical instrument or playing a sport. You spend much more of your time practicing than you do doing the real work.

So when we're training up this innovation army, this innovation force, the thing that we really focus on is getting repetitions. What's the fastest way that you can get lots of examples? We use case studies, simulations, role plays, real projects but short projects as a method for getting those repetitions in so that people can get practice. They need practice in both using the process but also in the content, the voice of the customer and market sizing and competitive analysis and so forth.

If you do hire externally, then you want to look for people who have those repetitions. Ideally also, look for people who have some success.

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Chad: As part of the second step, it sounds like that also involves demonstrating to the

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organization where the successes are so you can get some of these early wins and you can start getting people seeing the successes that the army is creating. Is that part of the step?

Michael: Yeah. In fact, you're leading me actually to the next step which is creating some transparency around what's going on. One of the important things there is getting recognition for the folks in the organization who are doing the right things so getting recognition, for example, for your success cases. And part of that is to recognize the individuals so they are getting credit for it but part of that is also to show everybody this is what good looks like and this is the kind of thing that we want you to do.

Chad: So you're highlighting what was done well and in the context of the successful projects.

Michael: Exactly.

Chad: How have you seen that being communicated effectively? And I ask this because I know in organizations especially when this is new, we're still on the journey to try and create the culture of innovation, that people might get something in an email, they might get something that comes through in some memoir or something that they ignore basically. It's like, "Okay, I don't even know what that is and it's not on my radar. I don't care about it." So how do you actually let the organization know? Is this a town hall meeting or you demonstrate the outcome of the project? What do you think we should do?

Michael: Yes, a good question. In Ingersoll Rand, for example, we have a variety of president's awards and chairman's awards that we give out for innovation and also for other things and the people are recognized. Sure, there are some emails that go out but they're also recognized at town hall and leadership conferences. And then we've even got a step further in some of our leadership conferences to actually put some of the folks up on stage and have them talk about their experiences and give them recognition that way as well.

Chad: And that's real good for recognizing the people involved. I expect that these would be good cases to dissect the project and what happened on that project as training tools too to understand how are we learning to do innovation and this organization? Have you seen that done? Do you do you do that?

Michael: We have a program which we call the Innovation Masters Program and that's one of the ones I mentioned where we're trying to get a lot of repetitions. So one of the ways that we get repetitions is to use some of these successful and also unsuccessful projects as keystones. So the folks who did the work present it and then the students kind of take it apart.

Chad: And you mentioned unsuccessful projects which I always like to highlight because for some reason when we do something that's not successful, there's more pain involved whether

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it's real pain or pain that we make up our minds and we tend to learn from those experiences. I think more powerful lessons than actually the successful instances at times in our life. Do you have an example of something that the organization learned and the people involved learned from one of the projects that was a success?

[18:20]

Michael: Yeah. I think I can give you an example without giving you the exact project details. Nobody wants to air their dirty laundry. We had a project where we're developing a new product and it was pretty clear that it had been driven entirely from the engineering team. They had developed something that they thought would make a good new product and they'd come up with a bunch of features and they'd come up with a bunch of technologies to implement those features, but what they really hadn't done was the voice of the customer to understand whether this was something that people would really want to buy or even they had done a little bit of that but they hadn't taken it down to the level of the value proposition. How do the customers value each of these different features? And then as a result, how would we be able to price that? So by presenting that example in the class, the students picked up on it very quickly and we had a good discussion about how you can avoid that in your own projects.

Chad: It's a really good example. It reminds me of what we've been seeing going on with the Lean startup kind of movement and making sure that we know what the customers want, what job they want our product to accomplish for them. And in my space of product management, this comes up even among the modern Lean practitioners that from our perspective of being the product managers involved, we might get half of the feature set right, half of what the user needs in terms of benefits, and we typically are not good at picking what that half is. We need to have the customers involved to really understand what provides them value.

Michael: I know what you're saying.

Chad: And as a former -- I don't know if you can be a former -- electrical engineer, from an engineering background, we kind of -- at least I kind of -- felt like we always had the solution. Engineers, the one thing that we're good at, we're trained to solve problems and so they give us a problem, we will tackle it for sure. Most of the time in engineering, we're not developing products for ourselves and we're not the actual customer even though we might have some cool ideas.

Michael: I try to be pretty agnostic about which you do first because of many innovations that did come from the science side.

Chad: Absolutely.

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Michael: And there are many innovations that came from a clear need in the marketplace. I think in the end you really need both. You need a clear understanding of the customer's needs and you need to differentiate its solution. As long as you get to a point where you have both of those fairly early, it probably doesn't matter too much which one you start with.

Chad: Yeah. And I think an element of that especially in organizations of your size is having some way of making those connections happen because there's no doubt, good engineering that's been done that's sitting on a shelf somewhere because it didn't have a fit yet, right? And there is going to be a problem that comes up some time.

[21:11]

And if the right person finds out, they're going to be able to say, "Hey, we already have a solution for that. Let's bring that in." And it's making those connections that are so important.

Michael: And that's a faster way to do innovation because a lot of the work that you may have finished previously.

Chad: So that then led you into what must have been step three, creating transparency and providing recognition for those involved and recognition of the projects and helping people see what successes we have going on in the organization.

Michael: And there's another half of that which is the metrics that go along with it. So most companies there, they understand the importance of tracking metrics and having some metrics around innovation is also important. One of the things that I promote is idea that the metrics should evolve with the maturity of your transformation. If you start on the first day with the business impact of your innovations but you haven't even figured out how to innovate well, then you're probably not going to have much to track. What you can start with our simpler metrics like metrics around activity, for example, in one company we spent some time developing a capability building plan and then we just tracked whether we were working our way through that plan effectively, then once you've got that in place, then maybe the next stage is tracking progress.

So for example, what are the number of projects that you've got that are progressing past some key threshold like if you're using a stage gate process, the number of projects that are passing a certain gate. And you say, well, our goal for this quarter or this year is to have a certain number of projects passing that gate. And then when you've got to the point where you're doing that consistently, now we want to start looking at the impact that we're getting. So for example, the revenue from the products that were actually launched or if you want a leading indicator for that, what's the net present value of the projects that are passing through the gates?

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You can say, so this year I want to have an impact to the business of 100 million or 100 million or whatever it is that's appropriate for your business. And then you can actually track that you're making progress towards that.

Chad: I really like how you laid out kind of the latter approach to metrics. As we move up this ladder of our experience with this new innovation process and trying to really infuse the innovation into the culture, we're not trying to tackle -- because if I go pick up a book on innovation metrics, it's going to have some pretty sophisticated metrics in there which won't make sense just where we are in this journey of transforming our culture. I liked how you approach this as a ladder perspective. As we get more mature and progress through our journey, we are picking metrics that make sense based on where we are right now with what we know.

[24:06]

Michael: That's right. Because if you have metrics that show that you're getting better all the time but they have to be metrics that are tracking the things that you're actually getting better at.

Chad: And that's setting metrics in place that we really just don't have the information yet to even contribute to to measure those.

Michael: Well, you touched on another point is that you may not have the data. And if you introduce your metrics incrementally, then at the same time you're also probably improving your data systems and your data integrity to get to some of those more advanced metrics.

Chad: Yeah, exactly. Good. So that's step three right.

Michael: Right. So step four, so where are you now? You've got your process in place. You've got your army to go and generate some good examples and you've created some transparency about what's happening. Now the thing is to get some pool for really big ideas. There's a lot of ways you can do that. One of them we already talked about is sort of recognizing the people that are achieving those big ideas because that encourages other people to do that.

I think another important way is to get your leaders exposed to outside innovations so that they really understand both the opportunities and potentially the threats that are coming from outside and also to be a little bit inspired by all the interesting stuff that's going on in the marketplace. So we have a bunch of different activities that we do in Ingersoll Rand and also in some of my former companies to just get people exposed to outside ideas.

Chad: Can you share an example of what that is?

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Michael: Yes. I'll give one example that we did actually this year. We took our senior leadership team out to Singularity University out in California. Singularity University is a kind of a think tank and they promote what they call exponential technology, so things like robotics and artificial intelligence and bioinformatics and things that are changing at a very rapid pace. They teach about the technologies but they also put an emphasis on teaching about the business impact of those technologies. So a lot of their examples are names of companies and startups and bigger companies that are using these technologies so that their leaders can immediately see, hey, this isn't just technology and research but there's actually money being made in the market. Again, they see the opportunities and sometimes they get inspired by that, and they also see the threats and maybe that's another way to motivate people as well.

Chad: It's an interesting place. I hope to go join Singularity University as a student to have this experience myself sometime. In doing this, do you also find simple things like going to conferences in your industry or adjacent industries helpful for leaders to see, like you said, what the opportunities are and also what threats, just what people are thinking about?

[27:03]

Michael: Yeah. I mean the Singularity University is a kind of a heavyweight example but there are lots of lighter weight things you can do both by attending trade shows and conferences but also inviting speakers in. So we routinely invite in speakers from our industry, from our market analysts, from universities and other adjacent places just to keep a steady flow of ideas coming.

Chad: I've talked to some organizations where they have like their brown bag lunch time or their coffee time in the morning, something that they're doing to regularly try to provide these outside ideas and they do it by inviting an outside guest. Is that a format that seems to fit well into this?

Michael: Absolutely. Over the years, I've used that on many occasions and that works pretty well.

Chad: So we're trying to get our leaders to be more exposed to things going on outside the company which for some people that might sound a little bit silly, but the problem is I think this happens employees and leaders in the organizations over time we tend to become internally focused. It's unfortunately easy to lose touch with customers and competitors and market trends if you're not taking time to pay attention to it.

Michael: That's absolutely true. And also even for leaders who make an effort to expose themselves to the outside, there's only a certain amount of time that they can do that and so they maybe go to certain customers, they may have certain relationships they built with certain

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market analysts or whatever and a program like this where you're exposing them to new things and new ideas is always helpful to stir the pot a little bit.

Chad: Have you found pushback though as you have worked through organizations putting this in place? Have you found resistance from senior leadership at this point or are you able to get them on board pretty easily with this idea?

Michael: Actually, I would say the opposite. When we hold a workshop and we have a bunch of external speakers, our senior leaders often are excited to come to that. We may not be able to get them to show up for everything we do but they usually show up for that. They're also pretty encouraging of their teams to attend. I haven't had a lot of pushback on that.

Chad: So this step four is I think you said building the pool for the big ideas?

Michael: Yeah. And there's probably one important piece there which is around the goals for the organization. So in the end, the reason we do innovation, partly it's for employee engagement and partly it's for the reputation of the company. But really the reason we're doing innovation is to grow the business and to be profitable. If your goals for growth are modest, then it's often possible to achieve those goals without really doing much innovation. But if you set for your team, for your organization really aspirational goals, then just doing the normal kind of things is not likely to get you there and you force them to consider bigger ideas, bigger bets, bigger opportunities.

[30:02]

Chad: You're stretching the organization to go a little bit further than people might think about.

Michael: Exactly.

Chad: In these steps -- I'll run through them real quick and make sure I got them right -- so being the computer scientist, you like to start at step zero which is really putting the foundation in place and setting the expectations. But this is a journey, transforming culture and specifically the innovation culture is going to take some time and we need commitment from leaders to get that done. And then step one, setting up the innovation processes and you talked about standardizing the antidote, looking for our weakest link so to speak and strengthening them. Step two was building the army and finding those specialists that will be the soldiers and the ones to lead to those early successes. Step three was creating transparency which involved recognizing the people involved in these projects. You gave the example of awards at town halls and I think the award is a great approach and then using the lessons learned from the projects themselves as teaching points. Step four was build a pool for the big ideas and that involved getting leaders to look outside, recognize threats and opportunities and also setting

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aspirational goals. Fair summary?

Michael: Yeah, very good. I think you got all of it.

Chad: Very good. I'm curious; let's talk for a moment about the reason to go down this path. You told us in the beginning what it means to have a culture of innovation. I know I've been talking to organizations this year that either they already are experiencing flat line growth and they're concerned about what to do about that, or they're in a place where growth is not an issue for them but they're very concerned about competitors' actions and maybe the guy in a garage, the startup that's really going to come and disrupt things.

So these growing factors especially the medium or large organizations are looking at how do we get out of this? I'm curious just what you're seeing there and maybe not your company right now but just in the industry overall for why the companies are taking an interest today looking into this culture of innovation.

Michael: I think that there are so many benefits to being good at innovation. We touched on this a little bit before but we start with the obvious one; that if you have products and services that are highly differentiated and that are targeted to your customers, then not only you're probably going to get good market share in those markets but you're also probably going to get premium prices. Good market share and good margins are what makes for profitable successful companies. So it's pretty basic but then it goes beyond that.

[33:03]

I was just looking at a study recently of recruiting and they were saying, "Well, what kinds of companies do people like to work for who are looking for a job?" The war for talent obviously is pretty important. If in 12 out of 14 countries that the report was about including the United States, the number one thing that employees were looking for were innovative companies. I think this particular study was on engineering job applicants, but I think that that also goes to other kinds of roles as well.

And then you think about the reputation of your company. What kind of company do partners want to work with? What kind of company do the suppliers get excited about about selling to? It's companies that are growing for one but that are innovative. There's a cache that comes with being innovative that buys you a lot over and above just being a successful profitable company and maybe that's even good enough by itself.

Chad: So some key points that are about attracting the best people, it's something most companies say they want to do and we all realize that all companies cannot attract the best people. We have the most average issue going on. And then the reputation you want to build

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and being able to not only track the best talent but priced partner relationships and reputation in the industry. It seems like the part of the reason why I'm hearing this so much this year too is organizations recognizing that they need to take action to be more competitive. And like you said, it's the no-brainer to my words, so the no-brainer to look at innovation to differentiate yourself, to create products that actually stand out in the marketplace.

But companies have created roadblocks to actually make this happen. This is why the startup is more flexible and agile than large company because they don't have that legacy to deal with and the structure and the processes put in place, which takes me back to what you said in the beginning as this is a journey. This is a multi-year activity to really change the culture of innovation inside organization because I'm sure you're not just putting in processes and things we talk through but along the way you're finding that you actually have to maybe change your organizational structure and policies and some of the scaffolding that's been put in place previously to make this happen. Has that been the case?

Michael: Absolutely. Whenever you're in an organizational change, you always look for things that you can do to help yourself be successful like changing your organizational structure or removing things that may be in the way. But I do think that if we come back to our original definition which is just that leaders are pooling for big ideas and that there's resources to support them and that employees are excited about working on them, those things can exist in many different organizational structures. You don't have to have a corporate R&D to make that happen. You don't have to have a business divided into divisions. There are lots of different structures that could still support that kind of culture.

[36:22]

Chad: Sure. It's a good point. Good. Well, thank you so much for sharing your experience, your many years of doing this inside organizations and your steps are very clear. I'm sure, everyday innovators, you found some really valuable information there about when it comes to influencing a culture for innovation what steps to take.

And as the everyday innovators know, when we get towards the end of the interview I always like to ask for an innovation quote. Michael, what quote did you bring for us? And tell us also why you chose that one.

Michael: Well, I picked a quote. It's an old one. It actually dates back to the 16th century. It's from Machiavelli's *The Prince*. The reason I picked it is -- and this will be clear when I read it -- that it's just amazing how the problems we face in innovation today haven't changed at all since the 1500. It just makes me feel like I'm in a good legacy of a challenge that many people have had. So here, I'll read you the quote.

TEI 056: 5 Steps to Becoming an Innovative Company

Host: Chad McAllister, PhD

Guest: Michael Wynblatt

Machiavelli says, "There's nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things for the reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order, this lukewarmness arising partly from the incredulity of mankind who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it."

I think if it was true in 1513, it's probably true today.

Chad: Yeah, there is this nature of innovation that if we're doing something innovative, then we know it because there are going to be lots of people telling us that can't be done.

Michael: It's true.

Chad: I like what he said about the only lukewarm defenders of those who had profit by the new order. It's hard to find support in the beginning when you're trying to do something new.

Michael: That's exactly it.

Chad: Very good. Well, Michael, I appreciate you sharing that quote with us. I appreciate your time in going through those steps to really help an organization build or deepen their culture of innovation. Thank you so much.

Michael: Chad, it's been a real pleasure. Thank you for having me.

Chad: Everyday innovators, I so appreciate you listening. It means so much to me when you recommend this podcast to other product managers and innovators. We really just have a few resources like this for product managers. And please keep telling your colleagues about it. By going to theeverydayinnovator.com/056, you'll find a show notes and the details of the discussion with Michael. Keep innovating.