



## The Imagination Emporium: Creative Recipes for Innovation

**Duncan Wardle**

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*Treating innovation, imagination, and creativity as distinctive human traits, the leadership guide The Imagination Emporium is about capitalizing on the unique abilities of each and every employee.*

Duncan Wardle's *The Imagination Emporium* is a delightful business book on innovation, creativity, and workplace ideation from the former head of innovation and creativity at Disney.

Layered with thought-provoking content and colorful illustrations, this book guides industry leaders toward nurturing fresh, innovative ideas in their companies. It encourages providing a fertile ground for the incubation of ideas (a "greenhouse" for innovation), no matter how impractical, expensive, or ambitious they are, as well as setting aside a fun, colorful space dedicated to the work of innovation. It argues that the ideas chosen for further incubation can change the future of a company, highlight areas for improvement, and spark curiosity about possible solutions to ongoing issues. Its premise rests upon creating synergy among employees, encouraging play and divergent thinking, and engendering passion for a company's mission.

Treating innovation, imagination, and creativity as distinctive human traits that set people apart from artificial intelligence, which is said to be capable of iterating upon ideas but not coming up with them, this is a text that celebrates the intrinsic value of human employees. Walt Disney quotes pepper the text as an appeal to the author's expertise, including the sentiment "When you're curious, you find lots of interesting things to do." Emphasis is also placed on play as a vehicle for unleashing the inner child and the creative self. Tools for energizing employees, encouraging creativity, and enabling innovation appear as well. However, while these tools may be useful for generating and assessing ideas, they have limited use in the realm of implementation beyond the ideation stage.

The book's charm is furthered by its vivid illustrations and custom-designed layout. Each page is colorful in a way that works in harmony with the intention of sparking creativity. Illustrations of the original characters Zing, Spark, and Nova, who embody the various activities in the book's toolkit of innovation strategies, run alongside doodles and visual elements like colorful text boxes, thought bubbles, arrows, and stylized lines. QR codes appear for access to additional information and thematic playlists to accompany each chapter, and dedicated spaces for adding one's own ideas, observations, and doodles help to individualize the book's advice.

A leadership guide with a creative format, *The Imagination Emporium* introduces a range of methods for inspiration in corporate environments—means of generating new ideas, business strategies, and solutions to problems that customers and clients face.

CAITLIN CACCIATORE (October 9, 2024)

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