



**Special
Article**

**President's
Address**

**Tax &
Legal**

**Mumbai
Regional Meet**

Gunasegharan
President, ISODA



Dear Isodians,

Warm greetings from the Management Committee. There was a delay in getting this edition of Interconnect released due to the hectic preparations and after-event follow-ups of TS9. Needless to say, TS9 was a roaring success and thank you to all for making it so.

Trust you all will be engrossed in soaking up the business pressure to make the financial year-end a success for your organizations. We hope and pray that everyone has their cash boxes ringing merrily. I wish each and every Isodian a grand closure for FY18-19 and a more successful FY19-20.

This edition of InterConnect covers the activities that followed TS9. West region had a wonderful Regional Meet where we not only had 2 sponsors but also some very learned speakers addressed topics of great importance. Regional meets of South, North and East are being planned in the days to come. We have contributions from one of our new members Shantanu Som on "The Culture of Innovation and the Power of Empathy". Very interesting and I insist that everyone reads it.

In the meantime, our Association is geared up to meet the expectations set by members at large. I am also happy to announce that our legal consultant has agreed to take calls over phone. Members wishing to reach out to him can call on +91 9884393078 and take the benefit of his advice.

I once again wish you all wonderful business prosperity in the days to come!

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Tech **Summit 9** Business Edition



An event worth remembering!
Bravo to ISODA TS9 team.

Special Article

Shantanu Som

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The Culture of Innovation and the Power of Empathy

It was not a regular day at my office. I was immersed into deep thought on making how to solve a critical issue one of our partner, one of world's largest IT company is facing. The time is short and the solution is due. The nature of the problem is so critical that nothing seems a possible solution. Our regular IT solution team seems clueless how to resolve this particular issue. After all, it was not a regular IT ticket what you get, especially when the internal team of such big IT giant could not solve it by themselves and approached us as they considered us to be a specialist in the field. The issue was related to image processing and I escalated it to my R&D teammates as if anything works out, it had to be something out of the box, something innovative. But even my R&D team was drawing a blank.

On the fourth day, there was no solution, not even a hint of it. I was sitting in my room, anxious. Then I was told a young fella, a trainee engineer from R&D wanted to meet me. I let the guy in. He was 23 year old science graduate from Kolkata, joined a month back. Not usual incumbent from our R&D team - who are at least holds a postgraduate degree. He looked nervous initially, I asked him to take his seat. Then I asked him, what brought him into my room. "Sir...", he started, "I was thinking of a possible solution of the company X. I have an idea, but my seniors said it is not feasible". His voice trembled - "so I thought I might come to you".

I ordered for two cups of coffee to calm the nerves of the young man. He was an introvert person who fought with himself before he came to my room. I paid attention to him throughout when he was describing me his approach towards the solution. Gradually his voice became confident and bold as he moved from one design to another on the whiteboard.

His idea was unique but difficult to implement. I understood why his seniors was not positive about it. But if anything with given limitations and constraints can work - this is it! I announced that a team will work on this idea but also cautioned that they may fail and hence they should take it as an experiment. I called the CIO of company X personally and asked for another weeks time.

After three days of work, the test results were great. I confirmed our customer that we have a solution in hand and we need some more time. Four more days have passed and we have a unique solution in which was fully successful and ready for delivery. I congratulated my team and organized for a small internal celebration. In the event, we awarded the trainee an internal recognition called "Hat's Off" - the highest internal recognition of our company. This is the first time in history of our company a trainee won it. After the celebration is over, the head of R&D thanked me for giving time to this guy and not discriminating for his trainee status or qualification. The solution just did not get us a great happy customer but also helped us bagging in two awards on innovation - out of one being an international award.

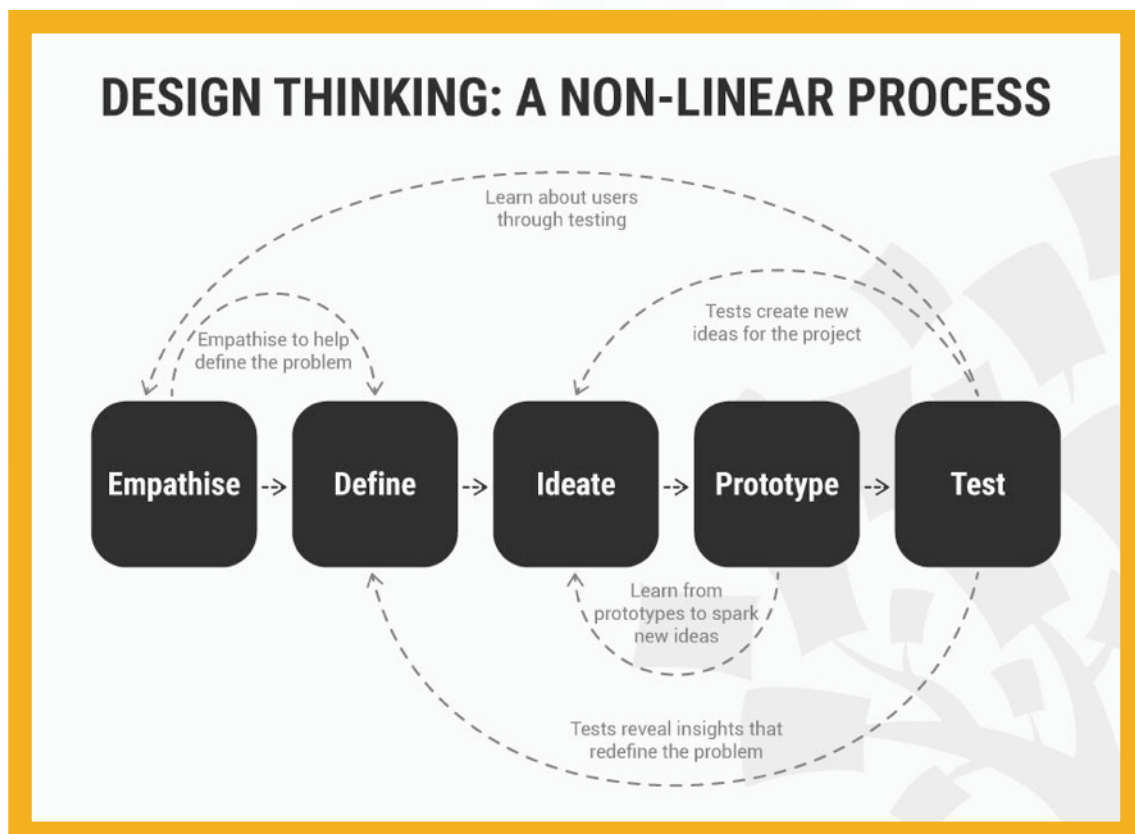
Special Article

(contd.)

Many articles have been written on the ways to build a culture of innovation. We talk about flexible work schedules, workshops on creativity, and crafting a workforce that constantly looks for newer, better ways to run our business. But with all this talk of creativity, perhaps it's time to look to a trait that's critical to innovation and often overlooked: empathy.

The very definition of empathy is "the ability to understand and share the feelings of another." It might sound very soft, but think about all of the great innovations that have come from empathy. Steve Jobs wanted to be able to carry his entire music library around in his pocket. He found it frustrating that he couldn't and he thought perhaps others shared that frustration. From that level of empathy, the iPod was born. Airbnb needs to help individuals experience the solaces of home in urban areas around the globe. In any case, these advancements are based on the thought somebody had and the empathy for other people and their experience.

Empathy also plays a large role in how innovation takes place. Without empathy, one teammate's great idea may never be heard. Empathy allows individuals to bring their experiences, their world views, their very lives into the workplace and create ideas for a better world. That same empathy allows their teammates to hear them, to see them, and to help them craft that vision. Without empathy, innovation is merely an empty idea. We cannot see our way to the future without our ability to see each other. We must put down our phones, step away from our devices, and hear ideas. We must have the ability to step into each other's shoes, feel each other's pain, and work to solve for the common good.



Special **Article** (contd.)

We are in the world today where so often we see individuals ignoring each other or turning their backs on what they do not wish to see, it is more important than ever to practice empathy. The next great idea is waiting for it. Yes, we must build skills and teach leadership, but the toughest cement of a cohesive culture of creativity is the ability to comprehend and share the joy, pain, frustration, and mind-sparks of our fellows. Compassion is a muscle that ought to be worked alongside every single other expertise and capacities that shape a powerhouse workforce, and it's so basic that we make it a requirement.

Since the way to business survival is the way of life of advancement, and it begins with the articulation and comprehension of thoughts. In the event that we can't sympathize, could end and the entire thing could descend. That is the nature of teamwork. That is the core of innovation culture. Without it, we have nothing.

Creativity is a critical job requirement for innovation, but it is apparently an increasingly scarce resource. According to studies, fully 61% of leaders don't believe their companies are creative enough, in a recent study, 77% of people say they believe creativity is a critical job skill for the next century, but 69% of people don't agree that they are living up to their optimum creative potential.

While it is a scarce resource, creativity's importance cannot be overstated. It is fuel for innovation which is in turn fuel for company growth. Creativity is, of course, the potential to create new ideas and the raw material of brainstorming, new thinking and ideation. Innovation, distinguished from creativity, is defined by the market and the extent to which action has been applied to creativity in a way that results in innovations people will adopt.

Great new innovations start with a focus on people and an understanding of their needs, conditions and challenges. From these, leaders and companies can not only motivate creativity and innovation, but can also ensure new innovations have a positive impact on people and communities. That's the power of empathy.

Mumbai Regional **Meet**

ISODA West conducted its Regional Meet on 6th March 2019 at Kohinoor Continental
The agenda was as below

Registrations & Networking

Internal Meeting for ISODA Members

Sponsorship slot - Systech
Stop Attack, Upgrade Operations and
Prove Compliance

Sponsorship slot - TeamViewer

External Speaker - Adv. Vicky Shah
Cybersecurity & Eventuality
Planning in Business

Cocktails and Dinner



Legal & Taxation Snippets

Prevention of workplace sexual harassment:

The newly introduced act viz., Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013 (the "Prevention of Sexual Harassment law") has brought about new amendments emphasizing the necessity for employers to take all appropriate measures to be "strictly" implemented. This law broadly defines sexual harassment and creates a mechanism to redress complaints of harassment, specifically requiring each establishment with 10 or more employees to establish an "Internal Committee" to receive and redress complaints of workplace sexual harassment raised by women.

Working conditions requirements.

As per the new law and the various amendments it has brought forth, the employers are hereafter required to, among other things:

- maintain a complaint box;
- prominently display phone numbers of local police and women's helpline;
- provide proper lighting and illumination inside the establishment, its surroundings, and places that women may visit for work purposes;
- if the establishment has 10 or more female workers, engage a sufficient number of female security guards;
- provide separate and safe restrooms for women.

Day-care Facilities:

In establishments where 50 or more employees are employed, employers must provide for day care facilities for employees' children.

Night-Shift Work Protections for Women:

The amendments have also prescribed specific working conditions for women working in night shifts. In particular, an employer may require a woman to perform night-shift work (i.e., between the hours of 9:30 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.) only if certain conditions are which are as follows:

- The woman provides written consent to work that shift;
- The number of women working that shift is no fewer than three at any given time;
- The employer provides safe and secure transportation between the workplace and the doorstep of the woman's residence.

The law also specifically bars women from working the night shift during a 24-week period before and after giving birth. However, this bar may be lifted at the request of the employee if supported by medical certification from a qualified medical practitioner stating that neither the woman's health nor that of the child would be endangered.

A story about data.

This is not a story which is told with data, this is a story about data. Recently, in a public forum, the government has stated that they are on target with the direct tax collection however indirect tax collection may fall short.

GST collections in february have dropped to 97,247 crores from a 1.02 lakh crores in the previous month. Once the face of it ,this seems grim, considering the fact that GST is now stabilizing and compliance is improving. But the story hides a key fact that February comprises only of 28 days and not the advantage of 31 days that January enjoys.

Even then, can three days make such a difference ? Apparently so, since collections from January 29 to January 31 touched INR 1500 crores owing to a special compliance drive organized by the GST department. The action was initiated to target non-filers and stop-filers of returns, a category which comprises of 15 crore tax (non) payers.

A key area of concern noted by the department during this drive has been the phenomenon wherein taxpayers file the return declaring sale value (GSTR1) but subsequently do not file / short-file the return which enables payment of taxes (GSTR3B). Data pertaining to this was shared with field formations basis which relevant assesseees were approached and told to file Form GSTR3B. The return system envisaged initially by the government did not give taxpayers the option to resort to this method. However the revised return system has unintentionally enabled taxpayers to delay payment of taxes resulting in a headache for the department.

There is light at the end of the tunnel, the new return filing mechanism will restrict this ability to delay the payment of tax. However till that time, the department will have to 'drive' tax collections in more ways than one.