

September 2009

Two-Minute Drill



John Baker is a nationally recognized speaker, consultant, and award-winning author with over 25 years of executive experience. His *READY Thinking* principles have helped thousands win when confronted by change. Contact John at www.readythinking.com.

A Breath of Fresh Air

The toughest of all change is self-inflicted. Sometimes this self-inflicted change is called "Innovation"; and, from the outside looking in, innovation seems to happen painlessly. But it is far from painless. Innovation is akin to jabbing yourself with a sharp stick and forcing yourself out of your comfort zone and into a space that is foreign, scary and awkward.

It was great to receive a note from a good friend who wrote about the idea of accomplishing our dreams. In this note he included: *"All dreams are outside of our comfort zone. Leaving the zone is the price we must pay to achieve them."*

Most people and almost every organization want to be innovative, but why do so many fail? In *Innovation to the Core*, authors Skarzynski and Gibson argue that a precondition for innovation is *"the need to create time and space in people's lives for reflection, ideation and experimentation."*

In these changing, chaotic times it is especially difficult to justify the effort it takes to create the time and space to quiet ourselves and reflect on matters at hand. How do we get this done when there are so many other things to attend to?

Consider this: In the Hebrew scripture (aka: the Old Testament) the word used to describe the "spirit of God" is *"Ruach"* which means: wind, spirit, breath.

Ask yourself:

Breathing deeply offers many physical benefits: slowing of the heart rate, reducing anxiety and the symptoms of stress, and lowering our blood pressure. More than this, breathing deeply offers a spiritual opening, a time and space to get in touch with the center of our experience.

Take a DEEP breath. Breathing is automatic. Deep breathing can be accomplished in the idle slivers of our day: at a traffic light, on the commuter line, while on hold, waiting for a download, standing in queue or during a stultifying meeting.