



# Weird Ideas That Work: 11 1/2 Practices for Promoting, Managing, and Sustaining Innovation

*Robert I. Sutton*

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Creativity, new ideas, innovation -- in any age they are keys to success, but in today's whirlwind economy they are essential for survival itself. Yet, as Robert Sutton explains, the standard rules of business behavior and management are precisely the opposite of what it takes to build an innovative company. We are told to hire people who will fit in; to train them extensively; and to work to instill a corporate culture in every employee. In fact, in order to foster creativity, we should hire misfits, goad them to fight, and pay them to defy convention and undermine the prevailing culture. *Weird Ideas That Work* codifies these and other proven counterintuitive ideas to help you turn your workplace from staid and safe to wild and woolly -- and creative.

Stanford professor Robert Sutton is an authority on innovation and a popular speaker. In *Weird Ideas That Work* he draws on extensive research in behavioral psychology to explain how innovation can be fostered in hiring, managing, and motivating people; building teams; making decisions; and interacting with outsiders. Business practices like "hire people who make you uncomfortable," "reward success and failure, but punish inaction," and "decide to do something that will probably fail, and then convince yourself and everyone else that success is certain" strike many managers as strange or even downright wrong. Yet *Weird Ideas That Work* shows how some of the best teams and companies use these and other counterintuitive practices to crank out new ideas, and it demonstrates that every company can reap sales and profits from such creativity. *Weird Ideas That Work* is filled with examples of each of Sutton's 11 1/2 practices, drawn from hi- and low-tech industries, manufacturing and services, information and products. More than just a set of bizarre suggestions, it represents a breakthrough in management thinking: Sutton shows that the practices we need to sustain performance are in constant tension with those that foster new ideas. The trick is to choose the right balance between conventional and "weird" -- and now, thanks to Robert Sutton's work, we have the tools we need to do so.

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