

Governing Energy

Strength of Ideas

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History is replete with examples where ideas have overcome significant hurdles. One example is the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity in 312 AD.ⁱ

Some may argue that this was almost three hundred years after the Crucifixion and that it was a societal transition not simply a decreed event. The counter point is that a transformation along the magnitude from one of a pagan society to Christianity in less than three centuries of the almost 200,000 years of human existence is very quick indeed.ⁱⁱ

The Twentieth Century entertainer and one time Vaudeville performer, Eddie Cantor famously said, “It takes 20 years to make an overnight success.”ⁱⁱⁱ More recently and popularized by Malcolm Gladwell in his book *Outliers* (published 2008), the so-called 10,000 hour rule suggests that it takes about 10 years to master a field of expertise—the principle actually dates to a 1993 study.^{iv}

As early as 1993, this author was arguing that good ideas like good wine or scotch gets better with age. This hypothesis is that the current state of the practice of management is a function of all the human organizational knowledge that preceded it.^v Some readers may recall that this was during an era when many new management techniques emerged from a number of practitioners claiming new and often profound business understanding.

On a separate note this article, Management Theory - Evolution Not Revolution has been down loaded almost 15,000 times and I have long suspected it is often referenced in high school and college student papers.

Another example, the Smart Phone disrupted the cell phone market and challenges the PC for computing dominance. Achieving critical market share towards the end of the last decade, it too can trace its roots to IBM/ BellSouth in 1993.^{vi}

Good ideas honed by passionate and committed people do change the world. Disruptive beliefs, knowledge and/or technologies have given us the society we enjoy today. They often just don't happen overnight.

Circa the 1970's a popular poster was of a cat hanging by its paws from a tree branch. Tagged, “Hang in there,” its intention was one of motivation.^{vii} So stay after your New Years' Resolutions and nurture those great ideas. According to the French scientist, Louis Pasteur, “Fortune favors the prepared mind.”^{viii}

So it goes with good governance. Organizational governance models are driven by these same behavioral models. Make this New Year the one your firm's governance model advances up the maturity curve.

How will you nurture your good ideas this New Year?

About the Author

Dr. [Scott M. Shemwell](#) has over 30 years technical and executive management experience primarily in the energy sector. He is the author of two books and has written extensively about the field of operations management. Shemwell is the Managing Director of The Rapid Response Institute, a firm that focuses on providing its customers with solutions enabling operations excellence and regulatory compliance management.

End Notes

ⁱ http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/romans/christianityromanempire_article_01.shtml

ⁱⁱ <http://www.librarything.com/topic/72547>

ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/e/eddie_cantor.html

^{iv} <http://www.wired.com/opinion/2013/05/so-you-know-that-10000-hours-makes-an-expert-rule-bunk/>

^v <http://www.scribd.com/doc/13395793/Management-Theory-Evolution-Not-Revolution>

^{vi} http://www.techhive.com/article/199243/a_brief_history_of_smartphones.html

^{vii} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hang_in_there,_Baby

^{viii} <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/l/louispaste159478.html>