

Moving from vision to action

New book says innovation and execution need not be mutually exclusive, writes **Rick Gangwani**

The ability to create and implement are all too often seen as incongruous – polar opposites that rarely, if ever, coexist.

According to Stefania Lucchetti, however, such assessments are far from accurate.

In her new book, *Ideas in Reality*, the former attorney makes a strong case for the possibility of mastering both these faculties.

“The world often divides people into creative and not creative, she says, “those who have ideas but don’t know how to make them happen’ and ‘those who don’t have ideas, but are good executors of other people’s ideas.’ The truth is,” she notes, “there’s no reason why you can’t be great at both.”

While Lucchetti concedes that we tend to be more inclined towards one skill over the other, she nevertheless advocates the prospect of improving your weaker side with knowledge and self-awareness.

The crux of her optimism rests on the view that creativity and execution each involve their own unique states of mind.

To illustrate, she references the classic states of chemical matter – gas, liquid and solid, each of which she attributes to one of the three phases of her idea implementation process.

The process commences with the “idea-generation” stage, a state that the author likens to a gaseous substance – “fast moving, immediate, abstract and uncontainable.”



Illustration: Bay Leung

The book’s dedicated chapter on the topic suggests that the actual formulation of ideas tends to happen at times of inward observation. “Studies of inventors, artists and other creative people reveal a common trait that is widely recognised,” Lucchetti writes. “The creative genius occurs during a moment of reflection, of inward turning, of quiet.”

According to her subsequent comments, it’s precisely this state of calm that is needed to allow ideas to flow in their raw form, which, as she reiterates, are “like gaseous matter that needs space to expand.”

Once a tentative idea arises, Lucchetti says that it quickly needs to be transformed into a lower frequency if it’s to stick around.

“Ideas are like dreams,” she explains. “If you don’t write them down, you’re going to forget them.”

But carrying a notepad with you at all times is only half the battle. Lucchetti also discusses how to transform your idea from a vision into an actual concept.

Like with the other two phases, she concludes the chapter with a brief series of action steps, complete with empty spaces for readers to list their personal goals and outcomes.

The three-step process ends with what she refers to as the “materialisation” phase. Here, concepts begin to take shape as actual projects.

Much like that of a solid object,

energy and frequency at this point tends to be low. Also, the actual work here tends to favour routine, and thus may seem a little dry at times.

“Materialising an idea is a lot of hard work, Lucchetti says. “When you’re writing a book, the stage where you’re actually doing the writing, I assure you, is not all that fun. It’s a lot of grinding work, and you have to be prepared for it. This is where a lot of people fall.”

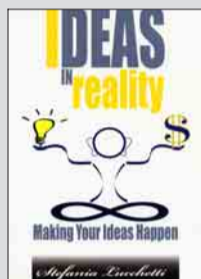
To overcome the lull, the now full-time author suggests learning to shift into the correct gear for operating in a low-energy environment. She specifically outlines the need to switch from right-brain-thinking to left-brain-thinking.

She also suggests getting support from others where possible and moulding your environment and work habits towards routine activity – while making room for breaks, of course.

The book goes on to discuss the role of movement in creativity and also provides useful insights on how to conjure creative thoughts in the workplace.



Stefania Lucchetti



Book *Ideas in Reality – Making Your Ideas Happen*
Author Stefania Lucchetti
Publisher Restless Travellers Publishing

Challenge of finding qualified finance staff

If you’re currently working in the accounting or banking sector, you could be worth more than you think.

According to the latest Robert Half Workplace Survey released just this month, 34 per cent of Hong Kong employers are planning to increase their full-time staff in finance, accounting or banking in the second half of 2011. Nevertheless, 93 per cent reported challenges in finding qualified finance professionals.

Furthermore, 88 per cent of employers are concerned about losing their top performers to other job opportunities next year. The survey covers four key financial markets in the Asia-Pacific region – Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong and New Zealand. This year 3,500 human resources and finance and accounting managers were surveyed.

Commenting on the Hong Kong results, Pallavi Anand, director of Robert Half Hong Kong, says the results were surprising but justified, particularly about losing top performers, which was 12 per cent more in Hong Kong than the regional average.

“Employers’ fear of losing their top performers is valid, as 45 per cent of finance professionals surveyed in Hong Kong admitted

that they were planning to seek employment or a promotion with a new company in the next two years,” Anand says. This fear is further validated when one considers the challenge of finding qualified finance professionals.

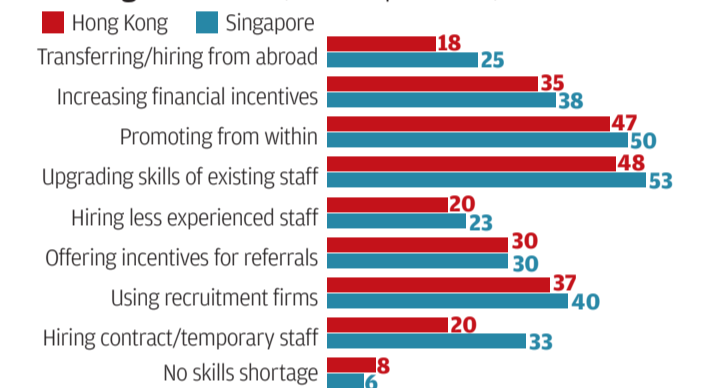
“Hong Kong and Singapore are dynamic global financial hubs and, with the current market uncertainty in the European Union and the United States, many companies are now looking to Asia as a key growth market,” she explains.

Anand points to another finding that 56 per cent of Hong Kong employers were mulling a business expansion in the second half of 2011. Companies are also trying to keep their staff by promoting from within and upgrading their skills.

“Losing staff is more costly than training them so employers are focusing on staff training and development. This not only allows companies to build the skill sets of their current teams but may improve retention rates, since employees appreciate the opportunity to acquire new skills,” Anand says. *Billy Clarke*

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What is your company doing to address skills shortages in 2011? (% of respondents)



Note: Respondents could select more than one option
Source: Robert Half

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