



EPISODE 34: THE FOUR ESSENTIALS OF INNOVATION

EPISODE NOTES

Thank you for joining the *Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast*!

If you want to lead a breakout ministry, dominate an industry, change a city, help a nation, solve massive problems, or meet the needs of thousands of hurting people, **you will have to learn to innovate.**

Here's another key thought: **innovation is different from creativity.** Creativity is thinking up new things. Innovation is doing new things.

“People with ideas are not innovators. People who follow through with ideas are innovators.” – @craiggroeschel

It's safe to say that the most successful companies in the future will be doing things no one is doing today. Think about the four companies that made the headlines in the 1980s: GM, Walmart, Exxon, and Ford. Today, the four companies you hear about are Apple, Amazon, Facebook, and Google. They're doing today what no one dreamed was possible just a few decades ago. They are leading the way in innovation.

Let's take a look at the four essentials of innovative leaders. Think about it as an equation:

A Problem to Solve
+ Limited Resources
+ A Willingness to Fail
+ A Crazy Idea =
Explosive Innovation

1. **A Problem to Solve.** Problems are not things to fear, but opportunities to embrace.

“Every great innovation is simply a solution to a problem.” – @craiggroeschel

Many great innovations are solutions to a problem people didn't even know they had. Train

your mind to see problems as opportunities for something new.

- Limited Resources.** The top cop-out for would-be innovators is “I don’t have what I need,” but innovation is often borne out of limitations.

**“Innovation is more about mindset than money.” –
@craiggroeschel**

If you believe you can’t do something because you don’t have enough, you’ll always be right. Having more isn’t always better—it can slow things down, make us lazy, or allow us to buy solutions instead of creating them. Limitations are the breeding grounds for innovation.

- A Willingness to Fail.** People who say, “Failure is not an option” are right—it’s a necessity, if you plan to be innovative. Everyone is going to make mistakes. Innovators make mistakes while trying new things.

“If you aren’t failing every now and then, you’re playing it way too safe.” – @craiggroeschel

- A Crazy Idea.** This isn’t just any crazy idea. Lots of people have crazy ideas. You need a crazy idea that, if it works, will drive innovation. The reason it seems crazy at first is because you’re the first to do it. The idea doesn’t have to be yours, but you need the wisdom to recognize it and the courage to attempt it.

If you put all this together and act on it—well, you still won’t always succeed. But every now and then, you’ll be looking at what everyone else was looking at, but you will see something no one else saw. You won’t just think it. You will do it. And that’s when you’ll become an innovative leader!

Remember, you don’t have to know it all to be a great leader! Be yourself. People would rather follow a leader who is always real than one who is always right.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Here’s an exercise you can do to grow as a leader—ask your team these questions:

- What’s a problem you have that, if you solved it, would be a game-changer for your organization?**
- Name every excuse that you feel is limiting your progress. How can that perceived limitation become a catalyst to innovation?**
- What crazy idea do you have? What are you planning to do about it?**

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