VIJAY GOVINDARAJAN

Vijay Govindarajan, known as VG, is widely regarded as one of the world’s leading experts on strategy and innovation. Most recently designated the Marvin Bower Fellow at Harvard Business School for two years, he is also the Coxe Distinguished Professor at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College. The Coxe Distinguished Professorship is a new Dartmouth-wide faculty chair. He was the first Professor in Residence and Chief Innovation Consultant at General Electric. He worked with GE’s CEO Jeff Immelt to write How GE is Disrupting Itself, the Harvard Business Review (HBR) article that pioneered the concept of reverse innovation – any innovation that is adopted first in the developing world. HBR picked reverse innovation as one of the Great Moments in Management in the Last Century. In the latest Thinkers 50 Rankings, Govindarajan was ranked the #1 Indian Management Thinker.

VG writes about innovation and execution on several platforms including Harvard Business Review and Bloomberg BusinessWeek. He is a co-leader of a global initiative to design a $300 House.

Govindarajan has been identified as a leading management thinker by influential publications including: Outstanding Faculty, named by Business Week in its Guide to Best B-Schools; Top Ten Business School Professor in Corporate Executive Education, named by Business Week; Top Five Most Respected Executive Coach on Strategy, rated by Forbes; Top 50 Management Thinker, named by The London Times; Rising Super Star, cited by The Economist; Outstanding Teacher of the Year, voted by MBA students.

Prior to joining the faculty at Tuck, VG was on the faculties of Harvard Business School, INSEAD (Fontainebleau) and the Indian Institute of Management (Ahmedabad, India).

The recipient of numerous awards for excellence in research, Govindarajan was inducted into the Academy of Management Journals’ Hall of Fame, and ranked by Management International Review as one of the Top 20 North American Superstars for research in strategy and organization. One of his papers was recognized as one of the ten most-often cited articles in the entire 40-year history of Academy of Management Journal.

VG is a rare faculty who has published more than ten articles in the top academic journals (Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Strategic Management Journal) and more than ten articles in prestigious practitioner journals including several best-selling HBR articles. He received the McKinsey Award for the best article in HBR. He published the New York Times and Wall Street Journal Best Seller, Reverse Innovation.
VG has worked with CEOs and top management teams in more than 25% of the Fortune 500 firms to discuss, challenge, and escalate their thinking about strategy. His clients include: Boeing, Coca-Cola, Colgate, Deere, FedEx, GE, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, J.P. Morgan Chase, J&J, New York Times, P&G, Sony, and Wal-Mart. He has been a keynote speaker in the BusinessWeek CEO Forum, HSM World Business Forum, TED and World Economic Forum at Davos.

VG received his doctorate from the Harvard Business School and was awarded the Robert Bowne Prize for the best thesis proposal. He also received his MBA with distinction from the Harvard Business School where he was included in the Dean’s Honor List. Prior to this, VG received his Chartered Accountancy degree in India where he was awarded the President’s Gold Medal for obtaining the first rank nationwide.

Speech Topics

Three-Box Solution

Leaders already know that innovation calls for a different set of activities, skills, methods, metrics, mind-sets, and leadership approaches—it is well-understood that creating a new business and optimizing an already existing one are two fundamentally different management challenges. The real problem for leaders is doing both, simultaneously. How do you meet the performance requirements of the current business—one that is still thriving—while dramatically reinventing it? How do you foresee a change in your current model before a crisis forces you to abandon it?

Vijay expands the leader’s innovation toolkit with a simple and proven method for allocating the organization’s energy, time, and resources—in balanced measure—across what he calls "the three boxes":

- Box 1: The present—Keep the current business going
- Box 2: The past—Forget what made the business successful in the past
- Box 3: The future—Create the new model

The "three box" framework makes leading innovation easier because it gives leaders a simple vocabulary and set of tools for managing and measuring the different sets of behaviors and activities, across all levels of the organization.

Strategy Is Innovation

We now live in an era of constant change, driven by the dynamic forces of technology, globalization, the Internet, changing demographics, and shifting customer preferences. As a result, companies find that their strategies need almost constant redefinition—either because the old assumptions are no longer valid, or because the previous strategy has been imitated and neutralized by competitors. Rooted in these premises, the strategic and organizational challenges become:

- How do we identify the market discontinuities that could transform our industry?
- How can we create new growth platforms that exploit new market realities?
- What are our core competencies and how can we leverage them to generate growth?
- What new core competencies do we need to build?
- What organizational DNA will allow us to anticipate and respond to changes on a continual basis?
- How do we execute breakthrough strategies?
Innovation Execution

Implementing Box 3 breakthrough innovation projects is the triple-flip-with-a-quadruple-twist of general management. No matter how talented and experienced the leader, chances are that this is a new and unfamiliar challenge. VG can help you understand the three fundamental challenges faced by Box 3 strategic experiments, and can offer several specific recommendations to help you overcome them.

Reverse Innovation

In this presentation, VG introduces the idea of developing new business models in emerging markets first – instead of scaling down rich-world products – to unlock a world of opportunities for your business. Stemming from a pivotal article in Harvard Business Review, his reverse innovation presentation offers an important next step for companies looking to derive long-term value from emerging markets. According to VG, "Reverse innovation is a potent force that will transform the global economy over the next few decades. It will redistribute power and wealth to countries and companies who understand it and diminish those who do not."

VG offers a glimpse at strategies from some of the world’s leading companies – from GE and Deere & Company to P&G and PepsiCo. There is no one industry that needs to reverse innovate; instead, all industries must have interest in the needs and opportunities in the developing world in order to thrive in tomorrow’s global marketplace.

Delivering World-class Healthcare, Affordably

In this presentation, VG explains how innovative Indian hospitals are delivering high-quality healthcare at prices 95% below American hospitals. Although the context is very different in these two countries, there are lessons that U.S. healthcare leaders can learn and apply.

To provide high-quality care at ultra-low costs, private Indian hospitals have adopted three techniques: 1) hub-and-spoke networks; 2) task shifting; and 3) basic frugality. These approaches enable these hospitals to maximize the number of patients served, while benefiting from economies of scale. In the years ahead, U.S. healthcare providers should learn about and consider adopting these principles as they strive to expand access, improve quality, and reduce costs. If U.S. providers don’t change, they actually risk being disrupted by these efficient, low-cost Indian providers.