THE DO's WHEN DIGITALLY TWINNING YOUR INNOVATION HUB

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Why is the virtual space so monotonous? Whether it's a team meeting, fireside chat, maker session, client presentation, design jam, or social hour, every online box we enter seems to be formatted with the same, same, same experience. Something's got to give if we are to effectively extend our innovation activities into this uncharted realm.

I'm no expert on digital twinning, but what I've learned from raising my children—identical twin "Baby Zoomers" (who, thank goodness, have taken to their new "everything is online" reality)—is that although they might have the same DNA, they are clearly different in personality, mindset, and behavior. This, as a matter of principle, should apply to any type of digital twinning of your innovation hub—be it a direct copy or a loose virtualization of the innovation experience.

In the last issue of Innovation Leader's magazine, we published a vision of an **Innovation Hub Utopia/Dystopia** complete with everything you'd ever/never want. Since then, we created a spin-off on how to make a **Work From Home Utopia/Dystopia**. This illustration of a digital twin Innovation Utopia/Dystopia completes the trifecta of the "new normal" hybrid experience by including the virtual dimension—a place with blurred boundaries that we seem to be clocking into endlessly.

56% OF EMPLOYEES WORKING FROM HOME SAY THEY WANT TO CONTINUE TO WORK VIRTUALLY BETWEEN 1-5 DAYS A WEEK[1]

74% OF EMPLOYEES WORKING FROM HOME SAY THE PEOPLE ARE WHAT THEY MISS MOST ABOUT THE OFFICE[1]

WAR ROOM — ASYNCHRONOUS
Create a safe space with knowledge walls for the full team to contribute from anywhere, any time.

CHAMBER — PRESENCE
Start sessions with everyone unmuted to mark their entry. The first 5 minutes of "jib-jab" should be wildly human.

SANDBOX — IMMERSIVE
Gamify the release of new products to test them with real people gallivanting in a virtual space.

ZOO — INCLUSIVE
Facilitate breakouts that have a range of voices so the discourse is an exciting mix of perspectives.

LAB — MIXED REALITY
Send a kit of materials to participants' homes to bridge the physical with the virtual.

PLATFORM — SOAP-BOXED
Open the dialogue for 1-on-1 candid conversations, and seize this moment to amplify more voices.

SPEAKEASY — SPONTANEOUS
Provide opportunities for serendipitous interactions by selecting randomized, round-robin meeting features.

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Can this crisis actually help us amplify diversity of thought and inclusion within our digital environments? Can this virtual experience ultimately humanize work no matter where it takes place?
The acceleration of change right now is fierce. Those who curate their virtual world to be a strategic hub for transformation can begin to successfully "unquarantine" their innovation culture.

The secret to success is to pick your virtual platforms intentionally; don't assume the default virtual configuration is the best way to foster an innovative culture. The key is having an empathetic, emotionally intelligent facilitator who carefully considers the features available in each digital tool and leverages cross-platform capabilities to create a tailored virtual experience.

THE DONT's WHEN DIGITALLY TWINNING YOUR INNOVATION HUB

CHAMBER — ABSENCE
Keeping the forced mute default discourages participation when attendees are silenced from the start.

WAR ROOM — SYNCHRONIZED
Overly "PowerPointing" limits collective contribution and constrains the presentation experience.

ZOO — EXCLUSIVE
Privatizing chat channels with excess password protection limits diversity of thoughts shared.

LAB — NO REALITY
Relying only on virtual visuals omits any tactile stimulation, making the scene feel flat.

SANDBOX — CONTRIVED
Gathering feedback through only one heavily controlled source can lead to false results.

PLATFORM — BOILER-PLATED
Directly reading from talking points feels even more scripted in a screened-in environment.

SPEAKEASY — BOOKED
Arranging forced "happy hour" conversations with no programming and too many attendees makes for an impersonal event.

[1] *U.S. Work From Home Survey 2020, Gensler Research Institute*

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