



DIGITAL FREEDOM CHALLENGE

EXPANDING AUTONOMY AT WORK

POWERED BY



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Gartner



THE CHALLENGE:

DRAMATICALLY INCREASE PERSONAL FREEDOM

Over the last decade, digital, social, and mobile technologies have greatly expanded the scope of personal freedom. Thanks to digital technologies and social media, we have more choice than ever in our personal lives; but at work, not so much. To be sure, many companies have adopted “Enterprise 2.0” technology and tools to drive internal collaboration and engagement with external communities, but there’s little evidence that these new tools have significantly enlarged the scope of employee autonomy.

That’s no surprise. The broad majority of organizations operate according to bureaucratic practices and principles designed to maximize standardization, specialization, predictability, and efficiency. In other words, most of our organizations are designed

for control—controlling people, controlling information and controlling budgets. Control is important, but all too often the pursuit of alignment and conformance undermines the sort of innovation and engagement that drives success in the 21st century.

To build an organization that is adaptable, innovative and engaging, individuals need freedom. They must be able to pursue their passions, experiment with new ideas, ignore the hierarchy, make small bets, challenge conventional thinking, choose their work, and maybe even elect their own leaders.

Without freedom, there will be little initiative, creativity or passion. That’s why freedom can’t be a luxury; it can’t be a privilege doled out in tiny increments. Freedom is a right.

THE CHALLENGE (CONTINUED)

Of course, unleashing freedom inside organizations is a tough challenge because it requires dismantling deeply-embedded management principles and practices. But it's even tougher to expand autonomy without exploding the important efficiencies and discipline that are a product of control.

Thanks to digital technologies, we can imagine organizations that transcend the tradeoff between freedom and control—that are large but not bureaucratic, focused but not myopic, efficient but not inflexible, and disciplined but not disempowering. We believe that embracing and experimenting with

emerging digital technologies and the powerful principles that power them—from openness to diversity to flexibility—will lead to new and infinitely more empowering management practices.

With the **Digital Freedom Challenge**, we're looking for real-world case studies and bold ideas that demonstrate how digital technologies and the principles that undergird them can help us to **dramatically increase the freedom of individuals** to connect, contribute, choose, create, and challenge—while still affording control where it's needed.



HOW DO YOU EXPAND INDIVIDUAL AUTONOMY INSIDE YOUR ORGANI- ZATION?

TELL US WHAT YOU'RE DOING
TO CULTIVATE . . .

THE FREEDOM TO CONNECT

All too often, a person's sphere of collaboration and communication is defined by organizational silos and sharply defined roles. Direct, transparent, person-to-person connection is the liberating power of social media.

THE FREEDOM TO CONTRIBUTE

In too many organizations, an individual's expertise is assumed—what a person has to give is closely linked with their formal title or level. There is so much hunger for greater voice and participation. The leaders who figure out how to unleash and harness it will win.

THE FREEDOM TO CREATE

Most organizations are structurally and culturally biased against risk-taking and deviation of any kind. Organizations that lay out the welcome mat for the new, the different, the irregular—will be the ones that reap irregular rewards.

THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

Job roles and tasks are often assigned from the top-down, and all-too-often limited to a narrowly-defined area of responsibility. The most vibrant organizations are working to give individuals more choice over where they work, when they work, how they work, with whom they work, and what they work on.

THE FREEDOM TO CHALLENGE

Large organizations tend to make life uncomfortable for misfits and rabble-rousers. Organizations must become more hospitable to dissent and deviance in order to stay tuned and adapt to all the changes in the environment.

THE 5 DIGITAL FREEDOMS

1 .. CONNECTION

Social media opens up endless possibilities for connection. The ability to reach others—instantaneously, without friction—is now woven into the fabric of daily life. Twitter opens the door to the famous, the powerful, the iconic—anyone can access their hero's intimate, minute-to-minute thoughts. Applications from LinkedIn to Instagram, to Pinterest allow individuals to easily share their experiences and passions with friends, colleagues, and the world. Because it's easier to connect, it's also much easier for people to organize. Global collaboration was once the sole province of global corporations. Today anyone can connect with anyone else, anywhere else. The natural and ever-more powerful unit of organization is the community of shared passion.

2 .. CONTRIBUTION

In the digital-powered world, contributions are more important than credentials. All ideas compete on an equal footing. Wikipedia is the most potent example of the power of individual contribution: in just over a decade, the free, user-generated encyclopedia has grown to more than ten million articles in 273 languages edited by hundreds of thousands of passionate

contributors from around the world. Sites like Reddit and Fanfiction.net have become vibrant hubs on the basis of user contribution. The voice of the “crowd” is shaping every kind of institution all over the world. In the United States, for example, the White House has created a website that allows any citizen to contribute a petition on any subject important to them.

3 .. CREATION

Digital technologies promote the possibility that we are all inventors, producers, even artists. There is literally nothing stopping people from sharing their ideas and creations. Anyone can post a blog on WordPress or Tumblr. Anyone with a video camera on their phone can instantly upload a video to YouTube that has the potential to change the course of human history (or at least changes the conversation). Today, an eight-year-old fashion blogger or an 80-year-old first-time novelist can have the sort of impact that was previously impossible without help from the mainstream media.

4 .. CHOICE

Social media is opt-in by design. When people have a near-infinite number of communities they can join, sites they can pay attention to,

“friends” they can follow—they select those that interest them most. Whether contributing micro-loans to entrepreneurs in the developing world via Kiva.org, contributing restaurant reviews to Yelp.com, meeting up with their cohort through Meetup.org, or canvassing online on behalf of a favorite political candidate, individuals express themselves, promote their favorites, and help to determine the fate of brands, businesses, and candidates based on their participation. The menu of affiliation is endless and the freedom to choose offers up new opportunities and challenges to individuals and institutions alike.

5 .. CHALLENGE

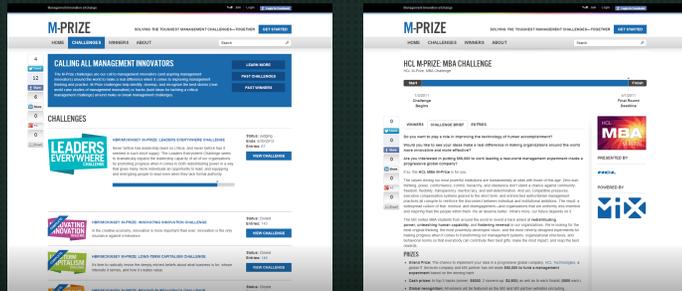
People are opinionated and passionate. With their voices connected and amplified on the social media, they are powerful—and astonishingly quick to mobilize against decisions contrary to the community's interests. From the citizen activists in Cairo's Tahrir Square to the protesters in Wall Street's Zuccotti Park to the Pirate Parties across Europe to the disgruntled customers of United, digital technologies ensure that people—especially those with a dissenting opinion—will always find a way to be heard.

THE MIX M-PRIZE

The M-Prize challenges are our call to management innovators (and aspiring management innovators) around the world to **make a real difference** when it comes to improving management thinking and practice.

M-Prize challenges help to surface and develop the world's most progressive management practices and most provocative ideas—and to connect and celebrate the individuals and initiatives from every corner of the world who are reinventing the “technology of accomplishment.”

Over the last two years, our M-Prize challenges have generated hundreds of contributions from leaders and in-the-trenches innovators from every realm of endeavor and every corner of the globe—including global industry leaders, vibrant startups, public sector organizations, academic institutions, and cross-sector initiatives. 



www.mixprize.org

QUALITY, QUANTITY, AND DIVERSITY

GLOBAL COMPANIES



PUBLIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS



ACADEMIA



HOW TO PLAY

HOW ARE SUBMISSIONS MADE?

You can enter the challenge in two ways:

Share a Story

A real-world case study of a single practice, an initiative, or a broad-based transformation

Submit a Hack

A disruptive idea, radical fix, or experimental design

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Participation is open to any registered member of the MIX (registration is free and only takes a few seconds). MIXers can team up to co-author submissions.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE?

First round [August 20 to December 20, 2013]

Participants submit Stories and Hacks in response to the challenge brief, for review by judges and the MIX community.

Second round [January 6 to January 27, 2014]

Finalists will be announced and will have time to improve upon their entries based on feedback from our panel of judges, the MIX editorial team, and the community. Winners will be announced in early February.

WHO WILL JUDGE THE ENTRIES?

Entries will be evaluated by the MIX editorial team and our panel of leading management thinkers and progressive practitioners, taking MIX community feedback into account. The panel of judges will be finalized early in the first round of the challenge.

PREVIOUS JUDGES INCLUDE:

Scott Anthony / Managing Director, Innosight Asia-Pacific; author, *The Little Black Book of Innovation*

Julian Birkinshaw / Professor, London Business School; author, *Reinventing Management*

John Boudreau / Center for Effective Organizations, University of Southern California

Tim Brown / CEO & President, IDEO

Marcus Buckingham / Speaker; author, *Now, Discover Your Strengths*

Henry Chesbrough / Professor, UC Berkeley; author, *Open Innovation*

Jeff DeGraff / Professor University of Michigan; author, *Innovation You*

Gilberto Garcia / Chief Innovation Officer, CEMEX

Lynda Gratton / Professor, London Business School; author *The Shift*

Gary Hamel / Co-founder, the MIX; author, *The Future of Management*

Umair Haque / Director, Havas Media Labs; author, *The New Capitalist Manifesto*

Eric Hellweg / Digital/Editorial Director, Harvard Business Review Online

John Kao / Chairman, Institute for Large Scale Innovation; author, *Innovation Nation*

Terri Kelly / President and CEO, W.L. Gore & Associates

Tom Kiely / Director of Sustainability and Social Responsibility, McKinsey & Company

Polly LaBarre / Co-founder and editorial director, the MIX; author, *Mavericks at Work*

Tom Malone / Professor, MIT Sloan School of Management; founding director, MIT Center for Collective Intelligence

James Manyika / Director, McKinsey Global Institute

Mark McDonald / Head of Research, Gartner Executive Programs; author, *The Social Organization*

Chris Meyer / Founder, Monitor Talent; author, *Standing On the Sun*

Vineet Nayar / CEO, HCL Technologies

Tim O'Reilly / Founder and CEO, O'Reilly Media

Colin Price / Director of Global Organization Practice, McKinsey & Company

Dov Seidman / Founder & CEO LRN; author, *How*

Clay Shirky / Arts Professor and Distinguished Writer in Residence, NYU; author, *Cognitive Surplus*

Jim Stikeleather / Chief Innovation Officer, Dell Services

Jim Whitehurst / CEO, Red Hat

WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE CHALLENGE

BECAUSE YOU AIM HIGH

There may be some folks who are content to work on trivial problems, but you're not one of them. You're excited by the chance to bring your experience and imagination to this important, global-scale challenge.

BECAUSE YOU WANT YOUR INNOVATION TO SPREAD

Progressive management practices deserve to be emulated, and radical yet practical ideas should be put into practice. Finalists and winners will receive recognition as management innovators on the MIX, Fortune.com, and by Gartner.

BECAUSE YOU WANT TO MAKE A WORLD-CLASS CONTRIBUTION

Every radical new management practice starts out as a courageous "What if?" During the course of M-Prize challenges, world-renowned experts and like-minded practitioners will give you valuable feedback to make your story even more compelling, and turn your "far out" idea into a real-world management breakthrough.

BECAUSE IT'S NOT EASY BEING A RENEGADE

Trailblazing is hard and lonely work. During this M-Prize challenge, you'll discover a community of like-minded management rebels who know what it takes to fight the status quo and win—and who are eager to share their hard-won wisdom with others.

BECAUSE YOU WANT TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Tackling the urgent challenge of reinventing management for the 21st century is everybody's business. You don't have to be a guru or a CEO—or even a "manager" by title—to be an effective management innovator. MIXers aren't solely interested in their own or their organization's success—their highest ambition is to change the game for everybody.



MIX TIP:

Post your entry early to get more visibility, more feedback, and more time to fine-tune your entry before the deadline.



HELP SPREAD

The more people participate in this challenge, the greater the chance that we'll be able to build a comprehensive picture of how to create deep innovation capabilities in our organization. You can play a big role by activating your personal networks to build enthusiasm for the Digital Freedom Challenge. Here are some ideas to get you started:

THE WORD

Send an email to your team and colleagues introducing the challenge and encouraging them to enter (attach this Cheat Sheet to your note).

Promote the competition through social media channels—this includes Facebook, Twitter, and your corporate social network.

Post updates and reminders on your intranet or internal portal.

Nominate a company or person you think we should invite to participate—to do so, drop us an email at:

challenge@mixprize.org



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

VISIT: www.mixprize.org/m-prize/digital-freedom

EMAIL: challenge@mixprize.org