

The Innovation Farm

A Modern Replacement
for the Innovation Funnel



Lisbon October 2022



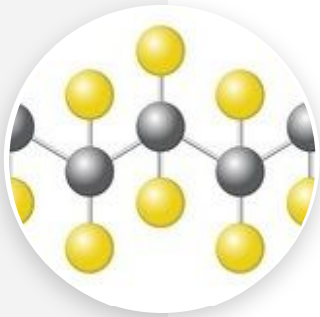
Jay Erickson

,Partner, Chief Innovation
Officer



Gen Gurczenski

Emerging Technology Innovation,
Experience Architect



Founded to create products around PTFE

1958

First products in space - cables for Telstar satellite

1962



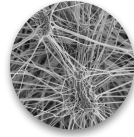
First GORE-TEX® Vascular Graft is

1975



Discovery of ePTFE

1969



GORE-TEX® fabric launches

1976



ePTFE sutures

1986



ELIXIR® guitar strings

1997



Fabric woven from GORE® Fiber for retractable roof at Wimbledon Centre Court



45 million implants milestone

2019



Core foundational innovations - PTFE in 1958 > ePTFE in 1969

- Cascade of diverse innovative applications and materials science

Unique organizational structure

- power of small teams
- lattice structure

New pressures to innovate

- competitive pressure
- larger org = less nimble
- rise of digital
- climate change





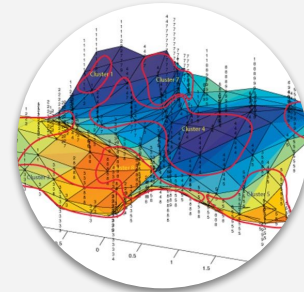
Our Mandate

Leverage emerging digital technology to inhabit the future by evolving products, embracing complexity and solving customer problems

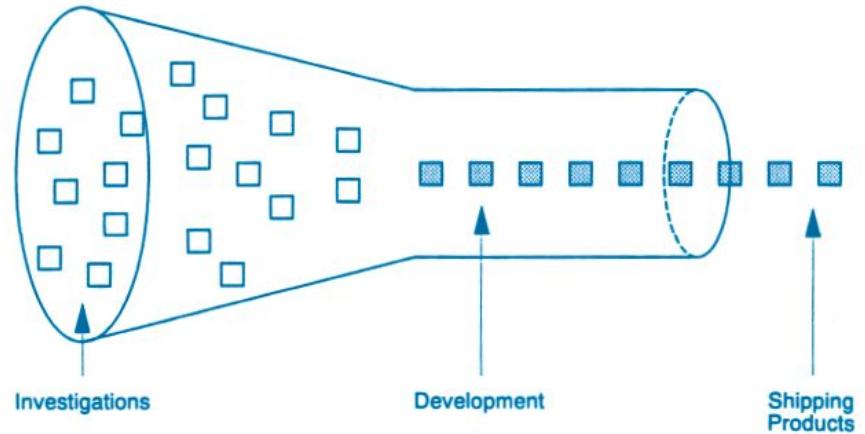
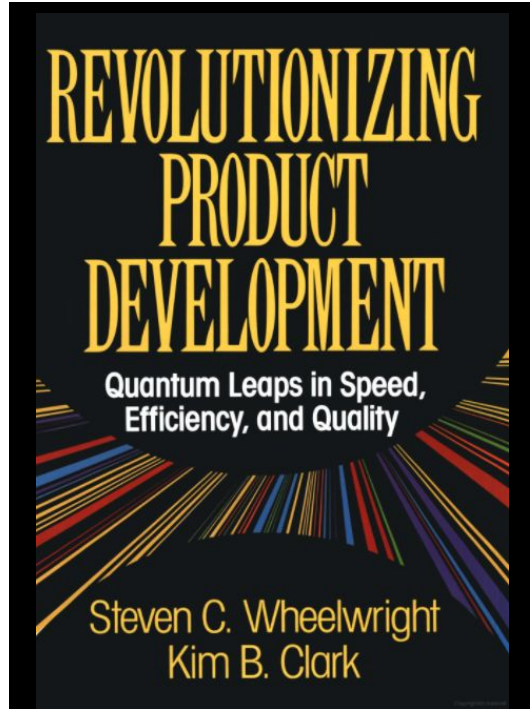


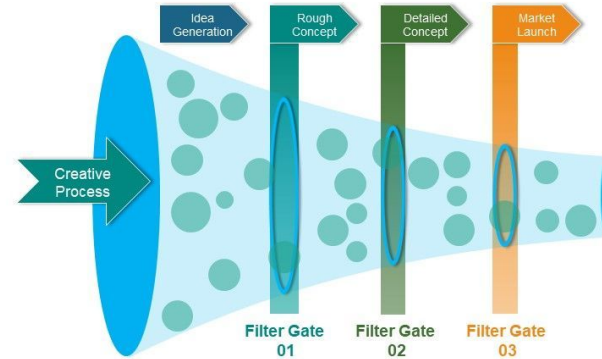
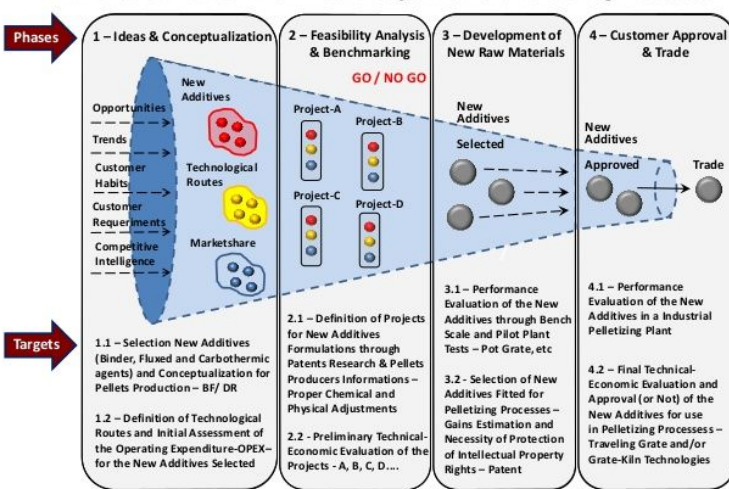
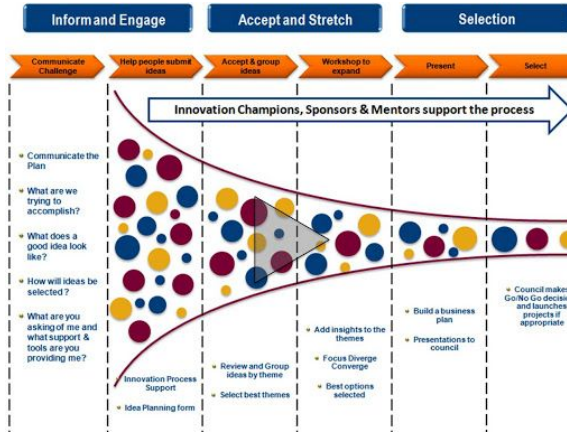
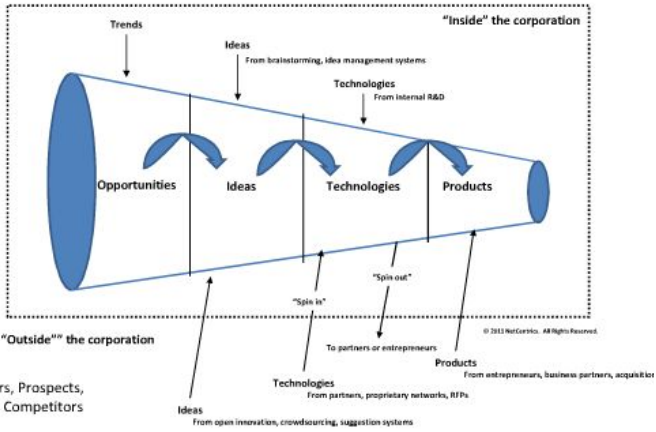
How can we move from linear thinking to supporting complex, graph-based systems?

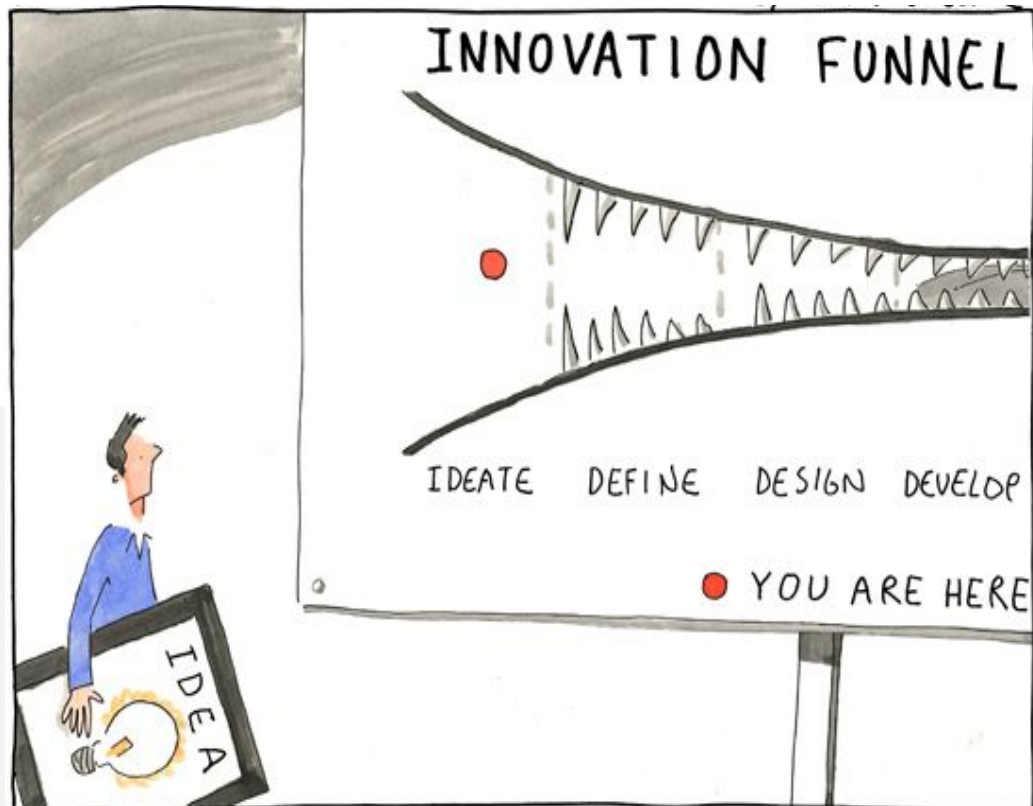
Bob Murray / GORE / Innovation Champion



1992 › The Innovation Funnel is Born

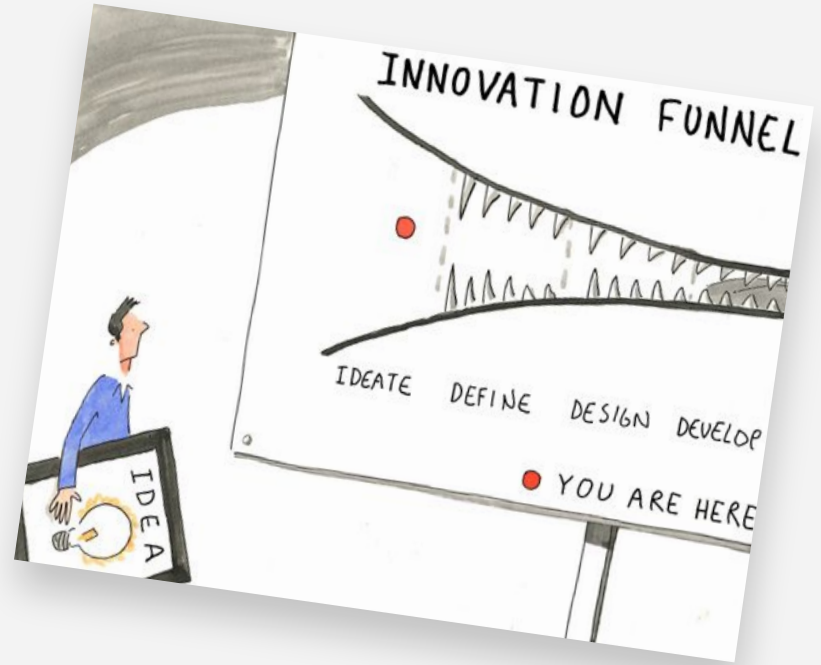






Funnel Problems

- Focus is on **picking winners not creating winners**
- **Admin is at the core** not ideas or product development
- Senior **expertise becomes focused on evaluation and not creation** or improvement
- Stage **gates become clogs**
- **Low tolerance for risk** or faltering





Funnel to **Farm**



20th Century
Industrial Era

21st Century
Digital Era



Nature ›

All Time Top #1 Champion Innovator

The Original Complex System

- Non-centralized rulesets
- Competitive forces
- Selective processes
- Mutation = Innovation

Ideation

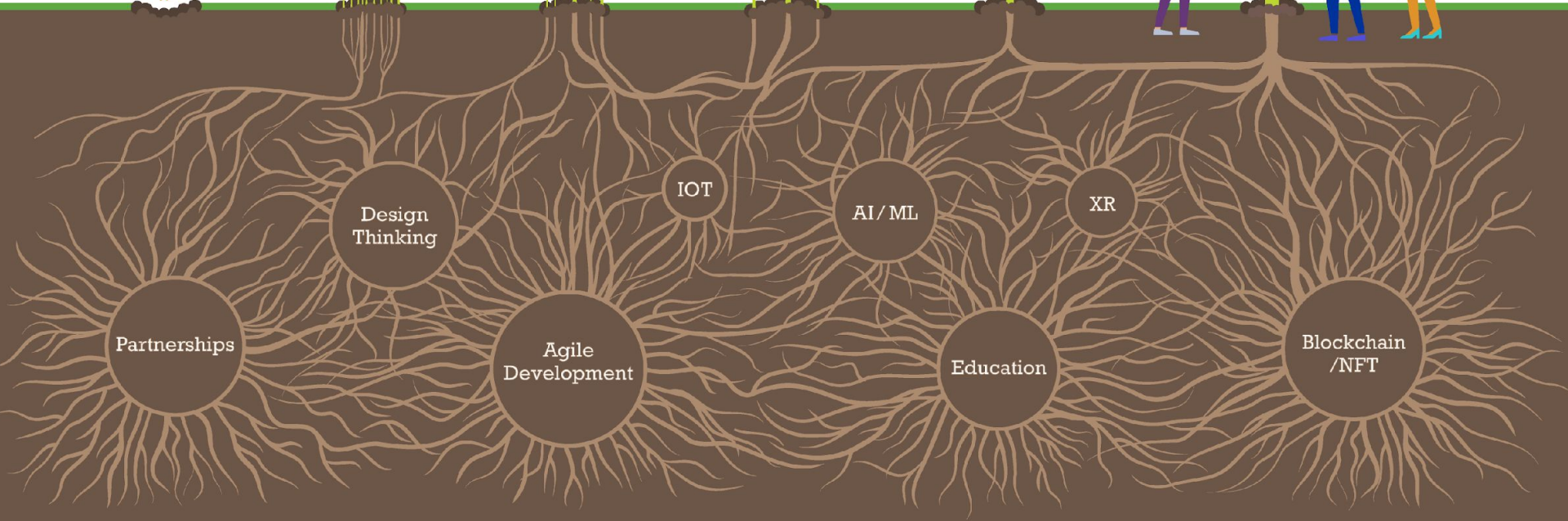
Landscape Analysis
Proto-personas
Brainstorming & Workshop
Workshop Synthesis
Validation Testing
Synthesis of Findings

Understand Value

Prove Out Concept

Plan for Scale

Transition for implementation



Design Thinking

IOT

AI/ML

XR

Partnerships

Agile Development

Education

Blockchain /NFT



Farm Features

- Harness natural forces with **intentional evolution**
- End goal is to harvest the fruit but **investing in good seeds, inputs, soil health**, etc
- **Ideas have intrinsic drive** to grow, evolve, flower, fruit
- **Transparent** and **navigable**
- **Friendlier image / interface** (not trapping your idea / project in my funnel)
- **Cross pollination & grafting**
- **Natural selection, weeding and thinning**
- **“Failed” plantings become compost and contribute to soil** health (expect < 5% of concepts to fruit)
- Allows for **highly variable growth** and **harvest times**

Marketing

Functional IT

Legal

XR Model Warehouse

Finance

Customer Problem #1

New Product

IOT solutions

Emerging Technology Innovation

AI/ML

Key Partnership

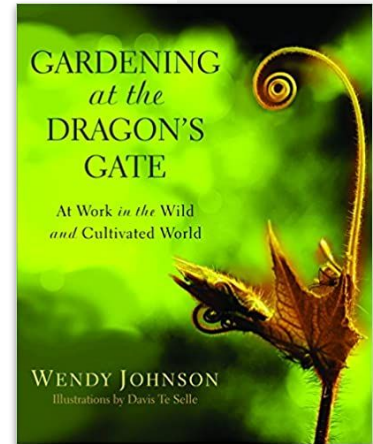




Space for The Wild

"My first principle is to learn gardening from the wilderness outside the garden gate. In honor of wildness inside and outside the garden gate, every spring **I leave a random corner of our garden untended.**"

-Wendy Johnson





Funnel

Cutting and slashing

Feels like a race

Live or die by linear (creative) ROI models

Innovation infrastructure is consumptive

Competitive

Artifact of industrial era

Rigidly defined swimlanes

VS



Farm

Growing and evolving

Variable speeds OK

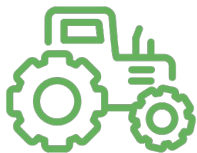
Projects/ideas have intrinsic value

Innovation infrastructure is generative

Collaborative

Human and timeless

Space for unexpected, organic emergence



Operationalizing the Farm

- Fund the farm **collaboratively** (CSA / DAO)
- Differing growth rates can add complexity to centralized stage gates
 - Empower farmers to **do their own weeding**
 - Establish **clear OKRs and horizons** for each farmer / planting
- **Rename your kanban** columns / stages (seed, sprouts, seedling, growing, fruiting, etc)
- **Monitor soil** health
 - establish **feedback loops** from stakeholders, innovation team, internal customer
 - monitor **industry trends** for emergent technologies
- Invest in internal communications and **storytelling**



The screenshot shows the website header with the GORE logo on the left. The main navigation bar includes a globe icon, the text "Emerging Technology Innovation", and a dropdown menu with "Following" and "English". Below the navigation are links for "Home", "Current ETI Projects", "Community & Education", and "Inhabiting the Future". The main content area features a large video player on the left with the title "AI/ML L&L: A short history, present developments, and future outlook w/ Prof. David R..." and a "Watch now" button. To the right are four smaller video thumbnails: "The Metaverse and GORE Mountain", "First We Take Manhattan" - How NFTs are...", "AI/ML Lunch & Learn: Dr. Nina Kottler on...", and "Tokenizing Carbon".

Think of Gore as an innovation farm.

Emerging Technology Innovation's (ETI) role on this farm is as a greenhouse.

The greenhouse cultivates seeds of promising ideas with soil rich in:

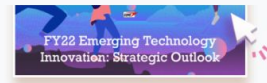
- Emerging technologies
- Cross-disciplinary collaboration
- Early stage prototyping

Seeds that show promise are then taken out to the field where the full resources of the farm grow them to bear fruit.

On the farm, ETI is a distinct but connected part of IT.

IT maintains the infrastructure needed to run the larger farm.

ETI focuses on creating a space to nurture early-stage ideas that may one day be supported by IT.



Emerging Technology Innovation is *inhabiting the future* by evolving products, embracing complexity and solving customer problems.

[Discover ETI's Strategy](#)

Thank you!



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