

My Rubric for Innovation

By Tim Sharp

This moment in history certainly feels like we are being forced "to boldly go where no one has gone before," as we "explore strange new worlds." Lately, in addition to *Star Trek*, I have called upon another one of my favorite movie scenes for inspiration during a forced season of innovation.

This favorite moment is from the 1995 film *Apollo 13*. In this scene, it is discovered that there is a potentially fatal filter problem on the orbiting Apollo 13 rocket that must be corrected. The problem is, there are no replacement parts onboard. In a moment that calls for pure innovation, the engineers back at ground control gather to find a solution. Their instructions? Find a way to solve the problem using a bag of random objects that are aboard Apollo 13. There is nothing in the bag the engineers are given that would suggest a fix to the critical problem, yet under pressure, a solution is innovated.

The reason I like this scene so much is that in this short tableau, all of the characteristics and elements that form my rubric for innovation are in evidence:

1. The motivation for innovating comes through as empathy for **PEOPLE** who are in need of a solution to a real problem.
2. The spirit of empathy is offered with **OPTIMISM** that there will be an answer to the problem.
3. The methodology of innovation is found in **EXPERIMENTATION** toward finding an emergent solution.
4. **TENSION** builds as the group ramps up for a challenging process of collaboration.
5. The big **IDEA** is eventually found.
6. The **COLLABORATIVE** team turns an idea into reality.

For this time of innovation, this is my **POETIC** dashboard: People, Optimism, Experimentation, Tension, Idea, Collaboration.