

NEW RANKING OF BUSINESS GURUS ANNOUNCED: HARVARD INNOVATION EXPERT TOPS THINKERS50

Who is the most influential living management thinker? The Thinkers50 2011 provides the answer. The biennial global ranking is a guide to which thinkers and ideas are in – and which have been consigned to business history. So which thinkers make the grade in the 2011 ranking announced today?

No. 1. The Innovation Guru: According to the all-new Thinkers50, the most influential living management thinker in the world is Professor Clayton Christensen of Harvard Business School. Christensen, the author of several best-selling books including *The Innovator's Dilemma*, tops the list for the first time. "I never would have imagined I would merit an award like this. I am so honoured and so grateful," said Christensen when presented with the award by Thinkers50 co-founder Des Dearlove in Boston.

Christensen's influence on the business world has been profound. In *The Innovator's Dilemma*, he looked at why companies struggle with radical innovation in their markets. The book introduced the idea of disruptive technologies and disruptive innovation to a generation of managers. The innovator's dilemma is that the very management practices that have allowed them to become industry leaders also make it hard for companies to develop the disruptive technologies that ultimately steal away their markets.

More recently, Christensen has applied his ideas to healthcare and education to show how enlightened management thinking can tackle the big issues facing society. Christensen also picks up the 2011 T50 Innovation Award.

No. 2. Blue Ocean Thinkers: At two in the 2011 ranking are the INSEAD professors W Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne. Kim and Mauborgne, Korean and American respectively, are the authors of *Blue Ocean Strategy* and a string of highly influential *Harvard Business Review* articles. (They also collect the 2011 T50 Award for Strategy.) *Blue Ocean Strategy* has sold over two million copies, and has been embraced by companies, not-for-profits and national governments around the world.

In 2010, for example, the government of Malaysia launched the third wave of its National Blue Ocean Strategy. A key target is building rural infrastructure – providing housing and water supplies for the rural poor. The Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Razak has said publicly that BOS has already proved useful in several government programs. "Blue Ocean Strategy is a management tool which can be applied in the government's administrative context as it enables us to think out of the box with good results," he said in a recent interview. "It will be expanded to other initiatives."

No. 3. The \$300 Man: At No.3, with his highest appearance in the ranking to date is the Indian-born thinker Vijay Govindarajan. VG, as he is better known, is a professor at the Tuck School of Business in New Hampshire. In 2008, Govindarajan joined General Electric (GE) for 24 months as the company's first Professor in Residence and Chief Innovation Consultant. He is the originator (with GE CEO Jeff Immelt, and Chris Trimble) of the concept of

reverse innovation – where innovation takes place in emerging markets and then is brought back into developed countries. Reverse innovation is rated by the *Harvard Business Review* as one of the ten big ideas of the decade.

An August 2010 blog by Govindarajan and Christian Sarkar challenging designers to create a house for \$300 set off a campaign to re-invent housing for the world's poorest people – which earned Govindarajan the CK Prahalad Breakthrough Idea Award.

No. 4. Great Expectations: At No. 4 is Jim Collins, a former Stanford professor whose book credits include *Built to Last* (with Jerry Porras); and *Good to Great*. Collins' new book *Great by Choice* (written with Morten Hansen), came out last month (October 2011), and seeks to understand why some companies thrive in unstable environments while others falter.

No. 5: May the Forces Be With You: Strategy heavyweight Michael Porter is at No. 5. Porter's Five Forces Framework is taught in every business school in the world, and its creator, a Harvard professor and former T50 winner, makes a return to the top 10. An expert on competitiveness, Porter has advised the UK government among others. Most recently, he has championed the concept of Shared Value, arguing that firms should generate value for society as well as shareholders.

No.6: Designed to Think: Also making his way up the list is Roger Martin, dean of the Joseph L. Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, and champion of integrative thinking. His latest book *Fixing the Game* rails against the wrongheaded decoupling of the "real" market (the business of designing, making and selling products and services) from the "expectations" market (the business of trading stocks, options and complex derivatives).

No. 7. Coach Class: At seven is corporate America's favourite executive coach Marshall Goldsmith. Straight talking Goldsmith combines a no-nonsense approach with a Buddhist philosophy. The author of the best-sellers *What Got You Here Won't Get You There* and *Mojo*, doesn't charge if his coaching doesn't work.

No. 8. Playing to his Strengths: Also powering up the ranking is Marcus Buckingham. Buckingham is best known for championing the idea that we should play to our strengths rather than worry about our weaknesses. The charismatic author of a string of best-sellers including *First, Break all the Rules* (with Curt Coffman); and *Now Discover Your Strengths* (with Donald O. Clifton) enters the top 10 at number eight.

No. 9. Wiki-thinker: In the top 10 for the first time, too, is the Canadian digital guru Don Tapscott. Tapscott, who was also shortlisted for the T50 Global Village Award, is probably best known for his 2006 book *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything* co-authored with Anthony Williams. Tapscott revisited the theme with *Macrowikinomics: Rebooting Business and the World* (shortlisted for the T50 Book Award), revealing how

mass collaboration is being used by businesses, organizations, and individuals to revolutionize the way we live and learn.

No.10. What the Guru Saw and Other Adventures: Tenth position goes to another Canadian, Malcolm Gladwell. Gladwell is an award winning staff writer for the *New Yorker* magazine. He is also the author of a string of best-selling books, including *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Make a Big Difference* (2000); *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking* (2005); *Outliers: The Story of Success* (2008); and *What the Dog Saw And Other Adventures* (2009).

So what are the other stories to come out of the new ranking?

Female thinkers: The big story is the arrival of an increasing number of women thinkers in the top 50. The Thinkers50 is male, pale and stale no longer. In 2011, there are 11 women in the ranking, compared with just five in 2009. At joint second (with writing partner Chan Kim) INSEAD's Renée Mauborgne is the highest placed woman ever. Also moving up are Lynda Gratton of London Business School, up from 18 to 12; Harvard's Rosabeth Moss Kanter – up to 25; Tammy Erickson up from 46 to 33. Newcomers in 2011 are Sylvia Ann Hewlett who goes straight in at 11; Linda Hill (16); Teresa Amabile (18); Rita McGrath (19); the Cuban-born thinker Herminia Ibarra (28); Amy Edmondson (35); and Columbia Business School's Sheena Iyengar (48).

“When you consider that women constitute half the world's population, they are still under represented in the Thinkers50,” says Thinkers50 co-creator Des Dearlove, “but they are making serious inroads. We knew there were a number of women just outside the top 50 because we were picking them up on our guru radar – people like Linda Scott from Saïd Business School and Haiyan Wang from the China India Institute. What is particularly impressive is that so many have come straight into the top 25.”

The Asian Invasion: The other big story is the surge of Asian thinkers. Korean-born W Chan Kim is the highest placed at joint No. 2. Vijay Govindarajan and Harvard Business School dean Nitin Nohria at 3 and 13, respectively, are two of seven Indian-born thinkers to make the 2011 ranking. Joining Govindarajan and Nohria, are London Business School's Nirmalya Kumar (26); Pankaj Ghemawat author of *World 3.0* (27); Vineet Nayar, CEO of the Indian high-tech company HCL and the highest placed practitioner in the ranking (40); Harvard's Rakesh Khurana (41); and quality expert Subir Chowdhury (50).

Just missing out on the Thinkers50 but on the radar are two female, Chinese-born thinkers, Haiyan Wang; and the Chinese CEO and author, Dong Minghzu; the Japanese head of MIT's Media Lab, Joi Ito; the Korean business woman Soo Joo Kim; and happiness guru Srikumar Rao.

Globe Trotting Gurus: The 2011 Thinkers50 is also the most international ever. No fewer than 10 different nationalities feature in the top 50 – with thinkers from the US, Canada, Cyprus, Korea, Holland, the UK, Greece, India,

Sweden, and Cuba. North Americans are still the largest grouping, but in 2011, no fewer than 23 non-Americans make the ranking – compared with just 10 in the first ever Thinkers50 in 2001.

Canada Calling: Remarkably, the other nationality punching well above its demographic weight is Canada, with four thinkers in the top 50 (and three in the top ten). Roger Martin, Malcolm Gladwell, Don Tapscott and Henry Mintzberg all come from north of the border.

Changing of the Guru Guard: The new ranking also signals a passing of the baton to a new generation of gurus. There are 19 newcomers to this year's ranking: Sylvia Ann Hewlett; Nitin Nohria; Linda Hill; Teresa Amabile; Rita McGrath; Richard Rumelt; Jeffrey Pfeffer; Nirmalya Kumar; Pankaj Ghemawat; Dan Pink; Vineet Nayar; Herminia Ibarra; Henry Chesbrough; Sheena Iyengar; Ken Robinson; Andrew Kakabadse; Stew Friedman; and Subir Chowdhury. Only 13 of the original 50 from 2001 still make the cut.

Fading but not forgotten is the evergreen Tom Peters, who drops five places to number 24. Henry Mintzberg, arch critic of the MBA rises three places to number 30. Change expert John Kotter is up six places to 34. Harvard's Chris Argyris; the doyen of leadership, Warren Bennis; marketing guru, Philip Kotler; and Irish-born Charles Handy are elevated to the status of Thinkers50 Emeritus.

Lifetime Achievement: Charles Handy is also singled out for the first-ever Thinkers50 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Comeback Kids: The Thinkers50 welcomes back Fons Trompenaars and Seth Godin who were both in earlier rankings, but missed out in 2009.

“Interesting times demand interesting ideas,” say Thinkers50 creators Stuart Crainer and Des Dearlove. “There is a real sense that how we view business and how business is practiced is changing. The ideas of the people featured in the Thinkers50 make a difference on the factory floor and in the C-suites of the world. In business, ideas matter because they can be the difference between mediocre performance and competitive advantage.”

The full listing of the 2011 Thinkers50 is now available at www.thinkers50.com and at www.hbr.org.

About the Thinkers50

The definitive global ranking of management thinkers is published every two years. The 2009 winner was CK Prahalad. The previous winners were Michael Porter (2005) and Peter Drucker (2001 and 2003). The ranking is based on voting at the Thinkers50 website and input from a team of advisers led by Stuart Crainer and Des Dearlove. For the 2011 ranking more than 10,000 votes were cast.

The Thinkers50 2011 advisers drawn from America, Asia, the Middle East and Europe are: Mohi Ahmed, Corporate Brand Office, Fujitsu; Mary Glenn,

Associate Publisher, Business & Finance, McGraw Hill; Santiago Iniguez, Dean, IE Business School; Mark Jenkins, Research Director, Cranfield School of Management; Kevin Kelly, CEO, Heidrick & Struggles; Josh Macht, Group Publisher, Harvard Business Review Group; Steve Mostyn, Associate Fellow, Saïd Business School, at the University of Oxford; Dr Ali Qassim Al Lawati of Abu Dhabi's Department of Economic Development; and Richard Stagg, Editorial Director of Financial Times Prentice Hall.

The Thinkers50 has ten established criteria by which thinkers are evaluated -- originality of ideas; practicality of ideas; presentation style; written communication; loyalty of followers; business sense; international outlook; rigor of research; impact of ideas and the elusive guru factor.

About Stuart Crainer and Des Dearlove

The Thinkers50 concept and ranking is owned by Des Dearlove and Stuart Crainer who are the founders of Suntop Media. They describe their work as "bringing ideas to life". They are adjunct professors at IE Business School. Stuart is editor of *Business Strategy Review*. Des is an associate fellow of Oxford University's Saïd Business School. Stuart and Des are the authors of more than 15 books available in 20 languages. Former columnists to *The (London) Times*, they are editors of *The Financial Times Handbook of Management*. For more information visit www.craingerdearlove.com.

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