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## Focus on Innovation

Focus on Innovation is a monthly electronic newsletter designed to provoke thoughts and ideas on how to bring innovation to life within the organizations in which we work.

### For Those on the Run

Being able to see ideas that others miss takes not only inspiration, but persistence and perseverance. This month's newsletter presents a case study of one company who was able to "see ideas that others missed" in developing its brand and website.

### Seeing Ideas That Others Miss

*"Big Ideas are so hard to recognize, so fragile, so easy to kill. Don't forget that, all of you who don't have them." - John Elliot, Jr.*

#### Case Study: *Foursight Consulting Group Inc.*

Foursight Consulting Group Inc. is a Management Consulting firm which leverages a strong network of professionals to aid organizations in Developing Human Capital, Enhancing Innovation, Transforming Business Processes and Optimizing IT Investment. This case study highlights what it took to "see ideas that others missed" in the development of their brand and website.

**Situation:** The owners of Foursight Consulting, a husband and wife team, separately are subject matter experts in IT and HR related areas. In December 2004, they decided to incorporate under the name Foursight Consulting Group Inc. Their plan was to launch a website that would explain their various offerings in a cohesive manner, but were struggling with what the positioning of the consolidated services should be; ultimately, they needed help in determining what the Foursight brand should be, in order to develop an efficient and effective website.

**Challenge:** In the beginning, the owners tried to develop their website on their own, quickly coming to the realization that they needed help from an outside consultant. After meeting with one, it was clear that although the owners had developed significant content and a concept of Foursight centering on the idea of "insight" and four areas, they needed help combining their energies under a single brand banner. Upon recommendation from the outside consultant, they contacted a branding specialist.

After meeting with the owners, the branding specialist identified that in trying to unify their brand they faced a number of challenges:

- Their consulting disciplines were not necessarily overlapping in ways obvious to customers;
- The range of skills were very broad, leading to a wide number of potential focus areas; and
- As a result, their proposed messaging was perhaps too broad.

Unfortunately, after completing the analysis the branding specialist could not come up with a clear unified brand for Foursight leaving them with the following options: a single business, which he saw taking significant time and energy to develop into a viable approach; or a network brand. For whatever reason, the branding specialist was unable to discover the ideas that, in hindsight, were just below the surface. Foursight had found itself after one and a half years, many starts and stops, now being told it was "difficult to brand" them, and therefore unable to create a website they could be proud of.

**Action:** In October 2005, the owners sought the help of a colleague; a creative soul and successful entrepreneur. Together, they sifted through the data they had created, brainstormed ideas, and were open to inspiration ...to seeing the possibilities that were overlooked. After much persistence and perseverance, they converged and recruited a marcomm firm to take them to the next step. This firm was able to build on what Foursight had developed, advancing the concept further and exposing the simple tag line "*Seeing tomorrow's ideas... Today*", marrying it with the image of a crystal ball. While this process was not without "creative tension" the end result is a website the owners are proud of - [www.foursightconsulting.com](http://www.foursightconsulting.com). We encourage you to check it out and be the judge.

**Lessons Learned:** There were several lessons learned related to "seeing ideas that others miss" that include:

- *Coming up with best ideas takes time and patience* - expect to hit the wall; big ideas come from persistence and perseverance. Besides, more time means more incubation, which inevitably leads to the best ideas.
- *The Diverge/Converge continuum really works if you apply it*, i.e. fight the tendency to converge too quickly; deliberately diverging, then converging. For more information on this, check out the Creative Problem Solving and Idea Generation Techniques Tool in the Ideas section of our website at [www.foursightconsulting.com/ideas](http://www.foursightconsulting.com/ideas).
- *Expect "creative tension" when working with others.* Peter Senge suggests that "creative tension comes from seeing clearly where we want to be, our "vision," and telling the truth about where we are, our "current reality." The gap between the two generates a natural tension." Seeing ideas that others miss happens when you can manage the tension around the diversity of perspectives team members bring, seeing it as a natural process, and coming out the other end with the best ideas.

## What's the Bottom Line

Seeing ideas that others miss involves persistence and perseverance; you need to be stubborn enough to not give up, while being team oriented enough to allow success to be achieved.



Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to others.  
 If you would like more information about the ideas and topics listed in this issue, contact Judy Laws, Ph.D. at [jlaws@foursightconsulting.com](mailto:jlaws@foursightconsulting.com).

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