

MARCH 2020

The Newsletter of the Institute of Inventors and Innovators

III – The home for inventors. A non-profit organization controlled by inventors, supporting inventors.

III – South Africa Business Award Winner – MEA Markets 2018

<https://www.mea-markets.com/2019-the-institute-of-inventors-and-innovators>



For your diary ...

- ❖ **Our Eureka!MEET** dates are 11 March; 8 April; 13 May; 10 June; 8 July; 12 August; 9 September; 14 October; 11 November ... so set aside the days because attendance is always worthwhile. Details of interesting speakers are confirmed month by month.
- ❖ **PITTP – Pitch it to the Panel** – the next date is **Saturday 9th May 2020**. Do you need confidential advice for your invention? Secure your place now, don't wait until the last minute!
- ❖ Remember the **venue has changed** for Eureka!MEET and PITTP. See below.

Report back: Eureka!MEET February 12th – Steve Schwartz, M D Vandasol Group.

The Ancient Greek aphorism 'Know thyself' was at the basis of this talk so you didn't have to visit the Oracle at Delphi to learn about this truth, you just had to have been at the Eureka!MEET in Randburg. You missed a good talk. Steve is a well-known motivational speaker and trainer and he brought his extensive experience both in corporate and entrepreneurial sales to bear as he packed a lot of very useful information into a short time ... and he encouraged all to ask questions and make comments in between.

**WANTREPRENEUR
TO
ENTREPRENEUR**

He'd also done some homework about inventors and innovators. Being an Inventor has rules attached just as running a business does and Steve pointed out how these two roles overlapped. As an inventor you face challenges, you need to be creative and come up with solutions and it's the same in business. While an Inventor may not think of him/herself as a business person they probably are by default and likewise, while a business person does not think of him/herself as an Inventor in the strict sense of the word, again by default they are. Wearing either or both hats, the skills you draw on to achieve what you do are the same.

WHO ARE YOU? Once you know most of the answers to this open-ended question then you'll know what you can do, what you will do and what you want to do. Think carefully about these.

About who you are.

To start off here is a thought-provoking matrix to get you going!

You don't know what you don't know	You know what you know
You know what you don't know	You don't know what you know

It's really worth your while to consider yourself for a moment. Choose an area of your life and consider each of the boxes alongside by trying to imagine what it is you know or don't know about that area. It will make you smile (maybe) but it will also show you gaps in your knowledge which, in order to both invent and run a business, you will want to fill. Now take another areas and do the same exercise. Get out your personal notebook and record your answers.

About running a business

So once you have done a Stephen Covey on yourself (!) you'll need to consider the elements that make up a 'business' and then hopefully see what each exercise has in common. It could be that you are not an entrepreneur or even a wantrepreneur. It could be that you just want to invent - and there is nothing wrong with that.

Usually, any business will include planning, staff, legal matters, marketing, finances, cash flow, production, customer interface, competition, brand identity, changing market conditions and consumer profiles, impact of technology, social media ... and that's not all. It never really ends, for the dynamics of even the smallest enterprise will keep a person on his/her toes.

Steve dipped in and out of this list asking the questions like 'What are your expectations of yourself? Your business? Others?' Ask yourself – are your expectations real and workable or are they just wishful thinking? When the going gets tough we know what the tough do – but he warned against just thinking of the low hanging fruit. He said it could cost more than you think.



Perception is reality. What your customers perceive to be true about your company or service becomes true ... your world is *not* your customer's world and vice versa. Take care and put yourself in the customers shoes often, do not ass-u-me anything.

About some general observations

Entrepreneurial tips he gave came thick and fast. Know what you know and delegate tasks as appropriate. Know your USP (Unique Selling Point), why you are doing (or want to do) what you are doing. Do what you do best and avoid the trap of *I-can-do-it-all*. Have sufficient backing to start and keep going. Are you committed? Study business practice, Learn about your field. Know more than you need to know. Keep yourself updated, trained and current, your customers will notice. Make good use of social media. Lastly, have a flexible business plan. Work it. Revise it. Use it. And absolutely last, have your VISION framed and hang it in a prominent place.

About the questions we asked.

- ◆ Can you learn to be an entrepreneur or are you born one?
We are born skilled in 'selling' what we want or need or...and as we grow up we hone these skills and use them as we need, no matter how old we are. So I guess it's yes, entrepreneurs are born and made.
- ◆ What sort of person makes a 'good' Entrepreneur?
A good entrepreneur is a person who knows what he/she needs to know. They understand their purpose, they know who they are, they understand the demands of being a business person and they work really hard ... and then some. 80% of success is the **hard work**, the remaining 20% is made up of all the other stuff.
- ◆ Why are some Inventors successful entrepreneurs while others are not?
There is no finite answer to this question. Maybe they don't want to be in business? Maybe they don't work hard enough? Maybe they don't understand what is expected of them? Maybe there is no market for what they are selling? Whatever the answer, most times it has to do with the person themselves and not the circumstances surrounding them.
- ◆ If you are an inventor running a business and things are ordinary, how can you fix it all?
You can take the actions you know you need to take. Check the basics are in place and ordinary can become extraordinary. Step back and look at everything from your customers' point of view. Or maybe go to the seaside and play with a bucket and spade and get some rest. Rejuvenating and caring for yourself is always high up on anyone's list.

A new portmanteau word in town is **Inventrepreneur** whose meaning seems obvious and would include somebody who invents a process, program or widget, and who takes on greater than normal personal risk in order to see it work. Many agree that inventors can be entrepreneurs just as entrepreneurs can be inventors. The state seems interchangeable – and it depends on the person. As with anything in life, it's what we *need* and often not what we *want* that gets us to where we land up.

Thank you Steve Schwartz of Vandasol and Platinum Gold Radio for an interesting, if testing, talk. You made everyone think hard, you invited participation which you got and everyone went home happy, and with renewed focus and intent.



As advertised in the February Eureka!NEWS.

Don't forget! **Eureka!MEET** – Wednesday 11th March 2020 19h15 – 21h15...ish

Our informative topic is

'An Inventor's Tale – meeting the Challenges of getting produced and to market!'

Venue details: See below NOW IN ORCHARDS (Norwood area)

Eureka!MEET – Wednesday 8th April 2020 19h15 – 21h30

Join us for another engaging and useful presentation!

Oh dear! Our speaker could not confirm with us in time and we could not wait any longer to send out this issue of Eureka!NEWS.

Rest assured you will hear who will be addressing us as soon as we get that confirmation ... so whatever you do, please don't double book for the 8th April because you will want to be with the Institute on that evening.

P.S. We will have a networking table so bring some brochures or business cards or other marketing material of the services you offer or products you have ... and be there a little earlier to meet some interesting people.



Please note the new venue details for Eureka!MEET

We now meet in the **Crawford room in the grounds of St Luke's Anglican Church, 18 High Road/ cnr Oaklands, Orchards** (near Norwood). Call 072 6643749 if you get lost. There are several approaches to High Road but when you get there look for the open main gates. Drive in, veer immediately left to the parking. Walk up a brick path through the gardens to the meeting room.

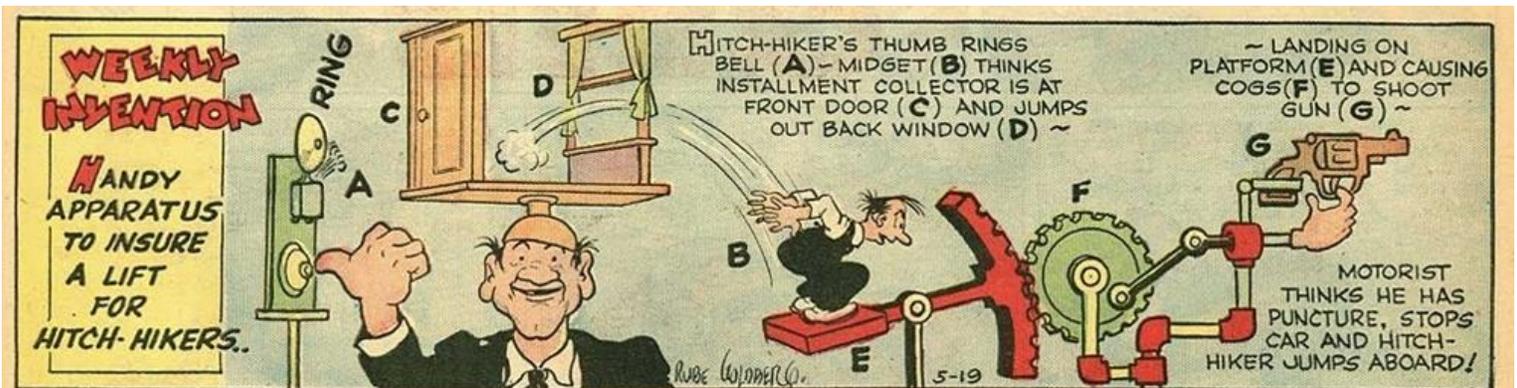
Click <https://www.google.com/maps/@-26.1540859,28.0711162,15.25z> for directions

Members and visitors are welcome!

We look forward to seeing you at our meetings, feel free to bring a guest.

Please call 0726643749 to book a seat as space may be limited.

Rube Goldberg shows how it's done - in his inimitable way.





Quora is an American question and answer website where anyone can pose a question, anyone can answer and it is edited by internet users. Some answer by relaying facts while others pass opinions or share experience or expertise. It's really successful as it is a collaborative effort and any subject goes.

What are the best ways of thinking up invention ideas?

Kim Aaron, a spacecraft mechanical engineer answered the question:

Thinking of invention 'ideas' is easy. You can have hundreds a day. Every time you solve a challenge, you have an invention idea. But, turning these ideas into 'inventions' is a different matter. That's why patents don't protect intellectual ideas, they protect the device that is based on the idea. To get better at coming up with invention ideas, keep your eyes open. Keep a look out for things that you don't know why they are the way they are. Don't just accept that that is the way they are. Instead, ask yourself why it might be that way.

Coming up with reasons (that someone else might have had) for the way the thing is will give your mind practice in thinking about why something solves some problem. Even if you get the wrong reason, that's not a problem. It's still exercise for your brain. Try to turn yourself back into a kid and ask, "Why?" all the time except ask it of yourself. After you've tried to come up with some reasons, go look it up online and see if you can find out some of the real reasons. Sometimes, you can't find the answer online and then you might have to ask an expert.

I never knew an expert who didn't mind showing off their expertise by explaining something. Sometimes the best challenges are the ones that you think are really stupid and you can't think of any good reason to do it that way. But you might be surprised when you do finally learn why and I'll give you an example.

I wondered why plumbers sometimes put insulation on the drain line underneath the sink. Insulation is to stop heat leaks. I could understand why you would put insulation around the hot water line going to the sink. Maybe even the cold water supply line to keep it cold, but why would you need to insulate the waste water? It's not as if you need to keep it warm. Boy, I thought, they must be dozy plumbers!



Well, maybe I couldn't get past my disbelieving thinking long enough to let my mind think of reasons that might make sense. I got a kind of invention blindness that time. But in the end I asked an expert - I asked a plumber! He told me it is so condensation would not form on the outside and drip onto the tiles and make them slippery! Awesome. What an idiot I had been ... not because I couldn't figure that out myself, but because I couldn't let go of the idea that it was a self-defeating and useless mindset to have. I learned a very valuable lesson that time!

There are often different ways of looking at things. Different reasons for doing things. Don't be dismissive. But do find out. So, keep looking at things and trying to figure out why they are the way they are and you will start to have more ideas for inventions and innovation and improvements.

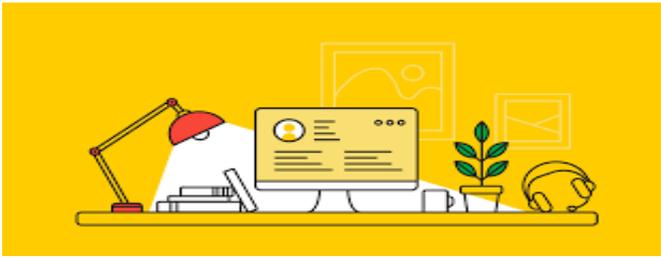


As Designers, Innovators and Entrepreneurs it's our job to understand the world we are living in and to invent for it. Watch this sobering talk about our consensual loss of 'free will'.

The TED talk of the month is about Smart Mind Manipulation via SMART devices and the scary part of it all seems to be that iceberg that's floating around, you know, what we see and perceive and can control is only about 20% of what's really happening.



https://www.ted.com/talks/tristan_harris_how_a_handful_of_tech_companies_control_billions_of_minds_every_day?referral=playlist-who_s_watching_us&language=en#t-46235



PITTP – Pitch it to the Panel -

a confidential and professional service for members

Shine a SPOTLIGHT on your smart concept and get expert advice on what to do next.

At this get together, you will have a chance to speak to a knowledgeable group of professionals, specialists, entrepreneurs and inventors where your idea and invention is treated with the due privacy and confidentiality it requires at whatever stage you are at on your inventor's journey.

Get guidance, assistance and invaluable advice to get you to your next step.

Members can book a PITTP session by going to the website and booking online – www.iii.org.za

SECURE YOUR PLACE NOW – the next date is 9th May 2020

N B Venue change to Orchards (next to Norwood)

I presented to the panel on the 16th November and I am sorry I have taken this long to get back to you good people.

My head remains bowed.

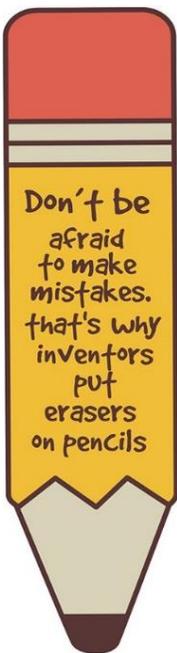
We enjoyed our encounter with the Panel and left a little stronger and better armed. We acted on the patent lady's advice and explored the websites that were recommended. I was not too surprised to see that similar thinking has been around for quite a while, mostly in the automotive industry and even one dating back to 1939. Since presenting I have disclosed my proposals to a large materials handling company after receiving a letter of assurance that I was prepared to accept in terms of protecting my work.

I'll keep you posted. Thanks again.

Terry Scanlon PITTP November 2019

Learn from some of the mistakes other Inventors have made.

Most mistakes made by inventors are both because of what they do and what they don't do! Sometimes the solutions are obvious but at others it may be best to seek advice.



- ✓ They think that you become an inventor or you are an inventor when you have an idea. Inventing goes far beyond just the idea.
- ✓ They fall in love with their ideas and develop tunnel-vision. From this they can go round and round in circles because they can't see the wood for the trees.
- ✓ They don't stick to their knitting ... they don't stay with and fully develop the initial idea/solution before dreaming of add-ons, they scatter their thinking, waste time and can get confused.
- ✓ They think they can sell an idea without working it.
- ✓ They don't do enough research. Go back to the June 2019 Eureka!NEWS (on the website) and read about the **5-factor Lens Test (5-FLT)** again.
- ✓ They don't properly understand the context of or the problem they are trying to solve.
- ✓ They don't listen to dissenting views and sometimes they don't listen at all. This doesn't mean they have to change anything, they just have to listen. Change will happen anyway.
- ✓ The old prototype-and-patent method of product development may be outdated because the invention landscape has changed. You need to get your product to market as soon as you can, your customers will not come to you...you must go to them.
- ✓ Inventors who get caught up in 'perfectionism' waste time (sometimes years) on polishing their prototypes and then money (lots) on trying to patent because they think an idea is not worth anything unless it's patented. Not true. Some things can't be patented.
- ✓ They think they can be an inventor without any money. Not likely. In the beginning you need

some financial reserves both to support 'yourself' and your ideas. You need an income. If you don't have a job or any money, your idea will not save you. You may need serious funding in the long run (and that you may get) but to start out it will cost money to develop your idea so that it is viable and ready to produce or license or sell.

A Plane made By South African Teens Flies from Cape to Cairo

An aircraft built by South African teenagers successfully landed in Egypt three weeks after it set off from Cape Town in July 2019

The four-seater Sling 4 plane was assembled by a group of 20 students from vastly different backgrounds. The crew landed in Namibia, Malawi, Ethiopia, Zanzibar, Tanzania and Uganda during the 12,000km (7,455 mile) trip. **Pilot Megan Werner**, 17, founder of U-Dream Global project, said she was thrilled by the accomplishment.



"I'm so honoured to have made a difference around the continent at the places we've stopped. The purpose of the initiative is to show Africa that anything is possible if

you set your mind to it," she added.

The teen flyers, whose goal was to give motivational talks for



other teenagers along the way, was accompanied by another Sling 4 plane, flown by professional pilots.

The teenagers built the aircraft in three weeks from a kit manufactured in South Africa by the Airplane Factory. Construction included assembling thousands of small parts. Megan's father, Des Werner, said it would normally take 3,000 man hours to assemble a Sling 4.



Watch this BBC news clip– it's inspiring! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKzsECp9-WQ>

● What do you think?

People tend to be opportunistic creatures, but their opportunism is sometimes a cause for concern.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, a number of trade mark applications have been filed in the USA for "CORONAVIRUS". So, for example, the logo mark alongside



has been filed in relation to various goods including music and record albums, head wear, t-shirts, and entertainment services (including performances by a musical group). We are hopeful that these trademarks will not be allowed through to registration,

but we will have to wait and see how the USPTO (United States Patent and Trademark Office) views such applications.

How enthusiastic would you feel about a new album from the group "CORONAVIRUS"?



In the meantime elsewhere on the planet, the maker and owner of the popular Corona beer has lost over R4billion in sales to the coronavirus. AB InBev whose other beer brands include Castle Lager and Budweiser, has admitted that the outbreak of the coronavirus has had a major impact on sales of Corona beer, especially in China.

What is it about humour that produces really bad jokes around merciless diseases like this coronavirus pandemic? Perhaps it is a way of dealing with events or thoughts that ordinarily are too difficult to contemplate or deal with. Do you remember the nursery rhyme, still sung today, 'Ring a Ring of Rosies, a pocketful of posies' ... well, that 'all fall down' was written about the Black Death in the mid-14th century. It does seem that the more things change the more they stay the same.

Sometimes the people around you won't understand your journey. They don't need to, it's not for them.

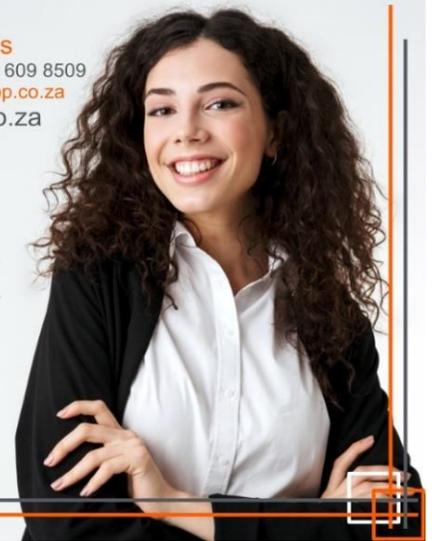


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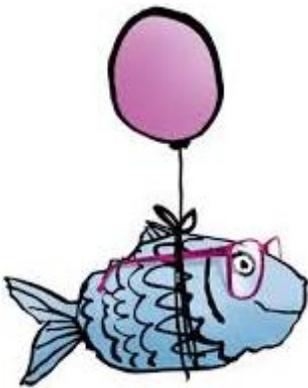
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T·A·X

Let us help you!



Answer to the buoyancy riddle posed in February Eureka!NEWS.



The balloon will sink.

At a depth of 60 feet, the water pressure is greater than it is at 30 feet (by about 15 PSI). Because of this the balloon will shrink, causing the balloon/weight system to increase in density. The total volume is smaller while the total mass stays the same. Since the system is now more dense than it was at 30 feet, it will sink. Also important is the fact that since water is pretty much incompressible, the water density at both depths will be about the same.

Archimedes is worth a mention here too since it seems he knew all about fish and balloons because he proved that the weight of the fluid (water) displaced by an object determines whether it sinks or floats. So as the balloon shrinks under increasing water pressure it displaces less and less water and will sink faster and faster.

Conversely a helium balloon will float higher and higher and expanding in the lower and lower density air until its weight balances the weight of the thin air it displaces; or it bursts.

So. Did you get it right?

Ron McGinn



"HYDRO DENSITY APPARATUS INVENTION? GO AWAY
- I'M NOT DISTURBING HIS BATH FOR THAT!"

Our 'revamped' website will be up and running by this time next month and you should see some useful new material about the III when you visit. Regardless ... do you know anyone who may be interested in joining or in learning anything more about the Institute? Let us know and we will send them an invitation to the ball.

WELCOME to the Institute of Inventors and Innovators...



In the December issue of Eureka!NEWS a call for nominations for III Executive Committee Members was made. Applications from suitably qualified people, who would also be able to devote time to serving the III on a voluntary basis, were welcomed.

Following on from this, it is with pleasure that the III announces the appointment of **Elizabeth Wolmarans** as an **Executive Committee Member**.

She hails from New Zealand but has made South Africa her home. She holds honours in a Bachelor of Technology and Engineering in Product Development and has more than a decade of professional experience in developing products for clients. Through her company, Aveti (Pty) Ltd. Elizabeth provides a project management service - essentially she takes products through the development process from idea and/or concept, through development and into manufacture. She is now a serving Executive Committee member of the III and part of the group of subject specialists for Pitch it to the Panel – the confidential advisory service offered to III members.

Congratulations and welcome Elizabeth.



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**The next Eureka!NEWS will be out by 5 April ... look out for it
Greetings to you all.**

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The Institute of Inventors and Innovators

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Inventors working on behalf of Inventors



As you know, the III are members of IFIA - the International Federation of Inventors Associations.

The international community is vibrant and very active when it comes to events and expos with the twin themes of INVENTION and INNOVATION.

If you go to <https://www.ifia.com/ifia-event-schedule/#> you will be able to see what events are scheduled for 2020 ... maybe you will find yourself travelling for some reason?

If you do get to attend any of these shows please tell us about it, we would love to hear about your experiences and impressions.

Got something on your mind? Email info@iii.org.za