

# Cultivating innovation:an interview with ceo of a leading italian desing firm

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Cultivating Innovation In an interview by McKinsey's Josselyn Simpson and Marla Capozzi, Alessi Alberto revealed valuable information on how to create innovation. Alberto is the CEO of an iconic design firm that is situated in Crusinallo, Italy. The firm has created some of the most popular and sought after hardware. The invention of the home espresso maker was one of the firm's most memorable inventions. This covers some of the ways in which Alberto creates innovation within his design firm.

One of the most profound ways that Alessi creates innovation is through his passion. He has great ideas, thoughts and passion for what he does. It is these attributes that arouse a desire in his team to be creative and develop a product that the consumer can relate to. Rashid (2009) mentions that he could tell the difference between an individual doing a CEO's work and Alessi's drive, leadership and passion. Alessi inspired Rashid and Rashid attributes this to be part of the reason why their relationship was successful. Rashid believes that it is this kind of relationship that enables one to work his best.

Alessi also notes that in order to be innovative and creative, the design of a product should not be based on market research but from our own intuition. He believes that innovative design starts from the use of one's intuition and sensibility in order to be able to touch other people's intuition, sensibility and hearts. An innovative designer, one mediates between the customer's dreams and the best expression of a product design. In this way a designer creates an original product that the consumer can relate to and simply put, finds it beautiful.

Innovation is created when a company is willing to take risks and explore an

area of products that is unknown. In doing so, designers are able to venture into new territory and develop new ideas and test them out. Alessi (2009) believes that many companies fear taking risks and prefer to produce similar products year in year out. In the process their products become synonymous and boring. Such companies lack innovation and the courage to take risks. Many designers prefer to have the freedom to be innovative but a degree of constraint will be useful in certain circumstances (Alessi, 2009). It may be necessary for a CEO to know when to let an innovator freely design and when to put some degree of constraint. It is important that innovators are allowed to work freely to encourage their innovativeness, but some degree of control is in order in certain cases.

#### References

Alessi, A. Cultivating Innovation: An Interview with the CEO of a Leading Italian Design Firm. Interviewed by: Capozzi, M., & Simpson, J., The McKinsey Quarterly, Crusinallo, Italy. February 2009.

Rashid, H. Cultivating Innovation: An Interview with the CEO of a Leading Italian Design Firm. Interviewed by: Capozzi, M., & Simpson, J., The McKinsey Quarterly, Crusinallo, Italy. February 2009.