



Innovation does not always mean something has to be new. Innovation can be as simple as providing another way to look at something already in existence.

In a recent training session with one of the bull riders I train I mentioned the need for greater sensitivity during the ride. I could tell he didn't know where I was going with this idea of being more sensitive and as we looked at each other for a brief second we both chuckled as "the penny dropped" and I realized that the bull rider and I were thinking about two different things. For the bull rider he had initially equated sensitivity with femininity or being female, but I was talking about the quality of *kinesthesia*, which is a sensory input we get from muscles, tendons and joints that provide constant feedback on the body's movement and position.

To further explain my point on sensitivity I mentioned how horses or bulls would appear to shudder or shake their skin to remove flies. If professional bucking bulls can weigh 1,400 hundred or more pounds, how much does a fly weigh? If the bull can feel a single fly on its back then what chance does a stiff adult rider with poor sensitivity have for success? There was a nod of agreement.

As coaches we don't just train the athlete or the student for performance we also help to improve the *thinking* that impacts performance. Thinking is a part of the formula that leads to every success or every unwanted outcome. As I said to the rider in our training session I could use many examples to describe sensitivity, such as the response a horse has to the rider, the

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way a leader assesses the group they lead, the way the hunter interprets the environment or the way a couple handles their marriage relationship, etc. However, what I did not do was narrowly define the term or attempt to label it inappropriately because to do so would be a mistake.

For the bull rider, the athlete or the individual who find themselves repeatedly stuck with poor results or other unsuccessful outcomes there is another way – examine the way we think about the people, the habits we maintain and our approach to what we do. If we consider that thinking plus feeling equals behavior or outcomes we are always in position to adapt, adjust and change. When we adapt and change we usually succeed in the areas we desire most.

“Whatever the mind can conceive, and bring itself to believe, it can be achieved.”

Coach G

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