

# THE HUMAN ELEMENT

## Overcoming the Resistance That Awaits New Ideas

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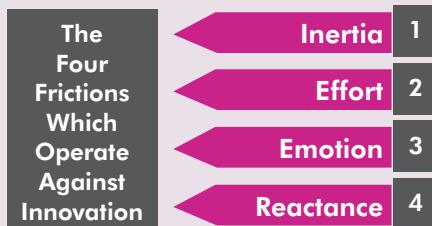
**MAIN IDEA**

Innovators wanting to introduce a new idea or innovation typically assume the best way to get people to embrace the new idea is to heighten its appeal. They work on adding enough fuel behind the idea that people will eventually say "yes" and get on board. They have a "fuel-based mindset", and want to keep adding benefits and features.



A better approach might be to analyze all the psychological factors which generate friction for the adoption of that innovation. If you have a "friction-based mindset" instead, and work to reduce those frictions rather than trying to continually add more fuel, you might have more success.

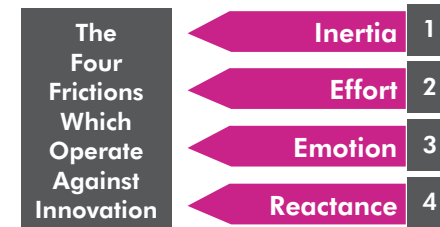
In particular, there are four key frictions which always operate against innovation and change:



To get more of your new ideas into action, don't try and add more fuel. Figure out ways to lower or eliminate the frictions.

*" Our intuition tells us that for an idea to take flight, we need to give it thrust. And that's true. But imagine building an airplane without taking aerodynamics into account and only thinking about the power of the engines. This is precisely what we do when we launch a new idea or initiative. No wonder so few take flight."*

– Loran Nordgren and David Schonthal



**The Fuel-Based Mindset** . . . . . Page 2

Most innovators try and make their new ideas more attractive and compelling by progressively adding fuel – more and more features and positive elements to try and sweeten the deal. Fuel is good because it's obvious, but more fuel does nothing to address the friction which may be hiding beneath the surface. To understand friction, you have to switch your focus from the idea to the audience, and dig deep into why people do what they do.

**Friction #1 – Inertia** . . . . . Pages 3 - 4

Inertia is the powerful desire to stick with the status quo. When attempting to innovate and thereby change behavior, give people multiple options. You have to position the innovation as a slight tweak to business as normal, rather than a radical change in direction.

**Friction #2 – Effort** . . . . . Pages 4 - 5

Effort is the energy required (real or perceived) to make change happen. To overcome this type of friction, demonstrate how easy it is to implement the new approach. Show the cost of implementation is low, but the rewards are great.

**Friction #3 – Emotion** . . . . . Pages 6 - 7

Making change often generates unintended negative emotions. Show your innovation will not threaten people and you're well on your way to offsetting this source of friction. Reduce anxiety, and this type of friction gets dissipated.

**Friction #4 – Reactance** . . . . . Pages 7 - 8

Reactance is the human impulse to resist being changed. A great way to lower reactance is to make sure people don't feel pressured to change. Instead, build genuine interest in your innovation, and fuel the desire for people to see how it performs.