



To BCG's network around the world,

I'm a huge fan of Adam Grant. The Wharton professor of organizational psychology wrote a book called *Give and Take* back in 2014 that has had a major impact on my thinking about BCG's culture and formula for sustained success. It's the one book I give to every managing director and partner, and I've recommended it to many CEOs.

The book challenges some of our most ingrained assumptions about what makes people successful in business and in life. It identifies three profiles—"givers," "takers," and "matchers"—noting that while givers tend to underperform on average, they also often stand out at the very top of the success ladder. These ideas get at the different ways in which we develop relationships and enable givers to thrive, how we can promote more supportive cultures and weed out takers, and, translated into a BCG context, how we can strengthen the fabric of our partnership and deliver lasting impact to our clients.

Now Adam has a new book—[\*Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know\*](#). As someone who has told each incoming class of BCG consultants for 25 years that the skill they need most is not knowing what they know but knowing what they don't know, I'm thrilled to see Adam bring this concept to life so powerfully.

In *Think Again*, Adam explains that we all have an "inner dictator"—that part of ourselves that rushes to protect our beliefs and points of view. We have to work hard to keep that voice at bay, question our assumptions, and be open-minded enough to rethink what we thought we knew—and to help others do the same. Overthrowing our inner dictator will allow us to keep learning for the rest of our lives.

To build an organization where rethinking can happen, leaders need to foster an environment that emphasizes learning over short-term performance. The book spells out three overarching steps for creating that kind of learning culture:

- **Be wary of best practices**, which can discourage us from looking again at what we think works. Instead, always aim for “better practices.”
- **Build an atmosphere of “psychological safety,”** where employees feel comfortable raising concerns and voicing different perspectives.
- **Keep track of rethinking.** Instead of just rewarding outcomes, also take note of how different options are debated throughout the process.

If there was ever a time when the past won't predict the future, it's now. Whether it's battling the pandemic, taking on climate change, transforming our organizations with digital and AI, or working to heal a polarized society in which people are deeply wedded to their views, the times we're living in call for just the kind of mental flexibility described in this book. Now, more than ever, we need to question our assumptions and think again.

Thank you once again, Adam, for expanding our horizons and sharpening our view of what matters most for leaders and for all of us seeking to contribute in this rapidly changing world.

Until next week,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rich".

Rich Lesser  
Chief Executive Officer



## Three Steps to Turn Your Company into a Learning Powerhouse

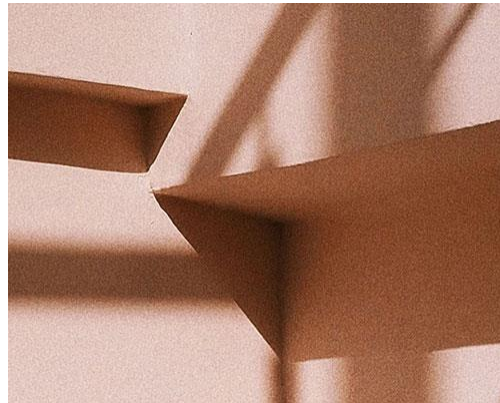
Companies compete on their capacity to learn quickly—and building an effective learning ecosystem is essential to gaining advantage in this critical area.

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### How to Foster Productive and Responsible Debate

Constitutional lawyer Ishan Bhabha lays out structures that organizations can use to navigate ideological disagreement and responsibly bring facts and context to a larger dialogue.



### Competing on Imagination

Big businesses often struggle to make use of imagination. But there are ways to cultivate imaginative capacity without relying on chance, intuition, or mechanistic processes.