



MAYORAL MEMO - 9 NOVEMBER 2022

If you are doing something that not many people in the community are doing, does that make it a silly idea or are you an innovator and the rest of the population will slowly catch up? The only definitive answer to that question is delivered after the passage of time.

In the Everett Rogers 'Diffusion of Innovation' theory, only 2.5 per cent of the population fit in to the category of 'Innovators' with a further 13.5 per cent sitting in the 'Early Adopter' category.

History has shown that some famous names were in the innovator category. Thomas Edison; Steve Jobs and Nikola Tesla spring to mind. Think of the Wright brothers – when many people said flight was for the birds, they persevered and eventually prevailed. Galileo attracted the attention of the all-powerful Catholic Church for daring to suggest that the planets revolved around the sun.

On the flip side, think of how Elizabeth Holmes persevered with the Theranos Edison blood testing machine despite the scientific community doubting its validity. Smoking a pipe or a cigar was intended

as a way to help you relax but, as we now know, it is hard to relax with lung cancer.

Where am I going with all of this? Don't get me wrong – I am not about to compare myself or our Councillors to the great innovators of history but I do like to think that this current group of Councillors is prepared to try different approaches when it comes to the business of Council. In academia and to a lesser extent in business, it seems acceptable to try different approaches to a problem and have some outcomes less than successful. In my past experience with Council, anything less than a positive outcome is highly criticised by some sections. The result is that Councillors normally tend to then become very conservative...but not this current group.

Take the example of the 52 blocks of land that we just put up for sale at Keswick Estate. With a volatile market, we tried an auction process. Never tried before by Council on this scale. We only sold 12 of 52. Councillors always knew it was a risk but were happy to try something different. In our current road situation, different avenues are being explored to bring forward funding with a deed of agreement with developers. Never tried before. Our Community Leaders' Breakfasts are unique across the land and many people are looking on with interest to see how our 3D printing is going to play out. Even the weekly podcast (Mayoral Memo) is something that I can't find is done anywhere else in the nation. Some ideas may be less than successful while others may be copied across the country but I can guarantee that we will keep trying to help improve outcomes in our community.

Councillor Mathew Dickerson

Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council

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