



Minute Interview with David Hollander July 2011

David Sneesby, Managing Partner

One minute Interview with David Hollander, Managing Director, GB & Ireland, Dyson

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David Sneesby: In your opinion, what is the biggest-innovation related challenge that organizations face today?

David Hollander: Minimising environmental impact is an important challenge. Effective machines, powered by increasingly efficient motors will be the future. The Dyson Airblade hand dryer contains a Dyson digital motor – smaller and more efficient than any other motor, with a lower environmental impact than conventional hand dryers. At Dyson we do more with less, and develop machines that work more effectively but use lower volumes of raw materials and last for longer. Rather than bold marketing claims, this approach relies on producing technology that works better.

DS: Which is more important: a culture for innovation or processes for innovation? Why?

DH: Both are important but new technology won't emerge unless it is valued at the top of a business.

DS: Do you think the field of innovation is in danger of becoming over-heated and over-hyped?

DH: Without long-term investment in Research and Development, and the development of new technology, innovation becomes little more than a marketing term. Dyson machines distinguish themselves through their technology. Our growing team of engineers in Malmesbury, now 550 strong, research, design and develop improvements to machine performance and efficiency.

DS: What are the benefits of getting customers involved, either directly or indirectly, in the innovation process?

DH: It is important to incorporate feedback from your customers, but it's also important to let the technology lead developments. Dyson engineers did not set out to develop a bladeless fan – they stumbled on the idea while working on another technology and spotted its potential. This results in ideas and inventions that would never emerge from a focus group – they are technology driven.

DS: What is the leader's role in innovation? What percentage of leaders do you think truly understand what this role calls them to do?

DH: Innovation is risky but leaders are willing to take those risks. They have a responsibility to be questioning and to challenge the norms. We are lucky to have an engineer at the helm of our business – it means our focus is always on new ideas.

DS: How does Dyson ensure that it is always pushing the boundaries and remaining at the head of the game?

DH: It goes back to our emphasis on research and development. Dyson engineers are always looking for new technologies to explore and they are given the opportunity to develop their ideas.

For more information on this interview, or if you would like to feature, please contact the partners via:

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