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Back to School notebook

KOL essays on open innovation and other drivers for the future

Open innovation: Atsushi Nagahisa

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“Something old, something new” connotes the need to recall what we have a tendency to forget, while also seeing what lies ahead. The saying also applies to what is required to unleash greater innovation in pharmaceutical R&D.

Amidst many mergers, acquisitions, and restructurings, the importance of trust has been neglected. As an industry, we need to restore it to a place of central significance. Trust is absolutely vital in the research enterprise. Without trust, we cannot achieve the kinds of communication and learning that are so essential to tackle the challenges we face. For new ideas to take hold and thrive, trust needs to permeate every level and all phases of the operation.

Integrated, open collaboration is an essential part of our future. We must create organizations that optimize both internal and external collaboration, networking and the timely exchange of knowledge and expertise from diverse sources.

Minimizing boss-subordinate relationships and creating more team-based responsibility-sharing and project ownership is essential to achieving greater efficiencies. More horizontally oriented, collaborative frameworks that emphasize speed to decision, flexibility in execution and effective use of capital will play a critical role in increasing research productivity.

An empowered, independent and autonomous team is far more disciplined and innovative than traditional vertical approaches and multi-layered organizations. The collaboration-centric enterprise is better suited to moving beyond proof of concept to proof of value, because it can ensure more consistent communication and responsiveness with customers and stakeholders.

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