

# Redefining Success & Leadership



 **N-NOVATION**



- Words from Catherine Verbeke
- Novation—A Path to Redefining Success and Leadership

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was born on March 25, 1956, in Flanders, Belgium, the second of four children and the first daughter in a family deeply immersed in business. Growing up in a bilingual world, I received both Flemish and French education, and later English, which prepared me to become an international citizen, first of Europe and then of the world. My family's life revolved around the world of large-scale business, and from a young age, I was immersed in a bustling environment of entrepreneurship and global connections.

In this world, I learned the hard way—the codes, the do's and don'ts, and what it took to be a woman in a male-dominated family business. But I was also fortunate. My father showed me the softer side of life, teaching me how to create warmth and joy in every moment. By the time I was nine, I had become aware of the powerful undercurrents of transgenerational challenges and how they shaped our family's lives, both personally and professionally.

At sixteen, I was determined to change the world. I dreamed of studying economics and finance, ready to prove myself as a woman who could thrive in a man's world. But life had other plans. At nineteen, I felt a profound calling that led me into a deep relationship with a young man from another family business. Together, we raised four sons, and I quickly found myself navigating the complex worlds of family life and business without a formal education—what I call the “university of life.” Through these years, I learned as much about myself as I did about life's challenges.



Over the years, I faced my own personal trials. Chronic health issues, psycho-emotional stress, and a quiet but relentless sense of fatigue were part of my reality. I refused to accept these as permanent limitations, though, and I was driven to search for new ways to live and thrive. This led me into the world of complementary therapies, opening my mind to new perspectives and possibilities. When my father passed away unexpectedly when I was 33, it changed me deeply. Amid the grief, I felt a strange but lasting presence of warmth, peace, and strength—a feeling that's stayed with me ever since, guiding me in ways I can't fully explain.

At 35, I took a step into the business world on my own, starting small ventures that gave me a taste of the challenges and responsibilities of being a businesswoman. It was difficult, sometimes harsh, and left me wondering why life and business had to be so stressful. I felt that there had to be more, that life wasn't meant to be lived in constant struggle—and I was right.

At 40, my life took another turn, and I discovered a heightened sensitivity and clear-mindedness. This discovery was a revelation, connecting me to a field of knowledge I'd never imagined. With the help of mentors, I cautiously explored this new dimension, learning how to apply these insights in practical ways that brought real change to my life.

My journey led me to reconnect with an old friend, a mother whose son had suffered a severe brain injury. I spent ten years helping

her understand her son's needs and supporting her through emerging therapies that helped release her own emotional stress. I later did similar work with another mother in a parallel situation. These experiences led me to co-found Open Therapeuticum Leuven (OTL), a neurocenter where we could combine traditional therapies with new, psycho-emotional approaches to help young people with brain injuries reintegrate into society.

For two decades, I immersed myself in this work, helping families and young people heal from trauma while exploring the deeper layers of the human experience—physical, emotional, mental, and energetic. This journey opened my eyes to an even broader world of personal growth and potential, guiding people toward greater awareness and a life in alignment with their highest self.

Today, I'm taking everything I've learned and extending it beyond the neurocenter, into the realms of personal and professional development. My goal is to help others explore and develop their true potential, in life and in business, and to transform outdated paradigms into ones that bring peace, meaning, and lasting fulfillment. This is my story, and I hope that through these manuals, my experiences will inspire and support you on your own journey.

*Gent, 11 of November 2024.*





# NOVATION—A PATH TO REDEFINING SUCCESS AND LEADERSHIP

In the world of business, novation refers to the act of replacing one contract with another, a legal restructuring that often marks a turning point in responsibility and ownership. In the broader context of personal and professional development, we define novation as something even more profound: the deliberate choice to reassess and rewrite the fundamental measures of success we have inherited from our family, upbringing, and society. These inherited ideas—about achievement, leadership, and value—can become rigid structures that confine our thinking, preventing true innovation and transformation. If we truly seek to bring extraordinary value to any market, we must begin by questioning these biases and preconceived notions—we need to replace that original symbolic contract with another.

This manual, *In-Novation*, is an invitation to do just that: to move beyond outdated definitions of success and evolve into a new paradigm of leadership. It builds upon the foundational concepts introduced in *In-Formation*, where we explored the multidimensional impact of past traumas, the cyclical nature of growth through spiral exploration, and the importance of balance. As we continue this journey, we now turn our focus to the practical application of these insights in the world of business leadership—especially in family-run enterprises and projects that require more than just direction, but a complete shift in thinking.

We begin with a deep dive into the notion of purpose and novation, understanding that the weight of family and inheritance often carries with it unspoken agreements about success. These are not simply business contracts, but

ingrained beliefs and cultural biases that shape our decisions. In this new phase, we aim to reconnect with our core being and align it with our core business, drawing on the innate potential that lies within us, while transforming negative patterns into sources of positive energy. We will explore how synchronicity and awareness play crucial roles in realizing our purpose.

Next, we address the concept of self-leadership, an essential part of unleashing our true potential and leading others with clarity and meaning. We will look at how values and culture must evolve to reflect a more human-centered approach to business—one that is organic, familiar, and deeply connected to those we serve. Leadership, we argue, is not about imposing rules but about proposing new paths that resonate with the people we guide.

Finally, we turn to the creation of new realities within business. As we navigate between different dimensions—3D, 4D, and 5D—we will discuss how leaders can manifest their core business purpose and invite others into a space of ownership and responsibility. The freer people feel to engage meaningfully, the more empowered they become, and the greater the value they bring to the organization.

This manual is about more than just innovating; it's about in-novating—transforming both ourselves and the systems we lead by reshaping the very assumptions that underpin our notions of success and leadership. Let's begin this journey together, and explore how true innovation arises from within.



Chapter

# 01

Purpose  
& the Need  
for Novation





In our journey as business owners, we often carry with us more than just professional aspirations—we inherit a legacy of unspoken agreements, beliefs, and biases about success. These may come from family traditions, cultural expectations, or societal norms that subtly but powerfully shape our views and choices. These contracts are rarely examined, yet they become guiding forces in our lives, often influencing us more than we realize. Bound up with strong emotions and a sense of identity, they can deeply impact the direction of our business.

But to create a business that truly reflects our values and unique vision, it's essential to question these inherited contracts and re-establish a path that aligns with our core being. This process of transformation, or novation, is about more than just changing direction—it's about reconnecting with our inner purpose and allowing it to become the driving force behind our business. By releasing outdated patterns, we can transform negative influences into positive energy, paving the way for meaningful, impactful work.

In this chapter, we dive deeply into the idea of purpose, examining how personal insights and inner alignment can guide us toward a new foundation in business. We'll explore how synchronicity and awareness come together to support this journey, turning obstacles into opportunities and hidden potential into realized purpose. As we redefine success on our own terms, we set the stage for creating a business with genuine value and significance.