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TED @ BCG 2017

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I just attended the TED event sponsored by @bcg. Aptly titled "Break the Mold", the event was organized in Milan this year. I am very grateful to having been invited to attend. A big thank you to all the organizers, including

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As Italian, I could definitely feel I was in Milan: whoever I was meeting was an "amministratore delegato" (CEO) of something ;-) That's Milan for you. Another cliche: the food was divine. It comes as no surprise as the chef was the celebrated Tomei (pay a visit to his restaurant, if you happen to be around Lucca).

On a more serious note, here are a few notes I took during the talks. In a few months, the talks will be available on TED.com.

AI

AI algorithms are **intuition machines**, says Phillipp Gerbert. I never thought about AI in those terms but it makes a lot of sense—after all, AI learns from

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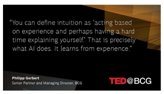

"You can define intuition as 'acting based on experience and perhaps having a hard time explaining yourself.' That is precisely what AI does. It learns from experience."

Philipp Gerbert
Senior Partner and Managing Director, BCG

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algorithms can be usually downloaded for free. What you can't buy is intelligence, that is, the training data!

Creativity

Vittorio Loreto (@loretoff) gave a fascinating (and witty) talk on how to quantify the unquantifiable—creativity. In particular, he managed to quantify and effectively keep track of "what is possible" in a given period of time, and showed how that impacted creativity. To do so, he introduced the concept of the "adjacent possible", which represents the collection of things that are one step away from what can be achieved (this concept has been theorized by Stuart Kaufmann). The main idea is that, once you try a new thing (or acquire a new skill or get to know a new person), you expand your "space of the

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picturing the mathematical model).

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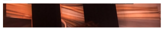

Creativity isn't random. It is made of chain reactions, and your space gets reshaped by every action. The space of the possibile is not predefined, Vittorio said. Check out the scientific paper (and its news summary).

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Kevin Bethune (@kevinbethune) celebrated the contributions that designers

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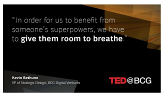

"In order for us to benefit from someone's superpowers, we have to **give them room to breathe**."

Kevin Bethune
VP of Strategic Design, BCG Digital Ventures

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1) embed feelings (great designers indeed manage to turn feelings into products); 2) move people into their "the state of flow", and 3) more generally,

> *great design does not lead us to some place—it leads us to the best place!*

I should definitely check out the tactile finger device that Kevin built for his thesis while he was graduating from Art school.

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Joy's Law states that

> *most of the smart people in the world are outside your company.*

The problem is that, in any company, it is very difficult to kill average ideas championed within the company and replace them with better ideas from outside. Michael Ringel says

> *that's equivalent to ask your spouse for advice in how to*

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Though job! The good news comes from Joy's Corollary:

> *Most of the bad ideas are outside your company.*

Diversity pays off. Yet women have to reached the top corporate spots as their increasing levels of education would have predicted

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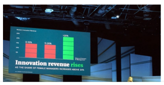
benefits of diversity.



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Doing good

Karen Lloyd (@archaearama) is a microbiologist who studies the microbes at the bottom of the oceans. Because of its lack of light and oxygen, the bottom of the sea is an harsh environment. If you think it does not host any form of life, think again! In her amazing, funny, and informative talk (pls do check it out once available!), Karen dispels that myth. There are microbes that are so efficient that can live out of (basically) nothing. One personal curiosity of

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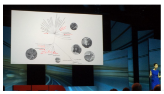

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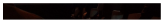

Lana Mazahreh (@mazahrehlana) is concerned with the global challenge of water scarcity, as everybody should be. She proposed a few solutions to empower individuals. One of these solutions entailed the creation of a hero network of water savers—for the fans of Zimbardo's work ;)

"We're living in a world where denial of this dependence has

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Natsai Audrey Chieza
Founder and Creative Director, Faber Futures

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According to Wendy Woods, "doing good doesn't have to come at a cost". "In fact, developing business strategies that do right for society even as they do right for the bottom line is likely the only way we'll collectively thrive in the future". She gave the example of Airbnb. One of the company's goals is to increase the number of houses registered on the platform. In the past, Airbnb

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Artificial Intelligence

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