

## Don't Let "New" Become a Sideshow

### What's the most urgent, important, celebrated element of your organization's work?

If it involves the status quo, the thing that got you here, it means the [new stuff](#) is going to be treated as a little bit of a sideshow or a distraction. (Another example: The team that typesets traditional books at most publishers is talented and driven. They do it with care and very high standards, and have for nearly a hundred years. The team that typesets ebooks at most publishers, though, is more junior, understaffed and has a very low bar for what is considered good enough.)

One reason that incumbents are so often defeated by newcomers is that the incumbents put their best people and their urgent focus on the stuff they used to do (like winning Pulitzer prizes, selling ads to cosmetic companies and counting dead trees) while the new guys have nothing but the new thing to focus on.

The same effect occurs when we approach our art/sideline/new venture. Some people spend their best energy on the new project, squeezing in the day job when they must. Others (the ones who rarely ship) insist on every element of the day job being finished before they practice their music, write their book or otherwise make a ruckus.

If you're serious about building a new sort of asset, or experiencing the cutting edge of new technology, or rebuilding the way you grow, the first way to demonstrate that seriousness is to **put your heavy hitters in charge of it**, while refusing to pay much attention at all to the people or the metrics of the old thing. Easier to say than to do, but consider how the upstarts that are eating your future are allocating *their* time and their talent...

Read more from Seth [here](#).