



Innovation at a Six Sigma Conference

By: [Katie Barry](#) Mon Jan 19, 2009 at 10:53 PM

Last week I was in Miami for iSixSigma Live! Summit & Awards. Innovation made its way into the agenda in a breakout and a workshop, and it was also a topic for the first day's general session – **David Silverstein, President and CEO, Breakthrough Management Group International** – spoke about "**Six Sigma and Innovation: A Distinction Without a Difference.**"

A few key points from his presentation include:

- "Innovation is about information and data."
- "Innovation is about connecting the dots."
- "Innovation doesn't happen without collaboration."

He also discussed the principle of separation in time. (It's something most of us have probably used to solve problems without knowing "it" had a name!)

Separation in time can be explained by the following: you're working on a problem, you get stuck, you go to a colleague's office, you explain your problem and you come up with the idea during the explanation. The collaboration was with yourself – you could have been in anyone's office, whomever was there listening was irrelevant to the solution. The solution came about because you had to re-process and re-state the problem at another time.

If only every problem could be solved so easily...