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Remembering Clayton Christensen and His Impact on Innovation

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Clayton Christensen popularized disruptive innovation and reshaped management thinking. Josh Gans reflects on the man, his work and his legacy.

Clay Christensen, the Harvard Business School educator who passed away in January 2020, changed the way people around the world think of innovation. Through widely-read books, such as "The Innovator's Dilemma," he popularized the idea of "disruptive innovation", a process by which entrepreneurs displace established, market-leading firms, upending entire industries along the way. Although Clay's terminology and examples gained wide acceptance among managers, scholars gave his work a more qualified reception. This recent blog post (https://digitopoly.org/2020/01/24/clay-christensen-mild-mannered-disruptor/) by University of Toronto strategy professor Josh Gans (https://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/FacultyAndResearch/Faculty/FacultyBios/Gans) offers some thoughtful and personal reflections on Clay's life and work that can help entrepreneurs make sense of Clay's contributions – and their limitations – within a broader intellectual context.

Photo Courtesy of the Christensen Institute

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