



Hal Gregersen

AUTHOR

Most senior teams have plenty of answers. What they lack is a disciplined way to surface the questions that would reframe the problem entirely. When the strategic terrain shifts faster than the playbook, the limiting factor is not analysis or execution; it is the quality of the questions being asked in the room.

Hal Gregersen helps senior leaders reframe their most consequential problems through structured inquiry, drawing on two decades of MIT-based research into how disruptive innovators think.

Hal Gregersen's 2026 Biography

AVAILABLE FOR

- After Dinner Engagement
- Speaking

Why organisations work with Hal Gregersen

- A specific, teachable method for recasting strategic problems: the four-minute “Question Burst,” published in Harvard Business Review and used inside organisations from Disney/Pixar to Patagonia.
- Co-author of “The Innovator’s DNA” with Clayton Christensen and Jeff Dyer, the foundational research identifying the five behaviours, including questioning, that separate disruptive innovators from ordinary executives.
- A perspective shaped by 200-plus structured interviews with catalytic questioners, including founders and CEOs, plus a behavioural database of more than 25,000 leaders.
- MIT Sloan and former MIT Leadership Center director credentials that give his frameworks weight in C-suite and board settings, not just innovation labs.
- Ranked on the Thinkers50 list across five cycles, peaking at #16, and winner of the 2017 Distinguished Achievement Award for Leadership.

HAL'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Change Management
- Creativity
- Executive Development
- Future of Technology
- Innovation & Disruption

Biography highlights

- Senior Lecturer in Work and Organization Studies, MIT Sloan School of Management.
- Former Executive Director, MIT Leadership Center.
- Co-author of “The Innovator’s DNA” (Harvard Business Review Press) and author of “Questions Are the Answer” (Harper Business, 2018).
- 2017 Thinkers50 Distinguished Achievement Award for Leadership; ranked Thinkers50 #16 in 2019.
- Senior Fellow at Innosight; co-founder of the Innovator’s DNA consulting group.
- Previous faculty roles at INSEAD, London Business School, Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, and Aalto University.

LANGUAGES: English

Biography

The most consequential strategic mistakes rarely come from missing data. They come from accepting a flawed framing of the problem. The leaders who break that pattern share a behavioural habit, asking catalytic questions, that can be researched, isolated, and taught.

That argument runs through twenty years of work at MIT Sloan, where Hal Gregersen serves as Senior Lecturer in Work and Organization Studies and previously led the MIT Leadership Center. With Clayton Christensen and Jeff Dyer, he co-authored "The Innovator's DNA," the research project that identified the five discovery skills, including questioning, observing, and experimenting, that separate disruptive innovators from competent operators.

His subsequent book, "Questions Are the Answer," drew on more than 200 interviews to formalise the practice. Out of that work came the "Question Burst," a four-minute structured method published in Harvard Business Review's "Better Brainstorming" and now used inside organisations from Disney/Pixar to Patagonia to reframe stuck problems before solutions are debated.

The Thinkers50 ranking, peaking at #16 globally in 2019, and the 2017 Distinguished Achievement Award for Leadership reflect what senior teams actually take from his sessions: a transferable discipline for changing the questions in the room before changing the strategy.

Key speaking topics

- Inquiry-driven leadership
- The Innovator's DNA and the five discovery skills
- The Question Burst methodology
- Building cultures of constructive questioning
- Disruptive innovation as a leadership behaviour
- AI and the future of catalytic inquiry
- Leading through transitions

Ideal for

- CEOs and senior executive teams setting strategy under deep uncertainty.
- Chief Innovation Officers, Chief Strategy Officers, and transformation leads building innovation capability beyond pilot programmes.
- Boards and leadership development programmes seeking a research-grounded behavioural framework rather than a values statement.

Audience outcomes

- A working command of the Question Burst method, applied live to a real organisational problem.
- The five Innovator's DNA behaviours mapped onto the audience's own roles, with a clear view of where they default to answering rather than questioning.
- A diagnostic for spotting the questions a leadership team is currently avoiding, and the strategic cost of that avoidance.
- Concrete language for embedding catalytic questioning into operating rhythms, board reviews, and innovation portfolios.

Hal Gregersen's 2026 talks & topics

Inquiry-Driven Leadership

A practical case for treating questioning as the senior leader's primary tool when answers cannot be pre-loaded.

Key takeaways:

- Why the cost of a wrong question compounds faster than a wrong answer.
 - The Question Burst as a repeatable method for reframing strategic problems.
 - How to build inquiry into the cadence of leadership team meetings.
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Infusing the Innovator's DNA with AI

How the five discovery skills change when generative AI absorbs the analytical layer of work.

Key takeaways:

- Which Innovator's DNA behaviours become more valuable, not less, in an AI-saturated environment.
 - The shift from prompt engineering to question engineering.
 - Where senior leaders should still be doing the questioning themselves rather than delegating to systems.
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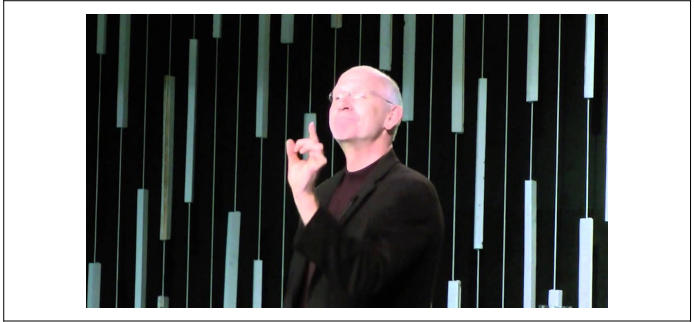
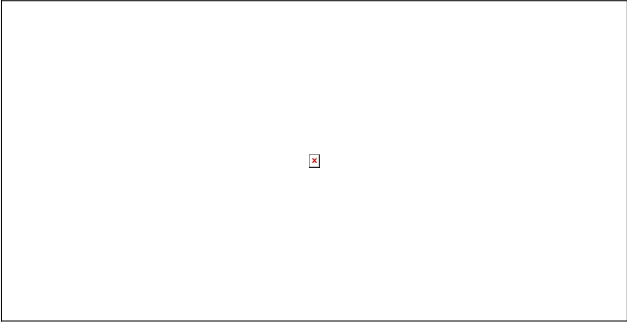
Seeing Deeply as Leaders

Five habits, drawn from research and Gregersen's photographic practice, for noticing what others miss in the room.

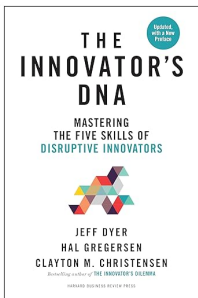
Key takeaways:

- The link between attention discipline and strategic clarity.
- Practical exercises for breaking pattern-recognition shortcuts.
- How senior teams build collective habits of deeper observation.

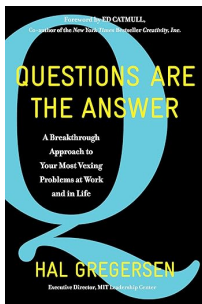
Hal Gregersen's Videos



HAL'S LATEST BOOKS



The Innovator's DNA, Updated, with a New Preface: Mastering the Five Skills of Disruptive Innovators



Questions Are the Answer: A Breakthrough Approach to Your Most Vexing Problems at Work and in Life