

NANCY K. NAPIER



Professor | Author | Speaker



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NANCY K. NAPIER

NANCY'S MISSION

To be a bridge across different fields, cultures, and people to find ideas that help organizations and people do things differently to get better.

N.K. Napier scours the world for ideas from Vietnam to Botswana to her own backyard of Boise, Idaho (USA). Many of those ideas have helped diverse organizations, from football to a jail, from software to theater, build leadership and creativity. In addition, she has received two of Vietnam's top medals given to foreigners for contributions to education in Vietnam and for helping to build friendship between the U.S. and Vietnam.

Through luck, grit, and perseverance, N.K. Napier had the opportunity to help establish Vietnam's first international standard business school in Hanoi. What began as a one-year program to deliver her university's MBA degree became a nine-year-long, \$8.5 million project, funded by Sweden and the U.S. that was, essentially, a new venture start up. She learned, wrote, and met many fascinating people over the years.

As a child, my family “argued” for the sake of argument. You could take any position, but had to defend it, with logic and facts. Sometimes, in the midst of a discussion, one of my parents would switch sides and argue the opposite position. I learned that ideas become stronger when they are challenged, that brains become more nimble when they face competent opposition, and that it's possible to disagree and agree.

During these days of such division, within families and beyond, I yearn for a way to have discussions, even arguments, that build toward something better, stronger, more creative. I would wish for a movement that brings back learning how to argue as a sport, as a way to learn, and as a way to create a new direction and solutions to problems. Right now, discussion feels like a tennis match where a point goes back and forth but there is no gain on either side.

~ N.K. Napier

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ABOUT NANCY

Distinguished Professor Emerita at Boise State University (USA), and a former Adjunct Professor at Aalborg University (Denmark), N.K. Napier teaches strategy and creativity, coaches executives and leads Boise State University's one-week Executive MBA residency to Vietnam.

She first went to Hanoi in 1994, joining a project that helped to establish the country's first international standard business school at the National Economics University. After the project, she taught periodically for the university and did research with numerous colleagues.



Because life is not just research and teaching, Napier reached out to leaders and managers in other formats. She co-created and hosted NPR local affiliate's Idaho Business Matters, was a regular guest on KTVB Channel 7's Noon News, wrote for Forbes Vietnam, and continues to write for blogs for Psychologytoday.com and the Idaho Statesman. In the last few years, she has received two of Vietnam's top honors for foreigners, the Medal of Honor, for contributing to the advancement of education in the country, and the Medal of Friendship for helping to build relationships between the U.S. and Vietnam.

After 35+ years in the academic and research world, N.K. Napier is embarking on something completely new: Fiction Writing, which offers her the joys and challenges of being a beginner again.

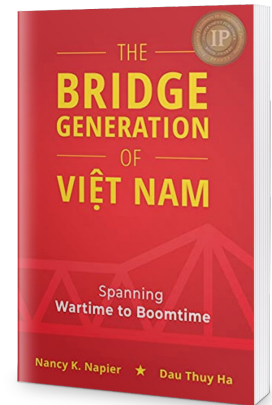
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NANCY'S NON-FICTION BOOKS

Việt Nam Books

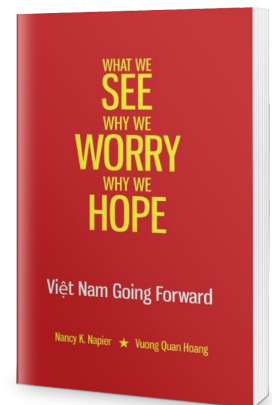
***The Bridge Generation of Việt Nam: Spanning Wartime to Boomtime.* Nancy K. Napier and Dau Thuy Ha (2020)**

The Bridge Generation was born in northern Việt Nam between the early 1950s until just before 1975. This group's lives spanned three critical time periods in Vietnam's recent history: from wartime, through a long period of food rationing, to the boom of a fast growing economy. Many are now among the top business, governmental, and educational leaders of the country.



***What We See, Why We Worry, Why We Hope: Vietnam Going Forward.* Nancy K. Napier and Vương Quan Hoàng (2013)**

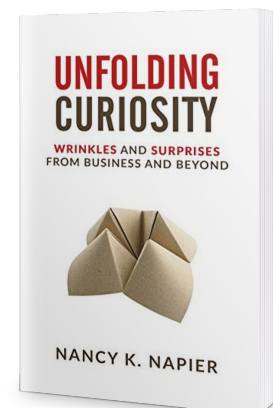
What we See, Why we Worry, Why we Hope: Việt Nam Going Forward explores key factors that affect Vietnam's ability to move forward as a global economic player. While we see challenges we see many reasons for hope, including a new generation of leaders.



Organizational Creativity & Innovation Books

***Unfolding Curiosity: Wrinkles and Surprises from Business and Beyond.* Nancy K. Napier (2017)**

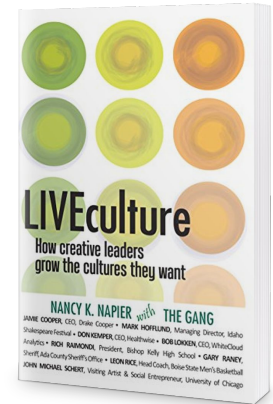
Unfolding Curiosity: Wrinkles and Surprises from Business and Beyond is a collection of quick reads that look at the “usual” with a slant. For relentlessly curious people, the idea that we can learn from fields far beyond their own disciplines is normal, to be expected.



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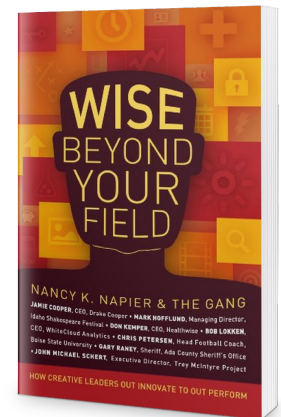
***LIVEculture: How Creative Leaders Grow The Cultures They Want.* Nancy K. Napier, Jamie Cooper, Mark Hofflund, Don Kemper, Bob Lokken, Rich Raimondi, Gary Raney, Leon Rice, and John Michael Schert (2015)**

Many leaders undervalue the power of culture as a competitive advantage. Don't make that mistake. In an easy to read, easy to understand format, *LIVEculture* offers tips from successful creative leaders on how they shaped, communicated, and grew the cultures they wanted for their organizations.



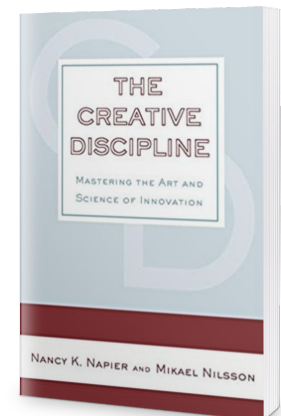
***Wise Beyond Your Field.* Nancy K. Napier, Jamie Cooper, Mark Hofflund, Don Kemper, Bob Lokken, Chris Petersen, Gary Raney, and John Michael Schert (2013)**

Do you want to boost your organization's performance? Outperform your peers? It may be as simple as looking outside your own field. *Wise Beyond Your Field* shows how creative leaders use ideas from far beyond their own fields to do things differently and outperform their peers.



***The Creative Discipline: Mastering The Art And Science Of Innovation.* Nancy K. Napier and Mikael Nilsson (2008)**

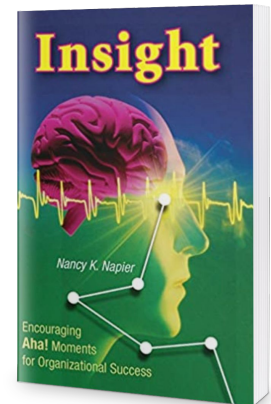
Why are some organizations more creative than others? What sets innovative, high-performing organizations apart? Can creativity and innovation be learned and enhanced? The answer to the last question, say creativity experts Nancy Napier and Mikael Nilsson, is a resounding yes.



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***Insight: Encouraging Aha! Moments for Organizational Success.* Nancy K. Napier (2010)**

Insight: Encouraging Aha! Moments for Organizational Success helps individuals and organizations create the conditions that lay the groundwork for the distinct "Aha!" instances of insight—when connections between different pieces of information are revealed and ideas come together in ways that have never existed before.



NANCY'S FORTHCOMING FICTION BOOK

The Painter - Launching Fall 2022

What happens when a naive curator from Vietnam discovers art crime that affects her own family and her country? Thuy, an ambitious 39-year-old assistant curator in Hanoi, Vietnam, goes to the U.S. to set up a special exhibit of art from her home museum, which will highlight work by her famous great-uncle in particular. She relishes the status her art background brings to her family. But when she arrives in the U.S. she discovers some of her uncle's paintings are in American museums, but that can't be since the paintings are in Hanoi. What's up?

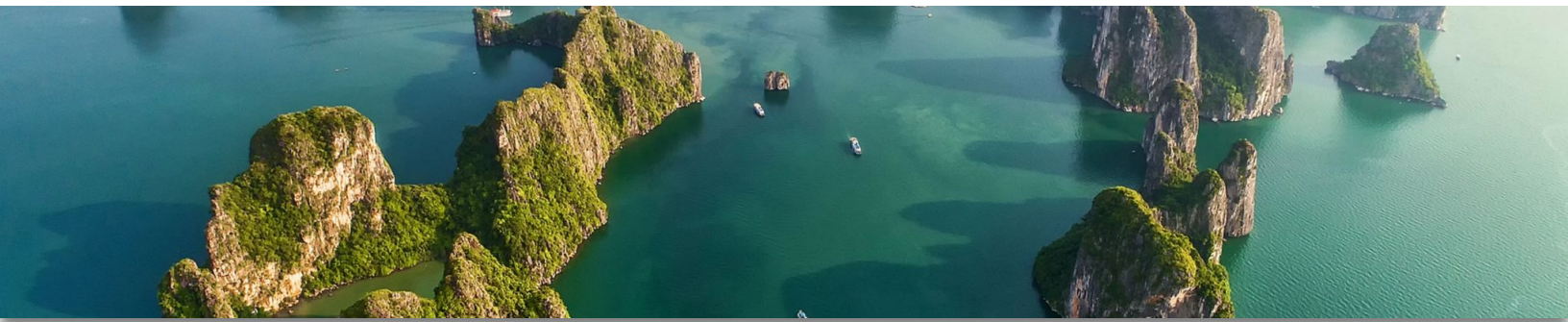
Thuy discovers that several of her great-uncle's paintings are in a museum in San Francisco, but the real paintings must be in Hanoi because she has walked by them every day for years. Are some fake? Her father, who she adores, advises her against investigating the paintings, fearing it will raise questions and damage the family's legacy. Her museum director in Hanoi also argues against the investigation because he fears lawsuits from the U.S.

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If Thuy goes forward, her father may disown her and she could lose her job. But if she doesn't investigate, and someone else discovers some paintings are fake, she risks ruining the reputations of her family, her museum, and her country.

Thuy wants to believe her father but discovers repeatedly that he has lied to her about trivial things as well as hinted at some larger lies. Has her family been living a myth? Are they really an artistic family or is the legacy her father has created just a lie? If there are fake paintings in the world, it will damage her family's name, her museum in Vietnam, and her country, which wants to bring Vietnamese art onto the legitimate global stage.

Thuy learns that the paintings in Hanoi may indeed be fake, that her father may have created forged paintings, that he may have manipulated her nine-year-old very talented son to create some of the paintings, and that her famous dead great uncle is not dead after all. What will she do?



*"A mantra I've followed for years, as a way to decide which projects to pursue,
is "Do good work, learn a lot, work with good people, and have fun."
It's carried me through many years of choices of what to work on."*

~ N.K. Napier

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WHY BOOK NANCY?

Nancy is a professor, inspiring speaker and author. As there are various topics with rich content that Nancy shares, she merges energy and enthusiasm to empower and embolden any audience. While Nancy routinely delivers custom content, her most popular topics include:

- Creativity in organizations;
- How working across disciplines can build your creativity;
- How to spur insight and bring on aha moments.

If you are interested in learning more about how Nancy would be an ideal fit and inspiration for your audience, visit www.NancyKNapier.com.

NON-FICTION BOOKS

Suggested Discussion Topics

- How unfolding our curiosity can help us find new ways to look at the world and to give organization leaders ideas from unexpected sources.
- How N.K. Napier has woven business strategy and creativity knowledge with Vietnamese culture and education to lead a one-week Executive MBA residency to Vietnam for the program.
- Two recent books are *The Bridge Generation of Việt Nam: Spanning Wartime to Boomtime* and *Unfolding Curiosity: Wrinkles and surprises from Business and Beyond*.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- You are a professor who has gone above and beyond the classroom walls to teach your students. In *Wise Beyond Your Field* you show how creative leaders use ideas from far beyond their own fields to do things differently and outperform their peers. What are the secrets and examples from leaders who compete with the best and soar beyond the pack?

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- You have worked with creative leaders who run organizations ranging from a jail to university sports, from software to the arts, from education to health information. How can creative leaders continuously do things differently to get better, and along the way happen to beat their competition?
- A lot of what we read, hear, experience or feel may be not directly connected to our work but it may offer a surprise or wrinkle on something we think we know. How can unfolding our curiosity help us find new ways to look at the world and to give organization leaders ideas from unexpected sources?
- You also have two books that focus on Vietnam, its history, people and economy. Vietnam's ability to move forward as a global economic player has been exponentially growing. What are the key factors and challenges that give the new generation of leaders reasons to be hopeful?
- Are there also struggles that worry you about Vietnam's place in the current global economy?
- In *The Bridge Generation of Việt Nam: Spanning Wartime to Boomtime* you profile Vietnamese who lived through three critical time periods in Vietnam's recent history: from wartime, through a long period of food rationing, to the boom of a fast growing economy. Who are these people from the northern part of Vietnam and what did they experience on the road from children of war to leaders of a country?
- How did they manage to go from such hardship to modern lives in thirty years?
- What makes the people and the country so captivating?
- What are your plans for the future as a professor and author? Do you have other books in the works?
- Where can people learn more about you and your books?

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FICTION BOOK

Suggested Discussion Topics

- After 35+ years in the academic and research world, N.K. Napier is embarking on something completely new: Fiction Writing, which offers her the joys and challenges of being a beginner again.
- How N.K. Napier scours the world for ideas from Vietnam to Botswana to her own backyard, Boise, Idaho (USA).
- The forthcoming book - *The Painter*.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- You are an author who goes beyond the book-writing world. You founded and carried out a daily local NPR radio “column” for seven years; you write for PsychologyToday.com and for your local newspaper. How did you become an author, first of non-fiction books, then columns, and now fiction?
- You have an interesting academic and research background as a Distinguished Professor (now Emerita) at Boise State University (USA) until you decided to face the joys and challenges of being a beginner again. What made you shift?
- How did the books you have written on creativity and innovation impact your new career as a fiction writer?
- Is going back to the beginner stages an easy process?
- What was the biggest challenge, the one pattern change that you resisted the most that was keeping you from writing fiction?
- When did you realize you could shift from academic writing to fiction writing? How did it impact your life at that point?
- Where do you get inspiration from?
- Where can people learn more about you, your books and your writing routine/process transformation?