

**INSIGHT 016****Creative Connections**

**T**he brain has some 100 billion cells, all with the potential to connect to one another. Often what happens, though, is that we get comfortable with connecting only certain cells—or ideas—to each other and, in doing so, overlook the vast potential for other connections that could be made. Like a beaten path through a grass field, we tend to use only certain “paths” or routine thinking patterns.

Creative minds, however, are always looking for new connections. In the late 1800s, American miners needed tough pants that wouldn’t keep tearing on the job. Along came a fellow named Levi Strauss, who sold canvas for tents and wagons. Mr. Strauss connected the need for tough pants to his canvas material and started to sew tough new pants for the miners that later would become known as “Levi Strauss Jeans.” In another example, runners in the 1960s were finding that the treads of their running shoes were not providing the needed support. One day while making breakfast, Bill Bowerman stuck a piece of rubber in his waffle machine and saw that the deep design might be good for running shoe soles. In connecting the waffle machine to his need for better soles, he invented a new kind of running shoe.

Are you planting the Seeds of Innovation® by using all 100 billion of your brain cells to find new connections?