



## Hopscotch · Julio Cortázar

Hopscotch, a novel or “anti-novel” by Julio Cortázar, was published in the summer of 1963. Now, 54 summers later, we propose revisiting this innovative book. Written in an innovative format, the author forces the reader to make a decision: choose one of four possible paths through the narrative, each with its own internal order:

- “Normal”, reading progressively from beginning to end.
- “Traditional”, proposed by Cortázar, reading from chapter 1 to 56 and disregarding the rest.
- According to the “Table of Instructions” at the beginning of the book, which suggests “hopscotching” through the chapters.
- In “any order the reader wishes”.

This freedom in Cortázar’s approach to the novel turns the reader into the real protagonist, switching reading from a passive act into something that requires the reader to actively and critically interact with the book. If you don’t like any of the paths suggested, you’re free to find your own.

When translated into organizations where the culture of innovation is a reality, every collaborator must have the autonomy to approach the objectives in their own way, feel responsible for decision-making, establish an order of action, and be able to make mistakes and start over again.

Hopscotch is a children's game in which players toss a stone into boxes drawn on the floor. Cortázar used this fun, recreational game as the departure point for Hopscotch, inventing languages like Glíglico and throwing the rules of grammar out the window (“It wuz a surprise b/c we had no idea he wuz bedriden”). Thus the reader has the sensation of reading a children’s game designed for adults, “a world where you move like a knight in chess, which moves like a rook, which moves like a bishop”.

By reading Hopscotch we learn that doing something out of the ordinary, this versatility and ability to fearlessly act and enjoy oneself while doing so, are the cornerstones for building a culture of innovation in our organizations.

Lovers La Maga and Oliveira, the main characters in Hopscotch, represent the emotional (her) and the rational (him) forces that shape the culture of innovation. They complement each other and both are necessary. “Someday, let me see how your eyes see”, they say to each other, and thus to see, they “close [their] eyes and hit the mark”.

Happy summer reading!

### ***This is how it begins...***

*“WOULD I find La Maga? Most of the time it was just a case of my putting in an appearance, going along the Rue de Seine to the arch leading into the Quai de Conti, and I would see her slender form against the olive-ashen light which floats along the river as she crossed back and forth on the Pont des Arts, or leaned over the iron rail looking at the water. It was quite natural for me to climb the steps to the bridge, go into its narrowness and over to where La Maga stood. She would smile and show no surprise, convinced as she was, the same as I, that casual meetings are apt to be just the opposite, and that people who make dates are the same kind who need lines on their writing paper, or who always squeeze up from the bottom on a tube of toothpaste.”*