

# DEVELOPING AN INNOVATION CULTURE ONE DAY WORKSHOP

  
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One of the first questions people ask about innovation is “how do I create a culture of innovation”. The real question is “how can I get creativity to co-exist with and ‘execution’ culture”. This workshop will give you answers to that question and show the essential behaviors and organization structure you need for innovation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Innovation is vital in order to compete in the Marketplace. It is the only strategy by which an organization can differentiate itself in the long term. However, ‘Conventional Thinking’ and ‘Fear of Failure’ inhibit Innovation. The way people think and act is key to success. A culture of Creativity has to coexist with the “Execution” culture which has been our focus in recent years. Execution is vital for successful innovation but has a different set of behaviors. The innovative organization needs both sets of behavior which makes an innovation culture complex.

*Exercise; Concerns about developing an innovation culture are discussed*

## 2. INNOVATIVE BEHAVIORS

The vital behaviors of an Innovation Culture are Exploration, Collaboration and Experimentation. Breakthroughs are not from the “Genius” but are from “Collective Knowledge”. Your own people are your most valuable source of knowledge for new ideas. Participants identify where they will make their own best personal contribution to Innovation, whether by generating ideas, finding solutions, making solutions practical or implementing solutions. This Self-Assessment tool also helps people on the team understand each other’s strengths.

*Exercise; You will determine how you will make the best contribution to Innovation*

## 3. EXPLORATION

The behaviors that will first discover and develop knowledge are exploration and interaction with

new people. You hear the expression, “Step out of the box.” Exploration strategies are explained. Giving people time and space is the first step to creating an innovation culture. It is this “release” that makes it so easy to engage people in creative thinking. The keys to people engagement are explained.

*Exercise; Engagement and Exploration Techniques*

## 4. COLLABORATION

Interaction with people who are different from ourselves is the next step, and this is not easy. The mirror effect draws us to people of similar background and experience. Diversity creates tension, but this tension creates new knowledge. For this to work we must respect the strengths of others. “Seek to understand before you seek to be understood.” Participants learn how to work with customers to identify opportunities. Defining the problem, exploring alternative solutions and identifying roadblocks are the path to the best conceptual solution. A culture of creativity allows creative problem solving or ‘ideation’. This is achieved through collective knowledge.

*Exercise; You carry out an exercise in creative problem solving or ‘ideation’*

## 5. EXPERIMENTATION

There must be a willingness to take risk, try something new and not be afraid to fail. Capturing the learning from failure grows knowledge. Alternative methods of testing solutions are explained. The reasons for risk aversion are explained together with methods of overcoming risk aversion.

Techniques for gathering 'Lessons Learned' are detailed.

*Exercise; A risk assessment exercise on alternative solutions*

## 6. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ASSESSMENT

A very detailed and unique tool for assessing organizational culture is explained. The group complete the assessment and the group discusses the results and identifies the main challenges

*Exercise; Organizational Culture Assessment*

## 7. FROM CREATIVITY TO EXECUTION

The management of the transition from creativity to execution is analyzed. This is a critical task for Leaders. Execution behaviors will continue to include collaboration but will now have a much stronger project management focus with speed being an imperative. You learn the importance of changing culture from 'loose' to 'tight' in order to execute with speed.

*Exercise; Project Management Techniques*

## 8. ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

An innovation organization must be agile, able to change direction easily and move with speed. The creative phase of innovation needs time and space which comes from an open network structure which is necessary for finding radical

solutions. The execution phase of innovation, however, demands high focus and speed to market and this comes best from a closed network. An Organizational Structure is needed which enables creativity and execution to live together. Agility and ability to change the plan during execution are essential attributes.

*Exercise; Assessment of structural alternatives*

## 9. CULTURE CHANGE

People must see the need for culture change and there must be a sense of urgency. Initially this comes from identifying a dying product or a process that is failing frequently. A change team has, as part of its mission, to create a critical mass of believers. One way do this is through an early win. As you move forward, you encourage exploration, collaboration and experimentation by recognizing these behaviors in your people.

*Exercise; You evaluate the 'Behavior Change' required between project phases*

## 10. THE PATH FORWARD

For every 3,000 ideas only one makes it. The Roadmap for developing an Innovation Culture in an organization is explained. A project plan is provided showing the points at which culture change occurs and how it will occur.

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