

# Ideas into Action: From Creativity to Innovation

Preview

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# Course Objectives

**Upon completion of this course, you'll be able to:**

- Recognize common myths and misconceptions about innovation.
- Use multiple intelligences to generate a variety of ideas.
- Apply the characteristics of creative people to any problem or issue.
- Follow a four-step process for team innovation.
- Promote innovation without regulating it.
- Use cross-functional teams to foster innovation.
- Spot sacred cows in your organization.

# Ideas into Action

## Chapter One: Myths and Misconceptions

# What Is Innovation?

Innovation is any idea that improves the cost/benefit ratio, either by increasing benefits or decreasing costs. At its essence, the goal of innovation is to make something better.

## Increase benefits

- Effectiveness
- Speed
- Pleasure or fun
- “Coolness”
- Safety
- Health

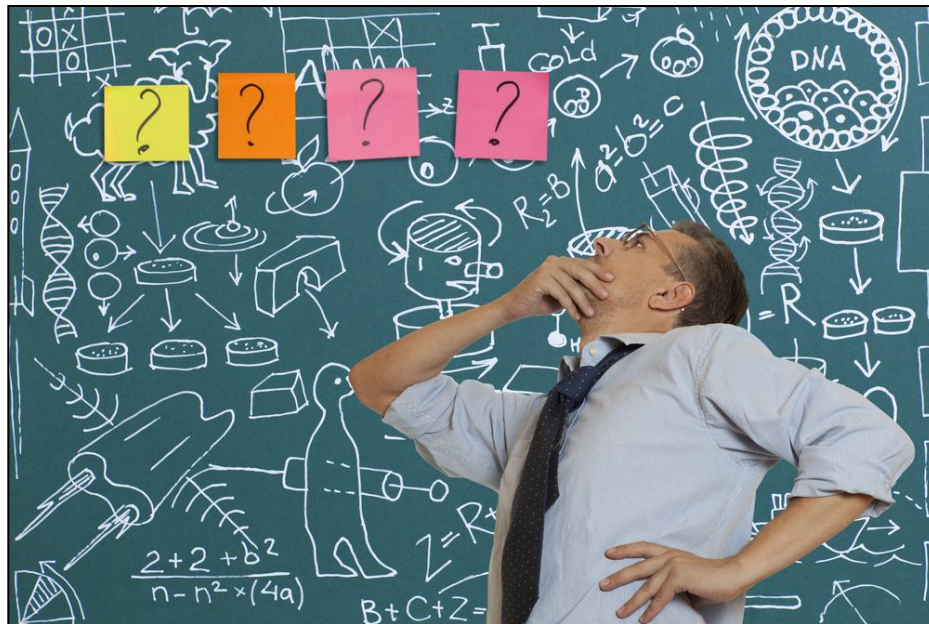
## Reduce costs

- Money
- Effort
- Complexity
- Skill level
- Risk
- Inconvenience
- Boredom
- Pollution



## What Is Innovation? (cont.)

Innovation can be applied to any aspect of running an organization—its products or services, internal processes, individual tasks, etc. A good place to begin looking is wherever you hear people saying, “If only...” Whatever that “if only” is, it could probably benefit from innovation.



*“Creativity is not the finding of a thing, but the making of something out of it after it is found.”*

James Russell Lowell

# Myths and Misconceptions

Increasing benefits or decreasing costs seems like a pretty simple proposition. So why does innovation seem irrelevant or impossible to many people? We'll look at some common myths that contribute to that mindset.

## **Myth: Only creative people can be innovative**

- Some people are naturally creative and full of ideas, and it is important to recognize them and tap into their ideas. However, one person is rarely single-handedly responsible for fostering all the innovation in any organization.
- Everyone can be creative and have good ideas. What does it take? Motivation, practice, access to a variety of knowledge resources and perspectives, and the ability to express ideas.



## Myths and Misconceptions (cont.)

### Myth: The “revolutionary” idea is the only way to be innovative

Many small, continual baby steps can take an organization farther than one rare, giant step.



- Revolutionary ideas can have a huge impact on an organization or entire industry; however, they are hugely disruptive and usually take years to reach their full potential.
- Small changes, pilot projects and new networks of collaboration help ensure the long-term success of an organization as much as a revolutionary idea.



## Myths and Misconceptions (cont.)

### Myth: People like innovative ideas

Truth: People don't like change, especially if they feel it has been forced on them. Change involves risk and the unknown, and some people are especially resistant to both.



Typical criticisms:

- “This will never work.”
- “It’s working just the way it is.”
- “What’s the point?”

What’s behind the criticism?

- Fear: “I’m afraid of change.”
- Envy: “I’m jealous I didn’t think of it myself.”
- Laziness: “I don’t want to learn something new.”

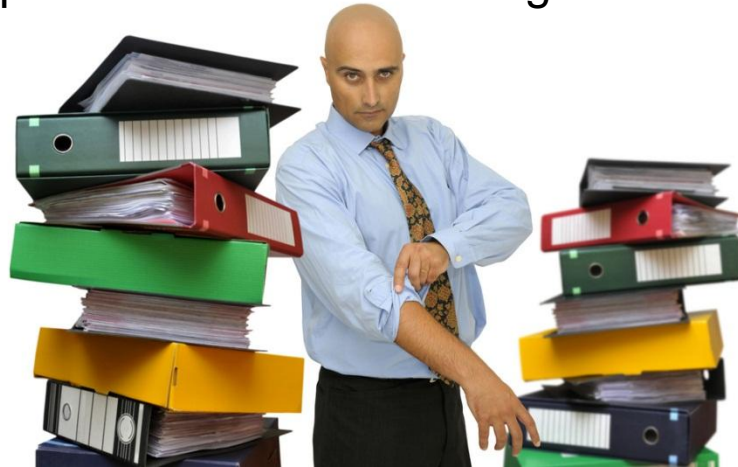
## Myths and Misconceptions (cont.)

**Myth: If an idea is good, it will stand on its own merits**

*“Don’t worry about people stealing your ideas. If your ideas are any good, you’ll have to ram them down people’s throats.”*

Howard H. Aiken, inventor

- Many people feel that once they have thought of a good idea, the hard work is done. Or, if the idea is worthwhile, it will sell itself and everybody will recognize its value.
- Unfortunately, thinking of a good idea doesn’t guarantee that it will be accepted and implemented. It can take a great deal of time and persistence to sell an idea.








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