



Innovation 'for profit':

Develop a highly creative and disciplined approach to innovation. Differentiate yourselves from the competition. Whether you are a small or large business convert your ideas and know how into profit.

1. Idea Capture

Develop a process for capturing ideas. Understand your market and customer needs and expectations. Anticipate trends and changes. What are your competitors doing? Develop a mechanism for all employees to contribute ideas, increasing diversity. Capture the required type of ideas in line with sales and marketing strategy.

2. Idea Prioritisation

Define a process for prioritising ideas. How do you select ideas to become your next offering into the market? Do you rank ideas? Can you develop a 'balanced' portfolio of new ideas, ie products, systems and services? Who is evaluating ideas and do they have the time, resource and knowledge? How will you provide feedback to idea initiators? How quickly do you evaluate and prioritise ideas?

3. Idea Maturing

Develop an organized process for maturing (testing) ideas. Test the high priority ideas to ascertain if they are worth the time, money and effort to bring to market. Consider elements such as technical, marketing, pricing, financial. Ensure that resources are made available for idea maturing eg time, people, information. Take an overview of market impact on price, market share, competitor reaction etc. Create a go/kill decision process. If it doesn't look good – kill it!

4. New Project management

Define the start up and ongoing management process. Who is leading the project? Do they have the time and the skills? Is the data detailed enough to make all the decisions on go ahead? Eg pricing strategy, set up costs, market readiness etc. Establish a 'stage and gate' type process to check and review at defined periods. Will it be ready for market? Are you testing the product or service? Are you using client relationships to help you iron out objections? Keep costs in check. etc

5. Innovation launching

Create a launch plan for your new product/service. Establish a plan for managing all potential impacts and market effects. Include customers at this stage – warm the market. Include all relevant employees. Begin the process of training/familiarisation with any new product, service or way of working. Prepare the 'go to market strategy' ie How will the sales process work? Create a positive PR event to launch the innovation.

6. Overall innovation management

Share a clear vision for innovation strategy. Define a clear and precise process for the management of 'cradle to grave' innovation. Establish clear rules on profitability of new products/processes/services. Define clear guidelines for pricing in the marketplace. Set clear criteria for measuring the effectiveness of innovation. Establish sensible metrics to define efficiency; eg time elapsed from idea maturing to launch, profit margin by product, market share growth, new customers gained etc. Is the market welcoming your innovative approach? Make innovation a clear differentiator. **Make it a profit generator.**