

CULTIVATES INNOVATION

CULTIVATES INNOVATION MEANS:

Creating _____ and _____ ways for the organization to be _____.

Patterns you may recognize in yourself or your environment:

SKILLED

- Comes up with useful ideas that are new, better, or unique
- Introduces new ways of looking at problems
- Can take a creative idea and put it into practice
- Encourages diverse thinking to promote and nurture innovation

LESS SKILLED

- Stays within comfort zone rather than experimenting with new ways
- Presents ideas that are ordinary, conventional, and from the past
- Tends to be critical of others' original ideas
- Has a style that discourages the creative initiatives of others

POSSIBLE CAUSES OF LESSER SKILL

- Cautious; risk averse
- Not open to new ideas
- Narrow perspective
- Not market/customer savvy
- Complacent with what is
- Lacks knowledge about process
- Doesn't value innovation
- Not curious
- Limited creativity toolbox
- Slow to change and act

REFLECTION

What tends to hold me back from improving things?

THE INNOVATION LOOP: A SIMPLE WAY TO IMPROVE THE WORK

Goal: Not perfect. Not big. Just better.

Focus on what you can influence.

Step 1: Choose a Problem

Notice where work feels harder than it should

Look for friction, delays, or repeated issues

Stay within your lane (something you can influence)

Ask:

What in my day-to-day work frustrates me, slows things down, or doesn't work well?

Step 2: Understand the Problem

Don't solve yet, get underneath it

Identify root causes, not just symptoms

Challenge your assumptions

Ask:

What's actually causing this? What else could be contributing?

Step 3: Generate Ideas

Aim for quantity over quality

Write one idea at a time

Don't judge or filter yet

Goal: At least 5 to 7 ideas

Ask:

What are different ways to make this easier, better, or more consistent?

Step 4: Select the Best Ideas

Look for ideas that are practical, impactful, and realistic

Choose a small number to focus on

Ask:

Which of these would actually make a difference if we tried it next week?

Step 5: Test It

Pick one idea to try
Make it small and specific
Focus on action, not perfection

Ask:
What's one step I can take right away?

Make It Work
You don't need more freedom. You need to use what you already have
Small improvements, done consistently, create real change

Don't do this alone. Fresh perspectives almost always make the idea better.

GETTING OTHERS ON BOARD: SIMPLE INFLUENCE STRATEGIES

Good ideas don't move on their own. They move through people.
This is not an idea problem. It's an influence problem.

1. Start with Trust

People are more open to ideas from someone they trust

Ask:
Do I have a relationship with this person?
Who should I talk to before this becomes "my idea"?

2. Frame It for Them

People care about what it means for them, not just the idea
Connect your idea to what matters:

- Time saved
- Less frustration
- Better results
- Easier work

Ask:
Why would they say yes to this?

3. Involve, Don't Present

Don't show up with a finished solution
Instead:

Ask for input early
Let others shape the idea

Try:
"I've been thinking about something, can I get your take?"
"What am I missing?"

4. Make It Easy to Say Yes

Big ideas get stuck. Small ideas move

Keep it:

Low risk
Simple
Testable

Shift from: "We should change this"

To: "Can we try this small adjustment for two weeks?"

MAKE INNOVATION A DAILY HABIT

Innovation is a small habit, not a big moment

The 1% Question

What's one way I can improve this by 1%?

How to Use It

Pick one area
Generate multiple ideas (aim for 5)
Keep it small and within your control

Ask:

What's one small change that would make this easier, better, or more consistent?

Make It Work

Small improvements, done consistently, create real change

TAKEAWAYS

One insight you want to remember from today.

What part of the process will you try first?

Who do you need to involve?

ABOUT MARK | KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Mark Kenny is the keynote speaker organizations bring in when pressure is high, teams are pulling in different directions, and the conversations that move work forward aren't happening.

As a former software company founder who has led associations and mission-driven organizations, Mark has seen firsthand that collaboration doesn't break down because people don't care. It breaks down because teams stop having the conversations that keep them aligned.

Through his Uncommon Collaboration™ work, Mark helps teams have the conversations they need to actually move work forward again, turning alignment into clearer decisions, stronger execution, and momentum that leaders don't have to carry alone.

In his interactive keynotes, Mark creates a shared experience where people see what's actually happening inside their teams in real time. Through personal stories and simple, guided interaction, audiences recognize how they instinctively show up under pressure, and how those moments either move the team forward or hold it back.

Audiences leave knowing exactly how to show up differently so their teams can move forward together when it matters most.

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