

## Practices and Actions of Innovative Teams



Innovative teams ask provocative questions, seek many points of view, learn from tests, and move promising ideas forward to provide business value for the customer and the organization.

The four practices, shown in the graphic, don't need to be used in any particular sequence. Use them and revisit them to suit your innovation opportunities.

Remember to use **open-ended questions** with all four practices to learn more, limit the impact of your biases, and include diverse points of view.

### ► Spark Inquiry

**Innovation actions:**

- Discover challenges
- Explore customer realities
- Challenge assumptions

These actions help you and your team to **think differently** about your customers and their needs.

**Tools and techniques that will help you:**

- All About the Customer
- Question Starters
- Natural Affinity

### ► Generate New Ideas

**Innovation actions:**

- Adopt new viewpoints
- Select ideas to test

These actions help you and your team **seek input** from others who have different points of view and develop **many** new ideas.

**Tools and techniques that will help you:**

- Fast Thoughts
- ViewPoint
- Impact/Effort Grid
- Spot Votes
- Brainstorming
- Brain Writing
- Rosetta Solution
- Talking Heads

### ► Take Action

**Innovation actions:**

- Commit to action
- Identify support
- Communicate impact

These actions help you and your team **ensure** that promising ideas are executed and realize their business value.

**Tools and techniques that will help you:**

- Golden Nugget
- Chain Reaction
- Multiplier Effect

### ► Test to Learn

**Innovation actions:**

- Break down ideas
- Choose goals and methods
- Learn from outcomes

These actions help you and your team **learn quickly** and affordably to move ideas forward.

**Tools and techniques that will help you:**

- Test to Learn Worksheet
- Primitive Prototypes
- Component Tests
- Early, Active Trials



## Leaders Who Foster Innovation

	Do . . .	Say . . .
 <p><b>Spark Inquiry</b></p> <p><i>Asking provocative questions to understand the customer experience.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask questions to challenge the team's assumptions and transform the status quo.</li> <li>• Connect team members with their customers.</li> <li>• Draw out team members' insights by asking questions that stimulate their thinking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Why did we choose that method? Why not try something totally new?"</li> <li>• "What if we . . .?"</li> <li>• "Let's find some new ways to observe customers."</li> <li>• "What have you seen in your work with customers that seems illogical?"</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Generate New Ideas</b></p> <p><i>Proactively seeking input from a variety of sources to originate many new ideas.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce and model effective idea-generation techniques.</li> <li>• Recognize the value of learning from new perspectives.</li> <li>• Guide the team's efforts in moving promising ideas forward.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "You could use one of the brainstorming tools on . . ."</li> <li>• "We could learn a lot by asking _____ for input."</li> <li>• "You've offered strong rationale for moving ahead with this idea."</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Test to Learn</b></p> <p><i>Testing promising ideas to learn more and using test outcomes to build ideas further.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed the use of small tests to learn quickly.</li> <li>• Make partial success acceptable; don't punish risk takers!</li> <li>• Value learning as much as outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "What do you want to learn? How can you test quickly?"</li> <li>• "What did you learn that you didn't know before?"</li> <li>• "What will you do differently now?"</li> <li>• "This small test tells us just what we need to know in the early stage."</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Take Action</b></p> <p><i>Mobilizing for implementation of innovative ideas.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion the merits of team members' ideas to managers and other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Seek opportunities to advocate for new ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "When we implement this idea, we will . . ."</li> <li>• "If we don't implement this innovation, . . ."</li> <li>• "With which other stakeholders or opinion leaders should we communicate?"</li> </ul>