INVOLVING THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION WITH DEFINING INNOVATION
Many definitions of innovation were given and two themes emerged:

1. Innovation is moving outside of R&D and becoming a value throughout the entire organization, requiring new skill sets and capabilities to be developed.

2. There is a difference between innovation in theory and innovation in practice.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INNOVATION CULTURES
There are 5 groupings of characteristics that were discussed that drive an innovative culture. These groups create tension with each other and could be used as a spectrum to measure a company’s innovation culture.

- Tolerance of Failure ↔ No Tolerance of Incompetence
- Willingness to Experiment ↔ Highly Disciplined
- Psychologically Safe ↔ Brutally Candid
- Collaboration ↔ Individual Accountability
- Flat Structure ↔ Strong Leadership

Other topics of discussion included:

JUDGING FAILURE + INCOMPETENCY
Teams need to be built in a way that leverages complementary strengths to better manage set-backs and creates a learning environment around failure. It is important to distinguish incompetency from competent failure: not learning from failure is indicative of incompetency.

THE GAP BETWEEN GENERATIONS
There is a perception that millennials have a different definition of innovation, one that is more oriented towards the greater good. This dynamic can challenge the existing culture and result in creative tension with the baby boomer generation.

THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP
Every senior tech leader needs to understand that if they are too strong with their own opinion, they may prevent the team from coming up with a better solution.

Also, if you are too prescriptive in how to attain the company’s vision, there is the potential of stifling creativity.
COMMUNICATION IS CRITICAL FOR AN INNOVATIVE CULTURE

An increase in global teams, remote employees, and generational differences have caused communication tools to shift predominantly from email and older methods of communication to more instant methods:

**SHARING YOUR SUCCESS STORIES**

People crave the freedom to innovate, and be recognized for their success. Sharing success stories through internal communications, published work, & public speaking engagements is a way to involve and excite the entire organization.

In the global age, it is important to be aware of the language you are using around success, and making sure it resonates with the various cultures being addressed.

**THE VIRTUAL BRAINSTORM**

Virtual communication removes emotions, and provides greater opportunity for entire team collaboration. It also allows for more developed and innovative ideas.

If there is a strong personality, virtual communications removes that overwhelming presence from a meeting, allowing everyone to participate.

**COMMUNICATION TOOL SHIFT**

Collaborative instant messaging, like Slack other company/department wide dashboards are replacing emails and older methods of communication.

This begins to dictate what language is used around innovation and how success stories are communicated.

**WAYS TO INVOLVE THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION IN INNOVATION**

- Align both the R&D team and the entire organization on one vision of innovation
- Tell success stories to shape the innovation culture
- Create growth platforms to reflect market changes and customer needs

**TOP THREE THINGS THAT DRIVE INNOVATION**

- Utilize effective and engaging communication
- The creation of a clear need/crisis
- Create responsibility around decisions to allow people to feel more confident in their sector

**TRANSPARENT AND FREQUENT (RE)PRIORITIZATION**

Portfolio management and re-prioritization need to happen continuously. Transparency helps to ease tension between managements’ need to optimize resource utilization and innovators’ desire to explore. The process of how decisions are made must be communicated to the entire organization:

- Use a prioritization scorecard to create the priority list and be aware of the potential of gaming the system
- Encourage critical thinking about the project and its value to help it move up the priority list, such as how can it be accomplished with less resources, more impactful, killed, etc.
THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM DISCUSSIONS

1. Innovation theory can be discussed in depth, but truly depends on the agility, adaptability, and reality of the business.

2. Teams need to be built in a way that leverages complementary strengths to better manage set-backs and creates a learning environment around failure.

3. Strong leaders need to self regulate their perspective to enable their team to fully engage in innovation.

4. Innovation is expanding outside of R&D and the success stories associated with this should be shared throughout the organization.

Communication + Innovation Success Stories

- Enhance communication around success stories
- Explore new communication tools & virtual brainstorming to bridge the generational gap
- Create a sense of urgency around innovation

INTERNAL Clarity + Transparency

- Align on business objectives and criteria for successful innovation
- Create clarity around acceptable failure
- Create a clear vision/definition of innovation to boost alignment

Action items recommended around bringing together the entire organization:

THANK YOU!
Thank you to Rick Michelman for hosting this forum and Paul Miklautsch for moderating. For further discussion or content please reach out to the contacts below.

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https://www.iriweb.org/
**CTO FORUM**

**ENLISTING THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION IN INNOVATION**

*You make it my job too?*

This Innovation Research Interchange CTO forum covered the topic of innovation, and more specifically how enlisting the entire organization innovation can shape a company’s culture and innovation strategy. The following are a summary of key takeaways from the forum.

**INTEGRATING THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION WITH DEFINITIVE INNOVATION**

Innovative companies recognize their culture is a value within the organization, requiring the entire organization to be involved in innovation.

**THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INNOVATION CULTURES**

"You mean it’s my job too?"

There are two perspectives that emphasize have a different definition of innovation. One is that it is more centered around the goal. This can challenge the existing culture and result in creative tension with the baby Boomer generation.

**YOUR PERSONAL INNOVATION TOOL KIT**

People crave the freedom to innovate, and excite the entire organization.

Communication is critical for an innovative culture.

Over 2 days in Cincinnati, Ohio

**SUCCESS STORIES**

- Create growth platforms to reflect market changes
- Tell success stories to shape the innovation culture
- Enhance communication around success stories

**COMMUNICATION TOOL SHIFT**

- Collaborate digital meetings, use Slack when appropriate, keep updates to an innovative, yet end user-friendly tone of communication
- The key is when to share information that is most successful and communicate.

**THE VIRTUAL BRAINSTORM**

Virtual brainstorming sessions are more, provide greater efficiency, for successful team collaboration. It also allows everyone to participate.

**SHARING your STORIES**

Success stories through internal communications, published work, & public speaking engagements is a way to involve & excite the entire organization.

**WAYS TO INTEGRATE THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION IN INNOVATION**

- Align both the R&D and the entire organization on strategy
- Set success stories to shape the innovation culture
- Create responsibility to reflect market changes and customer needs

**THEMEs THAT EMERGED FROM DISCUSSIONS**

- Innovation theory can be discussed in depth, but truly depends on the agility, adaptability, and reality of the business.
- Strong leaders need to realize that their position to realize that theirs is truly engaged in innovation.
- Teams need to be built in a way that leverages complementary strengths to manage back-end issues and creates a learning environment for the future.

**TOP THREE THINGS THAT DRIVE INNOVATION**

- Top leadership and engagement communication - The creation of a clear need/crisis around a problem that needs to be fixed
- Enable accountability around decisions to allow people to feel confident in their work

**COMMUNICATION + INNOVATION SUCCESS STORIES**

- Balance contradictory research success stories
- Create new communication tools & virtual brainstorming to bridge the generational gap
- Create a sense of ownership and participatory

**TRANSPARENT AND FRIENT (RE)PRIORITIZATION**

- Use prioritization scorecard to create the clarity needed to align with the organization.

**INTERNAL CLARITY + TRANSPARENCY**

- Align on business objectives and clarity for innovation execution
- Create clarity around acceptable failure
- Use a specific definition of innovation to boost alignment

**THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP**

Communication is critical for an innovative culture.

**THE GAP BETWEEN GENERATIONS**

- Negative generational traits need to be understood if they are going to work with their own opinions. They can only grow from learning and working with a better understanding.

**INNOVATION TOOLS**

- If there is a strong personality, virtual communication removes emotions, increasing presence from a meeting, thus allowing everyone to participate.

**JUDGING FAILURE vs INCOMPETENCY**

- Over 2 days in Cincinnati, Ohio

**THEMEs THAT EMERGED FROM DISCUSSIONS**

- Flat Structure                      Strong Leadership
- Psychologically Safe              Brutally Candid
- Willingness to Experiment          Highly Disciplined
- Tolerance of Failure                No Tolerance of Incompetence

**Communication** can be discussed in depth, but truly depends on the agility, adaptability, and reality of the business.

**Strengths needed to realize that theirs is truly engaged in innovation.”**

**Team needs to be built in a way that leverages complementary strengths to manage back-end issues and creates a learning environment for the future.”**

**Thanks to Rick Michelman for hosting this forum and Paul Miklautsch for moderating.**

**Thank you!**

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