



Innovative Thinking Toolkit

This is a partial sample from one of futurethink's 5 Toolkits featuring materials from the 200+ tools within our Innovation Portal, which offers how-to guides, videos, podcasts, case studies, and more. To experience the world's largest collection of on-demand innovation materials, contact us for a demo at innovate@futurethink.com.

Introduction

Innovation is the act of creating something new, useful, and valuable for your clients and organization.

This Toolkit is your on-demand guide to making innovation happen—starting *now*.

What does it mean to think 'outside the box'? Why does it matter? True innovators eagerly embrace a range of thinking styles and approaches to drive faster towards the future. Thinking differently enables you to get novel answers to old problems and creates unique ways to take your business forward.

Using the information and techniques on the following pages, you'll be able to:

- Question assumptions that hold you back from groundbreaking solutions.
- Find simple ways to overcome barriers to innovative thinking.
- Use offbeat methods to grow your existing business.
- Employ a feedback framework that gives new ideas a fair hearing.
- Learn new resources that help you keep your innovation antennae up.

Congratulations! By using these tools, you're joining tens of thousands of other innovators who have utilized these resources to ignite fresh thinking, overcome innovation challenges, and set their organization on a path to a better future.

Best Wishes,

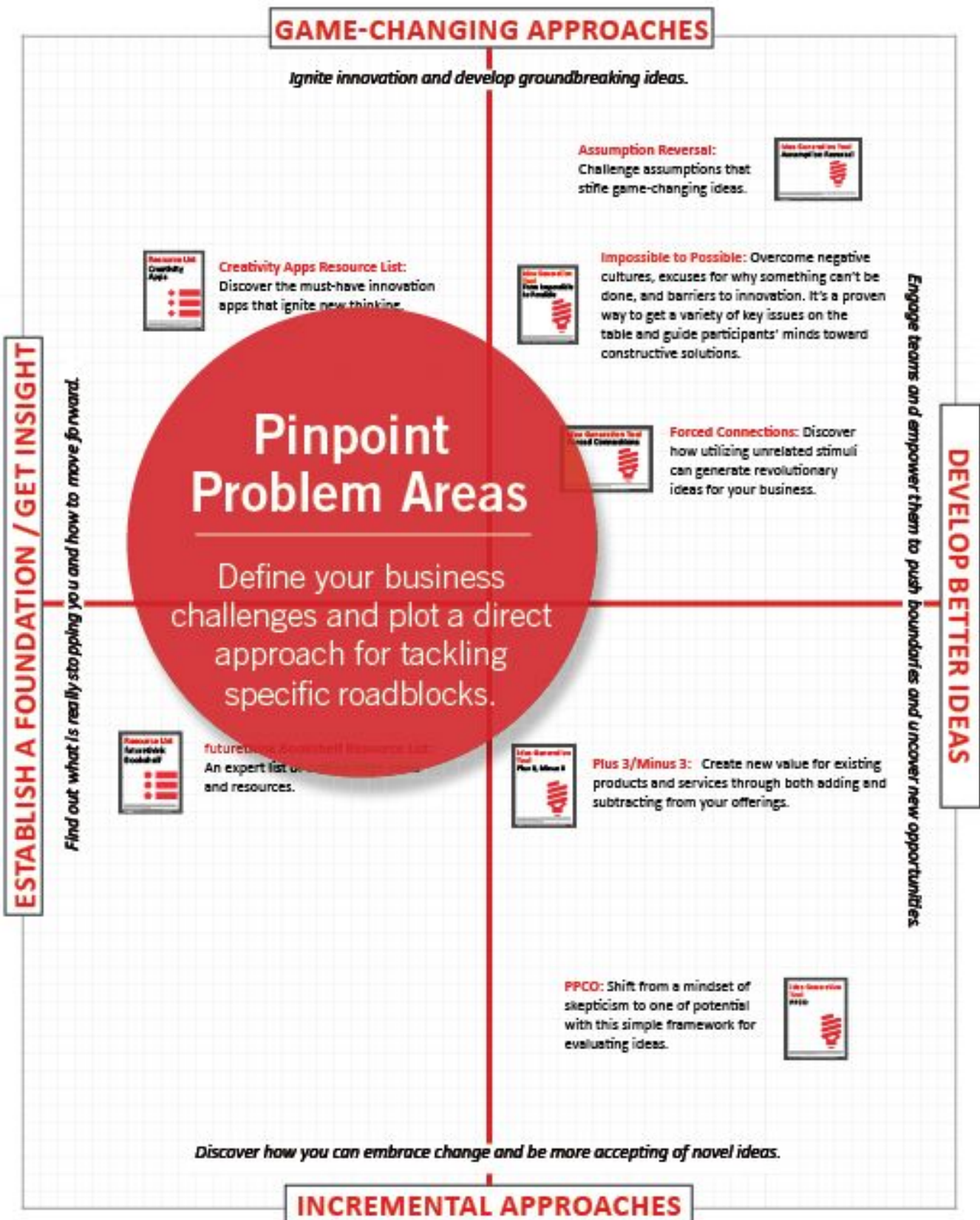


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How to Use This Toolkit

Need to understand which tool to use when? Find the tool that aligns with your most pressing challenge:



TOOLS



INCLUDING:

ASSUMPTION REVERSAL

FORCED CONNECTIONS

PPCO

IMPOSSIBLE TO POSSIBLE

PLUS 3 MINUS 3

Co-Developed with Fortune 500 Clients



The featured Tools have been tested by top industry leaders and are a key element in their innovation success.

Idea Generation Tool

From Impossible to Possible



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Idea Generation Tool

From Impossible to Possible

WHAT IS FROM IMPOSSIBLE TO POSSIBLE?

Some of the best ideas come from shattering norms and creating new paradigms. Detailing what *can't* happen allows us to think about what actually *can* be done. Start by listing the things that would *never* happen in your industry or company (e.g., offer products for free). In the second part of the exercise, you'll try to uncover ways to make these *impossibles*, *possible*. Make it happen!



For a video introduction to *From Impossible to Possible*, click on the image above or go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDEe-DKJpQs>

Learn On-Demand

Access accompanying videos to engage all types of learners with 90-second tutorials.

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FACILITATION GUIDE

SUGGESTED AUDIENCE: Relevant for all levels of staff and senior leadership.

SET-UP:

- This exercise should be done in teams of three to four people, ideally with an even number of teams (for swapping worksheets).
- To spur conversation and jumpstart the exercise, you can choose to pre-fill one to two IMPOSSIBLES on the worksheet to get the conversation started.

RECOMMENDED TIMING:

1. Introduction:	5 min.
2. Impossible Brainstorm:	10 min.
3. Swap:	10 min.
4. Possible Brainstorm:	15 min.
5. Group Discussion:	<u>20 min.</u>
	60 min.

SUGGESTED MATERIALS:



Worksheets
(enough for each participant, plus a few extra)



Whiteboard or flipcharts
(use them to write down all group ideas; no idea is a bad idea)



Colored markers, pens, and pencils
(separating ideas by color will help organize your thoughts)

Clear Instructions

Empower anyone to lead a discussion—even if they've never facilitated before—with our step-by-step guide.



This exercise is best used when participants feel there are many barriers to innovation. It's a surefire way to get a variety of key issues out on the table, and get participants to think constructively about how to solve them.

HOW IT WORKS

- 1. Designate Teams (Note: the exercise can be done individually):** Once all attendees are in the room, split them into their assigned teams.
- 2. Assign a Team Leader:** Ask each team to assign a "team leader" who will write the team's thoughts on the worksheet. It's best to designate someone with the best handwriting as the team leader.
- 3. Hand Out Worksheet:** Give each team a worksheet for brainstorming. (See next page.)
- 4. Impossible Brainstorm:** Give each group 10-15 minutes to brainstorm their list of *impossibles* on the worksheet. Brief participants clearly on what you mean by *impossibles*. *Impossibles* can be seen from three different perspectives (it's recommended that you focus on one perspective during a session):
 - a. Industry perspective:** What things will *never* happen in our industry?
 - b. Customer perspective:** What would a customer say we would *never* do for them?
 - c. Internal/company perspective:** What would other groups in our company say we could *never* make happen?
- 5. Swap:** Once the *impossibles* section has been completed, have teams swap their worksheet with another team. If there are an uneven number of teams, simply rotate the worksheets clockwise among the tables so each team gets someone else's *impossibles*. (Optional: do not tell teams ahead of time that they will be giving up their list of *impossibles* to another team. This element of surprise could add a level of excitement.)
- 6. Possibles Brainstorm:** Using their inherited list of *impossibles*, teams brainstorm ways to turn the *impossible*, *possible*.
- 7. Group Discussion:** Ask each team to read out the *impossibles* they came up with and how they made them *possible*. Use some of these questions to facilitate discussion:
 - a. Was it difficult to come up with *impossible*? Why/Why not?**
 - b. Did you have a hard time making your list of things *possible*?**
 - c. Of everything you've heard from the brainstorm, which *impossibles* do you think are most likely to become *possibles*?**

Try It Out

Reduce the lag between learning and doing by enabling employees to immediately apply this Tool to their current business challenge.



Idea Generation Tool

From Impossible to Possible

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IMPOSSIBLE

What are your Impossibles?

POSSIBLE

Here's how we can make it happen:

1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



Problem-Solve Creatively

Change your perspective and learn to generate brilliant ideas with our innovative worksheets.



RESEARCH

INCLUDING:

FUTURETHINK BOOKSHELF

CREATIVITY APPS

Top Resources

Discover the best innovative reads, technology, and resources to keep your company on the cutting edge.

Resource List

futurethink

Bookshelf



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futurethink Bookshelf

You spend enough time in front of a computer screen, so here's a list of books, some timely and others timeless, for you to learn about the future, and workplace culture and collaboration—the old-fashioned way.



TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	DESCRIPTION
A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change	Douglas Thomas & John Seely Brown	Hypothesizes on learning and the rise of imagination and play. Authors Thomas and Brown believe that even though the world is changing rapidly, our culture is one that can adapt and evolve organically. http://www.newcultureoflearning.com
Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error	Kathryn Schulz	Schulz asserts that the way we handle mistakes and learn from them makes us who we are. http://beingwrongbook.com
Beyond the Obvious: Killer Questions That Spark Game-Changing Innovation	Phil McKinney	Generating and executing great ideas is the key to succeeding in the economy of tomorrow. However, we're teaching people how to ask the wrong questions. In this book, former Hewlett-Packard VP Phil McKinney helps readers dig deeper and get back to asking the right questions. http://amzn.to/Wl0LI5
Breakthrough! Proven Strategies to Overcome Creative Block and Spark Your Imagination	Alex Cornell	All of us struggle at one time or another with creative block. Breakthrough! is a lively compilation of strategies for combating creative block offered by a who's who of leading graphic designers, typographers, cartoonists, photographers, illustrators, musicians, writers, and other creative professionals. http://amzn.to/TW2knS
The First Mile: A Launch Manual for Getting Great Ideas into the Market	Scott Anthony	This book is about "the first mile"—that critical time when an idea moves from concept to market. Anthony shows how to overcome challenges using tested principles and how to turn innovative ideas into success stories. http://amzn.to/lugLin
Future Perfect: The Case for Progress in a Networked Age	Steven Johnson	This book, from <i>New York Times</i> bestselling author Steven Johnson, makes the case that a new model of political change is on the rise, transforming everything from local governments to classrooms, from protest movements to health care. http://amzn.to/108dcEK