FUTURETHINK

Unleash Innovation

TIPS TO UNLOCK NEW POTENTIAL AND TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

No matter where you are on your innovation journey, there are some easy, yet game-changing techniques to start thinking differently and ignite change quickly:

	Ask Killer Questions	• **Use open-ended 'question stems'** – Use phrases like 'What if?', 'How else might we?', 'What are all the ways we could…' as starters for your potential question. These invite options and ideation better than closed questions. • **Keep it simple** – No rambling, multi-part questions. Keep it focused. • **Be provocative** – Don't be boring, be creative! Asking 'if we could charge 10x more for our product how could we do it?' is a lot more thought-provoking than 'how could we raise prices?' • **Use positive and negative angles** – Rather than asking 'what do our customers want?' consider also exploring 'what our customers DON'T want?'
	Kill Stupid Rules	• **Create space for change by eliminating time sucks –** Innovation doesn't stall because you don't know how, it's because you often don't have time. Get time back by unnecessary rules and processes that have outlived their time. • **Focus on your sphere of control –** For best impact, focus on stopping things you have power over in your everyday work -- meetings, emails, team decision-making.
	Challenge the Status Quo	• **Kill your company –** Don't be scared - try it! Pretend that you're your #1 competitor. Now, imagine being them and try to put your company/product/service out of business. How could you make what you currently do irrelevant? Use this approach to proactively identify weakness and potential threats, and then fix them. You'll learn how to be more agile, honest, and more on the offense (vs. the defense) with your competition. • **Reverse your assumptions –** List your assumptions around a particular product or problem. Then, reverse them! For example, let's say you assume meetings have to be an hour long. Alternate assumptions can be that they're five hours long, 10 min long, or the meeting is canceled! Reversing assumptions invites a wider range of possibilities without the constraints of what 'has to be'.
	Get Inspired	• **Break from Routine –** Take a new route to work. Get coffee from a new place. Invite some unusual suspects or outsiders to your next status meeting to get fresh opinions. If you want to learn something new, you have to DO something new. • **Set up 15 min. 'Brain Dates' –** Schedule time for a brief talk with someone outside your normal circle who could teach you something totally different. • **Google "Future of (Your Industry/Product/Service) 2030" –** Want to find the future? Google it! See what predictions already exist and build on them.

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