

A Culture of Innovation





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Harness your organisation's passion and translate it into successful results. By creating a culture that empowers and rewards, you can convert those who may not see themselves as innovators into agents of innovation. Business leaders must engender a culture which enables your people to successfully deliver on the powerful ideas they already have within them. This is a culture of innovation. Innovation: Ideas, successfully applied.

“ Leaders have a disproportionately large effect on the **cultures of organisations** and systems. By their behaviours, leaders create the conditions that either hinder or aid **innovation**. Innovation is a **conscious decision**, a discipline, that they must choose to undertake. ”

Introducing Oaklin's Innovation Culture Framework

At Oaklin, we don't see innovation as the preserve of a select few with Steve Jobs type genius. Rather it's an entirely accessible spectrum of behaviours, methods, processes and tools that any organisation's people can practise. There are simple steps that you as a business leader can take to develop a culture of innovation in your organisation. Through our 'innovation culture framework' we will help you on your journey to a culture of innovation.



What a Culture of Innovation Looks Like

Changing your organisation requires a clear vision of the culture you want to head towards.

At Oaklin we define seven habits and qualities which make up a culture of innovation.

1. Leadership sponsorship

Innovation is shouted loudly from the roof tops.

Your organisation's leaders must visibly and audibly champion innovation. First help them to understand its values and methods, then understand their priorities so you can channel innovation, setting direction to support the right business goals. By their behaviours leaders create the conditions that either make or break innovation.

2. Create capacity

Colleagues have space and time.

Innovation is a skill and like any skill you can only get good at it by spending time learning and practising. This means breaking existing routines to create the time for colleagues to explore problems and test new ideas. Innovation doesn't happen by accident but is a purposeful and intentional act.

3. Build ability

An accessible spectrum of behaviours, methods, and tools.

Innovation can seem abstract, distant and hard. But for it to be part of your culture it needs to be brought to life as real, relevant and easy. There are simple frameworks that can be taught which any colleague can pick up and succeed at aided by the right communication, engagement, and training.

4. Learn quickly

Innovative organisations are those that learn quickly.

We all know the mantra "fail fast" – failure is inherent in the innovation process. Your first idea is almost invariably wrong but what matters is the process of then quickly identifying what might be right. An innovative culture does not just accept failure but has the competence to derive validated learning from it.

5. Customer obsession

Observe your customers not your own company.

They say a company thinks it has a product to sell but the reality is that a customer has a problem to solve or a job to get done and what they are really paying for is satisfaction. Innovation seeks unsolved problems or jobs which have not yet been done. So, look from the outside in and get close to your customers.

6. Actions focused

The best decisions are based not on the analysis of ideas, but on an analysis of actions.

Creating ideas is just one – albeit important – part of innovation. Testing those ideas is when you'll learn which are likely to have impact. An innovation culture gives colleagues the tools and material to not just generate and capture ideas, but also to rapidly develop, prototype and test them, whilst always remaining close to your customers.

7. Value all results

Big or small, tangible or intangible, there is value in all types of innovation.

Innovations can be material or non-physical and can come in all forms and formats, tones and hues. Don't expect or wait for a breakthrough – very few of us will get to invent the next iPod – but reward new ideas for their value and impact rather than for their shape and size.



Our Innovation Culture Framework

Oaklin's innovation culture framework has four components. Leadership & Sponsorship, Engagement & Comms, Enabling Colleagues & Teams and Delivering Innovation.



The Four Components of Our Innovation Culture Framework

Leadership Sponsorship

To ensure adoption & business value

Maintain active, visible and engaged leadership championing innovation.

Align innovation efforts to your business's goals & strategy.

Engagement & Comms

To build lasting habits

Convey the need for innovation, celebrate and share successes.

Normalise failures as a natural part of innovation.

Enable Colleagues & Teams

To develop skills & ability

Coach, train and support your colleagues to give them the skills, tools and motivation to do innovation.

Delivering Innovation

To bring it all together

Run sprints on real business problems prototyping solutions to demonstrate value.

Use 'Design Thinking' as an open methodology to generate and explore ideas.



Framework Phases

Assess – This short, sharp phase brings together key stakeholders, taking stock of current abilities and aligning on strategic direction.

Deliver – This phase is at the heart of driving innovation with your teams. We have a menu of advice, best practice, tools and communications that will help your people to get excited about new thinking and to feel part of it.

Sustained Change – We will not overstay but step away, leaving your people with habits formed, behaviours changed, and a sustainable plan for innovation.



Delivering Change at Pace

We will help you build a multidisciplinary Innovation Team sitting at the heart of your organisation's innovation work who will help your colleagues to find bold new ideas. The team spans innovation, design, technology and the people side of change. We will draw on your own people's skills, supplementing them with ours where needed, to deliver change at pace.

“**Innovation** is the ability
to see change as an
opportunity not a threat.”

Steve Jobs, Founder & Former CEO Apple

Let's start a conversation...

At Oaklin, we are passionate about helping our clients realise their business potential. There is so much more to discuss. We'd love to hear from you and talk through how our innovation culture framework can excite and empower your people.

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