

FreeMind iNNOVation eSSentials

What do **YOU** have to **DO** to be an Innovator?

According to Clayton Christensen (of Harvard)
Jeffrey Dyer (of Marriott School BYU) & Hal Gregersen (of INSEAD)...

You have to...

OBSERVE

QUESTION

NETWORK

EXPERIMENT

ASSOCIATE

OBSERVE to innovate

Do you have your eyes open to what's happening around you in the world – in business and life?

Innovators keep on observing products, customers, problems, new developments – related to their company, competitors, 'unrelated' industries and the world at large.

Ratan Tata got the inspiration for a highly affordable car (the **Nano!**) when he observed a family of four riding a scooter in the rain.



QUESTION to Innovate

Do you question the status quo? Do you keep asking 'why', 'why not', 'what if'? Do you have trouble accepting things as they are?

Innovators are always asking questions. Disruptive innovators ask questions that people often find stupid, a waste of time, or even crazy.

Remember **Newton** – "Why did the apple fall downwards?"

AG Lafley (former **P&G** CEO) encouraged questions like, "What kind of experience does the customer really want?" – questions which P&G used to develop several highly profitable innovations.

NETWORK to Innovate

Do you network with various people from diverse backgrounds?

Networking exposes you to different thoughts, ideas, perspectives, knowledge, problems and solutions.

Pierre Omidyar (founder **Ebay**), says that he looks for insights from people who are *not* experts, like a mailroom employee.

Michael Lazardis (founder **Blackberry**) was inspired at a trade show by a wireless system for Coca Cola vending machines.



EXPERIMENT to Innovate

Do you try out new things, new ways of doing things and explore roads less travelled?

Innovation requires you to experiment, often without expecting success or a result.

Thomas Edison had to experiment with more than a thousand attempts before he finally invented the light bulb.

Steve Jobs' calligraphy classes (apparently useless!) helped him to design beautiful fonts for the **Mac** computer.

You don't have to be a lab geek to experiment! Just start trying out new things at work and in life!

ASSOCIATE to Innovate

Can you connect seemingly unrelated problems, questions or ideas and come up with an innovative solution?

Steve Jobs got the idea of the **GUI** (icons, menus, windows) from his visit to the **Xerox** research center. He realized that this new technology was perfect for his idea of 'a computer for ordinary people' – easy to learn & use – and the Mac was invented!

The more you *Observe, Question, Network and Experiment*, the easier it will be for you to "**connect the dots**" - make associations and come up with innovative ideas.



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FreeMind Business Solutions

mail@freemindtraining.com

(0)9958860228

Level 2, Elegance Tower, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi

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