

Execution of Ideas: the dark side of Innovation

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Innovation rises out of two great worlds, each one with vast challenges: **the generation of innovative ideas** and **the execution of those ideas**.

In the last months I've had the opportunity to offer workshops and consulting services in Ecuador, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and El Salvador, in Mexico as well, and the same situation prevails in all Latinamerican countries, great difficulties of businesses not only to generate ideas that have an impact in their profitability but also in executing those that have been generated.. When collaborators from a firm have many ideas but these are not executed then the firm remains merely a creative firm, and when ideas are executed in an efficient manner but these are not truly innovative ideas then the organization simply making use of good management.

So what's needed to execute innovations in an accelerated fashion: from start, it is required that the person that has the idea know the proper channels to communicate it, but before that, it is required that the individual work on the ideal setting that brings out the confidence to transmit his idea; following that, it is necessary that the person receiving the idea have the capacity to evaluate it, under known to all formats in a short period of time and that it may have the authority to immediately call a meeting where the idea may be conceptualized, the roles and responsibilities are assigned, and a chronogram is defined for the delivery of an execution plan, in a format know to everybody; after the plan is delivered comes the assignment of resources, that are easily obtained through know channels, and the implementation begins.

Pre-Innovative Business Environment:

All this implementation process requires an appropriate environment that allows errors, that permits learning from mistakes made by others and the everybody be willing to change being that collaborators are sensitized to the importance of innovation and its benefits, just as a leadership that promotes innovation by setting the example and that allows other leaderships; and last, it is necessary that there be instruments to measure the impact of innovations and it is vital to recognize not just the individual that generated the idea but everyone involved in the execution of such innovations.

Ingredients for the Execution of Innovations:

Let us see the ingredients of this process in a simplified manner:

- Environment that gives confidence to generate and communicate ideas being as crazy as they may sound.
- Proper and known channels to communicate the idea.
- Evaluators with authority, acting fast and utilizing known formats.
- Fast and enthusiastic creation of execution teams with a solid plan.
- Fast assignment of resources to invest in the plan execution.
- Environment that allows errors and where learning happens out of them.
- Collective willingness to change.
- Leadership that allows innovations through setting the example and that allows for other leaderships.
- Measurements to evaluate the impact of innovations.
- Recognition to innovative efforts.

Now give yourself a moment to evaluate each one of these factors and place a numerical grade from to 1 to 5 inside the box depending on whether your organization is very strong in these views or very weak, with representing much strength in that area.

Now add all the points and let's see if your firm has the ingredients to be a fast or slow executioner of innovations. Under 70 points the firm has many opportunity areas to improve in the execution of innovations, if the grade was higher than 80 then you have the advantage of

being able to focus and strengthen in 2 or 3 of the previous factors to achieve being an organization that executes ideas in an accelerated way.

If you are in an organization where the execution happens very slowly, I recommend that you immediately form an Innovation Execution Group where each participant assumes the responsibility to better each previous characteristic.

Tips to work in teams in the execution of innovations:

- Build your partners and coworkers: speak highly of them in all places, remember their phrases and quote them. If you get together with one of them and he makes a mistake don't tell all the others. That avoids building barriers based on prejudice.

- Calibrate: Calibration meetings are very necessary, it is important that all may be tuned up and that some may not feel displaced from the information circles or that others feel that they are working by themselves.

- Dedicate time to thoughts and documents from others: never forget to read what others are sending you for your revision or to share their thoughts, just as you want everyone to read and share yours, that generates motivation. In some situations I recommend the strategy of Affirmative Ficta, that is, if others do not make remarks in the next couple of days it means that it is automatically approved.

- Think big, start small, climb fast: never stop thinking to great scale; it is where you must reach, but start small, it is impossible that you start from the end line: Have in mind that the climbing has to be fast since others will be behind you, be that in the launching of a new product or service or in the implementation of some innovative internal process.

- Focus, focus, focus: it is the most important part in the execution of innovations, the whole team must be focused, if there is no focus yet, hundreds of meetings to find it will not be enough.

- Don't let a comment or thought go by for as dumb it may sound, let others look for value within it: speak up even if you think your ideas don't add value in that moment, others may take the idea, turn it around and find some useful value in it.

- Don't stick to your ideas, generate them, turn them loose and let others hunt them freely: if you stick to your ideas you'll frustrate others and make them feel excluded from the team, let other critique and deconstruct your ideas if necessary.

- Silent moments: there will be moments in which no one talks of the innovation or the developments in its execution, this may frustrate you, your role in this case is to advance on your own in some part of the execution and email other setting them back into tune so that they may retake momentum.

- Whenever you have an idea regarding how to accelerate the execution don't leave it to someone else to carry on, you yourself land ground your ideas and share them with everyone else.

Without execution there is no innovation, because ideas won't be adding value anywhere if not just playing in the desperate minds of who create it them.

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