

Leadership Excellence

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7 Powerful Results Of Nurturing Innovation

The collective brain power of every employee is a great tool and one you have right at your fingertips



By [Dr. Evans Baiya](#)

In my work, I hear a lot of reasons why people don't engage in innovation: "That's not part of my job description." "I'm not an idea person." "Innovation doesn't really apply to my industry." "We don't need innovation right now. Our company is doing just fine." "Our workforce is already well trained." "The CEO is the one who comes up with new ideas."

The most common misconception about innovation is that it's only for the chosen few—the chosen few decision makers, the chosen few departments, the

chosen few industries, the chosen few gurus, experts, and technical folks. This couldn't be farther from the truth. Throughout the six stages of innovation, there is a place for everyone. In fact, you will miss out on the valuable talents and contributions of your team if you *don't* involve everyone in the organization—from CEO to entry-level admin.

Not only should every person in your organization play a part in the innovation process, but every industry and every company can benefit from



innovation, especially right now. There is so much more to innovation than simply coming up with new products or services. The remunerations of an innovative culture are far-reaching. When you make innovation an integral focus, your organization will make great strides and see significant positive change.

Here are some of the benefits of nurturing innovation in your organization:

Increased Employee Engagement

We all want our employees and colleagues to contribute to value creation for the organization and the community of clients we serve. When all of your employees have their ideas and thoughts heard, and when you engage them to collectively solve a problem or capitalize on an opportunity, you have just validated their role and their importance in your organization. People who feel and are in fact valued and heard will actively engage to make your company better, to increase customer service, and to improve results. When decisions and ideas are not limited to just coming from the top, but instead come from all levels of your employees, who are closest to the situation and closest to your customers, extensive ownership and accountability to value creation will increase significantly.

Enhanced Teamwork

The six stages of innovation require different talents and people at each stage. Because of this, innovation projects will naturally involve a diverse cross-section of employees, forming new and dynamic teams. When you give your employees the opportunity to work with different colleagues during the stages, they will start to develop relationships and form new connections, fortifying your organization. One of our clients had employees in various departments and locations across the country who hadn't had the chance to work together, let alone meet. After working on an innovation project together, many remarked how grateful they were to have formed relationships and that even after the innovation project was over, they continued to collaborate to share best practices and make positive changes in the company. Innovation gives departments and teams a meaningful way to connect around small and sometimes large shared objectives.

Improved Processes

Innovative thinking naturally leads to improved processes as employees dig deep to discover better or more efficient ways to do things—saving money and often illuminating wasted time or the duplication of efforts. When you ask employees to innovate a

process, whether it's internal or one that involves your customers directly, they will be able to uncover ideas and timely microsolutions that make a big difference. One of our clients, while attempting to improve one of its customer service process, uncovered nearly \$250,000 in waste and duplicated services, just by taking the time to look at all the factors involved in that process. It was a great win, not only for the team involved in this innovation project, but for the company as a whole.

New Products and Services

New products are probably what people think about most when they think about innovation because new products are the natural result of solving a problem or capitalizing on an opportunity. The most impactful aspect of having everyone in your organization participate in the innovation process is that you will get far greater and deeper ideas using the collective brain power of your team than you will, utilizing only a select few people. Your employees are seeing the problem or opportunity through their own unique lens, which gives the ideas of diversity and creativity. You would be surprised at the number of great ideas you can elicit, and how refined and high-quality those product ideas can become once they are vetted, combined or applied.

New Processes

Another natural result of innovative thinking is new or updated processes. When you enlist the help of your team in the innovation process, you will be able to realize and recognize opportunities you may not know even existed. Your team is perfectly aligned to help you come up with better methods to serve and take care of your clients. After all, your employees are on the front lines; they are the ones who are interacting with your clients most frequently and see the day-to-day needs as they arise. They are well-positioned to come up with better avenues to provide your products and services.

New Ways of Thinking

One of the most powerful outcomes of innovation is how it shifts paradigms and inspires new ways of thinking. The more you prioritize innovation, the more innovative your company will become—it is

that simple! As a result, your reputation among your customers and your employees will shift as well. As you implement innovative measures, you will be recognized as cutting-edge, adaptive, and industry leading. Your employees will take pride in being part of an organization that is ahead of the pack and always striving for improvement. And your customers will want to work with you because they know you are offering the latest and greatest.

A Constant Stream of Ideas

Every organization needs as many ideas as possible as they strive to lead and stay relevant in the market place. As you encourage innovation throughout your company, you'll find that employees stay in an innovative mindset, which opens the door to even more improvement, value creation, and invention. You can quite literally shift your culture to one that is more accountable, more engaged, and more innovative, simply by practicing the steps of innovation routinely and involving everyone in the process. The collective brain power of every employee in your company is a powerful tool and one you have right at your fingertips.



Dr. Evans Baiya is an internationally recognized and trusted guide to business leaders and innovators. Using his 6-stage process, he helps companies identify, define, develop, verify, commercialize, and scale their ideas. He is the co-author of the award-winning book, *The Innovator's Advantage* and co-creator of The Innovator's Advantage Academy™, a detailed step-by-step innovation training experience.



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