

> // THIS CHECKLIST IS PART
OF THE INNOVATION EXPEDITION,
BY GIJS VAN WULFEN.
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THE 66-POINT INNOVATION CHECKLIST

The fuzzy front end is the nickname for the start of innovation or innovation phase. Why? Because getting innovative ideas is a vague process. It's considered hard to do. That's exactly why I like to unfuzzy it. Connect creativity and business reality in five steps: Full Steam Ahead, Observe and Learn, Raise Ideas, Test Ideas and Homecoming. Here is a practical 66-point innovation checklist to help you.

FULL STEAM AHEAD

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1. "If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got." [Albert Einstein].
2. Create momentum for your innovation project. There must be urgency otherwise innovation is considered as playtime and nobody will be prepared to go outside the box.
3. Manage the expectations of your bosses and the line management before you start your innovation project(s).
4. It is essential to start your innovation journey with a clear and concrete innovation assignment to give focus.
5. Be concrete about the market/target group for which the innovations must be developed.
6. Define which criteria the new concepts must meet. This forms the guidelines throughout the process.
7. Use a team approach to improve innovation results and increase internal support for the innovative outcome.
8. "They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself." [Andy Warhol].
9. Invite people for whom the innovation assignment is personally relevant.
10. Invite people for both content and decision-making.
11. Be sure to invite people who think outside the box.
12. Also include a few outsiders.
13. Get a good mix of men and women, young and old, and so on.
14. Let top management participate in the innovation team.
15. Identify potential target groups for innovation.
16. "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man." [G. Bernard Shaw].

OBSERVE & LEARN

OBSERVE AND LEARN

17. "Man cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore." [André Gide].
18. It is essential to get fresh insights before you start creating ideas.
19. Ask questions.
20. Use web searching and crowd sourcing to open up the minds of the innovation team: what do we learn from this?
21. Postpone your judgement.
22. Ask the most important question again and again: why?
23. What are the trends among potential target groups? Why?
24. What are emerging relevant new technologies? Why?
25. Visit customers, observe their behaviour and ask yourself the question: why?
26. Visit companies in other sectors that serve as a source of inspiration to discover innovation opportunities. Ask yourself: what do I learn from this?
27. Look for problems: start discovering relevant customer frictions to solve.

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> **FULL STEAM AHEAD**

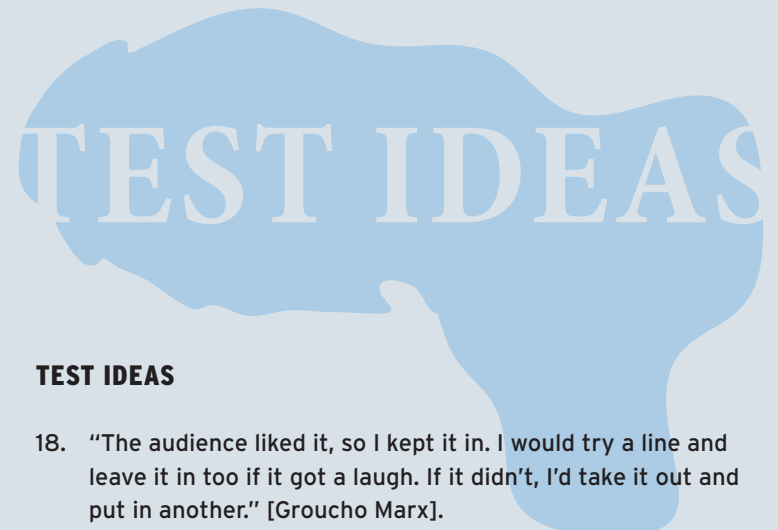


RAISE IDEAS

1. "The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas." [Linus Pauling].
2. Look for a special environment for your innovation workshops (special place, special theme, special music, special food et cetera).
3. Create an emotionally safe environment where you can be yourself.
4. Focus 100%: do not ever allow ringing and flashing iPhones and Blackberrys.
5. Never, I really mean never, brainstorm at the office.
6. Take at least two days for an effective brainstorming session for concrete new concepts.
7. Plan and prepare an effective combination of idea generating techniques.
8. Spend twice as much time on the convergence process as on the divergence process.
9. Make sure the innovation workshops are enjoyable. Fun promotes good results.
10. Monitor all participants and simultaneously involve them in the innovation process.
11. Time box. Work with strict deadlines. They help you to get people thinking outside the box. And to make choices.
12. Be open to ideas or suggestions from your innovation team

to adapt the process.

13. Allow people to choose which innovation opportunity, idea, concept board or mini new business case they want to work on.
14. Appoint an (internal) expert facilitator, who oversees everything while remaining in the background.
15. As facilitator give the opposite energy to the group. If the group is too active: be calm. If the group is too calm: be more energetic.
16. Visualize the results.
17. Keep up the momentum; otherwise it becomes long-winded and the team will get bored.



TEST IDEAS

18. "The audience liked it, so I kept it in. I would try a line and leave it in too if it got a laugh. If it didn't, I'd take it out and put in another." [Groucho Marx].
19. Check the strength of the newly created concepts right away at the front end.
20. Great ideas are the ones appealing to customers.
21. Use the voice of the customer internally to get support.
22. Use online tools to check ideas if speed is important.

23. Successful innovations will solve relevant problems of customers.
24. Check if the innovation fits the brand.
25. Would you really use this concept yourself?
26. Use customer feedback to improve the concepts.

31. "The best ideas lose their owners and take on lives of their own." [Nolan Bushnell].
32. Attractive innovations realize extra turnover.
33. Ideas get approved when they have adequate profit potential.
34. Be sure innovations fit management's personal goals.
35. You only get support when innovation is (somehow) considered feasible.
36. Winning new concepts give potential customers a concrete reason to switch.
37. Make use of the specific expertise of others from within the organization as much as you can in an early phase in the innovation process.
38. Substantiate, in a businesslike and convincing manner, to what degree and for what reason the new concept can meet the criteria.
39. "Ideas are useless unless used." [Theodore Levitt].

HOME COMING

HOME COMING

27. Return with mini new business cases instead of post-its or mood boards.
28. "If you have enough information to make a business case, you're too late." [Bill Gates].
29. Come back with innovative concepts that fit the in-the-box reality of your organization, otherwise nothing will happen.
30. A good concept stands out in the market.

**GO FOR IT! FOLLOW YOUR PASSION
AND MAKE YOUR INNOVATION DREAMS
COME TRUE.**