UPSET THE STATUS QUO: BUILDING HIGH-PERFORMANCE INNOVATION TEAMS

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Meet Our Innovators

Each were hand-selected by senior leaders to **UPSET THE STATUS QUO**
They are asked to pursue innovation as an **OUTCOME**

- Jason, a manager, assumes the team **LEAD** role
- Robert contributes technical **EXPERTISE**
- Anna understands consumer **TRENDS**
- Lisa is a strong **GENERALIST**
Many organizations are built to withstand change.

Restated: The gravity of the status quo is strong.

Restated: Innovation is not all Rubik's Cubes and Skittles.
Meet Our Innovators

- What happens when Jason is absent?
- What happens when Jason must contribute his technical expertise?
- What happens when Jason is wrong about consumer trends?
- What happens when Jason and Lisa compete for the team’s attention?

What **NORMS** should this team develop to **UPSET THE STATUS QUO**?
Complexity of Teams

Anna  Robert
Lisa  Jason

6 one-on-one relationships
4 three-way relationships
1 four-way dynamic

10 one-on-one relationships
10 three-way relationships
5 four-way relationships
1 five-way dynamic

15 one-on-one relationships
20 three-way relationships
15 four-way relationships
6 five-way relationships
1 six-way dynamic
Complexity of Teams

As the team grows:
- The more time Jason spends managing the **TEAM** rather than the **WORK**.
- **COMMUNICATION** becomes increasingly difficult.
Shift in Norms

"The New Dream Team"

Anna
Robert
Lisa
Jason
Megan
Sylvia

To create a **HIGH PERFORMING TEAM**, move ...

From **FUNCTIONAL ROLES**: Specific responsibilities that appear in a job description; tend to be fixed, such as subject matter expertise

To **TEAM ROLES**: Behavioral roles that do not appear in job descriptions; can be variable, such as meeting note taker
Team Roles

"The New Dream Team"

- Anna
- Robert
- Lisa
- Jason
- Megan
- Sylvia

- Anyone can assume the **LEAD ROLE**
- Everyone has **EXPERTISE**, no one knows the answers
- Roles are **DYNAMIC**, shifting as circumstances change
- Team moves from **KNOWING** what work to do to **LEARNING** what work to do
High-Performance Teams

- Empathetic and Honest
- Creative and Collaborative
- Fast and Accurate
- Lean and Agile
- Courageously Adaptable
- Nimble and Resilient
- Responsive to Change
- Deep Expertise and Broad Experience
- Empowered to Perform

Source: Today's Innovator
Three Critical Questions for Innovators

1. What does the organization require **FROM INNOVATION** in order to achieve its objectives?

2. What does the organization require **FROM MY TEAM** in order to achieve its objectives?

3. Who does the organization **NEED ME TO BE**?
INTRODUCING THE TODAY’S INNOVATOR PROFILES™

For Designing Teams for Maximum Impact
When Innovating and Driving Change
8 Today’s Innovator Profiles™

- EXPERT
- INITIATOR
- TEAMMATE
- INNOVATION LEADER
- CONNECTOR
- OBSERVER
- AGITATOR
- CHAMPION
An expert is a man who has made all the mistakes that can be made, in a narrow field.
-Niels Bohr, Nobel Prize Winning Physicist

- Applies deep **SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE** to well-defined problems
- Involved in **IMPLEMENTATION and EXECUTION** activities
- Stays connected to **EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT** through expertise
A designer knows he has achieved perfection not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.
-Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, French writer and poet

- The **CREATIVE GENIUS**, the **VISIONARY**
- Connects **PEOPLE** and **IDEAS** through **DESIGN**
- Asks “**HOW COULD WE ...**” and “**WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE IF ...**”
THE INITIATOR

“Don’t wait for direction that will never come.
-Me

- **CHANGE AGENT** who relentlessly pursues **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**
- Enlists **ALLIES**; makes **SWIFT DECISIONS**
- Creates space for **CREATIVITY, COLLABORATION** and **RISK-TAKING**
Even the genius asks his questions.
-Tupac Shakur

- Constantly **AWARE, LISTENING** and **QUESTIONING**
- Favors **LEARNING** over knowing
- Extreme **EMPATHY** – applied to both customers and employees
- Picks up **WEAK SIGNALS** from **CHANGE FACTORS**
THE TEAMMATE

“Michael, if you can’t pass, you can’t play.
-UNC Head Coach Dean Smith, to Michael Jordan

- **SUPPORT** others: lifts them **UP**, brings them **TOGETHER**
- Provides **GUIDANCE** and **COACHING**
- **MAKES OFFERS** to achieve **TEAM OBJECTIVES** (CQ #2)
THE AGITATOR

What stands in the way, becomes the way.
-Marcus Aurelius, Meditations

- **UPSETS** the **STATUS QUO** to inspire new thinking
- Challenges others to leave their **COMFORT ZONE**
- **BREAKS** (some) **RULES**
- Asks **QUESTIONS** that silence the room
THE CHAMPION

All things are subject to interpretation. Whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth.
-Friedrich Nietzsche

- Gains **PRE-COMMITMENT**; Manages **PERCEPTIONS**
- Negotiates **POLITICS** and **POWER STRUCTURES** to **INFLUENCE** decisions
- Fall in love with **CRITICAL QUESTION #1**
Great leaders provide the **structure** to channel an organization’s energy in a way that is both:

- Grounded in your **current reality**
- Pointed towards a **shared vision**

Creates an **empowering environment** for others to succeed
8 Today’s Innovator Profiles™

- EXPERT
- INITIATOR
- TEAMMATE
- INNOVATION LEADER
- CONNECTOR
- OBSERVER
- AGITATOR
- CHAMPION
HOW THE PROFILES RELATE
Action-Inquiry Spectrum

**ACTION**
- Expert
- Initiator
- Teammate
- Innovation Leader

**INQUIRY**
- Connector
- Observer
- Agitator
- Champion
Profile Domains

TODAY'S INNOVATOR PROFILES™

25
USING TEAM ROLES IN PRACTICE
Roles in an Ideation Session
The Dream Team Ideation Session

Jason

Anna

Lisa

Robert
The Dysfunctional Ideation Session #1

- Each of the participants are oriented either in the **TEAM** or **ENVIRONMENT** domain
- None of the participants are oriented in the **PROBLEM** or **SOLUTION** domains
- Ideas likely to be uninspired: May not **SOLVE A PROBLEM**, may not be **Viable**
The Dysfunctional Ideation Session #2

- **CONNECTOR, OBSERVER, and AGITATOR** roles are all inquiry-based roles focused in different domains.
- **LEADER** may get **FRUSTRATED** over lack of progress; this group may just **DEBATE** the whole time.
A Well-Designed Ideation Session

- **INITIATOR** serves as the table host; focused on **PROBLEM DOMAIN**
- **OBSERVER** is data-driven in the **PROBLEM DOMAIN**
- **CONNECTOR** and **EXPERT** are **SOLUTION-ORIENTED**
- **INITIATOR** can moderate dialogue to work toward **UNIQUE, VIABLE** ideas
A Well-Designed Brainstorming Room
Dysfunctional Strategy Planning

- **LEADER** may be overly **ENVIRONMENT-oriented**, disconnected from reality
- Too many **AGITATORS**
- **CONNECTOR** and **EXPERT** not represented
Well-Designed Strategy Planning

- **INITIATOR** serves as the moderator; focused on the problem of **PRODUCING A STRATEGY**

- Most roles represented, though heavy in **ENVIRONMENT** and **TEAM DOMAINS**

- **ROLES** can be **SHARED** or **ALTERNATED** throughout the session
When To Use Team Roles

- Building the case for change
- Team forming & norming
- Strategy planning/Goalsetting
- Attending a conference
- Discovery
- Customer journey mapping
- Brainstorming sessions
- Conceptualization & Prototyping
- Building and presenting pitch decks
- Sprint planning and retrospectives
- Alpha- and beta-testing
- Teambuilding
Sample Profile Power Pairs

PROJECT STAGES

DEFINITION

ROADMAPPING

DISCOVERY

IMPLEMENTATION

SOLUTION GENERATION

ITERATION

PROTOTYPING

IMPROVEMENT
Sample Profile Power Pairs

SYSTEMS OF INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT

NETWORK/STAKEHOLDERS

PHYSICAL SPACE

MEETING STRUCTURE

REWARDS MECHANISMS

DECISION STRUCTURES

SCREENING CRITERIA

RESOURCE ASSIGNMENT

TECHNOLOGY READINESS
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Your Top Three Profile Strengths

Strength 1: Champion
You have a well-developed understanding of the environment in which teams operate and decisions are made. You know and appreciate those in power positions, and you work to understand what drives their decision-making. You know how to sell change and you are not deterred by a “No” response; you will find a way to get to “Yes.” You ask questions to gain clarity and eliminate uncertainty. You rely upon the expertise of others to help you influence and negotiate outcomes. You may not fully appreciate all the work that is being done to drive change. Be sure to spend time with those who do the work to maintain a presence throughout the entire change process.

Strength 2: Innovation Leader
You work to create the conditions required to get others to achieve at a high level. You are focused on the future, often thinking ahead of others. You readily form new work relationships, and you work to make connections among team members so they can be successful. You understand business problems well, and you seek to design teams that can solve challenging problems. Your broad contextual awareness is an asset, but be sure to spend time establishing context for others who may not have access to the same information you have.

Strength 3: Expert
You possess deep subject matter expertise that others find valuable. You continue to develop your expertise by maintaining a network of academics and/or leading-edge experts. You thrive when working on solutions to problems, and can be trusted to get the job done at a high level of quality. You might keep your nose down to get work done, but you stay connected to the external environment through your expertise. You may feel underappreciated by dynamic leaders who place value on extraversion and creativity.

https://form.jotform.com/todaysinnovator/assessment