WEIRD IDEAS
THAT WORK

11^1/2 Practices for Promoting, Managing and Sustaining Innovation

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MAIN IDEA

The most creative companies and teams are usually inefficient and irritating places to work because they follow business practices that are the complete opposite of the way routine businesses operate.

Almost all highly creative companies do weird things. They are filled with mavericks who refuse to do things the same way as everyone else. By doing that, creative companies consistently develop new ways to think and act. That willingness to see old things in new ways positions these creative companies to come up with the breakthrough ideas of the future – which are never extensions of the existing but complete departures from the norm.

The $11\frac{1}{2}$ weird ideas for sparking business innovation are:

The Weird Ideas of Business Creativity		
	1	Hire people who are "slow learners" – of the status quo.
	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Hire people who you dislike or feel uncomfortable about.
	2	Hire people you probably don't even need yet.
	3	Use job interviews to get ideas, not to screen candidates.
	4	Encourage people to ignore and defy their peers and bosses.
	5	Identify your "happy" people – and get them fighting.
	6	Reward success and failure generously but punish inaction.
	7	Undertake an impossible task with a positive attitude.
	8	Think of some impractical things and then plan on doing them.
	9	Avoid anyone (even customers) if all they talk about is money.
	10	Innovate by ignoring what everyone else has done before you.
	11	Forget the past, especially your own company's successes.

To build an organization where innovation flourishes and becomes a way of life, you have to:
• Encourage variance amongst the employees – rather than "toeing the corporate line".
• Let people see old things in refreshingly new and original ways.
• Break from the past and be willing to release new products that may fail in the marketplace.
• Have a goal of making more money in the future rather than optimizing your organization to make money right now.

And thus, weird ideas are required. It is impossible to build an organization that acts differently to other companies by replicating what they do. To reach a different destination, a different set of rules are needed, and the journey must be judged not by the same criteria conventional companies use but by a new valuation methodology.

In short, when it comes to being creative in business, sometimes a little weirdness will go a long way.

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