

Innovation Cube

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Type of method

Creative techniques

Short summary

This methodology guides our thinking towards incremental as well as breakthrough ideas, while its application also leads to consideration of future needs.

Description

The innovation cube directs participants systematically towards a broader way of considering and addressing problems and needs, opportunities and ideas for novelties as well as towards finding new markets.

The process is systematically conducted using the following steps:

1. Analysis of the dimensions (needs, users, problems); we try to amass as much information as possible for each of the three dimensions of challenges.
2. "Filling the cubes" or merging dimensions of different fields, which is carried out in such a way that we find compatible information on convergent dimensions (e.g. the future needs of existing users in relation to their latent problems) and then complete the entire cube with this information.
3. Identification of problems and opportunities per the cubes (with regard to the common information with which the cubes were filled).
4. Searching for solutions that represent opportunities for innovation in existing products or the development of new ones. For this purpose we use one of the idea creation techniques.

Practical application tips

Without previous preparation, the method may be carried out in a simple, swift version of 1 to 3 hours duration. In-depth implementation, which requires extensive preparations, may take much longer, depending on the size and complexity of the market, industry and product. Will and ambition are also, of course, an essential factor in this process!

To implement this methodology, it is necessary to include various experts who accordingly have sufficient knowledge and experience in relation to customers, markets, technologies and requisites. By way of this, the solutions thus iterated will be both useful and applicable. This essentially means that the group implementation of this method is the most reasonable as well as the most effective.

The method can be undertaken simply and rapidly, or in more depth. In the first instance, the systematically oriented thinking of experts per the aforementioned needs, users and problem fields (per the 3 x 2 innovation cube), is sufficient to achieve positive results, without further analysis. If we want to exploit the full potential of the method, however, then an in-depth assessment should be carried out. This requires additional preliminary activities that include in-depth analysis of existing users, competition analysis, together with analysis of development trends both in this particular and other industries. More participants should be included in the in-depth version.

Advantages of the method

Primarily used for innovating products and services, this method is directed both towards the present and the future through the anticipation of completely new markets and products, as well as for minor innovations to existing ones.