

To be innovative is no longer an option for a firm, but a survival skill in this era of information and change. Research shows that innovation skills are among the most sought-after competencies in employees. In fact, the Innovation and Technology industry is one of the key economic areas that the Hong Kong Government seeks to further develop. Innovation is considered, mistakenly, by some as an innate skill possessed by select, and gifted group of individuals. The actual fact is that the fundamental principles of creativity and innovation have been well researched, and the processes as well as tools conducive to innovative thinking are also well developed.

Audience

Anyone who has a need to think out of the box at least some of time

Methodology

Discussions, demonstrations, exercises, games

What participants will learn

At the completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Look for opportunities to innovate
- Generate ideas for an innovation challenge
- Analyze and synthesize ideas to develop innovative concepts
- Test and select a concept
- Communicate and advance a concept

The purpose of this workshop is to provide participants with the principles, processes and techniques in innovative thinking adopting a 'Design Thinking' approach. Equipped with these techniques, participants will be able to identify opportunities to innovate, generate ideas, and turn these ideas into implementable actions.

Course Outline

1. Innovation and the Innovation Process

Being innovative is not just being creative. It involves a whole chain of steps beyond thinking out of the box. This module provides an overview of the innovation process. Through an *ice-breaking activity and discussions*, participants will learn:

- Differences between creative and innovative thinking
- The benefits of innovative thinking
- Finding solutions to problems that are not well defined
- The innovation process
- The Design Thinking approach

2. Looking for inspiration and opportunity

Innovation often starts with a challenge. This module focuses on how to find or anticipate such challenges in the workplace. Through a *fun-filled exercise and discussions*, participants will learn:

- Why you don't have to wait till things are broken before you can fix them
- The feeling of "there must be a better way"
- Interviewing users
- Questioning assumptions
- Drafting an innovation challenge
- Innovation questions

3. Generating innovative ideas

It is true that some ideas just come out of the blue, but the vast majority of ideas are the result of focused thinking with the application of thinking tools. Through a series of *fun-filled exercises and discussions*, participants will learn how to use these thinking tools to help them generate ideas for an innovative challenge:

- Common methods in idea generation and their pitfalls
- Piggybacking on existing ideas
- Turning the world upside down
- The power of randomness
- Other creative thinking tools
- Capturing your ideas

4. Turning ideas into themes and concepts

It is common experience that not all ideas work. Some may overlap with others. Many ideas are a part of another bigger idea. This module shows participants how to analyze and synthesize ideas into themes and concepts, especially in a group setting. Through yet another *fun-filled exercise and discussions*, participants will learn:

- Idea analysis and synthesis
- Let every idea speaks
- The process of Ranking and Prioritization
- Identifying themes and concepts

5. Testing and selecting

This module explains the needs for and methodology behind the testing and selecting of a concept. Through *case studies and group exercise*, participants will learn:

- The need to test a concept
- Identifying elements to test, audience and method
- Preparing for a test
- Conducting the test
- Analyzing testing outcomes
- Applying lessons learnt

6. Communicating and Advancing an Innovative Concept

Once a viable concept is born, how should it be communicated to others to get buy-in? This module provides some tips and examples for powerful communications. Through *case studies and group exercise*, participants will learn:

- Developing a prototype
- Preparing your concept story
- Communicating with visuals, metaphors and models
- Presenting a concept that sells