

## **56 Reasons Why Corporate Innovation Initiatives Fail**

Corporate innovation often fails. The following list identifies a number of reasons why this is the case. It is not exhaustive, please feel to post other reasons by way of comments.

1. “Innovation” framed as an initiative, not the normal way of doing business
2. Absence of a clear definition of what “innovation” really means
3. Innovation not linked to company’s existing vision or strategy
4. No sense of urgency
5. Workforce is suffering from “initiative fatigue”
6. CEO does not fully embrace the effort
7. No compelling vision or reason to innovate
8. Senior Team not aligned
9. Key players don’t have the time to focus on innovation
10. Innovation champions are not empowered
11. Decision making processes are non-existent or fuzzy
12. Lack of trust
13. Risk averse culture
14. Overemphasis on cost cutting or incremental improvement
15. Workforce ruled by past assumptions and old mental models
16. No process in place for funding new projects
17. Not enough pilot programs in motion
18. Senior Team not walking the talk
19. No company-wide process for managing ideas
20. Too many turf wars. Too many silos.
21. Analysis paralysis
22. Reluctance to cannibalize existing products and services
23. NIH (not invented here) syndrome
24. Funky channels of communication



25. No intrinsic motivation to innovate
26. Unclear gates for evaluating progress
27. Mind numbing bureaucracy
28. Unclear idea pitching processes
29. Lack of clearly defined innovation metrics
30. No accountability for results
31. No way to celebrate quick wins
32. Poorly facilitated meetings
33. No training to unleash individual or team creativity
34. Voodoo evaluation of ideas
35. Inadequate sharing of best practices
36. Lack of teamwork and collaboration
37. Unclear strategy for sustaining the effort
38. Innovation Teams meet too infrequently
39. Middle managers not on board
40. Ineffective roll out of the effort to the workforce
41. Lack of tools and techniques to help people generate new ideas
42. Innovation initiative perceived as another “flavor of the month”
43. Individuals don’t understand how to be a part of the effort
44. Diverse inputs or conflicting opinions not honored
45. Imbalance of left-brain and right brain thinking
46. Low morale
47. Over-reliance on technology
48. Failure to secure sustained funding
49. Unrealistic time frames
50. Failure to consider issues associated with scaling up
51. Inability to attract talent to risky new ventures
52. Failure to consider commercialization issues
53. No rewards or recognition program in place



- 54. No processes in place to get fast feedback
- 55. Inadequate sense of what your customers really want or need
- 56. Company hiring process screens out potential innovators