

# Preparing for discontinuous innovation

## How are you doing?



## 1 Sending out scouts

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the scouting strategy

- Does your organisation make use of some form of scouting?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Is anyone in your organisation officially charged with scouting outside the organisation for trends and developments that might have implications for your organisation?
- Are there any people who fulfil this role without having the official remit?
- Do you have any people who could easily provide you with relevant information if only they were aware that you were looking for it?
- Is it yet another job that person has to do or is it a main area of responsibility?
- Is the remit wide enough and gives the person free rein to look beyond the obvious places?
- Are there proper mechanisms to collect and distribute the information?
- Is there a process that facilitates the collating and enriching of the information before it is passed on, i.e. are different bits of information pulled together to create a more cohesive and convincing story?
- Are there clear channels through which the information is passed on to the right people?
- Is senior management interested in and receptive to the insights?
- Do the insights presented lead to some action?

## 2 Exploring multiple futures

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the exploring different futures strategy

- Does your organisation make use of some form of futures study?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Do you currently use scenarios to help understand and influence your organisation's future?
- Do you ensure that both experts and non-experts participate in the scenario creation?
- Do you ensure you have a large number of backgrounds (professional, functional, age range etc.) represented?
- Do you ensure that the constellation of the team is matched to the challenge of the scenario?
- Do you develop scenarios for different time frames?
- Do you ensure that the scenario may be influenced but ought not to be dictated by the status quo, e.g. the existing skill set?
- Do you ensure that timeframe and desired outcome are matched?
- Do you translate the insights back into real projects?
- Do you use scenario planning as an opportunity to identify competence gaps?
- What are the main reasons preventing you from trying scenarios?

### 3 Using the web

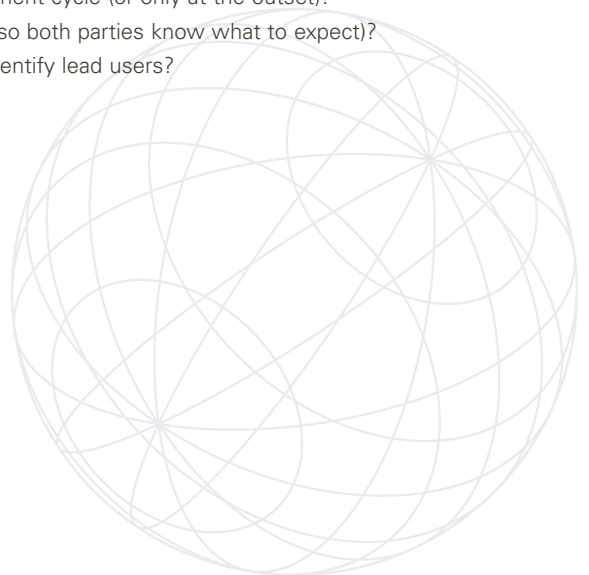
How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the using the web strategy

- Does your organisation make use of some form of web-based exploration?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Do the people undertaking the research understand the organisation sufficiently to be able to identify relevant and important bits of information?
- Do you use additional sources to verify/enrich insights gained from the internet?
- Do you check relevant blogs frequently?
- Do you employ a variety of search strategies and search terms?
- Do you have the capability/skills required to search websites in different languages?
- Have you got facilities/systems to store and retrieve insights collected from the net?
- Are the insights passed on to the appropriate people?
- Do you have a website where outsiders can submit their suggestions and ideas?
- Do you have mechanisms to manage the suggestions (evaluate, respond, take forward).
- Have you got procedures/policies to deal with intellectual property rights issues?

### 4 Working with active users

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the engaging active users strategy

- Does your organisation make use of some form of active user engagement?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Do you ensure that you choose users that are appropriate for what you are trying to achieve (the people you might want to choose for incremental changes or small improvements are different from those you would hope to come up with radical ideas)?
- Do you have criteria to identify/select lead users?
- Do you have a list of online communities from which you might draw lead users?
- Do you have access to databases (internal or external) from which we can draw lead users?
- Do you keep a log of potential lead users, e.g. keeping a record of people who have provided positive and negative feedback in the past?
- Do you draw on the insights and expertise of your outward facing employees to provide suggestions for lead users?
- Do you understand what motivates our lead users to work with you?
- Do you consider bringing in users throughout the development cycle (or only at the outset)?
- Do you have clear guidelines for working with lead users (so both parties know what to expect)?
- Have you considered setting up a website to attract and identify lead users?



## 5 Deep diving

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the deep dive strategy

- Does your organisation make use of some form of deep dive study?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Who is doing your market research? Are they external or also internal?
- Do you ensure your engineers and technical people get a chance to observe the use of your products and services in real life situations?
- Who is allowed to contact/be in touch, visit your customers?
- Have you got mechanisms to capture observations from the field?
- If you are doing observation-based research, do you know how to interpret and analyse observations?
- Do you have people who are trained in ethnographic research?
- When you design our products and services are you aiming for the creation of an *experience* or just an exchange?
- Do you check with your customers whether you are delivering a superior experience?
- When using ethnographic research to understand a particular problem, do you draw on inspiration from related fields? For example, motorbikes are traditionally welded together. Are there industries that use different techniques to fix bits of metal together?
- Do you bring together people from a wide range of backgrounds to ensure that you look at your insights with different lenses?

## 6 Probe and learn

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the probe and learn strategy

- Does your organisation make use of some form of probe and learn?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Do you run pilots or experiments, or do you tend to go for the big roll-out?
- Are pilots/experiments part of the normal process for radical innovation?
- Do you expect a minimum potential market size for new products or do you try a few where this is uncertain?
- Is the 'bottom of the pyramid' on your agenda?
- Are mechanisms in place that ensures that failure of experiments or pilots is not penalised?
- When using pilots or experiments, do you make sure everyone is aware that this is what they are (managing expectations)?
- Do you have mechanisms and structures to collect insights and feedback from pilots and experiments?
- Is the organisation open to listening to the insights and to acting upon them?
- Do you regularly review your offerings to see whether they can be transferred to/applied to other markets than the ones you are currently operating in?
- Do you explore markets adjacent to your main markets?

### Prototyping

- Do you frequently use prototypes when you are presenting new ideas?
- Are the prototyping competences gathered in some special organisational units?
- At what organisational level do these units report?
- Do you distinguish between different types and purposes of prototypes?
- Are you applying prototypes in the process of articulating tacit knowledge?
- Are you using prototypes in your communication with customers and suppliers?
- Are you viewing prototyping activities as mainly a technical discipline?
- Are you experiencing improvement in speed and quality when using prototypes?
- Do you base your strategic choices on the work with prototypes?
- What are the main reasons for not using prototypes?

## 7 Mobilise the mainstream

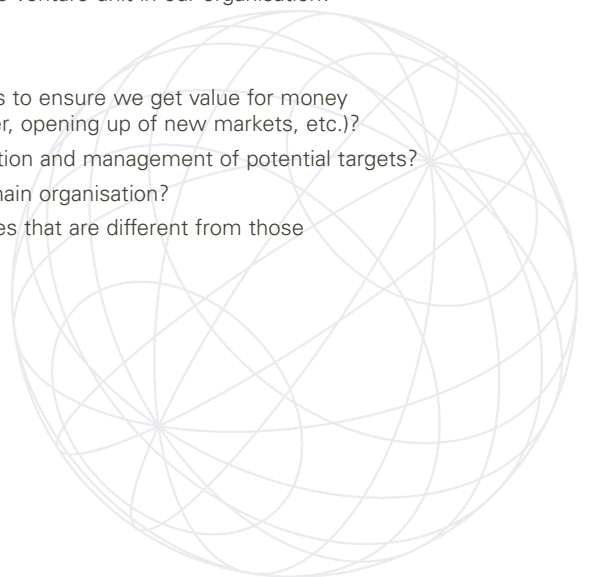
How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the mobilise the mainstream strategy

- Does your organisation mobilise its mainstream resources to support DI search?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Do you currently have systems or procedures in place that ensure insights from outside facing people are being collected systematically?
- Would any outside facing person with a potentially industry changing insight know where/to whom to take that insight?
- Would such a person have the motivation to do so?
- Would such a person be listened to?
- Who have you got in your organisation who could be the ears and eyes for developments at the fringes of your business?
- Do you know who of your outside facing people would get pleasure out of being a DI spy?
- What other sources of information do you have (internally or externally) that would help enrich the data collected?
- Who are the most senior people in the organisation who would be able to initiate action based on the insights?
- Do you collect any data anyway that you might be able to review for emerging trends?
- Who needs to be involved to ensure that insights from the front-end are flowing into the ideas pool and are taken into consideration in the planning of the portfolio?

## 8 Corporate venturing

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the corporate venturing strategy

- Does your organisation operate some form of corporate venturing to support DI search?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Do you have a clear understanding what the main aim of the corporate venturing unit is?
  - Is it for new business ideas from inside your organisation or outside or both?
  - Is it for ventures close to the core or at the periphery?
  - Are companies bought to be brought into the fold eventually or as stand-alone investment?
- Should we own the fund outright or are there some benefits of partnering?
- If you want to partner, should it be with organisations similar to ourselves or with financial institutions or other venture capital organisations?
- Do you have clear ownership/sponsorship for the corporate venture unit in our organisation?
- Do you define time frames?
- Do you develop exit strategies?
- If you have a corporate venture unit, what are mechanisms to ensure we get value for money (financial as well as other, e.g. learning, knowledge transfer, opening up of new markets, etc.)?
- Have you got a proper process for the identification, selection and management of potential targets?
- Do you have a strategy for integrating a venture into the main organisation?
- Do you have measures and success criteria for the ventures that are different from those of the main organisation?



## 9 Corporate entrepreneuring and intrapreneuring

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the corporate entrepreneurship strategy

- Does your organisation operate some form of corporate entrepreneurship to support DI search?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Are the people who are judging the ideas sufficiently open minded?
- Do you have a dedicated, ring-fenced budget available to fund intrapreneurs?
- Are people in the organisation aware of your intrapreneurs programme?
- Do you actively recruit people with a different mindset?
- Do you explicitly look for people with an entrepreneurial mindset?
- Do you have mechanisms in place through which people from different functions and/or parts of the business can meet and exchange ideas?
- Have you got some slack in your organisation or has downsizing led to creative anorexia?
- Do your employees know where in the organisation to find experts and specialists?
- Do you facilitate cross-functional/cross-departmental/cross business unit communication or do you leave it to chance?
- Have you got systems and structures that reward entrepreneurship?

## 10 Use brokers and bridges

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the broking and bridging strategy

- Does your organisation operate some form of broking/bridge-building to support DI search?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Do you know who the knowledge brokers in your organisation are?
- Do you actively encourage people to go to events/conferences/courses that are outside their current realm of expertise?
- Do you look outside your own industry to identify opportunities to apply your organisation's skill sets?
- Do you actively seek to recruit (and retain) people with a broad interest bandwidth or are you looking primarily for deep specialists?
- Do you make an effort to listen carefully to your knowledge brokers?
- Do you collect and store boundary spanning ideas?
- Have you got guidelines for external collaboration in place?
- Is networking and activities that broaden people's horizon on the behavioural wanted list, and if so, do you follow up, e.g. in the annual reviews?
- Do you encourage and facilitate connection between people from different backgrounds?
- Do you have mechanisms in your organisation by which people are exposed to different bodies of knowledge, e.g. lunch time presentations or pod casts by experts from different knowledge domains?

## 11 Deliberate diversity

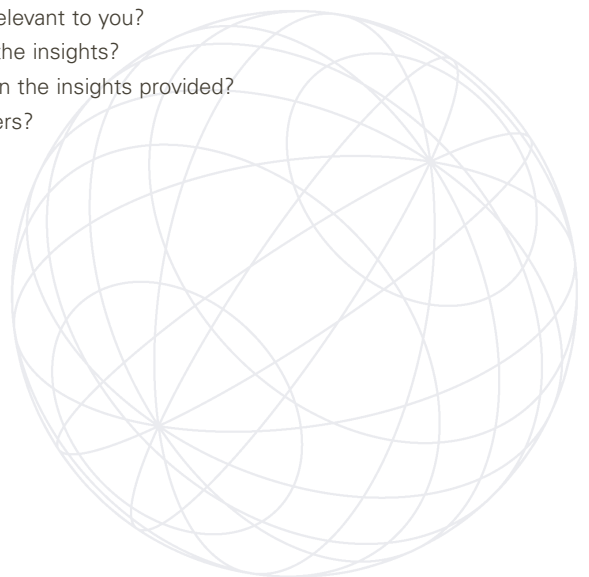
How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the deliberate diversity strategy

- Does your organisation operate some form of deliberate diversity to support DI search?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Is diversity on the agenda in your organisation (and we do not mean only racial or gender diversity but most important of all diversity in terms of mind-sets and thinking)?
- Do you consciously hire people who are different to yourself?
- Are you aware of potential communication problems resulting from people's different mindsets?
- Do you provide cross-disciplinary teams with training and/or a facilitator to help bridge the language barriers?
- When developing and testing ideas, do you encourage teams to seek the input of a diverse group of people?
- When developing new ideas, do you bring in recent joiners as well as those who have been with the company for a long time?
- Do you have tools and guidelines to help people from different backgrounds (professional, cultural, etc.) to communicate and understand each other?
- Do you have formal and informal platforms to bring diverse groups of people together?
- When developing new concepts and ideas, do you ensure that the teams are diverse and from a range of different backgrounds?
- Do you truly believe in constructive criticism and challenging of assumptions?

## 12 Idea generators

How well are we doing? Some self-assessment reflection questions around the creative idea generation strategy

- Does your organisation operate some form of creative idea generation to support DI search?
- Could you improve/expand your capability in this area?
- Are you open enough to listen to radical suggestions from outsiders?
- Do you know of external agencies that could help you scan for the future?
- Do you have a clear understanding of what you would expect an external agency or agent to do for you?
- Do you give a scope wide enough to allow spotting things at the periphery?
- Do you have access to any other external sources that could help you scan for the future, e.g. retired employees?
- Can you tap into university or other research networks to glean insights into future developments?
- Do you have mechanisms to filter out information that is relevant to you?
- Do you have the skills inside our organisation to interpret the insights?
- Do you have mechanisms inside your organisation to action the insights provided?
- Do you have mechanisms to transfer learning from outsiders?



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