



BEING INNOVATIVE

Program Overview

Learning Objectives

Being Innovative will enable you to expand your thinking by cultivating new ways to consider the future and by equipping you with tools to navigate a world of increasing change and uncertainty. This program also helps you drive innovation in your organization more successfully by providing insights into the lessons of successful innovators.

Being Innovative will enable you to:

- » Understand why traditional and familiar business models are no longer reliable in today's business context
- » Master new approaches to thinking about innovation, to craft better strategy in the face of great uncertainty
- » Acquire conceptual frameworks to make your innovation and strategic thinking more effective
- » Identify partners who will be influential in creating the future you will be competing in
- » Employ prototyping as a way of taking bigger chances without incurring bigger risk
- » Hone your personal idea-hunting skills
- » Develop leadership insights for dealing with great uncertainty
- » Maximize the talent contributions of those around you
- » Launch a coherent and innovative proposal in your current work environment

Weekly Overview

Week 0 Introduction to the Program, Platform, and Participants

You will get an overview of the program, learn how to navigate the program platform, and follow the “red thread” that ties together the eight modules designed to help you expand your thinking and build your capabilities to be more innovative. To introduce yourself to others participating in the program and already start on your “journey”, you will record and upload a short video, post your learning objectives, sign up to Twitter and share an idea. For those of you who have not yet discovered the benefits of “selfish tweeting”, you will get an insight into how to use this tool as a keystone into building your own personal, professional learning strategy.

Week 1 The Demise of Familiar Strategic Thinking

This week, you will look at how the constancy of change and its increasing pace are challenging the models that managers have traditionally used to make good strategic choices. You will have a first opportunity to work in groups to collectively develop and post your insights regarding industry disruption and consider how to make change an everyday part of strategy rather than a surprise. As well as being a great way to get to know each other, working with others brings in different geographical and industry perspectives and different functional mindsets – all extremely valuable inputs to bring into a conversation about innovation. And you’ll leverage into an individual assignment about what this means for the innovation context of your own industry. Throughout the program, as you think about how to deal more reliably with change as a basis for making good business choices, you’ll be asked to capture your thoughts in your own individual Learning Journal and to share your learning through regular “tweeting”.

Week 2 Innovation is Everywhere

This week introduces you to some practical ideas and tools that can help you address an uncertain future; these will help you think about how to confront the ever-present challenges as well as tap into the ubiquitous opportunities. By collaborating in groups to analyze an IMD case study, you will use one of these tools, the Business Model Canvas, to practice “design thinking”. Through an individual assignment where you look at a part of your business or organization with which you are very familiar, you will be asked to be experimental, to “dream bigger” about your customer’s experience and then consider the leadership implications that this would bring in changing your company’s business model.

Week 3 The Future is Already Here, It’s Just not Well-Distributed

You don’t have to take on the burden of innovating all by yourself. In every industry, there are already some individuals or even organizations who are already living in the future and can be a source of innovation that comes from the “outside”. This week, you will have a chance to identify and learn from these “lead users”, and apply your insights through individual assignments, which will also push you to look at the implications of having customers and suppliers in your value chain who are living in the future, present, or even the past. As in every week throughout the program, you will be asked to note down your thoughts, questions, reflections, and insights in your Learning Journal and to share these with others by “tweeting”.

Week 4 Talent Wasting

This week, we invite you to look at how the raw material available for innovation within organizations is being squandered and blocked. Yet, it is an organization’s own individuals who are critical in order to take ideas from the outside and transform these into something that delivers an inside edge. You will delve deeper into this dilemma by “auditing” your own talent and blockages and exchanging perspectives with a buddy. Through an individual assignment, you will initiate learning conversations with people inside your organization that will help you identify where, how, and why you and your organization may be wasting talent and think about ways in which this can be rectified. At this half-way point in the program, you will have a chance to review your learning objectives and think about how to bring your evolving insights towards the final summative assignment.

Week 5 Innovation and Conversations

While ideas are the raw material, it is the conversations that move ideas from person to person, which create the building blocks of innovation. You will learn how to map and leverage the networks in which you are embedded, to tap into diversity and consult different minds to put ideas in motion. And you will be challenged to expand your network to learn from people who come from worlds that are completely different from your own. As part of this week's hands-on learning, you will use an instrument to diagnose your own meeting experience by putting on the hat of an anthropologist to observe, note, and analyze how ideas flow. In small groups, you will share and discuss your conclusions and then we'll pool all of our experiences to identify the attributes that make for more or less effective conversations and look at how to reengineer conversations to make them more effective.

Week 6 Giving a Good Idea a Good Chance

This week, you will be introduced to a model that can help you improve the likelihood that an idea will not only be innovative but also successfully implemented. Through a group assignment, you will apply this "virus model" to analyze the amazing success of Apple's iPad, based on looking at five essential elements that determine the pace of adoption. You will also have an opportunity to apply this model through an individual assignment to diagnose a product, idea, or service in your organization or industry that worked or didn't work. In your Learning Journals and "tweeting" this week, you will capture and share thoughts about how to build strategic plans that take ideas from being "one lonely virus" to infecting the right people (trendsetters, people with influence, opinion leaders) who can take your idea from merely being a good idea to being a brilliant idea, "spreading like an epidemic".

Week 7 Teams that Outperform on Innovation

If more minds and different minds are always better than fewer, it follows that innovation is more likely to take place in team environments than in individuals. Yet team environments are challenging and not always associated with innovation as a team sport. By looking at the "virtuoso team" that created the iPod, you will learn about how to build and enable a team capable of delivering innovation more effectively. Through a group assignment using Galbraith's "star model", you will learn how choices in five domains related to strategy, structure, processes, people, and rewards can create a cohesive architecture that raises the probability of innovative success. You will also have a chance to cast a critical eye on your own workplace and think about how well your star fits together. Is it well-aligned, are there any disconnects, and what role do you play as a leader in making this all come together – or not – in the first place?

Week 8 Leadership and Team Culture

Effectively dealing with ideas and nurturing innovative skills in others involve roles that are considerably different from those you may be adopting today. You will get introduced to a "pathfinder" model and apply this to understand how you can use "stretching", "reaching", "stirring", "girdling", and "connecting" behaviours in leading innovation in your own organization. In this final week of the program, you will be challenged to put together and apply all of the insights, models, and conceptual frameworks that you have worked with over the past eight weeks. With the help of a template, you will create a coherent story that demonstrates that you can both find and implement an innovative idea in your own organization. Your final assignment includes drafting a 60-day implementation plan that ensures your innovation has a higher probability of success.

Learning

The learning will come from different sources:

- » Assimilating concepts gained through reflecting on the videos and reading
- » Discussing case studies that illustrate the challenges focusing on specific areas discussed during the week
- » Applying the models and frameworks presented to the situation in your own workplace, team, and industry
- » Submitting weekly assignments using your business as a live case
- » Exchanging with other program participants
- » Keeping track of your learning through the weekly Learning Journal

Readings

As part of the course, you will be asked to read a number of articles and cases which will be available on the program portal. You will receive an email with instructions on how to download these materials.

Application

The program has been designed to enable you to implement the weekly learning in your own specific business context. Throughout the program you will have ample opportunity to apply what you learned and implement an innovative idea in your organization. This is a key requirement to successfully complete the program and gain IMD certification.

Collaboration and Feedback

Learning from others will be another crucial part of your learning in this program. The collaboration will happen through:

- » **Feedback from your coach:** You will be assigned a coach who will be providing you with feedback on each of your individual assignments throughout the program. The role of your coach is to work with you to ensure you are able to successfully embed the learning in your specific context.
- » **Office Hours:** The IMD Faculty program director will be available to address emerging issues in live Q+A sessions at various points during the program. This will be your opportunity to submit questions specific to your context as you progress throughout the program.
- » **Group work:** There will be three group assignments during the program and you will be assigned to a group of 4-6 participants with whom you will be discussing the case studies and posting group assignments. You will remain part of the same group throughout the course. It is up to you how to share the workload between group members, and you may want to discuss the roles and split the workload in each of the group meetings.
- » **Pair work:** At the beginning of the program you will be assigned a “buddy” whom you will work with throughout the entire program. Having a “buddy” will help you get another perspective on your approach to innovation and will be a sparring partner to discuss various aspects of your innovation initiative as the program progresses. You will regularly apply frameworks to your specific context and discuss with your “buddy” insights you have gathered. There will be specific times when we will ask you to get together online with your “buddy”.
- » **Exchanging/Commenting:** The program will be all about learning from others and providing feedback to others and relies on the power of knowledge and experience from your global peers on this program. Therefore as part of selected assignments we will ask you to comment on the work of other individuals or work other groups have posted. There will be specific instructions provided.
- » **Sharing your experience:** We will also post important questions on discussion forums to allow participants to share their experiences. You can also actively use the forums to ask a personal question to the class and benefit from the knowledge power of the group.

Deadlines

We will post the detailed deadlines for all the specific assignments week by week. As a general rule each Saturday 23:00 CET will be the deadline to complete your group and individual assignments and each Sunday 23:00 CET will be the deadline for posting your comments on the exchange.

IMD Certification

At the end of the program you will have the opportunity to qualify for an IMD certificate. In order to achieve IMD certification you will need to:

- » Complete all individual assignments on time and in line with specific assignment requirements. Each individual assignment will form an integral part of your final strategic initiative audit
- » Complete all group assignments on time and in line with specific assignment requirements
- » Complete your weekly Learning Journals
- » Fully participate in the weekly exchange forum and submit the required number of comments and observations
- » Submit a detailed implementation plan for your innovation
- » Successfully complete the summative assignment at the end of the program

