

Innovation Culture

25 Behaviors Affecting Your Program's Success

Rate your company: how well are you positioned for collaborative innovation?

Culture is one of those difficult terms, with a wealth of definitions depending on the particular context. How an organization behaves is crucial for maintaining a sustainable innovation program, so HYPE continuously analyzes which behaviors affect a program's success and how. During our work with clients, we have come to understand there is a set of factors that help set your program direction and tactics.

The first thing to consider is: Where are we today? Consider the following 25 factors where an organizational behavior can help or hurt a company's innovation capacity. Note: no company is perfect on this scorecard. But based on the findings, it will be much easier to match your ambitions to the readiness of your company.

LEADERSHIP							
Cultural Factor	Negative Behavior	Your Company					Positive Behavior
Clear organizational mission	No mission exists; or the mission speaks in high level platitudes that people ignore because it's not actionable in their actual work.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	The mission is the touchstone for daily work, referred to regularly as decisions are made.
Strategic imperatives	Innovation is catch-as-catch-can, with little guidance on key strategic innovation areas.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Focus areas for innovation have been identified, and are connected to the company mission.
Prior internal program rollouts	New top-down programs are tried out frequently, with little follow-up making them seem like the "flavor-of-the-month".	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Other corporate programs (e.g. sustainability) are rolled out sparingly, integrated with the overall mission and committed to long-term.
Types of innovation	The types of innovation desired are unknown by employees, who cannot describe what innovation the company wants.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Company leaders have articulated the types of innovation desired (e.g. customer experience, products, markets).
Executive sponsorship	The innovation initiative lacks any type of senior leader sponsorship, signaling it's not in the flow of important work of the company.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	The C-Suite sponsors the innovation program, signaling to employees the importance of the effort.
Ownership of innovation program	The program is considered a project by some distant "innovation group" that people don't know internally.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	The innovation program is embraced by the heads of the different business units.
Focus on tangible business questions	Crowdsourced innovation initiatives focus on fluffy topics that fall outside "hard" business objectives.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Innovation campaigns seek input on real issues that people understand as relevant and want to help address.

AWARENESS							
Cultural Factor	Negative Behavior	Your Company					Positive Behavior
Program communications	Little information is communicated about the program, people are unaware of what is happening with it.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	Innovation program team, with leadership involvement, regularly send out updates on the innovation program: results, focus areas, recognition, etc.
Communication internally	Communications are expected to follow a hierarchical protocol, inhibiting expression of true insights.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Senior leaders make themselves accessible, and are regularly "reaching down" and talking with employees everywhere.
Recognition for quality contributions	No one ever sees praise for quality contributions, leaving employees wondering how much quality is valued.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Ideas and comments that provide quality and advance innovation are highlighted to the broader community.
Success stories	Successful outcomes are known to a few, but most people never hear about them. Missed chance to boost enthusiasm for collaborative innovation.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	When ideas sourced through employees deliver results, or the program makes connections that add value, these are celebrated and shared with everyone.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT							
Cultural Factor	Negative Behavior	Your Company					Positive Behavior
Time to participate	Employees are told to get their work done, and not spend time on something others in the organization can handle "just fine, thank you".	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> <div>-2-1012</div>					Employees are encouraged to spend time thinking about innovation and participate in campaigns.
Company leaders engagement	No one hears from company leaders, creating uncertainty as to whether they're paying attention.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> <div>-2-1012</div>					Company leaders from different levels engage employees on their ideas and comments.
Constructive criticism on ideas	People are discouraged from "bad mouthing" others' ideas. Or innovation antibodies weigh in with generic "never work" comments.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> <div>-2-1012</div>					Criticism that helps strengthen an idea or find its fatal flaws is encouraged.
Feedback on ideas and comments	People post ideas, never hear anything on them...from anyone.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> <div>-2-1012</div>					As regularly as possible, idea and comment submitters receive feedback on their contributions.
Response to non-starter ideas	Open criticism is communicated asking why we have so many "bad" ideas.	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div> <div>-2-1012</div>					Submitters are given guidance on why an idea will not be selected to move forward.

GOVERNANCE							
Cultural Factor	Negative Behavior	Your Company					Positive Behavior
Guidelines on successful ideas	No information is provided for what constitutes good ideas, causing the submission of many unworkable ideas.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div> <div>Extremely negative</div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div> <div>Quite Negative</div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div> <div>Neutral/Intermediate</div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div> <div>Quite Positive</div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div> <div>Extremely Positive</div>	For each campaign, general characteristics of what makes a good idea are described, providing useful guardrails.
Basis of idea selection	No one has provided information on how ideas will be selected, leading employees to fill-in-the-blanks on why an idea will be chosen.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Employees have a clear sense of how ideas will be selected at the end of a campaign or within a set time period if submitted to an open suggestion box.
Idea processing	No plan for the process of determining which ideas will be selected; employees are unclear on how their contributions will be considered.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Going into a campaign, the flow of activities that will occur around submitted ideas are understood by participants.
Evaluation of ideas	Submitted ideas languish with no one ever giving the best ones an assessment.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Ideas that have potential are actually evaluated by a credible team.
Selection of ideas	Ideas never or very rarely result in action to take them forward.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Highest potential ideas are selected for next steps: trialing, prototyping, development, projects.
Idea follow-up	Ideas end up in a dead letter file, with no final decisions made on them.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Final statuses for all submitted ideas are set, providing everyone with feedback on their contributions.
Record for why decisions were made	Ideas are selected, but no reason is given. Employees are left to speculate the basis of selection.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	After a set of ideas are selected for moving forward, employees can see the reasons they were selected above others that were submitted.
Involve interested employees in development of ideas	Employees aren't allowed time outside their assigned jobs to work on ideas they have generated or supported.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Idea submitters, commenters and supporters are invited to help see their selected ideas become reality.
Selected ideas fail, in trial or once they're live	Failure on an implemented idea becomes a black mark on a person's job performance or internal reputation.	<div><div></div><div>-2</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>-1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>0</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>1</div></div>	<div><div></div><div>2</div></div>	Ideas which fail as they are developed or after they're rolled out are celebrated as examples of being aggressive and learning.

Score assessment and recommendation

Points	Assessment	Recommendation
25 points or more	Exceptional	Innovation culture is a competitive advantage. Consider expanding initiatives to address more adventurous innovation topics such as new markets or business models. Your organization also has the capacity to scale up external innovation activities, systemizing supply chain and customer innovation programs.
10 to 24 points	Satisfactory	Culture is a positive contributor to your innovation potential, but the organization is missing its full potential. Focus on exploiting strategic innovation topics with your engaged community, develop a balanced innovation portfolio that progresses ideas through to implementation.
-9 to 9 points	Average	The level of innovation culture doesn't benefit the company significantly. Outcomes are generated unevenly, without a fundamental understanding for how they occur. HYPE recommends an incremental approach to involving more people in innovation and establishing better behaviors, focus on quick wins and boosting sharing, collaboration and increase the belief in collaborative innovation by advertising success.
-24 to -10 points	Underperforming	Culture is a negative contributor, erecting hurdles to achieving innovation outcomes. Find a senior sponsor to support a directed innovation activity (such as an idea campaign), choose your topic carefully, and focus on a tactical win to demonstrate the value of enterprise innovation.
-25 points or less	Ineffective	Culture is actively undermining the organization's innovation efforts. Consider inviting HYPE to brief your senior stakeholders on how the most innovative companies work and the value that can be driven from greater focus on innovation behaviors across the company.



Frank Henningsen,
Executive VP Professional Services



Colin Nelson,
Director of Strategic Consulting



Hutch Carpenter,
Head of Consulting US

See any of them around? No? For a more detailed assessment of your innovation potential please get in touch with us at hypeinnovation.com/contact.



US Headquarters
HYPE Innovation, Inc. | 485 Massachusetts Avenue | Cambridge, MA 02139-4018 | USA | Tel.: 1-855-GET-HYPE

European Headquarters
HYPE Softwaretechnik GmbH | Trierer Straße 70-72 | 53115 Bonn | Deutschland | Tel.: +49-228-2276-0