



Be an Innovator

10 Ways You Must Evolve

Presented by SalesBoost

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10 WAYS TO BE AN INNOVATOR

1. Bring your Best Self
2. Develop a Learner's Mindset
3. Unlearn Old Ways
4. Turn Up the Pressure
5. Take More Calculated Risks
6. Ask Great Questions
7. Be Humble
8. Meet with Purpose
9. Create a Personal Development Advisory Board
10. Think Differently to Find Creative Solutions

The Top 10 Ways We Must Evolve, developed by our Founder and CEO, Gretta Brooks, are not only timely, but actionable.

Gretta is living proof that applying these 10 strategies and techniques in your life works. We can't wait to see your confidence, performance and results boost as a result of implementing these innovative solutions today!

“Inevitably, everything evolves and so must we.”

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

1. *What have you done lately to learn a new skill?*
2. *What have you done lately to update or enhance your skills?*
3. *What's holding you back?*

We spend much of our time doing the same old thing because we think it works or we just don't like change. Inevitably, everything evolves and so must we. It's time to take a step back to take a closer look at yourself than you have in a long time. Often, we get so immersed in our life and in our work that we haven't noticed how complacent we are or rusty we've become, but the world and job culture around you is changing by the day! When was the last time you checked in to see how aware you are of such changes?

In order to be considered relevant and effective, you have to build your brand to be innovative. The details and technicalities that define your daily tasks, goals and expectations are extremely different today than they were even last year due to customer behaviors, the latest trends, market analytics, mergers and acquisitions – the list goes on.



The way in which we go about our craft has been affected by technological advances, changes in hierarchy, global competition, and so forth. Therefore, the job that you think you're here to do is going to continue to evolve and change.

So, how can you be sure that you are ready to take on such a challenge? Are you ready to present yourself in the best way possible?

84% Research says that 84% of customers say it is important that the company (or person) they buy from is *innovative*.

66% However, only two-thirds (66%) of executives say innovation is crucial for survival...

33% AND, just one-third (33%) say they are innovating successfully to drive growth and increase revenue.

1) BRING YOUR BEST SELF:

In order to do anything else in life, personally or professionally, you must take care of yourself first! This is the only way you can bring your best to others around you.

There are many different things you can do to bring your best self. And it's not just about exercising more or watching what you eat or losing weight. The very first thing you must do is get enough sleep! Yes! At least eight hours of sleep a night is important to rejuvenate your brain and let your body rest and re-energize.

Meditation is next. It's important to take time to yourself to reflect, and meditation is key. The Ten Percent Happier app is a fantastic way to use guided meditation whether you are a novice or expert. Choose the time of day that works best for you, and set aside time on your calendar to meditate for at least five minutes.

Once you do those two things, all the rest falls into place, including exercising more, being healthy and making good choices.

Above all, start a movement around self-awareness. You want to lead by example so that others want to follow you.



2) DEVELOP A LEARNER'S MINDSET:

Never think you're too good, too experienced or too well-versed or have too many certifications for what you do. Develop a learner's mindset, and keep that as a consistent mantra.

Get your hippocampus strong, and get comfortable with the learning zone. When we are in our learning zone, we are growing, stretching and developing new skills. To innovate, individuals and companies need to push into the learning zone while ensuring they don't become overly stretched. It's a fine balancing act that requires perspective and a high level of self-awareness.
- Camille Preston, PhD, PCC, AIM Leadership, LLC

Block at least one hour a week on your calendar dedicated to learning. Go beyond your personal area of interest to begin learning new topics that will positively impact you personally or professionally.

Read one book a month. We recommend that you start with the book, *Learn Better* by Ulrich Boser. If you prefer, pick a weekly podcast topic instead.

3) UNLEARN OLD WAYS:

You must unlearn what you have learned." – Master Yoda

The simplest definition of unlearning is to do away with the old to give way to the new. A clearer description is not forgetting what we know but stepping back from it to be able to see things differently. While learning is important for building ourselves professionally (and personally), it is the ability to unlearn that helps us to adapt.

Before you can reskill, you must unlearn old behaviors in order to remove habits and old ways.

For example, if you use Excel often, you could stop sorting and starting using pivot tables. You may join a new networking group or stop responding to RFPs the same way you've been doing since the beginning. Use stories or video testimonials and focus on explaining the benefits the customer will get vs. just the features your product offers.

Unlearning can be a bit painful and even uncomfortable, just like ridding yourself of any habit. However, once done, you make room for so many more opportunities.



4) TURN UP THE PRESSURE:

What do you think the most productive day is? It's the day before you go on vacation! It's true; People work their best and get more done when under a little pressure, like right before going on vacation.

Turning up the pressure actually turns up the endorphins in the body and helps move people into action. It's not about negative pressure, you want to avoid that while also being cautious of being too positive. Focus on what the expectation is for the result, the timeline and what needs to be done in advance of the timeline.

Put time on the calendar to account for meeting your deadlines and due dates three days ahead of schedule. Work on the most difficult or less appealing items first.

Schedule to work on your tasks in 30-minute intervals. Don't give yourself time to waste. Focus 100% and get what you need to get done in 30 minutes or less.

Turning up the pressure is also about holding yourself accountable and, if applicable, holding the rest of your team accountable.

5) TAKE MORE CALCULATED RISKS:

Taking more calculated risks means trying new techniques and strategies with intention. Flip the focus on ROI around and realize that the biggest risk is not your expected return, it's the risk of no return at all if you don't take a risk.

Ask yourself, "What am I willing to invest to take the first step?" Successful entrepreneurs generally don't try to calculate what they will ultimately get from their efforts, and instead ask "What can I afford to lose?" if the next step doesn't turn out as expected. Given the uncertainty inherent in their work this "acceptable loss" frame of reference represents a powerful offset to the traditional notions of "expected return" that stop most efforts before they ever begin.

And most of all, don't wait to be told what to do. If you have a good idea, then think it through, have a plan and execute. Know the risks and prepare for them. Learn from any mistakes. Put yourself out there and take more calculated risks.



6) ASK GREAT QUESTIONS:

Don't always try to be the expert, you can grow and expand if you ask better questions. Seek to understand. Make it your mission to listen. Stop assuming.

- Ask great more thought-provoking questions.
- Be intentional.
- Seek for feedback and advice.

Ask one question every day with the intention of truly getting feedback from others around you, especially your team members.

We have a list of 100 great questions that we use at SalesBoost which I'm happy to share with you. I challenge you to use one every day; before long, it will become a natural part of your day.

7) BE HUMBLE:

You don't have to have all the answers. Rather, surround yourself with talented people, and tap into their knowledge and input every day. Be the one to facilitate discussions to get to the answer.

By becoming a better facilitator, you also learn it's okay to be vulnerable. You don't always need to be the person leading the charge, or carrying the flag, or pulling others up. It's important to be transparent and allow others to understand your areas of opportunity and what you are working on to get better. Being humble is about being honest and showing others that you're striving to grow and learn, which in turn inspires them to surround you with support, input and guidance.

Also, be sure to credit those around you and recognize team members for their contributions. Don't brag about your success. Rather, put others above yourself and be humble. This is a crucial habit of a successful innovator.



8) MEET WITH PURPOSE:

Spend more time preparing for meetings to be more productive. The book, *Death by Meetings*, by Patrick Lencioni is a must-read that gives a blueprint on ways to eliminate waste and frustration in meetings and how to create environments where meetings are engaging and productive.

For example, most people cannot brainstorm on the spot. In fact, it's better to provide a problem or situation in advance and allow team members time to think about solutions. Be proactive and more organized with your meetings by sending information in advance, giving people time to absorb and think it through. Then, when you conduct your meeting, you will see participation rise along with the quality of input from the team.

9) CREATE A PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD:

Looking back, if I could do anything differently, it would be to have more mentors, more coaches. More critical feedback to set me in the right direction. It is imperative to surround yourself with people who will give you honest, straightforward critiques. You must engage people with different perspectives, from various generations, and from different background to get the most helpful feedback.

Identify where you have gaps by asking your personal advisory board to tell you what your gaps are. Be open to feedback. After all, feedback is a gift.

Then ask yourself, "Who can I bring along with me?" External entrepreneurs are constantly making deals for free or low-cost assets and resources. Entrepreneurs inside do likewise but they are also looking for employee partners and supportive bosses (or at least passive ones) as they build a marketplace and political support for their evolving idea. This internal network provides both emotional and physical support. You want enough to get started given your investment analysis and an orientation toward building as you further your efforts against the idea.

10) THINK DIFFERENTLY TO FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS:

Open your mind. Good thinkers are always in demand and are sought out for their abilities – because anything great begins with a thought, and anything worthwhile comes from a great thinker.

Great thinkers are successful leaders. They know how to solve problems, they know how to unleash possibilities, and they know how to achieve the impossible.

People who go to the top think differently than others, and they achieve more than most. But the good news is that successful thinking is something you can learn. Here are seven thought habits to get you started on the road to becoming a better thinker:

1. Cultivate strategic thinking. Strategic thinkers can simplify the difficult, prepare for uncertainties, and reduce the margin of errors—all because they have a plan. Strategic thinking makes you a great planner, which is how you move easily from where you are today to where you want to be tomorrow.

2. Engage in inquisitive thinking. Successful leaders spend their time questioning everything they know and everything they don't know. When you question, you gain knowledge, and when you gain knowledge, you have impact. To be impactful, you have to question what everyone else is taking for granted, and that alone can give you a leg up on innovation and creativity.

3. Explore big-picture thinking. Big-picture thinkers are always ready to see things that other people cannot; they are able to size up a situation and take all the variables into account. Once you can connect dots like no one else, you'll always be prepared to seize an opportunity when the time is right.

4. Harness focused thinking. Focused thinking shuts out interruptions and interference, allowing you to concentrate with clarity. When you can focus your thinking, you are able to bring clarity to challenges, targets, and results.

5. Utilize risk-oriented thinking. Highly successful leaders think big and dream bigger than most. When you learn how to push the envelope and dare to go where no one else has even looked yet, you'll be admired as a risk taker, someone who dares to gamble—and because you dare more, you'll have more.

6. Rely on shared thinking. Collaborative thinkers like to hear what other people are thinking so they can expand their own ideas. As much as we like to think we know it all, the best kind of thinking—the kind that brings the greatest return—is not done solo but is shared.

7. Practice reflective thinking. Take the time to reflect before you act, listen before you speak, understand before you respond, and engage your compassion before you react. When you take the time to reflect, it gives perspective. It allows you the bandwidth to see what is truly going on without being emotionally charged. Reflective thinking enables you to distance yourself, so you can see things with a new pair of eyes.





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