



Skills for Business Innovation Success.

Recommendations and Strategies



Canada's innovation and commercialization performance lags that of many of its peer countries. While many factors shape a country's innovation performance, Canada's poor showing is due in part to weak innovation, commercialization, and innovation management (IM) skills. Skills are active components of the innovation process and directly affect whether other innovation inputs (e.g., financial and technological resources) are used effectively in the pursuit of new or improved products, processes, services, or capabilities. Businesses with employees who have the right mix of skills, attitudes, and behaviours are more successful innovators—leading to improved productivity, competitiveness, and performance.

Skills for Business Innovation Success

The Conference Board of Canada's Innovation Skills Profile (ISP 2018), Commercialization Skills Profile (CSP 2018), and Innovation Management (IM 2018) encapsulate and profile the skills, attitudes, and behaviours individuals need to contribute to an organization's innovation performance.

The ISP 2018 separates innovation skills into four pillars:

- creativity, problem-solving, and continuous improvement skills
- risk assessment and risk-taking skills
- relationship-building and multicultural communication skills
- implementation skills

The CSP 2018 also contains four broad categories of skills:

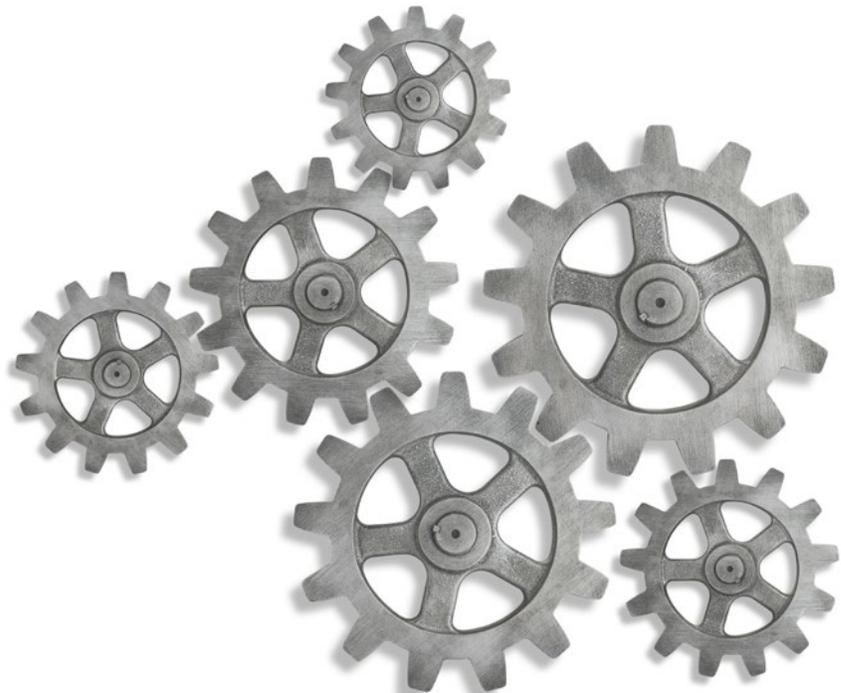
- business management skills
- capital-raising skills
- collaboration and networking skills
- sales and marketing skills

IM 2018 identifies five areas for management focus:

- market knowledge and strategy management
- resource management
- culture development and organization management
- solution implementation management
- value-realization management

Few individuals are strong in all the skills. Instead, organizations should aim to have individuals who together possess all these skills, as ultimately it is the collective skill set of an organization that determines its success at innovation and commercialization. Similarly, the mix and emphasis placed on different types of skills, attitudes, and behaviours will vary depending on the type of innovation and the characteristics of an organization and the external environment in which it operates.

Ensuring that Canadians develop strong innovation, commercialization, and IM skills will require action by governments, educators, businesses, and individuals. All have a role to play in ensuring that Canadians develop and utilize these important skills. Thirteen strategies to strengthen the skills, provide recommendations, and thereby improve Canada's innovation capacity are outlined as follows.





Strategies and Recommendations for Businesses

1. Create a company culture, organizational structure, and human resources management practice that encourage employees to exercise their innovation, commercialization, and management skills.

Businesses must ensure that they create environments where innovation skills can be put to good use. It is not enough for an organization to hire individuals with strong innovation skills; it must also create contexts in which employees are comfortable using their innovation skills effectively (e.g., to take risks, to seek out new ways of doing things, to share ideas, and to act). Companies need to recognize the importance of innovation culture and connect their innovation system to performance. If individuals are not given the opportunity to use their skills, or if their ideas and actions are not recognized and respected, their skills may atrophy or they may seek employment where their skills will be leveraged and rewarded.

A company's internal environment—its organizational structures, workflows, culture, management style, and human resources management practices—has a significant impact on whether individuals feel comfortable utilizing their innovation skills. Furthermore, companies with work environments that actively value innovation skills are more likely to attract individuals with strong innovation skills. Firms should ensure that they actively encourage the use of innovation skills, such as risk-taking, experimentation, problem-solving, idea generation, creativity, continuous improvement, collaboration, and networking. Organizational structures and workflows should encourage and reward individuals who utilize their innovation and commercialization skills. Initiatives such as failing fast and cheap, design thinking, and informed decision-making are examples of workplace concepts that support the development and use of innovation, commercialization, and management skills, which allow creativity, innovation, and commercialization to flourish.

2. Use the ISP 2018, CSP 2018, and IM 2018 profiles as frameworks for dialogue and action. Raise awareness about the importance of skills and provide training and development opportunities that strengthen innovation, commercialization, and management skills in employees.

Employers should provide training and development opportunities to help their employees develop and strengthen their innovation, commercialization, and management skills. Workplace training and development—through experiential, hands-on learning opportunities—is an effective way to ensure that employees have the skills to effectively contribute to innovation. However, Canadian businesses have decreased the amount they spend on training and development activities and now spend significantly less on training and development than employers in the United States.

ISP 2018, CSP 2018, and IM 2018 raise awareness about the unique contribution that skills, attitudes, and behaviours make to an organization's innovation and commercialization performance. They can help businesses understand what it takes to be innovative on the individual, team, and organizational levels. Whether integrated into existing human resources tools or used to inspire new recruitment, training, or development initiatives, the skills profiles can contribute to the skills capacity of all Canadian businesses—regardless of size, sector, or scope.

Training and development opportunities should be designed to complement the pillars of the ISP, CSP, and IM profiles. Depending on the needs and role of a particular employee, training and development activities can focus on problem-solving, risk assessment, networking, communication, sales and marketing, market acumen, or capital-raising. Training and development opportunities can include formal, informal, and social learning activities, such as classroom-based programs, employer-supported conference attendance,

coaching or mentoring, targeted experiential learning opportunities, peer information-sharing, job rotation and cross-training initiatives, job-shadowing, workspace flexibility, face-to-face networking, and online knowledge repositories.

3. Invest in diagnostic tools and programs to assess current innovation capacity and executive leadership alignment.

Canadian businesses need the skills profiles to maintain a constant understanding of the innovation capacity and executive alignment that exists within a firm as the company scales, transitions, and adjusts to market and competitive pressures. There are also several assessment tools available in the market. Some, like the General Innovation Skills Aptitude Test (GISAT 2.0),¹ will assess your organization's capacity to innovate against the needs of the firm and identify the skill gaps. The *Competitive Value Guide* (CVG) management diagnostic tool² will assess the alignment of the executive team on several critical business priorities and key performance indicators with a "competitive lens" to ensure success in key "must win" markets. These assessment tools can provide businesses with some key insights and do the following:

- evaluate and assess their current innovation and commercialization skills capacities (both strengths and weaknesses) and future human capital needs on the individual, team, and organizational levels;
- focus on the skills (and skill gaps) needed to maximize innovation success;
- assess the alignment gaps at the executive level;
- define competitive imperatives;
- assess innovation management processes;
- evaluate corporate culture.

The knowledge and insights gained from these types of tools will be critical for businesses to succeed and scale in global competitive markets and allow them to adjust their management practices, processes, recruitment, promotion, and training systems to succeed in the future.

4. Scale up innovation management capabilities.

A key challenge facing Canada is to develop innovative companies that can scale to compete domestically and globally. Early-stage, innovative start-ups often rely on informal management where innovation is in the founder's DNA but not explicitly contained in the firm's management

structure, systems, and processes. This approach to management can work when a company is small, but becomes impractical as it grows.³

Often, management weakness means that innovative companies never get the chance to flourish and seize the full market opportunity that could be open to them. Many of Canada's small, innovative companies are either acquired early or never grow to significant size because they do not have the management capacity to do so. They lack the managerial capabilities to move from "garage management" to corporate management that can handle scaling up production, hiring and retaining top talent, rapid systems growth, investor relations, and marketing and selling challenges.

The ability to scale up an explicit, formal innovation management system as a company grows is critical to corporate sustainability and growth to global eminence. Without effective innovation management, Canada will not reap the benefits of large, world-class innovative companies that can dominate global market niches.

Recommendations

- Formalize innovation management by building a strategy and business plan and establishing work environments that create a supporting innovation culture within firms.
- Align management culture, systems, and processes across all departments of a firm to support and increase innovation efforts for growth and entry into new markets and stimulate "corporate venturing" to explore and fund new business opportunities.
- Stimulate internal corporate venturing by providing staff with corporate capital to explore and develop new business opportunities.

5. Design and use firm-level metrics.

Innovation management often fails because companies lack a method for linking their innovation strategy and plans to day-to-day management. A well-developed metrics system allows management to make this link and to understand where to focus or adjust managerial energy and resources. Most companies use too few metrics to effectively manage their innovation efforts, while others get confused or distracted because they track too many data points. Findings from the Centre for Business Innovation surveys suggest there is a "sweet spot" in terms of the number of innovation metrics to track, typically six to ten measures.⁴

1 For more information about GISAT 2.0 visit <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/cbi/gisat2.aspx>.

2 To download the CVG visit <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=8785>.

3 Catharine Johnston, *The Stars Come Out: Innovation Management in Start-Up Businesses* (Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2015).

4 Sorin Cohn and Bruce Good, *Metrics for Firm-Level Business Innovation in Canada* (Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada, 2013).

Recommendations

- Establish a portfolio of firm-level innovation metrics, focusing on competitive differentiation in the market.
- Conduct an in-house corporate assessment as a pre-condition for accessing government innovation funding. Assessment should include competitive position, vision, culture, management practices, and innovation capabilities.
- Develop a continuous improvement cycle linking innovation measurement to corporate innovation activities and investments.
- Use advanced innovation management diagnostic tools to determine what external collaboration would help firms achieve market success and increase company value.
- Develop targeted metrics to support firm-level requests for funding by risk capital providers, including angel investors, venture capital funds, and equity investors.

Strategies for Governments

6. Support programs and initiatives that develop innovation, commercialization, and IM skills.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed a significant increase in attention, focus, and funding directed at the innovation “space”. Granting councils, the 2017-2018 federal budgets, along with other supportive institutions have helped to “raise the bar and it is having a positive effect. Federal, provincial, and territorial governments need to continue to encourage and support initiatives that help individuals develop the skills necessary to successfully contribute to innovation. When designing and allocating resources to education and job-training programs, as well as to academics, researchers, students, and post-secondary institutions, government granting agencies—such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research—should consult the ISP 2018, CSP 2018, and IM 2018 profiles to ensure that the development of innovation and commercialization skills are incorporated into these programs.

Other initiatives that support innovation and applied research, such as the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Centres of Excellence in Commercialization and Research, and the Canada Research Chairs programs—as well as provincial, territorial, regional, municipal, and industrial programs that promote innovation and commercialization—should also be aware of the important role that skills, attitudes, and behaviours play in achieving innovation and commercialization success.

Many of the skills listed in the 2018 profiles, such as multicultural communication and problem-solving skills, have much broader applicability than just innovation and can help individuals succeed in both their personal and professional lives. Developing innovation skills is a lifelong learning process. Governments should continue to invest

in programs that support the development of innovation, commercialization, and management skills in a range of contexts and settings and that address the needs of different individuals or groups, including the following:

- children, youth, and educators in primary and secondary schools;
- university, college, and polytechnic students and faculty members;
- Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples;
- workers enrolled in job-retraining programs;
- current workers, entrepreneurs, business owners and operators, managers, and leaders looking to improve their innovation and commercialization performance through skills, attitudes, and behaviours.

7. Seek out top international talent.

To innovate and prosper in the global economy, Canada must continue to grow as a champion of diversity, attracting international talent to our high quality of life and inclusive culture. Attracting diverse international talent has the twin advantages of adding highly skilled and creative people to innovation teams and increasing the firm’s knowledge of international market appetites and opportunities that are especially valuable in finding collaborators and accessing new and emerging markets.

Both directly and in partnership with industry, academic institutions already recruit abroad for undergraduate and graduate students. Businesses often look to Canadian universities and colleges for top international student talent or reach out directly to international talent in their home environments. These efforts should be reinforced and extended with leadership and support from government.

Canadian post-secondary education (PSE) institutions should also provide Canadian-born PSE students with more opportunities to study and gain work experiences internationally as part of their programs. This contributes to building culturally aware and well-connected graduates who offer employers a combination of “know how” and “know who” that will help firms find, and succeed in, global markets.

Recommendations

- Expand overseas marketing of Canada’s PSE institutions to attract more international students who are potential innovators, entrepreneurs, and innovation collaborators.
- Expand opportunities for international students at Canadian PSEs to obtain visas, work permits, and health care while studying in Canada and to obtain permanent immigrant status after graduation so they can gain employment and contribute to innovation in Canadian firms.
- Provide financial incentives for international students to settle in Canada and bring their skills to innovation roles.
- Provide Canadian-born PSE students with opportunities to study and gain work experiences internationally to produce culturally aware and well-connected graduates with the “know how” and “know who” to help firms sell their innovative products and services in global markets.

8. Leverage private sector business expertise to improve government programs.

In recent years, the federal government has added private sector representation at the granting council level—an excellent example being the Private Sector Advisory Board established by the Networks of Centres of Excellence.

More can be done to draw on the expertise and experience of senior members of the business community, as well as retired executives, to provide a market-savvy perspective on how best to stimulate innovation in Canada’s private sector.

Recommendations

- Seek private sector advice before developing new research and innovation programs and initiatives and in evaluating the effectiveness of existing programs and initiatives designed to enhance corporate innovation performance.
- Put business leaders in regular strategic advisory roles for innovation planning and policy making.
- Measure effectiveness of government agencies and programs using metrics that gauge their effectiveness in enhancing industry performance in the market.

Strategies for PSE Institutions

9. Ensure PSE curricula teach and emphasize the importance of innovation, commercialization, and innovation management skills.

The ISP 2018, CSP 2018, and IM 2018 profiles provide educators with an easy-to-use typology of innovation, commercialization, and management skills, attitudes, and behaviours required by entrepreneurs and companies, which can be used to design and develop new curriculum and learning activities.

PSE institutions should ensure that their curricula teach students innovation, commercialization, and IM skills. PSE institutions could consult the skills profiles and the supporting research to help modify their curricula for this purpose. Many PSE programs already emphasize some of these skills, such as communication and problem-solving skills, but few have taken a multicultural, global, and competitive viewpoint, which we now see as critical for international and domestic success. Students in all disciplines and programs should develop these skills as part of their educational experience. PSE curricula should ensure students understand the importance of innovation, commercialization, and IM skills to professional achievement.



10. Create more opportunities for experiential learning as part of students' PSE experience.

PSE curricula should include a balance of theoretical and experiential learning opportunities. Experiential learning programs that include hands-on learning opportunities—such as co-op programs and internships, start-up experiences, and applied research opportunities—offer students valuable opportunities to develop and apply their innovation skills. PSE institutions can also teach innovation skills by creating mentorship opportunities for students. They can bring in successful innovators, entrepreneurs, and other leaders and give students the opportunity to interact with these individuals. These types of programs and initiatives allow students to take the theoretical knowledge they have learned at a PSE institution and apply it in real-world contexts.

11. Increase training in innovation, commercialization, and IM skills in experiential learning in pre-service and in-service programs for educators.

Educators should understand the skills needed for innovation and commercialization. Pre-service and in-service teacher training and professional development programs should place greater emphasis on innovation, commercialization, and IM as learnable skill sets. Teacher training and professional development activities that highlight the value of experiential learning—and give educators the tools and techniques needed to facilitate this approach to learning—would also be beneficial.

Strategies for Individuals

12. Become familiar with innovation, commercialization, and innovation management skills and recognize their importance.

Individuals must be aware of the various innovation, commercialization, and IM skills and understand the role these skills can play in their professional success. ISP 2018, CSP 2018, and IM 2018 are all available online, and individuals should use these tools as a starting point to determine which skills they possess, which skills they need to strengthen, and which skills they need to develop.

13. Look for opportunities to develop and strengthen their innovation, commercialization, and IM skills.

Individuals should look for opportunities to develop and strengthen their innovation, commercialization, and IM skills in both educational and professional settings. They can develop and strengthen their skills through formal learning opportunities, on-the-job experience, and mentorship. Individuals should look for educational programs and training and development opportunities that include the development of these skills. They should also seek out mentors and colleagues who are strong in particular skills (e.g., problem-solving skills, multicultural communication skills, marketing and sales skills, or business acumen) and try to learn from them.



Conclusion

Canada can increase its innovation capacity by strengthening the innovation and commercialization skills of its workforce. The ISP 2018, CSP 2018, and IM 2018 are tools that governments, educators, businesses, and individuals can use to understand and develop innovation skills.

These skills are critical ingredients in ensuring that Canadian firms continue to scale and become globally competitive.



Innovative Company Profiles

Axonify

Axonify is a web-based e-learning platform led by serial entrepreneur Carol Leaman. While successfully leading three technology starts-ups over the last 15 years, she continued to mentor early-stage tech companies in her spare time. It was through this process, and after selling the last company to Google in 2011, that she was introduced to the original founders of Axonify. She saw an opportunity and purchased the company with a business partner. Today, the company offers its Fortune 1000 clients a daily, personalized, gamified learning experience for employees that completely changes the way companies think about driving knowledge. It is a combination of real brain science, adaptive learning technology, and gamification—resulting in knowledge transfer and behaviour change that gets massive financial outcomes for clients. Axonify's analytics also provide customers with data about learning they have not seen before: active participation rates, specific knowledge gaps, and resulting knowledge growth. Axonify has been hugely successful; in the space of less than two years they have acquired over 40 global brand customers and reached \$4 million revenue. In 2013, the company was awarded the CIX Top 20 Showcase and the CDMN Moonshot Awards' Digital Media Globalizer of the Year.

Ms. Leaman's successful strategy is based on product, market, and team. Product and market fit is essential, as is a strong team that can execute. Not only does a market need to exist, but it also needs to be gigantic. After doing a deep-dive market analysis, she realized the opportunity for employee-focused learning solutions was over \$100 billion a year in North America alone. Then it was a matter of refining the product and leveraging a strong team to drive sales. A strong culture coupled with past success has made recruiting top talent easier. In parallel with a strong strategy, Axonify tracks many metrics, including customer acquisition, sale cycle length, customer churn, revenue growth, cost of customer acquisition, and lifetime value of customers. Tracking key performance indicators from the beginning has allowed Axonify to better understand not only its growth, but also its costs.

Source: Carol Leaman (CEO and co-founder, Axonify), telephone interview by Catharine Johnston.

Chaordix

Chaordix was launched in 2009 with a plan to use crowdsourcing to help businesses collaborate with their stakeholders and take advantage of new markets. After two years in the field trying to figure out what problems their clients needed solved, Chaordix rebranded and launched Chaordix Crowd Intelligence. The new technology pairs the power of crowdsourcing with more innovative market research processes. It helps clients meet and co-create with their stakeholders and drive market research, brand loyalty, and innovation. In the beginning, CEO Shelley Kuipers underestimated how innovative their ideas were and how early they were to the market. To find a client base they had to mobilize the market, which involved presenting the Chaordix story at thought leadership conferences all around the world. At the time, many potential clients did not understand the potential of Chaordix's offering, although today crowdsourcing is being embraced by many leading companies across industries.

However, as Chaordix's innovative solutions gained traction, the company has experienced significant growth, either doubling or tripling its revenue each year. It was ranked as one of WordStream's 150 Top Internet Marketing Companies in 2012, recognized by the Advertising Research Foundation (ARF) for Quality in Research in 2013, and has made the WorldBlu List of Most Democratic Workplaces for five years in a row. This success is largely connected to Ms. Kuipers' prior experience. In 2000, she co-founded Stormworks—a software development and digital marketing firm, which was acquired by Solium Capital, a publicly traded financial services company. She has also co-founded Adventure Capital, an early-stage venture capital firm, and Material Insight, a consultancy that helps to grow technology start-ups. However, as a company grows, Ms. Kuipers sees the need to surround herself with people who are good at things she is not. The development of a strong team with similar values and goals has been paramount.

Source: Shelley Kuipers (CEO and co-founder, Chaordix), telephone interview by Catharine Johnston.

gShift

Founded in 2009 by Krista LaRiviere and Chris Adams, gShift provides marketers and agencies with web presence analytics through its software Web Presence Optimizer. Essentially, gShift provides “one platform with big data to inform, optimize and report on content marketing in search, social and mobile.”⁵ The name “gShift” stands for two things. The marketing shift Google has created and the mind shift the software will create when marketers and agencies think of and perform organic search optimization.

The company was founded on the vision of changing the way companies “monitor, measure and report on brand discoverability in search, social and mobile.”⁶ In addition to gShift’s search engine optimization software, Web Presence Optimizer, the company offers both coaching and managed services through its client success management team. Services are based on their hierarchy of web presence optimization methodology.

Ms. LaRiviere and Mr. Adams are both serial entrepreneurs who founded two other, now acquired, technology firms. gShift has found much success in its approach to online content marketing performance metrics, with over 70 per cent of its sales as exports and a three-year average annual growth rate of 581 per cent (2010–12). In 2013, gShift was also ranked 29th on Profit Guide’s 50 Hottest Companies and named as one of The Next 50 Canadian ICT Companies by Branham300. The biggest challenge for gShift has been data management, but it has now become a competitive advantage for the firm. gShift collects web presence data every day and uses them to create analytic dashboards for clients.

Source: Krista LaRiviere (CEO and co-founder, gShift), telephone interview by Catharine Johnston.

Nurse Next Door

In the beginning, Nurse Next Door, a Vancouver-based company, had two lines of business: providing home care and staffing for long-term care facilities. Under this model, the company grew to \$25 million in sales within the first four years of operation. However, the founders, John DeHart and Ken Sim, realized that if they were going to be world-class at something it was better to focus on one thing. Therefore, Nurse Next Door divested the staffing side of the business, which accounted for the majority of revenue, to focus on home care. In order to scale the business as quickly as possible, they decided to move to a franchise model. A franchise model allowed Nurse Next Door to grow quickly while building a brand. Nurse Next Door now has 3,500 employees in 80 locations across North America, was named one of Canada’s Most Admired Corporate Cultures by Waterston Human Capital, and Profit Guide named them Canada’s Smartest Company in 2014.

For Mr. De Hart, part of his motivation is money and the other is the purpose of the business. The passion to create something great and impactful is what kept him building and focused for 13 years. Originally, they had created a big company, but not a great company. To create a great company, they had to focus the company, improve communications, and attract the best people. In fact, he set a goal to become one of top 10 best employers in Canada. They did not know how to do that, so the company spent a summer studying the most enduring brands they knew and rebuilt the company from the ground up.

Source: John DeHart (CEO and founder, Nurse Next Door), telephone interview by Catharine Johnston.

R3 Deconstruction and Demolition

R3 Deconstruction and Demolition is a mid-sized demolition company based in Edmonton, Alberta, focused on environmental sustainability. Traditionally, materials from a demolition are sent to a landfill, but R3’s founder, Travis Blake, had the “naïve” idea that demolished materials should be recycled. In 2009, the company was founded on the principles of “waste diversion and sustainable demolition.” So rather than simply knocking down a building, R3 salvages, reuses, and resells as much of the contents as possible. Mr. Blake was new to the demolition industry; he had a unique idea but was an outsider. To make his vision a reality, he leveraged his networks and surrounded himself with experts that knew the trade. A huge strength for Mr. Blake as an entrepreneur has been his ability to act as a connector and attract a network of dynamic people—such as bankers, leaders in sustainability, and other companies.

R3 has experienced significant success, growing 453 per cent from 2010 to 2012 and being ranked 43rd on Profit Guide’s 50 Hottest Start-Ups for 2013. The company was also named the Alberta Venture Trade Contractor of the Year (under \$15 million), along with the LAPIDARY Award for training and education in the field of deconstruction at the 2013 DeconExpo. However, not every project has been a success for R3. From the beginning, R3’s innovation strategy has been to “fail gently” as a method of tinkering with processes over time. R3 accepts small failures, allowing innovation to occur incrementally as it refines its products and services. To supplement this strategy, R3 also continually asks, “why do we do the things we do?” Mr. Blake believes his desire to question everything is one of his most successful attributes as an entrepreneur. Creating an environment where employees can ask the right questions and nothing is “red taped” is at the core of R3’s innovation management.

Source: Travis Blake (CEO, R3 Deconstruction and Demolition), telephone interview by Catharine Johnston.

5 gShift, “Company,” accessed September 20, 2014, www.gshiftlabs.com/company/ (page removed).

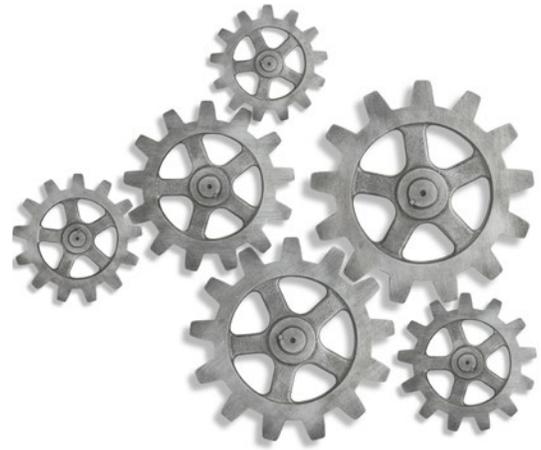
6 Ibid.

You.i Labs

You.i Labs is a company that blends art and technology together, by providing an engine that allows designers to develop unique and natural-looking interfaces for any operating system. The founder, Jason Flick, started the company in 2008 after founding Flick Software and N-able Technologies. From the beginning, the strategy for the company has been “to make every device and every app fun and easy to use.” The strategy has worked, and in 2013 You.i Labs was ranked 25th on Profit Guide’s 50 Hottest Start-ups, with 689 per cent growth from 2010 to 2012, and won Intel’s SME Innovation Award. You.i Labs’ clients include Netflix, KOBO, Rogers, and Sony.

While You.i Labs’ core strategy has remained solid, the company has gone through at least three major pivots. Initially, the company focused on helping low-end companies compete with the iPhone, then it focused on higher-end companies, and in the past three years it has moved into the media space. All three pivots have been driven by commercial viability. As Mr. Flick stated, “Just because you can do it does not mean you can make money at it.” By being adaptable, You.i has been free to innovate and change the direction of the company. Communication is a large part of what has allowed You.i Labs to be flexible and pivot. Each month the company has a meeting for all employees, giving an update on what is going on and where the company is headed. The executive team also meets off-site once a quarter. They focus on developing and revising the company’s strategic objectives.

Source: Jason Flick (CEO and co-founder, You.i Labs), telephone interview by Catharine Johnston.



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The Conference Board’s Centre for Business Innovation (CBI) is helping to bring about major improvements in firm-level business innovation in Canada. The CBI’s mission is to learn why Canada is not a leader in business innovation, to create insights for firms and capital markets that will improve firm-level innovation, to generate evidence and track our performance, and to formulate public policies that will successfully stimulate business innovation.

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