



Innovation - The Unexpected !

A detailed discussion of an innovation source

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What is this?

This kind of innovation comes from unanticipated events, whether they are triumphs, setbacks, or outside happenings that don't conform to the norms of a company, sector, or market. These revelations may highlight issues or unmet requirements that need to be addressed, creating new opportunities for innovation.

Harness the Unexpected

Fostering a Culture of Curiosity and Openness: Encourage an environment where questioning and exploring are valued, and where unusual outcomes are seen as starting points for innovation.

Rapid Experimentation and Prototyping: Highlight the importance of quickly testing ideas and learning from failures, which can often lead to unexpected successes.

Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration: Suggest how bringing together diverse perspectives can uncover unique insights and lead to serendipitous discoveries.

Maintaining Flexibility: Stress the importance of being able to pivot or shift directions when unexpected results present new opportunities.

Examples



iPod: When Apple Inc. introduced the iPod in 2001, it drastically altered the entertainment and music sectors. An internal mishap led to part of the design inspiration for the iPod: users wanted a compact, lightweight device to store and play their digital music collection. The iPod's popularity, despite its original lack of vision as a revolutionary product, helped Apple build the iPhone and iPad later on.

Post-it Notes: A classic example where a failed attempt to create a super-strong adhesive led to the discovery of a low-tack, reusable adhesive, perfect for sticky notes.



Penicillin: The discovery of penicillin by Alexander Fleming, who noticed that a contaminated Petri dish had killed the surrounding bacteria, revolutionizing medical treatment.

Learning from the unexpected

- Forming interdisciplinary teams to encourage communication, bring in new perspectives, and increase the chances of unexpected discoveries.
- Learning from failures to encourage risk-taking and innovation.
- Practicing observation and insight in daily life, starting from the details, watching how people interact with products, and exploring unmet needs.

Questions for you!

- What unexpected discovery could transform your industry today?
- Have you ever been surprised by the success of what you initially thought was a bad idea?
- How can you start looking for the innovation potential in everyday surprises?