**The companies look outside for product development due to lack of:**

1. capacity
2. speed
3. expertise
4. innovation

Success depends on both what you do, and how you do it.

The objective is to achieve true excellence in a few areas, and strength in many.

**5 basic methodologies to take a new idea to commercialization:**

1. Understand the market, the client, the technology, and the perceived constraints of the problem.
2. Observe real people in real-life situations to find out what makes them tick: what confuses them, what they like, what they hate, where they have latent needs not addressed by current products and services.
3. Visualize new-to-the-world concepts and the customers who will use them.
4. Evaluate and refine the prototypes in a series of quick iterations. Try not to get too attached to the first few prototypes, because they will change. No idea is so good that it cannot be improved upon. Get input from internal team, from the client team, from knowledgeable people not directly involved with the project, and from people who make up the target market. Watch for what works and what does not, what confuses people, what they seem to like, and incrementally improve the product in the next round.
5. Implement the new concept for commercialization.

Status should be about talent, not seniority.

The fastest development team cannot win the race to market if the decision process bogs down.

We all have a creative side, and it can flourish if we spawn a culture to encourage it, one that embraces the risks and wild ideas and tolerates the occasional failure.

Networking approach to problem-solving: When you are stuck with a tough decision or problem you do not understand, talk to all the smart people you know.

Go to the source, not the experts inside a company, but the actual people who use the product or something similar to what you are hoping to create.

Observation-fueled insight makes innovation possible, uncovering what comes naturally to people, and having the strength to change the rules.

Customers may lack the vocabulary or the palate to explain what’s wrong, and especially what’s missing and companies should not ask them to. This is particularly true of new-to-the-world products or services. Seeing and hearing things with your own eyes and ears is a critical first step in improving or creating a breakthrough product. Innovation begins with an eye.

Once you start observing carefully, all kinds of insights and opportunities open up.

Whenever we are in a new-to-the-experience mode, we need to pay close attention and even take notes about our impressions, reactions, and questions, especially, the problems – the things that bug you.

New ideas come from seeing, smelling, hearing – being there.

Having ‘a good eye for business’ is that you need to be aware of the world around you, ready to spot trends – and act. Good companies and good consultants are astute observers, of people, teams, organizations, technologies, and trends.

The best products embrace people’s differences. To make better products and services, you have got to care about the person actually using it. Awaken your antenna to the endless variety of human nature, and you are bound to make customers happier and find new products. As you observe people in their natural settings, you should not only look for the nuances of human behavior but also strive to infer motivation and emotion.

Many companies rigidly separate functions such as research, design, marketing, and manufacturing, creating walls between groups that have much to teach one another.

Sometimes even the best innovations fail because of simple, preventable miscalculations.

Successful innovations recognize that people do not always do the right thing to make the necessary leaps to bridge the gap between familiar and genuinely new ideas. Widespread adoption often takes time. Astute observation is one way to shorten that cycle and make trade-offs that users will accept.

If something’s broken, it can be fixed. Just keep your eyes open for inspiration.

The best way to get a good idea is to get a lot of ideas. –Linus Pauling

**Brainstorming:**

1. **Duration:** Sixty minutes to an hour and a half.
2. **Seven Secrets:**
3. **Sharpen the focus:** good brainstorming starts with a well-honed statement of the problem. Go for something tangible that participants can sink their teeth into, without limiting the possible solutions. The best topic statements focus outward in a specific customer need or service enhancement rather than focusing inward on some organizational goal.
4. **Playful rules:** do not start to critique or debate ideas. It can sap energy of the session pretty quickly. Go for quantity, encourage wild idea, and be visual.
5. **Number your ideas:** it is a tool to motivate the participants before and during the session and to jump back and forth from idea to idea without losing track of where you are.
6. **Build and jump:** Watch for chances to build and jump. Try building on an idea. Encourage another push or introduce a small variation or take jump, either back to an earlier path skipped too quickly or forward to a completely new approach to get into the next power curve and keep the energy up.
7. **The space remembers:** brainstorming is an intensely group-oriented process, and the facilitator’s rapid scribing is one of the focal points that hold the group together. Capture ideas so that the group can see their progression and return to those that seem worthy of more attention.
8. **Get physical:** good brainstorming sessions are extremely visual. They include sketching, mind mapping, diagrams, and stick figures. Bring competitive products, elegant solutions from other fields, and promising technologies that could be applied to the problem. Have material on hand to build crude models of a concept: blocks, foam core, tubing, duct tape, etc.
9. Brainstorming sessions offer the team members a chance to shine. It is a friendly competition. Everyone wants to demonstrate their cleverness and wittiness in front of their peers. When a brainstorming session thunders, it is a multiple win, a rising tide that loifts everyone up on a wave of excitement.
10. Without a comfort zone, people do not take chances.
11. Killers of a brainstorming session:
    1. The boss gets to speak first.
    2. Everybody gets a turn.
    3. Experts only please.
    4. Do it off-site.
    5. No silly stuff.
    6. Write down everything.

Great projects are achieved by great teams.

Hot project teams start with a clear goal and a serious deadline. The hot group knows that I might disband after the goal is reached and reform the next week to solve another challenge.

A hot group is infused with purpose and personality.

Draw the team from widely divergent disciplines, and the team members should have tremendous respect for their fellow members.

Members should be selected for their ability, not seniority or political skills.

The group should feel empowered to go get whatever else it needs.

Field for the best team you can, and race for the deadline.

Every job that must be done, there is an element of fun.

Teams do not need to have higher causes to perform, but they do need tangible goals – a technical first, a challenging sales target, outshining a tough competitor – something to shoot for an be proud of.

Strongest teams take root when individuals are given the chance of picking what groups they work with and even occasionally what projects they work on. That way, the passion fuels the fire.

Adversity can prove the glue that binds the team together, making it emerge stronger and more tightly knit.