



Blue-Sky thinking:

The key to unlocking innovation in a competitive business landscape

by Natalie Tillen, Senior Strategist, Luxoft's Smashing Ideas
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In brief:

Blue-Sky thinking fuels innovation: Break limits, spark ideas

Competitive edge through creativity: Adapt or risk obsolescence

Risk-friendly environment: Unleash creativity, conquer challenges

Workshops empower innovation: Luxoft's SI drives transformative ideas

It's all too easy to get stuck in a rut, where the creative brainstorming sessions are neither stormy nor brainy. This creates something of a quandary when you know you've got great people working for you, but they just don't seem to have the outlet to come up with the kind of ideas that keep you competitive, or indeed, that may even help you stand out as an innovator in your field. In this article by Natalie Tillen, Senior Strategist at Luxoft's Smashing Ideas, you'll hear how the team at SI can help you facilitate your next visionary step forward, giving you the tools, the space, the environment and the initiative to get you beyond the box of usual.

In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving business world, innovation is no longer just an option; it's a necessity. Companies must continuously adapt, evolve and push the boundaries to stay ahead of the competition. One powerful tool at our disposal to foster innovation is "Blue-Sky thinking". While it may not be easy, Blue-Sky thinking offers the potential to break free from conventional patterns and envision groundbreaking ideas. In this article, we explore why embracing the challenge of Blue-Sky thinking is crucial for businesses aiming to thrive in the competitive landscape and harness the power of innovation.

Blue-Sky thinking is hard, and that's okay

Blue-Sky thinking is a process for [thinking outside the box](#), envisioning solutions and exploring ideas without limitations. It encourages individuals and teams to break free from comfort zones and question the status quo. While this type of thinking may be difficult, especially when faced with time constraints or resource limitations, it is essential for sparking the creative genius within us. Embracing the challenges of a Blue-Sky strategy can lead to innovative breakthroughs and open doors to opportunities that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

The importance of innovation and staying ahead

In today's competitive business landscape, innovation is the lifeblood of success. Companies that fail to innovate risk falling behind and becoming obsolete. Customers expect new, better and more efficient products and services, and the market rewards those who can deliver on these demands. Staying ahead requires anticipating industry shifts, predicting customer needs and pushing boundaries to create unique value propositions. This is where Blue-Sky thinking becomes indispensable.





Blue-Sky thinking requires the temporary suspension of status quo and risks

To facilitate this process, it's crucial to establish ground rules and create a supportive environment. By setting the conditions for an environment where traditional barriers are suspended, we can access the untapped parts of our brains. These barriers may include unspoken rules, biases, preconceived notions or the fear of making mistakes. By temporarily releasing these inhibitions in Blue-Sky meetings, we allow ourselves to think freely, without the burden of overanalysis or self-censorship.

Risk aversion is a natural tendency that can hinder Blue-Sky thinking. We are wired to seek comfort and security, often avoiding situations that may involve uncertainty or potential failure. However, embracing and understanding risk is advantageous in cultivating a Blue-Sky mindset. By becoming friends with risk, we

can detach ourselves from the actual consequences and explore possibilities without the fear of immediate failure. This perspective enables us to think more deeply and innovatively, unencumbered by the constraints of our risk-averse nature.

Furthermore, creativity thrives outside of stress. When pressure mounts, our minds tend to default to familiar and safe solutions. However, creativity and risk can clash when confronted head-on. To harness their full potential, we need to create the right conditions. Workshops, time suspension, and a supportive environment all contribute to unleashing our creativity and critical thinking. By creating a space that encourages exploration, we can tap into our biggest set of tools, think strategically, wear different hats, pivot with ease, find our flow and approach challenges playfully.

Embracing the freedom of Blue-Sky thinking

To foster innovation and stay ahead in the competitive business landscape, organizations must embrace Blue-Sky thinking. By providing the freedom to explore uncharted territories, question existing practices, and challenge traditional norms, businesses empower their employees to tap into their full creative potential. Visionary leaders encourage a culture of openness, where employees feel safe to share their unconventional ideas without fear of judgment or retribution.

Blue-Sky thinking is undeniably hard, but that's perfectly fine. Its difficulty stems from the fact that it demands us to step outside our comfort zones and challenge conventional thinking. However, by embracing the challenges, setting the right conditions, befriending risk, and freeing ourselves from constraints, we can unlock a world of creative possibilities.

Unlocking the power of workshops

Visioning workshops, discovery workshops and ideation workshops play a pivotal role in nurturing Blue-Sky thinking within organizations. The strategists at Luxoft's Smashing Ideas are experienced in facilitating these workshops to drive innovative thinking. They provide a platform for individuals, teams, and organizations to embrace Blue-Sky thinking. Through visioning workshops, we will help you imagine new possibilities and define a compelling future. In discovery workshops, we will guide you in exploring emerging trends and uncovering untapped opportunities. And in ideation workshops, we will facilitate brainstorming sessions and creative exercises to generate innovative ideas.

Innovation is no longer an option; it's an imperative for businesses to thrive in today's competitive landscape. Blue-Sky thinking is the key to unlocking innovation by breaking free from conventional boundaries and envisioning a future that sets companies apart from

the competition. Embracing the challenges of Blue-Sky thinking and leveraging workshops at SI/Luxoft can help organizations harness the full potential of their creativity and propel them to new heights of success. In this journey of exploration, the possibilities are limitless, and the rewards are truly transformative. So, let's embrace the magic of Blue-Sky thinking and pave the way for a future of unparalleled innovation and excellence.

To see firsthand how Luxoft's Smashing Ideas applied Blue-Sky thinking to their [digital design services](#), and achieved success, delve into this case study where creative ideas were brought to life, contributing to the client's brand growth and the enrichment of user experiences — and accomplishing the impossible, getting children to brush their teeth every day without being told.

<https://www.luxoft.com/case-studies/philips-sonicare-for-kids-case-study> ← LINK TO CASE STUDY



About **the author**



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Natalie Tillen is a strategist and designer with divergent experience in life sciences, nanotechnology, fashion and retail. Driven by human-centered design, she's dedicated to building capacities for diverse and adaptive collaborations between stakeholders across industries. As a Senior Design Strategist at Luxoft's Smashing Ideas, she helps clients translate complex systems into seamless user experiences. She holds an MFA in Transdisciplinary Design from The New School's Parsons School of Design and a BA in Industrial Design from Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

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