

Detailed Kickbox Workshop Outline

Note: break locations are approximate

Day 1

Introduction

- What is Kickbox? What are our objectives?
 - Good morning. Warming up the attendees
 - Getting to know the audience. Show of hands surveys: e.g. what part of the company, how'd you hear about Kickbox, tenure at company
 - Why an innovation program? Aren't we already good at innovation?
 - Yes. Kickbox does not replace innovation, it augments other efforts.
 - Even more fundamentally, **Kickbox is not an innovation program. It is an innovator program. The product is you, the innovator**
 - Develop the skillset necessary to innovate inside the organization
 - Nudge your career vector
 - Provide the permission, resources, and knowledge needed
 - Kickbox is about really doing it, not about exercises with macaroni and pipe cleaners. If you need to teach swimming, everyone gets wet. If you don't swim you don't breathe.
 - Objection: "You let people work on anything you want, you pre-fund it without knowing what it is, you don't monitor what they're doing, and you don't measure the outcomes?" Yes, exactly! But that also puts maximum control in the innovator's hands.
- Types of innovation
 - Incremental (e.g. new features in existing products, 2x growth)
 - Sustaining (e.g. new products in existing line, 5x growth)
 - Disruptive (new businesses, 100x growth)
 - One solid project pays for 1000+ red boxes.
- Innovation processes in the past
 - Many approaches, all shared a pattern:
 - Money + Ideas given to some sort of decision authority to decide.
 - All variations tried
 - More or less money from many different sources
 - Ideas from all employees, from the board, from researchers, from organizational leaders
 - Decision authorities tried ranging from executive committees to employee voting.
 - Only thing never tried is to not decide.
 - Other programs assume it is possible to pick winning ideas. Kickbox makes the ideas prove themselves in order to overcome selection bias.

- Fund all the ideas just a little bit and let the innovator either prove the idea is worth more investment or come to their own conclusion that it is not.

Level 0: Distribute the boxes and discuss

- Innovation objections: “I know our executives talk about innovation, but...”
 - ...I don’t think they mean *me*.”
 - ...I’m not sure it’s a high priority for my manager.”
 - ...I don’t have enough time to innovate.”
 - ...I don’t have the money to innovate.”
 - ...I’m not sure what the company needs innovated.”
- Kickbox directly addresses these objections (as best we can)
- Distribute boxes. Participants open and review the content simultaneously. Includes everything you need to overcome objections and actually innovate.
 - Letter from executive: the company wants *you* to innovate.
 - Permission from manager: you will have time to pursue your project.
 - \$1000 credit card: you have the money to pursue your innovation project.
 - Removes friction from fast moving validation work
 - Shows trust: trust people and it fundamentally changes the relationship. “The company **really means** it because they put their money where their mouth is.”
 - Most controversial element. But eliminating risk also eliminates upside and without innovation we will eventually be irrelevant.
 - Time: permission from manager for 30-40 hours over next 6-8 weeks
 - Finally, sugar (chocolate bar) and caffeine (coffee gift card) – two of four innovator’s food groups!
 - Process: 6 well-defined steps to go through when pursuing your project
- Kickbox process overview
 - The 6 levels, actions, and the blue box.

Morning break (make sure there are an even number of people at each table at this point)

- Kickbox is not a change to the corporate systems. It’s a way to hack the existing systems.
 - Asking for the big money to fully fund ideas does not work, the risk is too high for a leader to displace other priorities
 - 30-40 hours and \$1000 allows you to get more time and then more money to pursue your innovation
- Getting started: “start here” card
 - Participants read the card, front and back, put it down when they’re done
- “What do you get if you finish all 6 levels? A fabulous prize: the blue box. What’s in the blue box? There’s only one way to find out...”

Level 1: Inception

- Motivation: Why it makes all the difference.
 - Level 1 generally throws people. Unexpected place to start but it's crucial.
 - Doing what it takes to take a new idea kicking and screaming into existence takes more than external rewards.
 - Innovators are compelled forward by strong motivation; you can't pay people to innovate (necessary but not sufficient).
 - Strong correlation between those who reach level 6 and those who could articulate a strong innovation motivation at level 1.
- First-hand examples from Mark's experience. Best if the workshop facilitator tells a personal story about motivation and innovation, especially a story about realizing that an extrinsic motivator (e.g. lots of money from a startup IPO) was not sufficient.
- Ask yourself why you want to innovate.
 - Are you mad that something doesn't work like it should? Do you want to prove yourself to your team or manager (or buff your resume)? Do you see pain in the world and want to remove it?
 - It doesn't matter your reason, but you have to know what it is
 - Also fair to ask your manager. Why do they do what they do? Why here and not somewhere else?
- Mark's secret to Joyful success:
 - Amplify your **unique talents** with the **skills of a great team** to **change the world**, creating **value for others** and **meaning for you**.
 - Align yourself with the interests of your customers.
- Read card 1 suggestions and complete card one
 - Some are controversial. Buff resume to leave? HR probably not happy, but we don't care. If that's what lights you up, it's what lights you up.
 - Individuals complete Level 1 card. They do not share with others.
- Q & A

Level 2: Ideate

- Innovation: "It's hard to define but we know it when we see it."
 - Innovators: less like media images (e.g. Steve Jobs) and more like a toddler. Naïve way of observing world for exactly what it is, not what you want, and making new connections. Picasso quote, "Every child is an artist. The trick is staying one."
 - Innovation: not about deep thought and flashes of inspiration.
 - Clayton Christensen *Innovator's DNA* and characteristics of innovators across organizations:
 - Observing, Questioning, Associating (ideas), Networking (people), Experimenting
 - Leverage a diverse group of people for feedback and balance to ideas

- Most innovation processes don't start with ideation. Strange, since innovation starts with knowing how to create ideas. Even though most new ideas are bad, ideas still are the start.
 - Really great ideas are very rare and very valuable. More ideas increase chances of getting a good one. Volume matters.
 - Looking through Mark's notebooks: 210-220 seriously considered ideas for every one pursued through testing and work
 - Having many ideas also clears your "mental stack" of whatever you're thinking of to make room for more ideas.
 - As you document more ideas you learn to spot which ones excite you
 - **Pursuing your first idea you've had is like marrying your first girlfriend**
- Brainstorming for ideation: research and experience show it doesn't work very well.
- Important to be critical of new ideas to hone and improve them. Pixar's process: dailies review is brutal but well intentioned by all participants.
- Divergent thinking and ideation frameworks.
- Effects and methods: How professional magicians think of new impossible things to do. (Hard, rigorous work. Creativity is work.)
 - Strategies for ideation:
 - Table of strategic elements [see Kickbox materials – elements moved around like tiles to create different combinations, spark ideas]
 - Question the question ("what problem are we actually trying to solve? How will we know it's solved?" Why this? And again. And again. Until we have the right level of abstraction)
 - Einstein was asked, "Given 1 hour to solve a problem, how would he approach it?" His answer: "Spend 55 minutes understanding the question, then 5 minutes finding the answer."
 - Value of answers (even right ones) falling today; but the value of the right questions is rising quickly
 - Time of day matters. Beginning or end, figure out what's good for you.
 - Solo storming: members of group brainstorm in isolation and write down all their ideas on post-it notes. Get back together and each person reads ALL their ideas and group gives feedback, critiques, and groups related ideas together.
 - Set a time limit for ideation. More effective. Research backs this up. Frees mind to focus when you know you'll go back to "regular work" when the timer is done.
- Bad ideas notebook
 - Why no good ideas notebook? Most new ideas look like bad ideas. Only a few look like awesome ideas, which means they're a really bad

ideas. Getting a lot of good ideas means starting with a massive stack of bad ideas. Clear the short-term mental stack.

- Exercise: 20 minutes of focused ideation, write down every problem, solution, question or answer that comes to mind.
 - Create a post-it note stack with 2 different colored stacks stuck back-to-back
 - Ideas on one color post-it
 - Everything else on the other (e.g. “get the dry cleaning. Pick up Sally from school at 3.”) If you don’t write down these tasks they will stick in your head and prevent new ideas from coming – clear the mental stack.
 - Arrange spatially to show related concepts
- Group discussion: how did that go for you? How did it feel? Long? Short?
- Q & A
- Being more creativity: FAME: hanging out with **F**riends, **A**rt, **M**usic, **E**xercise

Afternoon break

Level 3: Improve

- To go through the ideas in the workshop you need an idea. You can change it, but pick something to work with from here on out. Can be what you brought or one of your new ideas from Level 2 ideas.
- Elevator pitches and Zen statements: crushing your beautiful idea down to fit in one sentence won’t destroy it, it will make it better.
- How to make a Zen statement:
 - “A <product/service description> for <target customers> that <key value> enabling <primary benefits> unlike <existing alternatives>.”
 - Example: “A <portable music player> for <audiophile music lovers> that <plays music files from lossless formats> enabling <improved> quality and more enjoyable music> unlike <iPods and other compressed file music players>.”
- Example: Disneyland. Keep digging to produce higher level Zen statements
 - Accurate, but low level Zen statement for Disneyland:
 - **An** amusement park **for** families **that** provides fun rides and food **enabling** engaging entertainment **unlike** parks or beaches.
 - Higher level Zen statement for Disneyland:
 - **An** entertainment experience **for** children of all ages **that** brings families and friends closer together **enabling** the creation of memories that last a lifetime **unlike** other vacation destinations.
- Exercise: Create a Zen statement for your idea (or the idea your using for the workshop)
- Group discussion: Boxers share their Zen statements with the room and get feedback from facilitator and other boxers

- Exercise: Boxers share their Zen statement with the person next to them (their “innovation buddy”) and give and get feedback.
 - Guidance to room: job of partner is to assess clarity of the statement, not the idea itself
- Discussion: Who got useful feedback? Why was it useful?
- Exercise: Redraft or modify your Zen statement. Refine and polish until it shines
- The next tool: the scorecard; what it’s for, not for and why it’s so useful
 - Rate the idea on different axes.
 - Nothing can be high across the board because things high in one will be low in others.
- Exercise: complete a scorecard for your idea.
- Exercise: Ask the person next to you to complete a scorecard for your idea. They do the same for yours. Ask enough questions to fill out the card for their idea. Do this without letting them see how you scored your own idea.
- Exercise: When both complete, compare your scores and your partner’s for both ideas and note any item that is 2 or more different. Discuss why with your partner. This can be lower OR higher – they may see an opportunity you don’t see!
 - This is the key scorecard value. The card is not objective and **the scores themselves don’t matter**. It is only useful to prompt discussion and show where your idea is not clear or your assumptions are not shared. You can throw away the scorecard as you leave the discussion.
- Group discussion: How did the score differences provide perspective on the idea?
- After the workshop, you will use your Zen statement and scorecard to illicit real discussion and feedback with others in your organization. Make their feedback concrete, and allow you to dig in on unclear areas where score is different by 2+

Dinner break

- Canvas: What is it and how does it work?
 - Modified lean canvas, originally developed by Maurya based on the Business Model Canvas by Alex Osterwalder.
 - Goal: look at all areas of a business to see if it could be viable
 - Most innovators concentrate on the elegant, awesome solution. But few products or businesses fail because we can’t figure out how to build the product! Innovators must have a broader view.
 - Unfair Advantage: you likely don’t have. Can’t be replicated for any amount of time for any amount of money.
 - E.g. Martha Stewart Living
 - “Wow!” factor: what’s the wow moment when using your solution? That’s the hook that will make customers excited. Thinking about this

from the start can be very useful to figure out what is important and what is and what is not important about your innovation.

- Exercise: Complete the first draft of your canvas.
- Discussion on canvas, opportunities and challenges.
- Q&A

Day 2

Recap of day 1, how to choose

- Q&A from Day 1
- New ideas in the night. How do you choose which idea is worth investigating?
 - For Mark, it's that you keep thinking about it. It keeps popping up in your mental cycles.
 - Plus, when you're thinking about it, it makes you happy. This can be small, but if you feel happy thinking about the world that will exist after it's created. If it's just numbers it's hard to sustain passion for most people.
- [Facilitator should tell a story about moving from a compelling idea that excited them, and how they moved through validation to make sure it would excite others.
- Overview: Qualitative and quantitative validation; how they're different but both are critical
 - Quantitative tells you yes/no
 - Qualitative tells you WHY

Level 4: Investigate

- How to talk with customers
 - Talk to customers like you talk to your friends.
 - When? You can't do it fast enough. If you haven't talked with a customer within 24 hours you are late.
 - Conduct problem interview before solution interview – you must understand the customer's pain points and gains they would like to realize before validating your solution. A better or different solution to a more painful problem may present itself!
- Discuss interviewing tools. How to contact and compensate your interviewees.
 - Ask about past behavior. Specifics. Not aggregate (“how many times a week do you feed your kids vegetables” vs “what did you feed your kids last?”)
 - People are terrible predictors of their own future behavior. Health clubs example for OWN money, much less other money. Luxury cards and last major purchase.
 - Mark story about hard lessons in validation [ideally, facilitator uses anecdote that illustrates that even well-intentioned customers can't predict their buying behavior. Mark's story

involves a customer swearing they are 100% sure their company will buy a soon-to-be-release product, and that there was no risk they would not. However, when asked if they would buy on the spot, even with a huge discount, the reaction was, “Well, I’d have to talk to Sally in IT and Joe in purchasing to really...” Before then, IT and purchasing were not even part of the conversation.] Lesson: validation is not real until the customer has made a tangible commitment and tradeoff.

- Exercise: customer interviews
 - Everyone thinks of something they don’t like about their mobile phone. Expect battery life, that’s too easy.
 - Participants interview the person next to them (innovation buddy) and try to find the thing they don’t like by asking them about their daily usage. Interviewer cannot ask directly and interviewee shouldn’t tell unless the interviewer finds the exact issue. The exercise lasts **two minutes** and then the partners trade places. Using the interviewing techniques taught, typically about 1/3 to 1/2 of the group can find the issue in two minutes.
- Discussion: What did we learn about interviewing?

Lunch Break

- Quantitative validation. How do we do it? Landing page examples.
 - “I’m not an engineer! I can’t build a validation website.” “Yes you can. Here’s how. The secret is staying fast and easy using templates.”
 - Driving traffic to your site with ads.
 - How to create effective ad words advertisements.
 - Running your ad campaign.
 - Analytics: how to measure response.
 - What to do if it’s not working.
- Driving traffic to a test site with ads
- Exercise: Create your first Google AdWords ad. You have three minutes. The format is three lines: 25, 35 and 35 characters.
 - Some boxers are encouraged to share their draft ads and get feedback from the group.
- Exercise: Share your ad with the person next to you and get feedback on focus, clarity and abstraction. Provide feedback to them.
- How to select keywords to target for your ads by thinking about customer problems and using AdWords tools
- Exercise: Select three keywords for your ad. Share with partner to get feedback.

Guest speaker: “Meet a Blue Boxer.” A former red boxer who has reached the blue box phase presents their project, what went wrong, what went right, what they learned and their best advice. Much Q&A. If your organization does not yet have a blue boxer,

consider a recognized innovator instead.

Level 5: Iterate

- In Level 4, you will have created a test rig to see what happens. This level is about iterating and evolving the experiment to improve. And figure out which levers matter.
 - Change the ads, landing page, value prop and see what makes a difference.
 - Grab screens of every iteration
 - Using analytics to gain insight
 - How to advance your hypothesis to demonstrate increasing value.
 - What data is the most compelling and why.
 - Managing your budget so you don't run out of the funds before you get data.

Level 6: Infiltrate

- Welcome to the “Boss Level”. Stop playing HiPPO!
 - HiPPO = **H**ighest **P**aied **P**ersons **O**pinion.
 - Why does level 6 involve asking for funding? Because we want Kickbox to be reality-based.
 - Don't know what an executive thinks until you ask for money and/or time. So, you **have** to ask for funding.
- Who to pitch to:
 - Those who can eventually green light or endorse to higher execs to make it real.
 - Domain experts who can understand engage with your data
 - Sr. director or above
 - They become the start of your “board” for blue box
 - Blue box: “If we do this experiment and it works would you bet your reputation it's a winner”
- How to pitch your idea.
 - Template deck. [included in the documents download package] Always end with your ask. Whatever you need to run your next experiment. Minimum \$2000.
 - Value of the meeting comes AFTER you ask for funding or other resources. So make sure you don't ask in the last minute.
 - Why? Because when someone says “no” you can ask why and what would change that answer. This is extremely valuable and not a possible conversation until it has been asked.
 - “What would you need to see before you would fund further investigation of this idea?”
- Who you should pitch before them and why.
 - Whichever executive manages the area your innovation would naturally fit in with.
 - “Don't wake the sleeping bear unless you need the honey” (i.e.

- only meet as high up as you need to in order to secure the funding you need for continued validation work.)
- Domain experts (engineers, architects, scientists, product managers, researchers) whose reputation can lend weight within the organization.
- Understanding the way the company actually works:
 - The CEO doesn't have any money. He's already assigned it in the annual plan. He's not going to meddle in the plans of his staff, or their staffs, because that undermines their responsibility.
 - Execs will direct you to the people who are responsible for that area. Those are the people who need to sponsor you. If report recommends to their exec boss, it probably happens.
 - By the time you meet with a high exec, have already pitched all their relevant reports. You will know what they need and want because you will have heard it from their reports.
- How to get the meeting.
 - Consider the executive you want to meet. Approach their reports:
 - "I'm going to meeting with (VP or SVP) and I'm going to talk to him about (thing in your area) and wanted to meet with you first"
 - Ask that person, "what would (VP or SVP) ask?" so you will be prepared
 - Know the KPIs of who you are pitching before you pitch
- How to package your data. Reviewing the pitch template.
 - Ask for 30 minute meeting (easier to get). They're going to be 5 minutes late, have to leave 5 minutes early, and you need time at the end of the presentation to get the real conversation after the ask. So your pitch should be 10 minutes at the most.
 - You want to shut up as soon as possible so you can learn – every minute you're talking you aren't learning.
 - Don't put lots of text on a slide. You want them engaging with you, not reading.
 - Ask for something they can give without checking with accounting.
 - Be clear what you'll do with the resources. "I'm not selling you a positive result in this experiment. I'm offering a chance to know if this is a yes or no."
 - Don't list every way it COULD make money. Pick 1 with few most likely.
- [Facilitator should share some "war stories" about getting it done including examples.]
- "Don't worry. You either get a 'Yes' and funding or a 'No' and you learn something that will help you move forward. Either is a win."
- Q&A

Wrap-Up

- There's no program manager. No admin. No limo. **"Where you go from here is up to you."**
- Final Q&A
- Cover post-workshop logistics (e.g. wikis, mentors, how to ask for help, how to connect with other innovators, mailing lists, office hours, coaches.)
- Ask to spread the word to others who should come
- Distribute evaluation forms