

HOW TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN INNOVATION STRATEGY TO SURVIVE THE FUTURE

Innovation in Action - 2017

This report includes key takeaways from the Innovation in Action 2017 workshop, facilitated by Mats Fredlund and Colleagues from Stora Enso. The workshop included presentations and group discussions. The aim of the workshop was to how organizations takes on change applied to Innovation.

“PERHAPS THE ANSWER IS THE QUESTION”

PURPOSE

The purpose of the workshop was to identify actions companies can take in disruptive situations, how a company can survive and thrive in an industry by adapting innovative thinking, collaboration, and culture. Discussions helped identify methods to speed up innovations and go to markets of new products and services.

METHOD

The workshop with Stora Enso was based around presentations explaining their innovative thinking, development process and root to solid finances in a bio-based society. Discussions were carried out in groups, where participants discussed their experience with disruptive situations adapting innovative thinking.

DESCRIPTION

Prior to the introduction of the workshop a short movie was shown, introducing workshop participants to the future of Stora Enso as a renewable materials company. Thereafter a short introduction took place following the first group discussion around the question:

- What would have been your company's most urgent actions in a disruptive situation where it needs transformation?

7 TAKEAWAYS

- Diversify risk, put resources in external start-ups
- Communication is key, take account the people in and around your organization
- Have patience when innovating new products, it's no short run
- Reward success as well as failures
- Don't be afraid to kill your "darlings"
- Co-creation with customers speeds up the innovation process
- Learn from start-ups and create networks with different sized companies

Discussions were carried out in divided groups with people from various companies where each participant shared experience regarding disruptive situations within their company. In each divided group one or more Stora Enso employee participated and took notes of the discussions. After the first group session Stora Enso gave a presentation from two different examples of how they address innovative processes. The presentations gave insight in how Stora Enso as a large bio-based company adapts to new markets and customer needs. Following the presentations, three questions were given for discussion:



- How do you know that you have enough relevant experiments on-going to understand the world, enabling you to create compelling products and services?
- How do you choose and engage with external partners to speed up your innovations and go to market of new products and service, ensuring strong internal competence development?
- What are the requirements to scale up a new business as fast as possible?

Personal experiences were shared and discussed where a lot focused on how to engage with external partners as well as how the different participants cope with scaling a new business in their industry. After the presentations and group discussions were carried out, each Stora Enso employee summarized their discussions within the divided groups to all the workshop attendees.

LEARNING AND RESULT

The workshop contained a lot of interesting and analyzing discussions where people from different companies in various industries came together and brought up key points regarding innovation, collaboration, and culture. Diversify risk was observed as an important task when a large company such as Stora Enso tackles challenges in their industry. One way of diversifying is to create and provide resources to external start-ups parallel to the company, which won't affect reputation as well as company shareholders. Furthermore, communication is key to bring decision makers closer to innovative ideas and thus enabling projects. Another way of enabling new projects and speeding up the execution process is to co-create with your customers and adapt in joint-activities with suppliers. Further learnings from the discussions were not only to enable projects but also not be afraid killing your darlings, stopping further resources of being wasted.

Innovating in an industry as for Stora Enso isn't an easy task, but taking discussions and sharing ideas are essential. As a Stora Enso presenter brilliantly said: "Perhaps the answer is the question".