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Innovation Mindset

Gain valuable insights and enhance your capacity to drive change and innovation effectively.

In today's ever-changing world, innovating and finding new and different solutions is crucial. However, relying on the occasional brainstorming session or a single thought process may not be enough. Innovation Mindset is not about the tools you use; it's about how you use them - the beliefs, perspectives, behaviours, and actions that drive change.

By fostering their team's Innovation Mindset, leaders can tap into our human desire to participate in change and innovation, creating a culture where people feel empowered to speak up, identify problems and gaps, and challenge assumptions.

Explore the Hargraves Innovation Mindset Framework to discover your innovation mindset strengths, behaviours and areas for improvement.

Our research shows a strong link between an innovation mindset and healthy collaboration. When people can see the unique role they play in turning ideas into reality, they feel more competent, valued, and energised by the improvement they helped create.

To learn more about effective collaboration, visit Working Collaboratively.

Where do you start?

At Hargraves, we define innovation as a new idea or the new use of an old idea that adds value when implemented, whether that impact is small but valuable, significant across the organisation, or anything in between.

Research from the National Centre for Public Sector Innovation (Denmark, 2018) found that most innovation comes through collaboration and imitation, while less than 20% comes from entirely new ideas. So, when we say 'new idea', we also mean ideas that are new to you.

This inclusive definition ensures that every contribution, no matter how small, is valued and recognised.

Take a moment to think about an innovation you've been part of. Write it down. Then use the Innovation Mindset Story Template not just as a tool, but as a mirror to reflect on your role in bringing that innovation to life. This helps you identify your mindset strengths, and the strengths of others, reinforcing how innovation actually happens in practice.

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Mindset & Team Behaviours

The best idea in the world will fail if it is not supported by positive behaviours from everyone in the team. By making these behaviours explicit and naming them, team members can make an effort to practice them, resulting in greater innovation and improvement in your workplace.

How did you contribute to the team dynamic and its success? Reflect on your behaviours. Were you:

OPEN-MINDED	Did you encourage ideas and help build on them? Were you open to learning, to different points of view?
CURIOUS	Did you ask good, open questions to explore new solutions? Did you look outside your environment to see how others did things?
IMAGINATIVE	Did you come up with novel suggestions to help improve the idea? Did you visualise the future, the customer, a new product or service?
HELPFUL	Were you generous with your time and efforts? Did you do more than you had to?
ATTENTIVE	Did you notice things that others missed that helped the idea? Did you really listen and pay attention?
BRAVE	Did you really examine your assumptions to ensure you understood the problem? Did you challenge the assumptions of the team? Did you reframe the problem?
EMPATHETIC	Did you put yourself into the shoes of others to understand what would work? Did you help resolve conflict in the team?
TRUSTWORTHY	Were you reliable? Did you give credit? Did you do what you said you would?
PROACTIVE	Did you take the initiative to progress the idea? Did you anticipate events and problems? Did you accelerate the process?
GRITTY	Did you display a passion for the project? Did you persevere to drive through to a positive conclusion?
RESILIENT	Did you bounce back after a setback? Did you adapt to new circumstances when it was necessary?
OTHER	Are there other strengths you displayed?

Choose one or two that were critical to the success of the idea and/or the team.

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What's Your Role In Innovation?

Contrary to popular opinion, innovators can play a range of roles in the innovation/improvement process. That means that every one of us has a valuable role to play. Most of us can play multiple roles; however, we typically have only one or two real strengths.

How did you contribute to the idea implementation? Reflect and select how you as an individual contributed to the realisation of the idea. Were you a:

FINDER	Did you notice the gap, find the opportunity or present the challenge? Did you observe that the customer had a problem?
CREATOR	Did you contribute the main solution or add new elements to the solution that made it work? Did you imagine what would work for the customer? Did you experiment?
PEER	Did you contribute by being a sounding board, listening well, asking the right questions and providing encouragement?
EXPERT	Did you provide technical expertise that was important to realising the idea?
CONNECTOR	Did you introduce new research, insights, people or outside companies that helped develop the idea?
DOER	Did you get things moving and help organise the trial, the prototype, the customer input?
INFLUENCER	Did you help the team get the funds and opportunities needed to progress the idea? Did you lead the team and help it achieve its goals?
CRITIC	Did you provide constructive feedback to make the idea more practicable?
OTHER	Did you play another part in the team?

Choose one or two that represent your strongest contribution.

Working in pairs or with your team, use the **Innovation Mindset Story Template** to tell your story, identifying your contribution, mindset strengths, and areas for improvement.

To learn more about Innovation Mindset, visit https://hargraves.in/Mindset.

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Innovation Mindset Story Template

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Use this template to reflect on your own innovation story and analyse your contribution.

The challenge and the solution: What is the innovation that you are proud of?

Gap: What was the problem you were trying to solve?

Impact: How did it make a difference?

Belief: Why was the innovation important?

Perspectives: Which TWO perspectives did you contribute? Explain.

Finder - see gaps and opportunities
Peer - listening and asking questions
Connector - link people and ideas
Critic - reality checker
Other?

Creator - come up with solutions
Expert - provide specialist skills & knowledge
Doer - make, organise, implement
Influencer - advocate, persuade, present

Behaviours: Which TWO of your behaviours most contributed? Explain.

Open - to new ideas, learning, criticism
Imagination - to visualise, see novel ideas
Attentive – listen, pay attention
Empathy - to feel the experience of others
Proactivity - to make things happen
Resilience - to be adaptive

Curiosity - about why, what, how
Helpfulness - to be generous
Bravery - to challenge self, and others
Safety - to be trustworthy and reliable
Grit - to persevere and stay motivated
Other?

Actions: What skills, tools and processes did you apply?

Lessons: What did you learn from this experience?

Next steps: What role would you like to play in innovation? What skills and tools do you need? What behaviours can you work on?

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