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# WINNING WAYS

Leadership Management & Sales

**Inside:**

- Eleven Attributes of Leadership
- Break Even Deadline
- What is a real result?
- And much more...

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# FAN THE FLAMES OF INNOVATION



Gihan Perera

**C**reativity is about generating ideas, and innovation is about putting them into action. To make a difference, it's not enough to just generate the ideas. Acting on an idea not only creates real change from the idea itself, but creates a positive feedback loop for your team members to create more ideas.

## Here are some ways to put this into action:

- Say Yes more often. Don't ask for a compelling business case for every idea. Instead, take the opposite approach: Say Yes unless there's a compelling reason not to try it.
- Take action fast. Don't "accept" an idea and then put it on an ever-growing list of future actions. If there's no good reason to delay an idea, act on it fast. Even if it means diverting resources from other work, consider whether it's worth the cost, just to keep the innovation momentum going.
- Share the ideas with the team. Sharing somebody's good idea makes them feel good, inspires other team members, and gives the team more ownership of the idea. You could also ask the team to evaluate and prioritise the ideas.
- Don't evaluate ideas too soon. One study that looked at a company considering new product ideas found that customers were enthusiastic about many of the ideas, but managers weren't. Managers and leaders often reject ideas because they think about the cost of implementing them: time, people, skills, money, and other resources. Sometimes this means ideas get rejected too soon. Consider the idea, even if you know it's difficult to implement.

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If you reject it too soon, you reduce the chance of the person suggesting another idea.

- Value small innovations. Most ideas won't radically transform your organisation, but many small changes can create big results. For example, Britain's professional cycling team Team Sky won the Tour de France in 2012 by making many 1% improvements in minor areas.
- Reward mistakes. As much as you reward people for their successes, you might also institute a "Biggest Mistake of the Month" award. Of course, you're not rewarding the mistake; you're recognising initiative in trying something different.
- Recognise innovation. Many innovators don't need to be rewarded, but are happy just to be recognised for their ideas. Make this a regular part of your team processes – for example, highlighting and praising innovative ideas in your regular team meetings.
- Reward innovation. Some people are motivated by reward, so consider ways to reward the best ideas.
- Give them meaningful rewards. Choose appropriate rewards for each team member. One might value an extra day off over Christmas, another might want a gift voucher, and another might want to attend a conference.



Gihan Perera is a futurist, conference speaker, author and consultant who gives business leaders a glimpse into what's ahead - and how they can become fit for the future.

Since 1997, he has worked with business leaders, thought leaders, entrepreneurs, and other change agents - helping them with their strategy for thriving in a fast-changing world. Forbes magazine rated him the #5 social media influencer in the world in his area of expertise.

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