

PERSONAL CHANGE AND INNOVATION ASSESSMENT GUIDE

The Innovation You Personal Change and Innovation Assessment

The Innovation You Personal Change and Innovation Assessment and this corresponding guide have been developed specifically for you to plan, implement, and sustain innovation in your personal life: to “creativize” your lives.

This assessment has two purposes: First, it provides you with an accurate measure of the beliefs and behavior in yourself and your community. It also evaluates your current situation. Second, it serves as a map to show you how you fit into your community and into what’s going on in the world. It emphasizes that while you have the power to make your own decisions, those decisions affect the lives of people around you. Conversely, the actions of others and the forces of in the universe highly influence the opportunities and challenges you face. The assessment is a guide to recognize those opportunities and challenges and develop an effective and sustainable innovation approach for you.

The Competing Values Framework (CVF)

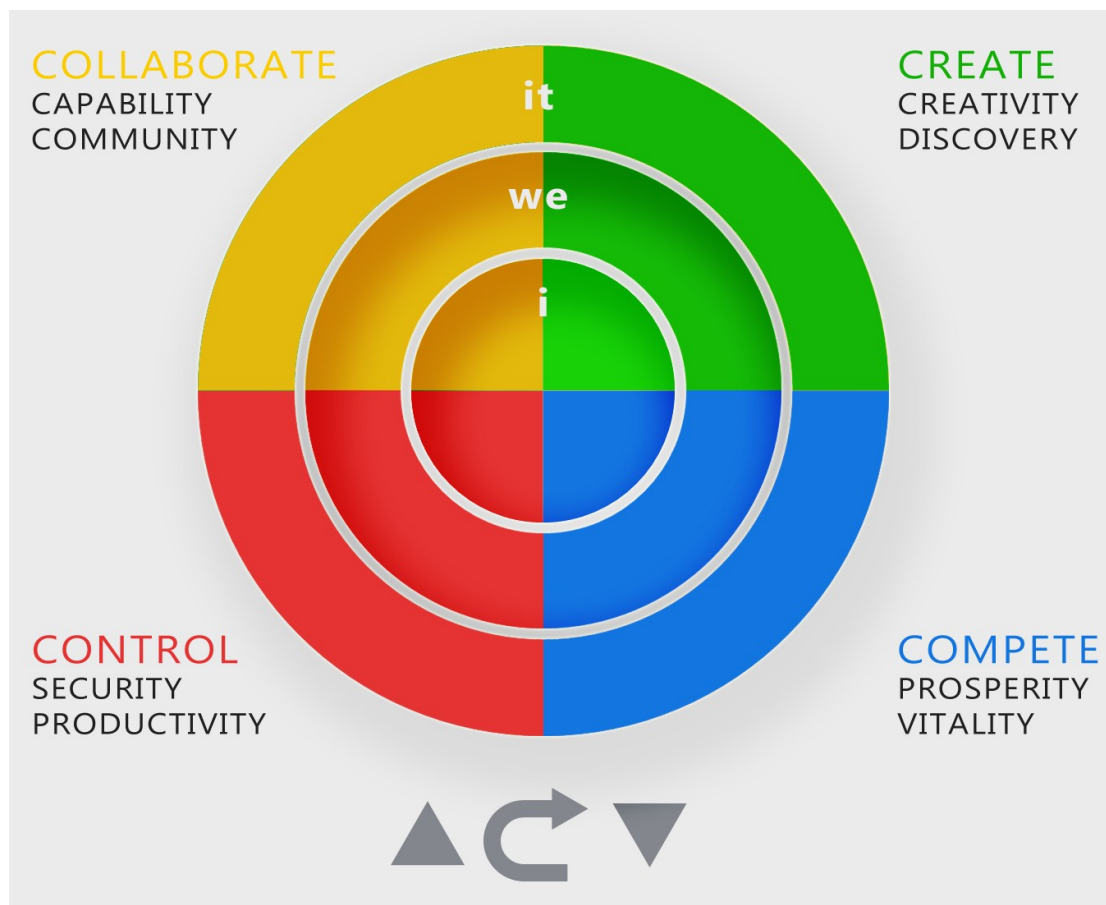
This assessment is based on the Competing Values Framework (CVF). Based on over 25 years of research, the CVF is a broadly applicable model that fosters successful leadership, improves organizational effectiveness and develops innovation strategy. It has been named as one of a handful of essential models for business success and used as a bluebook for innovation practices in many of the Fortune 500 companies.

The CVF is based on the principle that there are competing tensions or forces that exist in every situation and everyone. Each pulls you one direction at the expense of another. These tensions produce the conflicts that you face everyday: is it more important to you right now to attend your daughter’s recital or run the strategic meeting for that merger and acquisition work? Both are important, but yet very different.

The CVF takes account that your lives are complex and intertwined with others. The high price of gas may cause you to change your commute habit or the food you eat. Your parents’ declining health may precipitate your move to be closer to them. In choosing your innovation approach, you need to take account of all these forces, controllable or not. You need to understand how the world works around you. The CVF helps you do just that. It helps you spot opportunities to innovate and open your mind to new possibilities. It helps you conduct “prismatic thinking.”

Four Approaches to Innovation

There are four main approaches to innovation: control, compete, collaborate and create. Each is associated with a different color: red, blue, yellow and green. They are like a prism. Light is everywhere, but unless the power goes out, we take it for granted. Only when we see a rainbow or when someone shines light through a prism are we reminded that the light we live and work by every day contains all the colors of the rainbow. In the same way, every challenge or problem can draw on all the “colors” of innovation, but most of the time we’re not even aware those colors are all around us. In prismatic



thinking, we break the light of innovation into its component colors. Each of these is a way to make your situation new and improved, yet each one gets different results.


COLLABORATE

Yellows connect. They like to work where they can nurture a community based on trust, commitment, and lasting relationships – the sort of places that get known as “great places to work.” If they had a motto, it might be, “Let’s do this together – and make it last.” Collaborative parents emphasize school as a place for lifelong learning and friendship, and many are found working in schools and universities, human resource departments, and in the helping professions.

Yellows emphasize identification with family and work for the greater good. The Collaborate force is typically associated with the slowest forms of growth because it focuses on building the underlying organizational culture and competencies required to sustain it. Taken too far, however, a “collaborate” approach becomes a pleasure cruise where everyone helps everyone else feel all right, but no one gets anywhere.

COMPETE

Blues love a challenge. They see the world as a game with winners and losers, and feel motivated by clear goals and specific rewards: money, power, and other tangible forms of success. These are people who like to get things done and see results immediately. They find competition exhilarating, and enjoy the hard work necessary to win. If blues had a motto, it might be the Nike slogan, “Just do it.” Blue parents emphasize that school is a place to earn high grades and win access to profitable careers.



This form of innovation is the fastest of all four to show results, and it can achieve prosperity and physical fitness. Taken too far, however, the compete approach can lead to reckless pursuit of short-term gain at the expense of anything else: "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing." It is also hard to sustain: its "sweat shop" approach gives little concern to long-term well being.

CREATE

Greens experiment and explore. Generalists and artists, they enjoy finding multiple answers to problems and are able to easily shift directions while they are problem solving. Greens are what many people think of first about creativity or innovation: the wild-eyed scientist in his lab, the novelist in his garret, or the musician playing all night in the club. Creates live to generate new ideas and approaches, and they guard their freedom. They will set aside norms and rules in the service of their emerging vision, which usually emphasizes new ideas, flexibility and adaptability. Their motto could be, "Let's try this another way."

Green innovations can be the biggest and most valuable forms of change: new discoveries, original processes or points of view, unique expressions of vision. They have the potential to change the world around them by creating entirely new categories. But while "create" innovations can have the biggest impact when they succeed, they have the greatest chance of failure. Taken too far, a "create" approach can become a chaotic, endless series of wild experiments with no useful results.

CONTROL


Reds are systematic. Careful and practical, they innovate in the opposite way from greens. Rather than trying to invent a game-changing new creation, reds build change in small, careful steps by taking something that is already good and modifying it to make it better. The control approach, more than the other three, is focused not only on improving growth but on reducing failures to ensure security and efficiency. In the "control" world view, there is a right way and wrong way, governed by fix laws. There is a procedure to disposing medical waste. Ladies never wear white after Labor Day. Interpretations are of little significance in the face of rules and standards. Data wins the day.

You find reds in engineering departments or in situations where a complex and potentially dangerous system must run properly – nuclear power plants, surgical theaters, construction of airplanes and space ships, and the armed forces. They expect their rank to be respected and their rules to be followed because their rules ensure safety. If they had a motto, it might be, "Make it work better."

The control approach is the least risky and the most reliable, but its rate of change is the smallest. And taken too far it becomes a tangle of rules, red tape, and bureaucracy that can strangle the very creativity it requires.

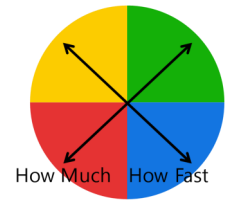
Trade-off 1: How Fast?

There is a natural tension between the compete and collaborate (blue and yellow) forms of innovation. This tension comes down to a basic decision about time: how fast does your innovation need to happen? Can you change through self development which takes longer but maybe more sustainable? How long will your opportunity remain? If you need to act immediately, then you need to consider the compete approach. If you have more time, the collaborate approach may be more beneficial.



Trade-off 2: How Much?

There is a similar tension involving the create (green) and control (red) approaches, based on the size of change you need in your life and the amount of risk you're willing to take on. Do you need a little something new in your life? Or do you need a whole new life? How ambitious are you? The create approach produces high reward with high risk and the control approach gives you smaller reward accompanied by smaller risk.



Three Levels of You

You exist in a complex reality. You are like nesting circles: each version of you is enclosed inside the next. Each of you is an independent individual, master of our own fate, yet you are also members of one or more families, businesses and other communities. You are also citizens of a country, actors in a global market, and a part of the universe. You exist on all three levels at the same time, and each level has some claim on you, setting some limits and offering some opportunities. Therefore, it is not enough to think only what you want, for you have the world to consider and your families or friends who will be affected by your actions. You need to understand what happens in all three levels to make the right choices and to seize the right opportunities.

The Individual Level

The individual or "I" circle is the core circle, describing your relationship to yourself, your body, your health, your values, dreams, personal intelligence and skills, as well as physical and mental health. If you don't have satisfaction at this level, the rest won't matter, but if you only focus on innovating at the personal level you will never find long-term success and satisfaction.



The Communal Level

Enclosing the "individual" circle is the middle circle that describes the communal level, the level of "they." At this level you exist in relationships to communities of all kinds, including families, businesses, schools, sports organizations, houses or worship and so forth. These communities offer chances to express your desires, values and beliefs as part of a group. They also offer some protection from the largest level, and some chance to benefit, from the enormous changes at the universal level. On this level you can have some impact on your own fate, by asking: who do you know? Who could you partner with? How do what you want connect to what others need?



The Universal Level

The biggest circle is the "universal" level: it describes you in relationship to those universal forces that are too big for any of us to control. They are nature, markets, technologies, society, other uncontrollable forces. This universal "it" acts on you, but you do not act on it. You can only respond to it. You can't reach out your arms and stop a hurricane, but you can watch the weather channel, make provisions and plan ahead of time. When there are changes on the universal level, you have no choice but to observe and to respond.

