



Maintaining An Environment of Continuous Innovation

Continuous innovation and staying fresh in approach to work is a great way of thinking...sounds like an entrepreneur. Someone who has grown their business and is on the verge of getting bored with it? Have ideas, but are stuck with the daily grind? Or maybe, you are a solopreneur who recognizes that they have to remain unique in the marketplace and continue to provide fresh ideas to clients.

Regardless of the source, there are potentially two different lines of thinking here:

1. Continuing to innovate. Innovation sometimes is narrowed down to creating and delivering new products and services. I would challenge you in that innovation can occur anywhere in the business, from your approach to customer service –

[remember how the Apple Store came up with a new style of retail](#) – to the way your product is delivered – [Amazon's \(scary\) 'Prime Air' drone product delivery](#) – to ways to reduce costs and deliver your products or services at a lower price – which is why many companies offshore manufacturing.

Not every innovation must be product related, nor must it be disruptive (versus continuous). Disruptive innovation was combining the phone with the digital assistant. Nearly every smartphone after that was some type of continuous innovation. So take some pressure off of yourself!

Lastly – if you use an innovation process – a series of steps to move ideas to prime time, you may find that this in and of itself a) will help to make sure that the right innovations are being developed and they will create strategic advantage for the business and b) keeps you busy! Many products that hit the light of day that don't go through the process end up either failing or not reaching its potential, for any number of reasons, like this [1990's era \(remember way back when..\) AT&T video phone.](#)

2. Keeping work fresh. As a business owner, sometimes, we get stuck in routines. Going certain places for the sake of going. Doing things for the sake of doing. Generally, playing the victim to the business. That totally is NOT living up to potential. No fun at all.

First of all (supposedly) if you do what you love, it is no longer work. Many business owners and entrepreneurs (especially) have great thrill in starting a company, but then, later, find that they are in the wrong position in the Company. For example, the design guy who is managing 10 people and doing sales...For the love of God, man (woman – happens to be #InternationalWomensDay – Go Mom!), produce those jaw dropping designs and find someone else to do those other tasks!

Seriously.

Not every business owner nor every entrepreneur is cut out (has the desire!) to run business operations or any number of tasks. Very few people (if any) can do it all. Running a company requires diverse skill sets and perspectives.

Remember [when Bill Gates stepped down as CEO of Microsoft so he could focus on software strategy?](#) Not that it is suspected that he took a pay cut, but this role fit him much better than that of CEO. Others might be able to sell ice to...well...Polar Bears. Just because they started the company doesn't mean they are the best person to run it.

What you want to do as a business owner is to evaluate your skills and capabilities – strengths and weaknesses, and find some way to accentuate your strengths and get support for your areas of weaknesses. Even as a decided solopreneur, there are freelancers with whom you can connect with that can fill just about any role in your company.

At the end of the day, in both scenarios, taking these approaches will address both innovation and keeping work fresh while improving your business and potentially amplifying your company's strategic advantages. And that's what it is all about.

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