

Innovation Cards

Introduction and Table of Contents

About the Author

Mark Clare has over 20 years of experience with leading Fortune 200 companies including 3M and Allstate, major health systems and a Silicon Valley start-up. Mark teaches innovation techniques in the leaders program at Northwestern University and writes about innovation in the Cognitive Design blog. He holds patents, a Lean Sigma black belt and Master's Degrees in both physics and philosophy.

Introduction to Innovation Decks

Innovation cards are a new way to develop the habits of successful innovators. They can be used by individuals looking to improve their own abilities or by leaders, educators, consultants and others that seek to improve team innovation or establish a culture of creativity.

You play a card daily to experiment with and eventually master a proven innovation practice. Cards are designed to fit into your everyday routine and take minutes to use. Innovation cards are organized into decks that teach you how to:

- Find or energize an innovation calling
- Reframe thinking to go in new directions
- Learn rapidly and deeply from experience
- Influence others to adopt new practices.

In short, the best innovators have a cause, think flexibly, experiment and can influence others to take action. Innovation cards include five decks for a total of 125 cards, all backed by research. The decks script a small-steps learning experience that accumulates over time into an innovation habit.

Introduction to Calling Cards

Find Your Innovation Calling is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you to find deeply compelling problems and opportunities to work on and how to persist in the face of resistance and setbacks. Techniques include:

- Challenges that stir the heart, mind and soul
- Problem and opportunity finding
- Tap the seven sources of innovation
- Networks to test ideas and stay energized.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits needed cultivate your innovation calling. Cards include:

1. Connect to Fully Bake Your Idea
2. Hang Out in Creative Spaces & Places
3. Look a Step Past What You Know Best
4. Let Your Disruptive Skills Off the Chain
5. Get by the Blinders of What You Know
6. Your Body Senses Possibilities First
7. Remix Experience to Enliven the World
8. Change Meanings to Find Your Calling
9. Find Your Calling in a Question
10. Focus on What Really Bothers You
11. Understand Trends and Hard Problems
12. So It's Broken, Why Don't You Fix It?
13. Your Problems are the World's Problems
14. Be There When Current Thinking Breaks Down
15. Compassion Can Unleash Innovation
16. Create Something Really Cool
17. Let Courageousness Stir Your Soul
18. Innovate by Lifting Someone Up
19. Opportunity in Demographic Shifts
20. New Perceptions Opens New Markets
21. Black Swan as Innovation Fountainhead
22. Indulge in Your Sense of Wonder
23. Like Minds Provide Energy to Create
24. Reconnect with the Heart of Your Work
25. Will to Innovate Runs on Necessity

Introduction to Reframe Cards

Reframe Your Thinking is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to think flexibly about problems and opportunities. Techniques include:

- Lateral and divergent thinking
- Helicopter and systemic thinking
- Structured inventive thinking
- Appreciative intelligence
- Visual sense making and metaphors.

Reframe offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build creativity habits. Cards include:

1. Zoom Out to Generate Alternatives
2. Zoom in to Consider Special Cases
3. False Assumptions Limit Thinking
4. Temporarily Relax Constraints
5. Use Random Words to Reframe Ideas
6. Focus on Strong Emotions to Reframe

7. Outsider's View Can Make Big Leaps
8. Collect Ideas from Other Areas
9. Use Structured Inventive Thinking
10. Combination is an Innovation Engine
11. Swap and Substitute Like a Chef
12. Focus on Contradictory Requirements
13. Visualize with Context Diagrams
14. Discover Relationships Using Graphs
15. Visually Display Facts Like a Detective
16. Drawing Forces You to Reframe
17. Use Metaphors to Nail Complex Ideas
18. Unpacking Metaphors Drives Insights
19. Make a Metaphor to Natural Systems
20. Democratize Your Solution
21. Innovate for Profit and Social Good
22. Move Hearts and Accelerate Minds
23. See Beauty in What Works Well
24. Amplify the Most Valued Features
25. Develop Provocative Propositions

Introduction to Observation Cards

Observation is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to use all five senses to drive the deep learning necessary for innovation. Techniques include:

- Engage sight, hearing, taste, touch & smell
- Be mindful or fully in the moment
- Study surprise and strong emotions
- Field work and immersion
- Probe questions and recordings.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits of astute observers. Cards include:

1. Mentally Focus to Expand Your Senses
2. Practice Watching and See Anew
3. Listen for the Sounds of Innovation
4. Smell Shapes Product Experience
5. Explore Touch to Enhance Products
6. Taste and Flavor Enhance Experiences
7. Stress Your Senses Everyday
8. Study Surprise to See How Minds Work
9. Special Moments Reveal Your Heart
10. Metaphors Reveal How Others Think
11. Seek out Emotionally Charged Events
12. Intense Beliefs are Needs to Be Met

13. Collect Images and Videos to Dig Deep
14. Map out Entire Ecosystem
15. The World is a Learning Lab – Use it!
16. Watch People Work to See Opportunity
17. Ask for and Give Help
18. Immerse Yourself in the User’s World
19. Move from Observer to Participant
20. Be on the Hunt for a Good Story
21. Use Questions That Show Respect
22. Consider Questions You Failed to Ask
23. Record the Freshest Observations
24. Cameras Capture Beauty and Detail
25. Collect Samples to Generate Insights

Introduction to Interpret Cards

Interpret is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to make sense of observations and test ideas that drive the deep learning necessary for innovation. Techniques include:

- Manage cognitive biases
- Think systemically to embrace complexity
- The art of informed guessing
- Prototypes, protocols and feature mapping
- Use social media and networking.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits of master sense makers. Cards include:

1. Set Aside Biases to Nail Insights
2. Beware: Last Item has Great Weight!
3. Ask Why Not to Reframe Constraints
4. Review Notes Daily to Develop Insights
5. Let Data Incubate to Find Meaning
6. Patterns Across Time Offer Insights
7. Build on Positive Feedback Loops
8. Break Vicious Circles
9. Consider Multifactor Effects
10. Repeat Whys to Discover Root Cause
11. Analyze Multiple Levels to Up Impact
12. Break Simple Explanations
13. Initially Avoid Either/Or
14. Pop with Multisensory Analysis
15. Learn to be a Good Guesser
16. Make Conservative and Wild Guesses
17. Fail Fast and Cheap
18. Testable Ideas Speedup Innovation
19. Innovators Pick Metrics that Matter

20. Prototype to Test Specific Features
21. Quickly Show but Don't Tell
22. Think Aloud Reveals Mental Processes
23. Map Features to Value to Test Ideas
24. Tweet and Post to Build a Test Group
25. Test Your Ideas with Divergent Groups

Introduction to Influence Cards

Influence is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to persuade others to try, adopt and share your innovation. Techniques include:

- Craft compelling messages and stories
- Provide extra support to early adopters
- Being authentic, likeable & appreciative
- Five factors of innovation diffusion
- Opinion leaders and indirect influence.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits of master influencers. Cards include:

1. To Convince Don't Just Argue Features
2. How Clear is Your Relative Advantage?
3. Count Successes and Share the Stories
4. Ideas Spread Rapidly via Metaphors
5. Innovations that Blend in Move Fast
6. Inject a Real Sense of Adventure
7. Frame the Innovation in Multiple Ways
8. What Cause Does Your Idea Advance?
9. Does Your Innovation Have a Symbol?
10. Value Proposition in Ten Words or Less
11. Concierge Support to Early Adopters
12. Incentives Speed Adoption
13. Find Advocates to Speed Adoption
14. Demos-For-One Speed Adoption
15. Post and Tweet an Innovation Forward
16. Likeability Amplifies Influence
17. Emotions in Your Story Persuade
18. Appreciation Before Influence
19. Call in Markers to Get Ideas Moving
20. Respect Mannerism While Pitching
21. Who Influences Your Target Group?
22. Opinion Leaders Accelerate Adoption
23. Seek Expert Endorsements
24. Make it Easy to Try and Important to Share
25. Study Those that Try but Don't Adopt