## - Introduction to IM2 -Innovation Maturity Model



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### Introduction to IM2 - Innovation Maturity Model

### Paul R. Williams



Think For A Change, LLC, a creativity consulting firm, was founded by Paul R. Williams in May, 2000 to assist business clients with the development of creative processes, innovative initiatives and new idea generation.

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## Introduction

"The Stone Age didn't end because they ran out of stones..." - Sheikh Yamani

This is, without question, my favorite innovation-related quote, even if it is taken slightly out of context. Placing it in the correct context, Sheikh Yamani was explaining that the world will not come to an end when the Earth's oil reserves finally dry up. He opines that there will be new, innovative alternatives available before that very disruptive event occurs.

The reason I list it as my favorite innovation-related quote is because it most clearly illustrates the concept of what this book is about...change through ideas. The Stone Age ended, quite simply, because something better came along...bronze. And the Bronze Age ended when an even better alternative arose...iron.

From the beginning of recorded human history, the concepts of creative problem solving and idea generation have been present. Innovation, or the process of leveraging those creative new ideas for commercial gain, undoubtedly arose shortly thereafter.

Today, the processes of new discovery, innovative invention, and improvement to old design continue, albeit at an exponentially faster pace. In response to this explosion of innovation and creative thought leadership, modern organizations are no longer relegating these processes to the research & development or marketing

departments. The goal today is to embed the innovation culture into each and every area of the company.

But how to do these organizations know that their innovation efforts are paying off? How do they know they are getting better at innovating? How can they track their progress in improving their innovation culture?

The Think For A Change, LLC. IM2 Innovation Maturity Model responds to this dilemma by providing organizations with the behaviors, characteristics and systems of a growing and maturing innovative organization. This guide will explain each maturity level of the IM2 Innovation Maturity matrix along eleven common attributes: Culture, Leadership, People, Processes, Tools & Techniques, Training, Facilities, Idea Capture, Idea Management, Strategic Planning and Metrics.

Diagram 1.1 –	IM2 Innovation	Maturity Model	(Part I)
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Levels of Innovation Maturity	Level 1 Innovation Deficient	Level 2 Innovation Structure	Level 3 Innovation Processes	Level 4 Innovation Standards	Level 5 Innovation Optimized	Level 6 Continuous Innovation
Culture	Culture is risk- averse, overly stressful, lacking trust and closed to new ideas	Culture recognizes ideas but systems to move the ideas forward are lacking	Culture is risk- tolerant and new ideas are documented	Culture encourages risk-taking and trust issues are confronted	Culture encourages collaborative innovation efforts	Culture encourages risk-taking, collaborative innovation efforts and dedicated idea time
Leadership	Leaders focused on past performance and current initiatives only	Leaders understand the difference between quality control efforts and innovation	Senior leadership	Leaders create and market targeted idea campaigns Senior leadership communicates innovation strategy and processes	Chief Innovation Officer or similar innovation-related leadership structure is appointed	Leadership is actively engaged in innovation portfolio management, culture maintenance and validating innovation ( corporate strategy alignment
People	People are viewed as productivity units, rather than idea sources	People are encouraged to submit ideas	People are encouraged to work with "Idea Champions" to jointly move ideas forward	People are encouraged to take calculated risks when problem solving	People are encouraged to use work time to collaborate with others on ideas	People are encouraged to use work time to generate and prototype new ideas
Processes	Innovation-related processes not present	Innovation-specific recognition and reward systems are established	ldea management processes and related systems are established	Goals related to innovation system are established	Innovation program/ portfolio system established	Funding sources and management oversight separated from corporate entity
Tools & Techniques	Innovation-related tools & techniques not present	General idea submission systems are established to collect and store ideas	General idea campaigns are launched to harvest ideas, regardless of the problem(s) to be solved	Targeted idea campaigns are launched to solve specific problems	Idea generation sessions are sponsored and facilitated	Full spectrum of idea generation, creative problem solving and innovation techniques are analyzed to match the problem to be solved with the most effective technique

Levels of Innovation Maturity	Level 1 Innovation Deficient	Level 2 Innovation Structure	Level 3 Innovation Processes	Level 4 Innovation Standards	Level 5 Innovation Optimized	Level 6 Continuous Innovation
Training	Innovation-related training not provided	Employees and managers are introduced to creative problem solving and innovation concepts	Employees and managers are trained on idea generation techniques and available processes Senior leaders and executives are offered creativity and innovation training	Advanced Innovation process training to employees and management Idea Champion training provided	Advanced creative problem solving, idea generation and innovation training provided to employees and management Idea generation session facilitator training program established	Creative problem solving, idea generation and innovation training provided to customers, vendors and all other outside idea sources
Facilities	Innovation-related facilities not present	Collaborative supplies are provided in existing meeting rooms	At least one dedicated collaboration room is provided and supplied with necessary tools	Dedicated Innovation/Idea Center established	Off-site collaboration and discovery "field trips" encouraged	Innovation "Center of Excellence" Established
Idea Capture	Ideas from employees, customers and other sources are not captured	Employee ideas are captured by middle and front line management	Customer and other third party ideas are captured	Ideas, regardless of source, are captured using a variety of means (personal, electronic, etc.)	Centralized idea database or other storage system is established	Idea database or storage is included in an overall idea/ innovation management software tool
Idea Management	Idea Management Systems not present	Ideas are captured	Ideas are captured, logged and moved to "Idea Champion" for future consideration	Idea implementation systems established	ldea quality control and feedback systems established	Idea Management software tools are deployed to track and monitor idea status through the process
Strategic Planning	Corporate strategic planning focuses on past performance, maintaining status quo and protecting existing market share	Ideas generated are not aligned with corporate strategy	Ideas aligned with project or departmental strategy only	Innovation portfolio system established to ensure ideas are aligned to corporate strategy before implementation	Strategic planning includes trend analysis, cash curve analysis and open innovation sources	Corporate strategic planning includes future farming, horizon scanning, innovation portfolio management and innovation-related performance metrics for senior leadership
Metrics	No established innovation-related metrics	Number of Ideas Submitted Percentage of employees and managers with creativity & innovation training Percentage of performance rewards linked to innovation activities	Percentage of capital dollars invested in innovation efforts Idea Campaigns Launched Ratio of successful ideas to submitted ideas Number of new products launched	Percentage of work time devoted to innovation efforts and idea generation Percentage of employees with innovation-related performance goal Percentage of executive's time spent on strategic innovation vs. day- to-day operations	Percentage of incremental to radical innovations within portfolio Average time from idea submission to product/service launch Level of innovation program integration across business divisions	Percentage of overall revenue derived from new products and/or services Change in company market value or market share from new innovation Frequency that business model is re- evaluated

### Diagram 1.2 – IM2 Innovation Maturity Model (Part II)

## Level 1

# **Innovation Deficient**

Culture: Culture is risk-averse, overly stressful, lacking trust and closed to new ideas

• This is typically the culture you find in most organizations today, especially organizations that have recently experienced layoffs or a period of aggressive cost cutting activities. Management doesn't care about new ideas, unless they are ideas that reduce cost. This is also the culture found in organizations that take Six Sigma and other cost reduction programs to the extreme.

Leadership: Leaders focused on past performance and current initiatives only

• Leadership vision is limited to reviewing how they did the past quarter and new directives have aggressive, short term goals. Leaders in this stage are not willing or confident enough to attempt new initiatives. Leaders are mostly interested in doing whatever it takes to maintain the status quo.

People: People are viewed as productivity units, rather than idea sources

 The focus of employee count strategy is to do more with less. Organizations at this level do not replace positions that come free when people advance or leave the company. Organizations also do not backfill for people who accept temporary project-related assignments. Instead, employees who remain where they are can expect increasing workloads and work hour demands. Processes: Innovation-related processes not present

• Innovation-related processes are typically not even considered at this level. Employee creativity is not encouraged and only cost-cutting ideas are entertained by management.

Tools & Techniques: Innovation-related tools & techniques not present

• Typically, the only tools used by organizations at this level are dictated by accounting and cost/value engineers.

Training: Innovation-related training not provided

• Employees are lucky to get any training dollars, much less creativity or innovation-related training, at this level of innovation maturity. Training is viewed as an unnecessary cost by management.

Facilities: Innovation-related facilities not present

• Meeting rooms are reserved for accountants and cost/value engineers to run their cost containment numbers rather than for idea generation sessions.

Idea Capture: Ideas from employees, customers and other sources are not captured

• Ideas that are percolated up from the employee level are typically blocked by middle management as too risky.

Idea Management: Idea Management Systems not present

• Ideas that do somehow "make it up the ladder" are not documented, organized, filtered or selected using any available rigor.

Strategic Planning: Corporate strategic planning focuses on past performance, maintaining status quo and protecting existing market share

• The description really says it all at this level. Management has no strategic plan...other than survival

Metrics: No established innovation-related metrics

• The only metrics tracked by management at this level are employee counts, cost ratios, and the bottom line.

## IM2 Level 2

# **Innovation Structure**

Culture: Culture recognizes ideas but systems to move the ideas forward are lacking

• The corporate culture at this maturity level is reflective of an organization that is "comfortable." While there isn't a whole of lot of aggressive cost cutting going on, there also aren't a whole lot of new growth avenues either. Employee ideas are heard and discussed at the front-line level but other than small, incremental improvements, very few ideas are brought to reality.

Leadership: Leaders understand the difference between quality control efforts and innovation

• Likewise, leaders focus on maintaining the status quo. They are comfortable with not having to demand huge cost cuts from their teams and they are just successful enough to feel secure in their position. While leaders at this level understand the difference between quality control efforts and true innovation/idea management, it is unlikely they are willing to risk putting a new innovation management program into place or take a chance on a risky "big" idea.

People: People are encouraged to submit ideas

• Ideas that deal with small, incremental improvements are encouraged at this level. These small initiatives either drive down the cost of operation, improve existing processes and/or increase customer satisfaction. Since process and systems are lacking, employee-born ideas are only sporadically submitted.

Processes: Innovation-specific recognition and reward systems are established

• Very primitive reward and recognition systems exist at this level. When the company needs new ideas to increase sales or to recruit new employees, a referral bonus or other similar "incentive" program is established. These financial-based reward and recognition systems are ill-advised for true innovation programs, but the incremental and risk-limited nature of the organization at this level can get away with systems of this nature.

Tools & Techniques: General idea submission systems are established to collect and store ideas

• When these incentive programs and campaigns are launched, there is typically an immature system for collecting the ideas. The old fashioned "suggestion box" or the centralized idea email address (ideas@yourcompany.com) generally compose the entire idea submission system. Storage is either paper and a filing system or the electronic equivalent.

Training: Employees and managers are introduced to creative problem solving and innovation concepts

Organizations that see a small spike in sales or recruiting as a result of these "idea systems" may recognize the correlation between the two. Some financially secure organizations may even bring in a training consultant to give a creativity "cheerleading" keynote presentation. Typically, this is the beginning and end of the training program and the participants are left feeling great but still do not have a system or process for ideas to reliably follow.

Facilities: Collaborative supplies are provided in existing meeting rooms

• Meeting rooms are supplied with whiteboards, easel pads, markers and Post-IT notes to facilitate idea generation in existing meeting formats.

Idea Capture: Employee ideas are captured by middle and front line management

• Depending on the campaign or culture, ideas are either submitted via paper or electronically to a centralized location. Additionally, employees may be encouraged to share their ideas with their line management. At this level, the line management function serves as the judge of the value of the idea and whether or not it will progress further within the organization.

Idea Management: Ideas are captured

• This is really the only thing that can be relied upon at this level. Ideas are generated and captured, but there is no clear advancement path or evidence that ideas regularly move beyond that stage.

Strategic Planning: Ideas generated are not aligned with corporate strategy

• Most ideas generated at this point deal with small, incremental improvements. These improvements typically come in the form of "I could do my job better if..." ideas or "Our customers would be a lot happier if we..." ideas. While these ideas are helpful to the organization, they are not clearly aligned to the existing strategy of the executive management. Some organizations, which are ready to move to the next level of maturity, will help employees understand the strategy in an attempt to focus the ideas...but it is not reliable at this stage.

### Metrics:

- Organizations who are beginning to understand the correlation between ideas and improved performance may begin to track, at a minimum, the following "entry level" innovation metrics:
  - Number of Ideas Submitted
  - Percentage of employees and managers with creativity & innovation training
  - Percentage of performance rewards linked to innovation activities

## IM2 Level 3

# **Innovation Processes**

Culture: Culture is risk-tolerant and new ideas are documented

• At this level, the organization is beginning to better understand the important competitive advantage that innovation provides to their customers, and in turn, themselves. With a few employee-based ideas launched in to successful products under their belt, the culture has loosened up to be a bit more tolerant of risk and ensure that each and every idea is captured, regardless of whether or not the idea will actually be used or implemented in the short term.

Leadership: Leaders appoint "Idea Champions" or serve on Idea Boards to organize ideas and form business cases, as well as, relying on middle management to communicate innovation processes

 As with the culture, leadership is growing to accept the innovation process as a path to success. The leadership takes an active role in ensuring ideas are gathered from all sources. Additionally, the leadership may take an even more active role in being directly involved with idea selection.

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People: People are encouraged to work with "Idea Champions" to jointly move ideas forward

• While everyone's ideas are solicited, it is at this stage where general ideas are separated from strategic ideas. Employees are provided with the idea filtering criteria based on the organization's strategy. Idea Champions are provided to assist idea generators with moving their ideas forward.

Processes: Idea management processes and related systems are established

• As one would expect with an increasing maturity, the necessary idea management systems and processes are put into place to ensure that all ideas are being collected, documented, organized and moved into the filtering processes.

Tools & Techniques: General idea campaigns are launched to harvest ideas, regardless of the problem(s) to be solved

• Early on in the innovation maturity of an organization, they choose one of two approaches to generating and collecting ideas...general and targeted. The most popular option is the general idea campaign. This campaign does not seek to pre-filter ideas based on a specific problem to be solved. The goal of these general campaigns is to introduce the employee base to the new system and to promote excitement. Typically, these campaigns generate a lot of ideas, a lot of duplicate ideas, and a lot of small, incremental improvement ideas.

Training: Employees and managers are trained on idea generation techniques and available processes while senior leaders and executives are offered creativity and innovation training

• With the new processes and systems in place, the better educated the idea generator pool, the better the ideas being poured into the top of the funnel. Basic and advanced training become logical additions to the innovation program.

Facilities: At least one dedicated collaboration room is provided and supplied with necessary tools

• Due to the increased training needs and the focused idea generation sessions that are being conducted, a dedicated idea/innovation collaboration room (commonly called a war room or idea center) is established.

Idea Capture: Customer and other third party ideas are captured

• Based on the successes of the ideas put into action from employees, leaders begin to invite important clients and vendors to provide ideas into the system as well. While this stage is just short of customer focus groups, they at least accept the concept that their customers can provide them with valuable insight in developing or improving products and services.

Idea Management: Ideas are captured, logged and moved to "Idea Champion" for future consideration

• This is the stage where formalized idea management becomes the norm.

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Strategic Planning: Ideas aligned with project or departmental strategy only

• Due to the organization still being in the early stages of innovation maturity, most ideas are not specifically filtered by overall organizational strategy. Ideas are submitted and implemented with a departmental, divisional or project view only.

Metrics: Organizations who are beginning to advance through the innovation maturity stages begin to focus their metrics and performance tracking by including the following to their metric scorecard:

- Percentage of capital dollars invested in innovation efforts
- Idea Campaigns Launched
- Ratio of successful ideas to submitted ideas
- Number of new products launched

## IM2 Level 4

# **Innovation Standards**

Culture: Culture encourages risk-taking and trust issues are confronted

• At IM2 Level 4, the culture has progressed to accept a reasonable amount of risk-taking. This is promoted through well published examples of employees who have risked and succeeded, as well as risked and failed. If there are still issues related to trust between employees, middle management or upper management, they are resolved quickly and openly.

Leadership: Good leadership is becoming more and more important as the maturity levels increase. Leaders must take an active role as promoters of new ideas and facilitators of effective idea generation. These goals are accomplished via:

- Leaders create and market targeted idea campaigns
- Senior leadership communicates innovation strategy and processes

People: People are encouraged to take calculated risks when problem solving

• Again, this level of innovation maturity is reached via calculated and educated risk taking

Processes: Goals related to innovation system are established

• The innovation system itself has metrics established and goals set to ensure the program and related processes are effective and efficient

Tools & Techniques: Targeted idea campaigns are launched to solve specific problems

• When the organization has new or chronic business problems to deal with, the entire organization is tasked with supplying ideas and facilitating idea generation sessions in an organized and targeted manner

Training: Innovation-related training is focused on improving upon the basic training already provided. For those people in the company who show interest in actively participating in the innovation program, facilitation-based training is also provided:

- Advanced Innovation process training to employees and management
- Idea Champion training provided

Facilities: Dedicated Innovation/Idea Center established

• An Idea Center is established to provide for a centralized center for learning, collaboration, idea generation and inspiration

Idea Capture: Ideas, regardless of source, are captured using a variety of means (personal, electronic, etc.)

• Idea capture systems are designed and managed to actively encourage ideas from every source the organization interfaces with such as employees, customers, vendors, etc.

Idea Management: Idea implementation systems established

• Formalized implementation and project management systems established, resourced and funded to ensure that a certain percentage of all ideas are moved from concept to reality

Strategic Planning: Innovation portfolio system established to ensure ideas are aligned to corporate strategy before implementation

• A formal portfolio management system is either established or branched off of an existing project management structure to ensure that the overall corporate strategy and the project implementation strategy are aligned

Metrics: Metrics at this level are focused on driving the innovation program from the top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top of the organization:

- Percentage of work time devoted to innovation efforts and idea generation
- Percentage of employees with innovation-related performance goal
- Percentage of executive's time spent on strategic innovation vs. day-to-day operations

## IM2 Level 5

# Innovation Optimized

Culture: Culture encourages collaborative innovation efforts

• Culture changes at the "Optimized" level include a dedication to organization-wide collaboration within the innovation program

Leadership: Chief Innovation Officer or similar innovation-related leadership structure is appointed

• At this IM2 level, leadership of the overall program is important to maintain and manage the direction of the program and the individual program maturity attributes to ensure efficiency and effectiveness

People: People are encouraged to use work time to collaborate with others on ideas

• Leaders and managers allow employees and other idea generators within the company to utilize "work time" to generate, incubate and/or prototype ideas that may or may not relate to their normal job responsibilities

Processes: Innovation program/portfolio system established

• Innovation initiatives are managed under a program/portfolio system to not only ensure corporate strategy alignment, but to effectively manage resource, financial and prioritization issues through the corporate work streams

Tools & Techniques: Idea generation sessions are sponsored and facilitated

• To more effectively generate ideas, sessions dedicated to idea generation are scheduled, sponsored and facilitated when and where needed

Training: As the maturity level increases, the need for advanced training increases proportionally:

- Advanced creative problem solving, idea generation and innovation training provided to employees and management
- Idea generation session facilitator training program established

Facilities: Off-site collaboration and discovery "field trips" encouraged

• In order to generate fresh ideas, employees are encouraged to go off site for training, exploration or other discovery intensive activity

Idea Capture: Centralized idea database or other storage system is established

• Technology tools are implemented to add greater efficiency to the idea capture and search systems

Idea Management: Idea quality control and feedback systems established

• Ideas are filtered based on organizational strategy, and as such, are subjected to the same quality control, improvement and feedback systems as all other projects being managed within the company

Strategic Planning: Strategic planning includes trend analysis, cash curve analysis and open innovation sources

• Strategic management of the overall innovation program must ensure future viability through visioning, financial performance focus and additional idea generation sources

Metrics: Metrics at this level begin ensure the right mix of innovation types in the portfolio, along with speed-to-launch tracking:

- Percentage of incremental to radical innovations within portfolio
- Average time from idea submission to product/service launch
- Level of innovation program integration across business
  divisions

## IM2 Level 6

# **Continuous Innovation**

I am not going to comment on each individual attribute for this chapter. At this level of innovation maturity, the organization is fully leveraging the pool of human resources, the mental energy of individuals, the power of group collaboration and the tools, techniques and processes that harness and implement business changing ideas.

Culture: Culture encourages risk-taking, collaborative innovation efforts and dedicated idea time

Leadership: Leadership is actively engaged in innovation portfolio management, culture maintenance and validating innovation / corporate strategy alignment

People: People are encouraged to use work time to generate and prototype new ideas

Processes: Funding sources and management oversight separated from corporate entity

Tools & Techniques: Full spectrum of idea generation, creative problem solving and innovation techniques are analyzed to match the problem to be solved with the most effective technique

Training: Creative problem solving, idea generation and innovation training provided to customers, vendors and all other outside idea sources

Facilities: Innovation "Center of Excellence" Established

Idea Capture: Idea database or storage is included in an overall idea/innovation management software tool

Idea Management: Idea Management software tools are deployed to track and monitor idea status through the process

Strategic Planning: Corporate strategic planning includes future farming, horizon scanning, innovation portfolio management and innovation-related performance metrics for senior leadership

Metrics:

- Percentage of overall revenue derived from new products and/or services
- Change in company market value or market share from new innovation
- Frequency that business model is re-evaluated

### THIS IS YOUR IDEAL TARGET LEVEL...WORK YOUR WAY UP THE MODEL SLOWLY. REMEMBER THAT EACH GREAT JOURNEY STARTS WITH THE VERY FIRST STEP!!!

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## Conclusion

"Most people think of innovation only in terms of R&D or new product development -but taking an idea and turning it into cash is an effort that involves almost every part of a company. The challenge is thinking about and managing this extremely broad set of inter-related activity as a unified process." ~ Hal Sirkin, Boston Consulting Group

The IM2 Innovation Maturity Model, developed by Think For A Change, LLC., is nothing more than a tool. This is a very important point to remember. Tools should only be used when and where appropriate. If your organization is ready to start the innovation journey, then your first step is to review the behaviors, characteristics and systems of growing and maturing innovative organizations.

Start the journey by plotting your "current state" along at the various behaviors, characteristics and systems of the IM2 Innovation Maturity Model.

As the journey continues, periodically repeating the plot of "current state" to the IM2 Innovation Maturity Model at the various behaviors, characteristics and systems will allow you chart progress...hopefully forward progress.

As referenced above, this is only a tool to compare attributes-tocurrent state in an attempt to show a progression of maturity. Obviously, innovation is not simple. The systems and culture changes described within the tool are not easy to implement. It is strongly recommended that an organization leverage experienced resources, both internally and externally, to develop an innovation implementation and management strategy.

### About Paul R. Williams:

Paul R. Williams, PMP is President & CEO of Think For A Change, LLC, (www.thinkforachange.com) an organizational creativity and innovation management consulting firm that serves to assist business clients with the development of successful and constantly maturing innovation management processes and systems.

In 2008, Paul R. Williams was listed by InnovationTools.com as one of the "Top 10 Innovation Experts To Whom You Should Be Listening."

Mr. Williams has nearly a decade of experience consulting, training and providing thought leadership for a broad spectrum of clients ranging from multi-national Fortune 500 corporations to small non-profit organizations.

He regularly publishes his insights and experiences on the popular Think For A Change Blog (blog.thinkforachange.com), is a frequent speaker regarding organizational creativity, continuous innovation and innovation maturity topics and actively participates within numerous web-based social networks focused on innovation management.

Paul R. Williams has dedicated his professional development to the study of creativity and innovation in business. He holds numerous degrees, professional certifications and is a 2000 Graduate of the Disney Institute's Program on Managing for Creativity and Innovation. Mr. Williams is also a Senior Manager within the Enterprise Project Management Office at Thrivent Financial for Lutherans (www.thrivent.com), a Fortune 500 Company, located in Appleton, Wisconsin USA and Minneapolis, Minnesota USA. He is responsible for providing project/portfolio and innovation management solutions in support of Thrivent Financial's Information Technology and Corporate Legal/Compliance initiatives.

### About Think For A Change, LLC.:

Think For A Change, LLC. was founded in May 2000 by innovation management and organizational creativity expert, Paul R. Williams, to provide innovation management consultation services to organizations interested pursuing "next practices."

It is the Think For A Change, LLC belief that the business world is on the threshold of a monumental shift in the corporate-consumer dynamic. In today's truly global marketplace, companies that ignore new idea generation and innovation, do so at their own peril. Companies who do not recognize that creative and innovative thinking is a requirement for success in the new world economy will be the dinosaurs of the next business age.

Think For A Change, LLC seeks to help organizations and individuals develop the thinking skills necessary to be effective, competitive and relevant in the current and future economy. We also help organizations pin down problems, recognize opportunities, and produce innovative new products and services demanded by an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Think For A Change, LLC provides these forward-thinking businesses with hands-on consulting and coaching services that develop efficient processes and systems designed to unleash and capture the new ideas of employees and customers, accelerate the movement of those ideas from concept to prototype and focus on innovations that improve the customer experience.