

IM EXERCISE SQ vs IC in business

Purpose

Help students readily identify the Status Quo and Innovation Cycles in a business context.

Recommended for Trail 6 Innovation Cycle

Estimated Time Required 5 min.

Instructions

Use the following lists to pose various activities and policies typically found in business and ask students whether they reflect a Status Quo or Innovator mindset. Some of these may be judgement calls or depend on interpretation. Encourage students to explore those subtleties, and even debate where an item best fits.

IN GENERAL

(SQ) Review monthly cash flow reports to be sure that targets are being met.

(SQ) Hire someone to fill a technically demanding position because they have prior experience doing the required work.

(IC) Hire someone because they have new and different skills that will enhance your capabilities.

(SQ) Harangue your sales manager for falling product sales.

(SQ) Walk the office or shop floor to be sure that folks are doing their jobs.

(SQ) Provide feedback to an employee who is not meeting performance expectations.

(SQ) Gather customer feedback on why they are ordering less (or more) product.

(IC) Invite employee suggestions for new product or service offerings.

(IC) Ask your customers what problems they have that you are not helping them address.

(IC) Ask your salespeople what concerns and objections are being voiced by customers.

(IC) Interview customers about potential product enhancements.

REALITY PHASE – AWARE

(SQ) Graciously accept a compliment for what a great boss you are.

(IC) Ask someone to candidly critique a presentation that you have made, or plan to make.

(SQ) Ask an employee to evaluate their performance in fulfilling their jobs requirements.

(IC) Ask an employee if they feel that they are getting the support that they need from you.

(IC) Interview customers to determine how you can more effectively meet their needs.

(SQ) Check with a customer to confirm that a delivery was made on time.

FEEDBACK PHASE – OPEN

(SQ) Rely on your experience and expertise to understand what's happening in the markets you serve.

(IC) Encourage your subordinates to candidly disagree with you when that reflects their true feelings.

(SQ) Address problems quickly with minimal disruption.

(IC) Treat recurring problems as clues to larger system failures that may need to be addressed.

(SQ) When any employee does something inappropriate, revise employee guidelines to preclude that behavior.

(IC) Hold periodic meetings to discuss how business processes that are working well can be improved.

(SQ) Don't ever accept someone's "theory" about what's going on.

(SQ) Always check any new interpretations against what you know to be true.

IDEA PHASE – CREATE

(SQ) Whenever technical issues arise, defer to those with the most relevant expertise.

(SQ) Judge ideas based on how quickly and easily they can be implemented.

(IC) Judge ideas based on how much potential value they may create.

(IC) Take weak ideas and look for ways to improve them.

(SQ) To keep people focused, set a time and place for brainstorming and limit it to that occasion.

(IC) Take someone else's ideas and use them to inspire your own.

(IC) employees to suggest ways to improve things.

ACTION PHASE – BRAVE

(SQ) design a mission statement and expect all of your employees to follow it.

(SQ) Set regular goals for business outcomes and hold people accountable for them.

(SQ) Make changes or undertake anything new only when you have a clear sense of how it will turn out.



(IC) Develop low-cost low-risk ways to test new ideas and processes.

(SQ) Don't allow anyone to just play their hunches.

(SQ) Design metrics that provide objective measurements of success or failure.