THE FOUR PILLARS OF INNOVATION

There are four pillars for creating enterprise wide innovation. Sustainable innovation isn't possible without addressing each of the pillars and their potential hot spots.

01
MANAGEMENT MANDATE

Needs to be clear, loud, broad, bold and spoken continuously. It also should be modeled by leadership.

Secret mandates — Leadership talks about mandates but doesn't communicate them to anybody else.

Mandates don't work when they're only given lip service, i.e. when you see it on the web site but there's nothing behind it.
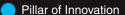
Demotivating mandates — There's a mandate to innovate or everybody is out of a job.

02
DEDICATED INFRASTRUCTURE

Always mirrors the seriousness of the mandate. If there are a lot of resources invested in supporting the mandate, it's serious. If there are no resources invested in supporting the mandate, it's lip service.

You can have too few resources and metrics that limit innovation to being only incremental. Metrics in the infrastructure need to inspire and enable breakthrough innovations.

● Pillar of Innovation   ● Hot Spot   ● Harmful Mandates

03
PROPRIETARY INNOVATION PROCESS

Needs to reflect the unique business and assets of the company, and it needs to evolve over time.

The process can't be owned by a single "guru." It needs to be shared.

It's not a static process, it's a learning process. One size does not fit all.

SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

04
SUPPORTIVE CULTURE

It's friendly to ideas, ranging from incremental to transformational. Supportive culture limits corporate gravity, inoculates against the enterprise immune system, and fights corporate myopia.

You're in trouble if your culture only encourages ideas to travel from the top down – they need to travel in every direction.

And your culture has to avoid breeding a fear of risk and failure.