

The Innovator's Voice

A Tool for Growth



Business Unit Guide

The Innovator's Voice

The Innovator's Voice Competition is a suggested best practice for pursuing initiatives, creating organic growth and addressing changes and uncertainty in our businesses. The competition enables individuals and teams to spend some of their time innovating and creating new, novel products and services for our customers. This program also builds desirable innovation "muscles" in the business unit and engages our most creative and self-motivated employees. It is a great approach to generate new ideas and promote a culture of innovation.

Ground Rules and Guidelines

- Executive leadership is critical and is part of the incentive to participate. It allows employees to interact with leadership and get business insight.
- Contestants should be provided guidelines in the form of a BU Design Challenge to constrain and align efforts with the BU's business and growth strategy. Example: ideas to sell SaaS add-ons back into the current customer base as a product edge. Or, expand our offerings as a journey edge for asset management or online payments, etc.
- Contestants can be individuals or teams and get their manager's approval before beginning.
- The Harris Kickbox contains materials and information to complete the contest with step-by-step guidance. Short self-paced training in the form of videos and other resources on are included to support each step on the Harris Kickstarter Learning website. Additional training or reading on Lean, Edge Strategy and Design Thinking may be added by the BU.
- Contestants will have to spend some time to work on their ideas as allocated by their BU throughout the competition. Innovation comes with a cost and impact to the business, which will require managerial courage.
- Teams face four 'Gates', which enable their journey to make it to the final competition and win the Innovator's Voice.
- The BU determines the duration and investment necessary for the competition, which can run anywhere from 30 to 90 days in duration.
- The BU may decide if projects that don't create value, resonate with customers or fit with the BU's capabilities and risk tolerance will be stopped or allowed to continue as a learning exercise.
- This practice can always be tailored by the BU to fit their specific needs, growth objectives and timing.

Level 1 - Collaborate

- Jumpstart the competition with the Harris Kickbox, which provides step-by-step guidance on developing an idea into an initiative.
- Recruit your team, ideally across departments to collaborate on a potential idea. Teams can be individuals or groups of up to 5 people.
- A design challenge brief may be included to provide guidance on areas of opportunity for your BU.
- Register your team and get manager support and approval

Level 2 – Ideate

- Review the “Getting Started Videos” on the Harris Kickstarter website. We also recommend reading the Lean Startup or Edge Strategy, BU’s may provide copies to all participants or other training.
- Come up with multiple ideas that can make our current customers more successful. Is it a product? A service? An add-on? Or perhaps something reinvented? There are no bad ideas at this point!
- Reduce your number of ideas down to several different ideas you think are most promising, and as a team evaluate which one has the best opportunity using the iScorecard provided.
- Fill in your Harris Canvas to pull your concept together and finalize your idea.

Level 3 – The Pitch

- Submit a brief executive summary of your concept and canvas using the guide provided.
- You may be asked to give a short pitch and answer some questions.
- Coaches will review the 1 page summary of the ideas of each team in advance of the pitch to make an informed decision.
- **The Voice Challenge** - Much like the TV show “The Voice”, Teams pitch their concept ideas to the coaches. If a coach likes one of the ideas, they ‘vote’ for it. This means they are volunteering to help that team with their project and see it through to the end.
 - If more than one coach selects a team, the team can choose their preferred coach for the rest of the competition.
 - If nobody sponsors the team, they’re out of the competition.

Level 4 – Discovery

- Teams should get out and talk to prospects and customers to get insights into real problem and opportunities to create value.
- Document insights, learning's and any disproved or confirmed assumptions based on customer or prospect feedback.
- Refine your value proposition and approach to move your idea from a vitamin to an aspirin or even a life-saving drug. This requires deeper customer empathy and understanding – understand their PAIN!
- Update your Lean Canvas and provide insights and results from your discovery efforts e.g. Delight, Value Proposition and external-perceived value.
- **Value Prop Challenge** - Decide to pivot, persevere or fail fast! Teams that get customers or prospects to validate their concept and/or get a commitment to collaborate move on.

Level 5 – Impact

- Research trends and changes in the market place that are externally driving the need or opportunity.
- Map your concept into the appropriate initiative quadrant, and consider how to best position your offering as a journey or product edge strategy as appropriate.
- Focus and define who exactly is your customer and who's problem you are best addressing. Refine your target market segment and estimate an addressable market size.
- Complete a financial assessment of your idea – is it a business or a hobby? What is the potential growth impact? Coaches and Finance can help with your model and analysis, providing feedback for adjustments and changes.
- Compile a one-page summary of the business model, highlighting the KPI's, market size, envisioned pricing, sales or revenue growth potential and expected startup costs to launch your new "venture".
- **Is it a business or a hobby Challenge?** Coaches will review the model and ask various questions about the project, market, pricing model and revenue potential. Teams that demonstrate a viable commercial path forward can move on. Key decision factors include revenue growth impact, addressable market size and growth, startup costs, IRR and risk.

Level 6 – The Final Challenge

- Much like the TV show “Shark tank”, each team presents their idea (~20 minutes or less) at the Innovator’s Voice Finale to the judges consisting of the BU executive team, corporate sponsors and coaches. Make sure your team asks for the funding you think you need to dedicate a champion, secure a GVG and build your MVP e.g. your next phase startup costs.
- Prepare a 10-slide presentation using the power-point template provided, and practice to put your best foot forward.
- The coaches and the audience (participating employees) can have a vote as well, which may be weighted into the final scores.
- The winners receive an Innovator’s Challenge Trophy and the startup funding to pursue their innovative organic growth idea! Top place winners may also receive cash prizes split amount the team members as decided by the BU.