

# Top 10 Tips for business innovation by Sean Dennis; organiser of the Let's Do Business Brighton exhibition

With a dedicated innovation zone at this year's Let's Do Business Brighton set to inspire visitors, here are our tips for encouraging business innovation.

1. **Encourage employees from all levels of the business to get involved.** If someone has an interest in another area of the business outside of their normal role, set aside time for this to be explored. Think about those who are talking to your customers daily - they often have the most valuable insights in to the challenges they face.
2. **Explore cutting edge technology.** You may not be in the financial position to invest in the likes of AI and VR just yet, but understanding how they work and their impact on business is useful. You can visit the innovation zone to find out more at Let's Do Business Brighton for free.
3. **Foster a supportive company culture.** Many people won't give ideas because they're afraid of failure. Encourage collaboration and empower employees to share their ideas. Reward people who consistently think outside the box.
4. **Review processes.** Innovation doesn't have to just mean investing in the latest equipment. Could you come up with an innovative way to streamline business operations or processes? This could save valuable business time and money.
5. **Keep on top of trends.** Keeping an eye on industry trends is important if you're to innovate and keep ahead of the competition. Don't just limit your knowledge to your industry though; wider advances in technology and consumer purchasing habits could impact your business.



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6. **Be adaptable.** We all know how the saying goes; 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.' While this is certainly true in some instances, doing what you've always done will get you the same results. Be open to change.
7. **Look at the bigger picture.** While it can be difficult to predict what the face of certain industries will be like in 5 – 10 years' time, think about what you know now. How is customer behaviour likely to involve? What is going on politically and economically that looks set to continue? Coming up with innovative solutions to these problems can help futureproof your business.
8. **Get views from people outside of your company.** Often you can be so close to something it's easy to overlook things. Ask for the views of customers and people who've heard of your company.
9. **Have a strategy.** Ideas rarely come to fruition without a strategy. Communicate business goals clearly and plan what you'd like to achieve and by when. Once you have an idea, put together a strategy for how you're going to achieve it.
10. **Set aside time for innovation.** Don't expect employees to fit it in around their workloads. Take it in turns to have time away from everyday tasks or create small innovation teams of people from different departments so that normal work can resume.

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