Overview of Innovation Cards

**About the Author**

Mark Clare has over 20 years of innovation experience with leading Fortune 200 companies, Health Systems and a Silicon Valley start-up that include 3M and Allstate. Mark teaches innovation techniques in the leaders program at Northwestern University and writes about innovation in the Cognitive Design blog. He holds patents, a Lean Sigma black belt and Master’s Degrees in both physics and philosophy.

[More about the author](http://newvaluestreams.com/wordpress/?page_id=1258)

**Use Guidelines**

You can play NewHabit cards by yourself, with a partner or in groups. Use them as standalone program or to augment other training, development and coaching materials.

* Get started by picking any card that interests you
* Play a card every day or every few days
* Expect to play a card multiple times
* You can play the same card repeatedly or pick a new card
* Try each card in the deck at least once unless it is already a habit
* To master a card play it as many times as it takes to become a habit
* You don’t need to master all the cards to see big improvements
* Expect to play a deck for at least 90 days
* You should see improvements or gain insight every few days
* Jot down ideas for new cards or decks
* Share your cards

**Innovation cards** are a new way to develop the habits of successful innovators. They can be used by individuals looking to improve their own abilities or by leaders, educators, consultants and others that seek to improve team innovation or establish a culture of creativity.

You play a card daily to experiment with and eventually master a proven innovation practice. Cards are designed to fit into your everyday routine and take minutes to use. Innovation cards are organized into decks that teach you how to:

* Find and be energized by an innovation calling
* Reframe thinking to find new ways of creating value
* Learn rapidly and deeply from experience
* Influence others to adopt new practices.

In short, the best innovators have a cause, think flexibly, experiment and can influence others to take action. Innovation cards include five decks for a total of 125 cards, all backed by research. The decks script a small-steps learning experience that accumulates over time into an innovation habit.

**Find Your Innovation Calling** is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you to find deeply compelling problems and opportunities to work on and how to persist in the face of resistance and setbacks. Techniques include:

* Problem and opportunity finding that stirs the heart, mind and soul
* Tapping the seven sources of innovation
* Developing a network and circle to test ideas and stay energized.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits needed cultivate your innovation calling. Cards include:

1. Regularly Connect with Others to Fully Bake Your Idea
2. Hang Out in Creative Spaces and Places
3. Look to What You Know Best and Take the Next Step
4. Let Your Disruptive Skills Off the Chain
5. Discovery Begins When Your Realize You Don’t Know
6. Your Body Senses Possibilities First
7. Remix Experience to Enliven the World
8. Change Meanings to Find Your Innovation Calling
9. Find Your Innovation Calling in a Question
10. Focus on What Won’t Stop Bothering You
11. Understand Trends and Hard Problems in Your Field
12. So It’s Broken, Why Don’t You Fix It?
13. Your Problems are the World’s Problems
14. Be There When Current Thinking Breaks Down
15. Compassion or Outrage can Unleash Your Innovative Spirit
16. Why Not Create Something Really Cool?
17. Find Courageous People that Stir Your Soul
18. Major Innovation Opportunity: Lift Someone Up
19. Changes in Demographics Create Innovation Tidal Waves
20. Shifting Public Perceptions Opens New Markets
21. Black Swans Can be an Innovation Fountain Head
22. Indulge in Your Sense of Wonder to Stay Energized
23. Like Minds Provide Energy to Sustain Innovation Efforts
24. Reconnect with the Philosophical Heart of Your Work
25. Your Will to Innovate Runs on Necessity

**Reframe Your Thinking** is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to think flexibly about problems and opportunities. Techniques include:

* Lateral and divergent thinking
* Helicopter and systemic thinking
* Structured inventive thinking
* Visual sense making, appreciative intelligence and metaphors.

Reframe offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build creativity habits. Cards include:

1. Zoom out From Fixed Ideas to Generate New Alternatives
2. Zoom in to Consider Special Cases and See New Solutions
3. Find the False Assumptions that Limit Your Thinking
4. Temporarily Relax Constraints to Reframe Your Thinking
5. Use Random Words to Reframe Core Ideas in Your Problem
6. Focus on Strong Emotions Not Facts to Reframe Thinking
7. An Outside View Can Lead to a Big Leap in Thinking
8. Study Other Domains and Be an Idea Collector
9. Use Structured Inventive Thinking to Reframe Old Solutions
10. Combination is a Powerful Innovation Engine
11. Swap and Substitute Like a Chef to Reframe Your Idea
12. Sharpen Your Focus on Contradictory Requirements
13. Make Your Problem Visible with a Context Diagram
14. Discover Key Relationships Using Simple Graphs
15. Visually Display Your Case Like a Detective
16. Drawing Pictures Forces You to Reframe
17. Use Metaphors to Make Sense of Complex Concepts
18. Unpacking Metaphors Drives Creativity and Insights
19. Make a Metaphor to Something in Nature
20. Democratize: Repurpose a Solution to Reach Everyone
21. Challenge: Innovate for Profit and Social Good
22. Be Sure To Move Hearts and Accelerate Minds
23. Appreciate the Beauty of Things that Work Well
24. Amplify Just What is Valued to Move in New Directions
25. Develop a Portfolio of Provocative Propositions

**Sharpen Your Observation Skills** is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to use all five senses to drive the deep learning necessary for innovation. Techniques include:

* Engage sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell
* Master mindfulness or being fully in the moment
* Study surprise, special moments, emotions and intense beliefs
* Field work, immersion, questioning and recording.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits of astute observers. Cards include:

1. Focus Your Mind to Enlarge Your Senses
2. Practice Watching Daily and Learn to See the World
3. Listen for the Sounds of Innovation
4. What You Smell Shapes Product and Service Experience
5. Explore Touch to Find New Ways to Enhance Products
6. Taste and Flavor Offer New Ways to Experience the World
7. Stress Your Senses to Build New Observation Skills
8. Study Surprise to Gain Insight into How Minds Work
9. Special Moments and Objects Reveal the Human Heart
10. Catalog Metaphors that Reveal How Others Think
11. Read Emotions and Unlock New Opportunities for Innovation
12. Intense Beliefs and Feelings are Needs to Be Met
13. Collect Images and Videos to Dig Deep
14. Map out Surrounding Artifacts to Understand the Ecosystem
15. The World is a Learning Lab – Use it!
16. Watch People Work to See Ingenuity and Opportunity
17. Experience the World: Ask for and Give Help
18. Immerse Yourself in the Community that Uses Your Innovation
19. Move from Observer to Participant for Empathetic Insights
20. Always Be on the Hunt for a Good Story
21. Get More from Questions That Show Respect and Interest
22. Think About the Questions You Failed to Ask
23. Record Observations Before They are Lost or Distorted
24. Use a Camera to Capture Context, Beauty and Detail
25. Collect Samples to Generate Insights and New Questions

 **Sharpen Your Interpretation Skills** is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to make sense of observations and test ideas that drive the deep learning necessary for innovation. Techniques include:

* Manage cognitive biases that lead to faulty inferences
* How to think systemically and embrace complexity
* The art of informed guessing
* Prototyping, think-aloud protocols and feature-to-value mapping
* Use social media and networking to test with divergent groups.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits of master sense makers. Cards include:

1. Set Aside Biases to See What the Data Really Means
2. Don’t Be Fooled by The Last Thing You Experienced
3. Ask Why Not to Determine the Nature of Constraints
4. Review Notes Daily to Develop Insights
5. Let Data Incubate to Find Meaning
6. Patterns Across Time Offer Deep Insights
7. Build on Positive Feedback Loops
8. Break Vicious Circles
9. Are Multifactor Effects Driving Your Problem?
10. Ask Why Repetitively to Discover Root Cause
11. Analyze Multiple Levels to Amplify Impact
12. Push Simple Explanations Until They Break
13. When Initially Creating a Solution Avoid Either/Or
14. Multisensory Analysis Pushes Impact to New Levels
15. Learn to be a Good Guesser
16. Make Conservative and Wild Guesses
17. Fail Fast and Cheap
18. Formulate Testable Explanations to Innovate Faster
19. Innovators Pick Metrics that Matter to Focus Learning
20. Prototype to Test Aspects of the Real Thing
21. Quickly Show Don’t Tell for Robust Feedback
22. Think Aloud Testing Reveals Mental Processes
23. Map Features to Value and Confirm Your Assumptions
24. Tweet and Post to Build a Virtual Testing Group
25. Network to Test Your Ideas with Divergent Groups

**Sharpen Your Influence Skills** is one of five decks of innovation cards. It teaches you how to persuade others to try, adopt and share your innovation. Techniques include:

* Craft and deliver compelling messages and stories to accelerate adoption
* Provide support and incentives to early adopters
* Being authentic, likeable and appreciative
* Five factors that control the rate of innovation diffusion
* Opinion leaders, expert endorsements and indirect influence.

The deck offers 25 cards all backed by research and designed to build the habits of master influencers. Cards include:

1. To be Convincing Don’t Just Argue Features
2. How Clear is Your Relative Advantage?
3. Count Successes and Share the Stories
4. Meaning Spreads Rapidly via Metaphors
5. Innovations that Blend in Move Fast
6. Bring a Sense of Adventure to Your Innovation Process
7. Frame Your Innovation in Multiple Ways
8. What Cause Does Your Innovation Advance?
9. Does Your Innovation Have a Symbol?
10. Value Proposition in Ten Words or Less
11. Provide Extraordinary Support to Early Adopters
12. Incentives Speed Adoption
13. Speed Adoption: Find and Support Natural Advocates
14. Demos for One Speed Adoption of New Ideas
15. Post and Tweet Your Innovation Forward
16. Likeability Speeds the Innovation Process
17. It’s the Emotion in Your Innovation Story That Persuades
18. Appreciation Before Influence
19. Call in Some Markers to Get Your New Idea Moving
20. Respect Mannerism While Pitching Your Innovation
21. Work With Those That Influence Your Target Group
22. Target Opinion Leaders to Accelerate Adoption
23. Seek Expert Endorsement of Your Innovation
24. Go Viral: Make it Easy to Try and Important to Share
25. Study Those that Try but Don’t Adopt