

FOCUS: BUSINESS / STRATEGY

Generating Big Ideas

“Coming up with big ideas is an ultimate value activity to keep your company thriving in today’s intensely competitive marketplace. Industry research shows that eighty percent of companies know big ideas are necessary for success, but only four percent know how to generate them!”



Context Partner,
Mike Borel

Generating “Big Ideas” is key to strategic thinking. Big ideas are those that enable your company to grow considerably faster than others in the industry. They can be simple and straightforward, or big, bold and appear intimidating. The Ideation Process involves four stages:

Four Stages of the Ideation Process	
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the problems, opportunities and competitive position your company faces • The Ideation Team, comprised of professional ideators and management personnel, interview key employees to produce an ideation brief • Incubation period follows. Individuals ideate on their own and write ideas in a notebook before meeting as a group.
Idea Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 ideas or more relevant to the ideation brief are discussed with a professional facilitator. • An idea upgrade session, following an incubation period, helps determine how to improve, complete or combine the ideas • Ideas are prioritized and each team member chooses their top three. • Three most promising ideas are presented and discussed. • Each idea is assigned to an ideator to create a visual concept and copy to reveal which idea is truly a "big idea".
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top three ideas get a reality check by evaluating risks, costs, paybacks, etc. • Careful evaluation is critical. Work that is not done thoroughly could end up costing the company millions. • Considerations include using existing market research or generating new data. • Evaluation team should include some of the following: a financial whiz, an industry expert and a marketing or sales person. • Ideators will review the final evaluations to determine if the rankings still hold or need adjustment.
Selling and Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the team has generated three big ideas, selling more than one at a time will water down your chances of getting necessary approvals and buy in for success. • Don't throw the other ideas out – just implement one at a time. You'll often find that generating a big idea is easier than selling it.

An idea not implemented adds zero to your balance sheet or income statement. This final step involves a lot of hard work, so remember why you started on this journey: you want your company to be a winner. Context has ideators and the ability to facilitate this process for you. Call us to discuss. Reach Mike Borel at 925-937-4180 or mike.borel@contextnet.com.