



„Get **ahead** with
unconventional partners“

3DSE Expert Forum Austria 2018

Product and business model innovation within the network

Success factors for innovation in the network

1 Expand and diversify your network

Most innovations are spawned by the creative interaction of two or more partners. A team has better chances of generating ideas for path-breaking innovations and of effectively putting them into practice. So your main priority should be to expand your network, and more importantly, to diversify. Partners with a very different take on your daily issues help you to think out of the box and jump-start your innovation motor. Take a deep breath and even consider potential partners among your toughest competitors, or people whom you've so far discounted as amateurs.

2 The mission, not only the business case, is a trailblazer

Sharing a clear mission, understood and supported by all partners, points the way ahead and speeds up innovation. It serves as an invisible guideline for all partners and lets them head off

in the right direction without being subjected to strict steering. A good mission addresses global mega trends: If you have a stock of easy solutions for the pressing issues of potential customers, profitable innovations will almost automatically drop into your lap. Bide your time if the business case doesn't look compelling at first: the actual application areas of a good idea are often difficult to predict. Your belief that you are creating a definite value proposition for customers is what counts.

3 Opt for partnership, not issuing orders

You need to treat all stakeholders in an innovation project as equal partners if you want it to be successful. Success hinges on everyone pulling together, sharing the opportunities and risks equally and a complete absence of any taboos. Instead of burying yourself in contractual issues at the start, come to a mutual understanding about what you want to achieve. During cooperation, set out clear rules for your

innovation partnership to ensure your ability to take action in the event of radical change. In a good innovation partnership, responsibility is assumed and actively borne as a matter of course, while any conflicts are addressed openly and resolved professionally.

4 High speed and validation by customers

Waiting until you can do something perfectly before taking the next step doesn't work any longer in today's dynamic competitive environment. Especially in projects with high innovation potential, coming up with fast results and having customers validate them is crucial. Deploy agile working methods to speed up your development process and involve your customers in the development by giving them working prototypes to trial. True to the motto „the project never ends“, all stakeholders must be fully committed and ensure that decisions are taken swiftly in every situation.

5 Don't neglect your own core organisation

If your innovation in the network is focused on a single unit in your company, make sure it isn't isolated from your core organisation. Ensure that no barriers are created between your existing R&D and the new unit. Establish a lively exchange between the two and don't locate the new unit miles away from everyone else. Avoid giving rise to the impression that your existing R&D has had its day. All units are relevant and do their part to create an innovative portfolio. Healthy competition is a strong incentive for innovation across the entire company.