

# Ann Tardy

## **6 Ways to Influence Innovation Instead of Fear**

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People want to stand out and be different. They are ripe with fresh ideas about how to do things differently. But people avoid innovation because it requires them to step outside of their comfort zone and leave the herd, even for a moment. Their fear of rejection overpowers their desire to be different. There are 6 ways that you can influence people to answer to their innovation instead of their fear.

### **1. Embrace the word “Pilot”**

“Pilot” is a magical word. Slap it on any idea or new project and you can help people take action in the face of their fears. The word “pilot” communicates an experiment, not a perfection. It demands flexibility and forgiveness for initial imperfections.

### **2. Ask for forgiveness, not permission**

Grant people the freedom to take action without getting everyone’s permission. As long as such action will not endanger another’s life or job or the company’s survival, then they can ask forgiveness if their actions are not initially accepted.

### **3. Give the go-ahead**

Give people the go-ahead with creativity and new ideas. People seek encouragement to step out and be innovative. You have the power to be encouraging.

### **4. Encourage curiosity**

Curiosity is the key to innovation. With curiosity comes the magical questions: “Why?” and “Why not?” When people approach the world with curiosity, they inevitably generate new perspectives, ideas, and solutions.

### **5. Tickle the brain**

To leverage curiosity, you need people to generate fresh, gripping ideas. There are three activities that result in breakthrough ideas: brainstorming, brainwriting, and brainsteering.

### **6. Cheer for failure**

Each time we fail, we learn how *not* to do something, and that learning connects synapses in the brain. Cheer for people’s failure and allow for conversation about what they’ve learned from it.



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