

10 Steps For Innovation Success

Innovation is widely seen as a major contributor to improving productivity and profitability in any industry. Innovators consistently achieved better financial results and acquired greater market share than low innovating firms.

Developing and maintaining innovative business practices can be difficult even at the best of times. The BRITE project was developed as part of the Cooperative Research Centre for construction innovation with the aim of increasing the rate and quality of innovation in the building and construction industry.

A comprehensive survey and 12 individual case studies assessed innovation within the industry and the results revealed the business practices of highly innovative firms. This knowledge is now being used to help promote more widespread adoption of best practices across the building and construction industry.

The BRITE has some valuable tips for businesses wanting to improve their innovation performance. The ten recommendations are as follows:

1. Enhance in-house skills by providing training programs and employing new graduates, rather than relying in recruiting experienced employees;
2. Have formal systems that regularly include lessons from previous projects in work processes and encourage staff to share ideas;
3. Actively monitor developments internationally and have robust relationships with key domestic organisations;
4. Use more innovations to reduce clients costs;
5. Formally evaluate the effectiveness of advanced technologies and practices;
6. Invest in Research & Development, possibly using the R&D Tax Concession and/or Australian Research Council Linkage Grants to subsidise costs;
7. Increase links with universities and other research institutions;
8. Implement a broader range of technology, knowledge and human resources strategies;
9. Consult with sources of innovation such as research institutions, professional or trade associations, main contractors etc; and
10. Implement a broader range of the advanced practices including organisational practices, computerised practices and contract practices.

More information on the BRITE project and CRC for Construction Innovation is available at www.brite.crccl.info/ **Aleck Schoevers**