

INTRODUCTION

Fluid Innovation Thinking™

I. DAN CALINESCU

**INTRODUCTION TO
FLUID INNOVATION THINKING™ (FIT)**

*A blueprint for troublemakers
on a mission to build a more human world.*

I. DAN CALINESCU

You Have Infinite Potential

Most of us live by the grind—sticking to routines, meeting predefined goals, following rules. This is the world of *crystallized execution*, a place where success is based on what we already know. It's safe, predictable, and sometimes stifling. Over time, it leads to what we call *drudgery*—that sinking feeling of going through the motions without feeling fulfilled or engaged. It's a life driven by short-term goals and superficial achievements, focused on profit, promotion, and fitting in, while deeper purpose remains just out of reach. It's a cycle of *uniformity* and *fear*, where people often lose sight of what they truly want.

There is something powerful inside of all us - inside you - that doesn't fit within these confines. It's a part of you that's not content with just following the script. It's the part that dreams of creating, innovating, and making an impact. This is your Innovation Genius—a force within you that's waiting to be unlocked. It's the spark that's dissatisfied with just the next achievement; it's the drive to leave a legacy, to build something meaningful that will last. This isn't about chasing another goal—it's about tapping into the part of you that's destined to do work that matters. It is the reason you're here.

Awaken The Innovation Genius Inside You

Innovation isn't one-size-fits-all. Fluid Innovation Thinking (FIT) recognizes that every innovator has a unique approach to discovery, rooted in one of three primary archetypes: the Philosopher, the Artist, and the Scientist. Philosophers are driven by purpose and seek to understand the 'Why?' behind every challenge. Artists are fueled by creativity, inspired by the 'What if?' of possibility. Scientists are grounded in practicality, driven by the 'How?' and focused on logical solutions. Your Innovation Genius lies within one of these archetypes, guiding you to unlock your potential and approach innovation in a way that feels authentic to you.

If you're reading this and haven't taken the test yet, what are you waiting for? Go discover your innovator personality and come back when you're done.

[Take The FREE Assessment Now](#)

Innovation thrives in many forms, not just entrepreneurship. FIT empowers you to innovate whether you're driving change within an organization, exploring new skills, or bringing fresh perspectives to your current role. Each journey is different, but all are valuable. There are a total of 24 Innovation Genius Types. Whether you resonate as a *Sage Thinker* who seeks meaning, a *Visionary Creator* inspired by what could be, or a *Precision Expert* grounded in real-world solutions, FIT provides the tools to help you awaken your unique Innovation Genius.

The whole world is waiting for you to awaken your Innovation Genius—not just to succeed, but to make a difference. Innovation matters because it connects us, serves others, and enriches communities. When you build with purpose, you're contributing to something larger – a legacy that endures.

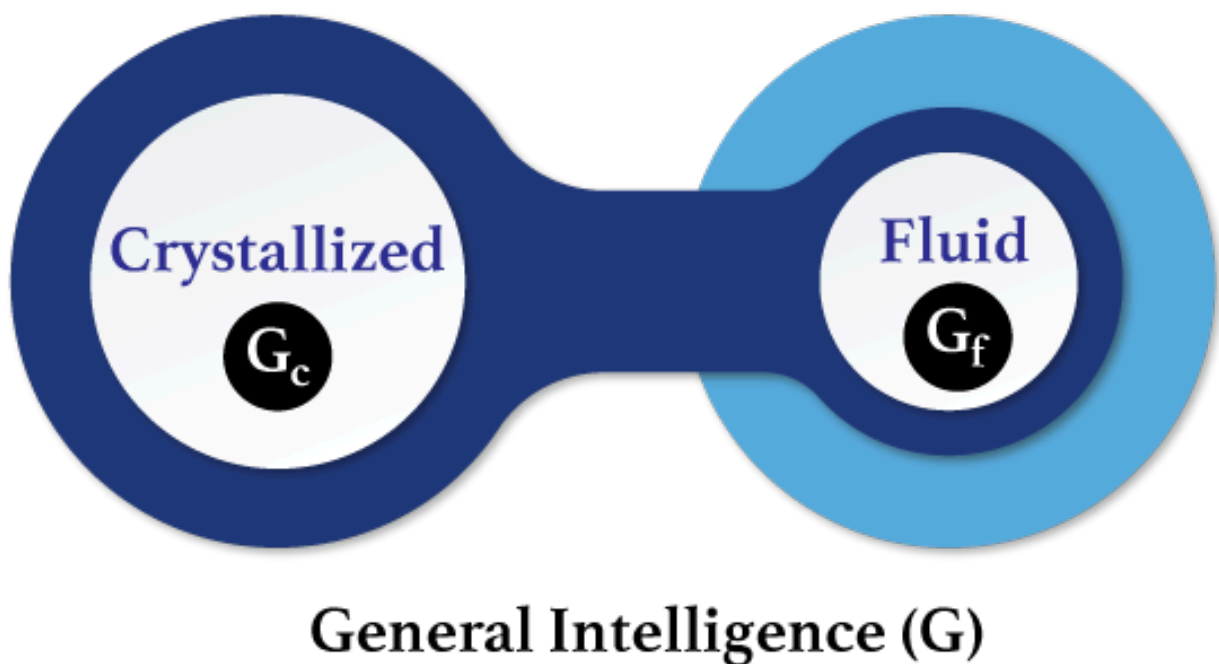
BACKGROUND

The Craft of Innovation

Understanding the craft of innovation requires a look at both human intelligence and how new ideas spread. Psychologist Raymond Cattell's research revealed that intelligence is composed of two types: *crystallized intelligence*, based on knowledge from experience, and *fluid intelligence*, which is our innate ability to solve new problems without prior information.

True intelligence lies in our balance of both—learning from what we know and innovating in the unknown. In the field of innovation, Everett M. Rogers' *Diffusion of Innovation* theory explains how ideas or products gain adoption across different adopter groups. Building on this, Geoffrey Moore introduced the concept of “The Chasm”—a crucial gap between early adopters and the early majority that innovations must “cross” to achieve widespread success.

Different innovator personality types naturally leverage fluid and crystallized intelligence in distinct ways. For instance, *Sage Thinkers (P)* and *Thoughtful Explorers (spa)* are especially skilled in using fluid intelligence, intuitively grasping big-picture ideas and societal shifts. While *Precision Experts (Sp)* and *Analytical Strategists (s)* ground their work in systematic analysis and structured problem-solving.

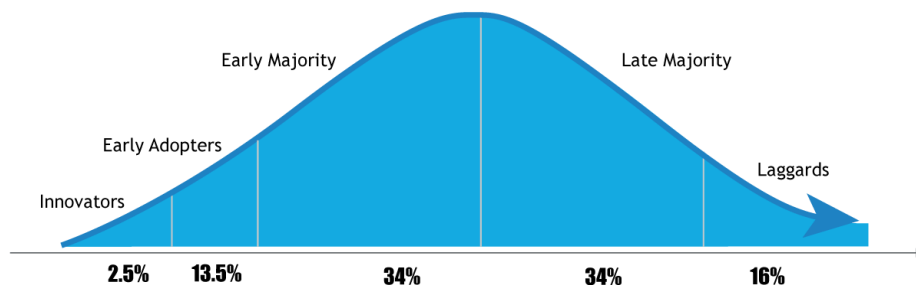


Cattell, Raymond. (1963).

[Theory of fluid and crystallized intelligence: A critical experiment. Journal of Educational Psychology.](#)

Diffusion of Innovations

The Diffusion of Innovation theory developed by Everett M. Rogers, demonstrates how an idea or a product gains adoption and then spreads (diffuses). The theory posits that adoption is diffused throughout five key segments of adopters – each making up a percentage of the total market – and that understanding each adopter segment is critical to every successful product innovation initiative.



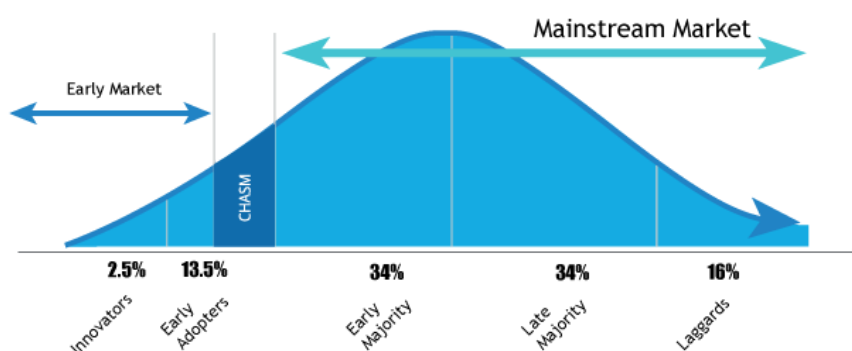
Innovation Adoption Curve

Everett M. Rogers. (2003, 5th edition).

[Diffusion of Innovations.](#)

Crossing The Chasm

In the early 1990s, Geoffrey Moore showed that the first two segments defined by Rogers (Innovators and Early Adopters) are significantly different from the ensuing three segments. Consequently, he introduced the theory of “The Chasm” which is formed between Early Adopters and the Early Majority. His concept of “Crossing The Chasm” becomes the mission – the ultimate north star – in early innovation initiatives. To succeed at a mass scale, an innovation must “cross the chasm” from an early market position to a mainstream market position.



Crossing The Chasm

Geoffrey A. Moore. (2014, 3rd edition).

[Crossing the Chasm.](#)

Fluid Innovation Thinking™ (FIT)

You don't have to be an entrepreneur to innovate. The journey has many paths, each tapping into your potential in a unique way. For some, it's intrapreneurship—driving change from within an organization. For others, it's about reskilling, upskilling, or simply bringing fresh, creative thinking to their current work. Innovation isn't tied to a specific career; it's a mindset that brings purpose and creativity to whatever you do.

Navigating this journey can be challenging. That's where *Fluid Innovation Thinking™* (FIT) comes in. FIT guides you in harnessing your crystallized knowledge, but focuses on your fluid intelligence to make an impact. It supports you through the stages of recognizing trends, shaping ideas, mapping journeys, and experimenting—all tools that unlock your Innovation Genius.

In a rapidly evolving world, innovation requires more than just a flash of inspiration or a rigid plan. It requires a framework that adapts to change, embraces uncertainty, and leverages both our learned knowledge and our inherent ability to think creatively. This is how Fluid Innovation Thinking changes the game; it is designed to guide you through the journey of meaningful, impactful innovation, whether as an entrepreneur, intrapreneur, or a professional seeking to think and work more creatively.

The Four Stages of FIT: Trends, Stories, Journeys, and Experiments

FIT is built on four essential stages, each serving a distinct purpose in the innovation process. As you explore the four stages of FIT, you'll find that each offers opportunities to express your unique innovation style. *Sage Thinkers*, for example, might find Fluid Stories a powerful tool for connecting trends to meaning, while *Creative Explorers* may enjoy shaping Fluid Journeys to guide stakeholders through transformation.

A note on “stakeholders”. Typically this term refers to the people in a team, or organization, who are invested in an idea. In FIT, stakeholders are the ‘heroes’ of an innovation journey. These could well be the team, organization, or investors, but, more concisely, these are the beneficiaries of an innovation. They are the people for whom innovation matters most.

1. Fluid Trends: The journey begins with discovering “*fluid trends*”—emerging patterns that point toward future opportunities before they crystallize. By observing and interpreting early signals, you start to identify the direction your innovation should take, even before clear data is available. The FIT program has a full module dedicated to discovering, exploring, and harnessing the knowledge you gain from identifying fluid trends.

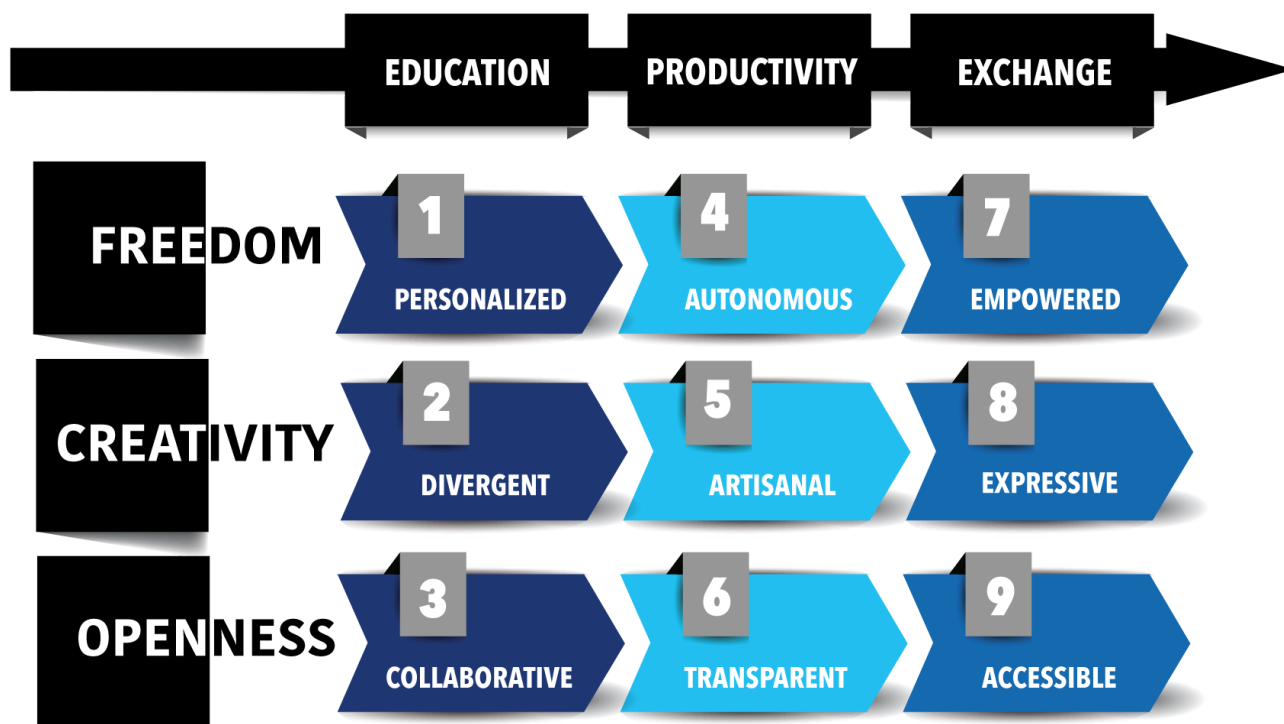
2. Fluid Stories: These trends are woven into “*fluid stories*” that shape the mission and vision of your project. Each story centers on the needs and aspirations of your stakeholders, guiding your efforts with empathy and purpose. The stories evolve as new insights emerge, maintaining a strong connection to the people you're creating value for.

3. Fluid Journeys: Fluid stories transform into "fluid journeys" that map the transformation of your stakeholders. This stage is about understanding the challenges and milestones your audience encounters as they engage with your innovation. By mapping these journeys, you can anticipate needs, resolve barriers, and create a supportive experience for those involved.

4. Fluid Experiments: The final stage involves "fluid experiments" designed to test ideas, refine solutions, and validate market demand. Through iterative cycles, these experiments allow you to make adjustments and optimize the solution before full-scale implementation. Each experiment is a step closer to bringing a valuable, well-tested product or service to life.

The 9 FIT Principles unlock Freedom, Creativity, and Openness

FIT is grounded in 9 core principles, organized across three dimensions of innovation and human work: *Education*, *Productivity*, and *Exchange*. Each dimension supports one of the values essential to meaningful innovation: freedom, creativity, and openness. FIT transforms human work by transforming Education, Productivity and Exchange in fundamental ways:



THE FIT PRINCIPLES

At its core, FIT enables you to break free from conventional limits, empowering you to create with purpose and collaborate meaningfully. This journey is about realizing your potential as an innovator.

Fluid Trends

Discovering Fluid Trends is the most crucial aspect of Fluid Innovation Thinking (FIT). A successful fluid innovation journey begins here, in the space of uncertainty where data and established patterns are scarce. Identifying Fluid Trends is about recognizing the early signals of existing and potential mass adoption—patterns that suggest where future demand might emerge. Without these early insights, the entire innovation journey is at risk of wandering without direction, unable to bridge the gap between a promising idea and a successful, widely adopted solution.

Despite lacking substantial supporting data, Reed Hastings recognized the potential of streaming as a future trend. He acted on these early signals (home delivery for rentals, increased broadband speeds, dissatisfaction with cable TV), investing heavily in developing a platform (Netflix) that would allow users to watch shows and movies online whenever they wanted.

Every innovator type has a distinct approach to identifying trends. Precision Experts may focus on analyzing data patterns and hard evidence to forecast industry shifts. Visionary Designers, by contrast, might look at emerging cultural or aesthetic movements to identify upcoming opportunities. Sage Thinkers may sense societal or philosophical shifts, guiding them toward trends that shape long-term impact. By aligning trend discovery with your unique style, you can better anticipate where innovation is heading.

Why Start with Fluid Trends?

In the earliest stages of innovation, when you're operating pre-chasm, conventional data is unavailable. There's no significant user base to analyze, and no established demand to build upon. This is why discovering Fluid Trends is so essential. By identifying these emerging patterns, innovators can catch glimpses of potential futures that are shaped by adoption patterns. These trends serve as a compass, guiding innovators towards areas that show promise for growth and alignment with market needs. It's about sensing what's possible and mapping paths to bring it to reality.

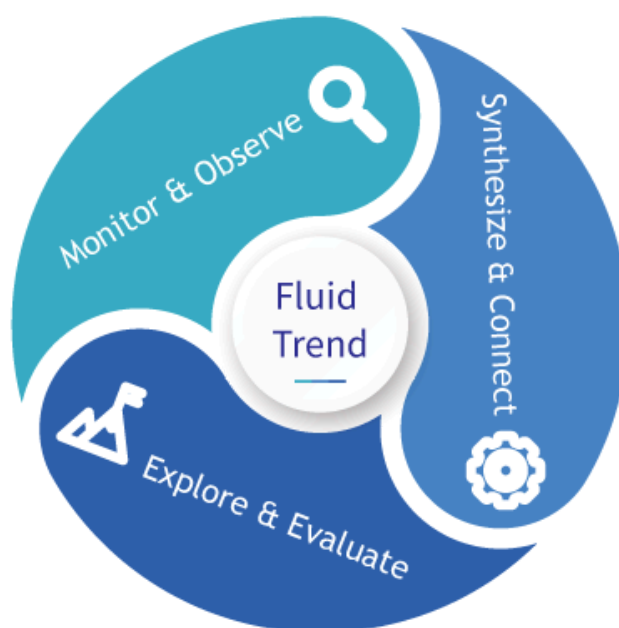
Starting with Fluid Trends enables you to identify both the **existing adoption signals**—small but clear indicators of current market interest—and the **potential paths** that haven't yet crystallized but may have the ingredients for mass adoption. Recognizing these two elements helps innovators focus their efforts on meaningful directions that are more likely to resonate with users and sustain growth.

The iPhone's development hinged on understanding that users were increasingly interested in integrating various functions (music, browsing, communication) into one device. This insight, rooted in both observation and intuition—helped along by the massive popularity of the iPod (an existing adoption signal), helped Apple bridge the gap between existing technologies and future mass adoption. By prioritizing this fluid trend recognition, Steve Jobs led Apple to shape an entirely new era of personal technology.

Laying the Foundation for the Innovation Journey

Fluid Trends set the stage for the entire innovation process. By starting here, you create a foundation of understanding that influences every decision along the way. From crafting stories that resonate with stakeholders to designing journeys that guide users through transformation and experimenting with viable solutions, each stage of FIT is built on the insights gained from Fluid Trends.

Without discovering and understanding these changing – fluid– trends, innovation risks becoming reactive and unfocused. But by anchoring the process in these trends, innovators can move with confidence, adapting as needed while staying aligned with the deeper currents of potential mass adoption. In Fluid Innovation Thinking, Fluid Trends are more than just the starting point; they are the pulse of the entire innovation journey.



The FIT Compass

The FIT Compass: Your Essential Tool for Discovering Fluid Trends

The **FIT Compass** is the core tool for navigating this crucial phase. Using the Compass, innovators focus on detecting and understanding Fluid Trends as early as possible, setting a clear direction for every subsequent step of the FIT process.

This tool leverages Fluid Intelligence, helping innovators think abstractly, identify patterns from minimal data, and see connections others might overlook. Through the Compass, innovators become adept at exploring unknown spaces and turning uncertainty into informed insights.

Fluid Stories

In the world of innovation, storytelling is not just about conveying information—it's about building a meaningful connection between the product and its audience. Fluid Stories serve as the backbone of the Fluid Innovation Thinking (FIT) methodology, translating Fluid Trends into a narrative that resonates with stakeholders and aligns with their needs and aspirations. Fluid Stories are more than just static descriptions; they are dynamic, evolving narratives that adapt as new insights emerge, keeping the innovation journey rooted in purpose and relevance.

In Phil Knight's autobiography, *Shoe Dog*, he writes about Nike's transformation from just another shoe brand competing in a red ocean of sportswear companies into a household name through the power of storytelling. He could have focused on tracking the number of pairs competitors were selling and engaged in head-to-head battles market by market. He could have looked for ways to cut costs and increase production or chosen to chase trends and remain a copycat brand. Many companies pursue these strategies with success. But instead, Knight chose to connect with his customers, to listen to and champion their stories.

While early endorsements, like that of marathoner Steve Prefontaine, transformed Nike's image, it was the experiences of everyday runners who wrote to Knight about how Nike shoes changed their experiences, making runs longer and more comfortable, that helped him realize that Nike was more than a business venture—it was a vehicle for inspiring people and elevating their potential. This storytelling approach, by which Knight championed the heroes of the Nike story, turned Nike into a brand synonymous with aspiration and overcoming challenges, culminating in its iconic "Just Do It" slogan. By prioritizing the stories that connected with the human spirit, Knight shifted Nike's identity from a shoe manufacturer to a movement celebrating personal greatness.

Fluid Stories allow each innovator type to express their unique narrative style. For example, a Sage Thinker might craft a story that connects deeply with the mission and societal value, while a Visionary Creator could shape a narrative that's vivid, imaginative, and inspiring. A Practical Expert may focus on stories that highlight functionality and real-world benefits. Each story becomes a reflection of your innovator type, aligning the mission with your personal strengths.

Why Stories Matter in Innovation

Stories are powerful tools that help people make sense of new ideas. In the context of innovation, stories give life to abstract trends, transforming them into relatable and inspiring journeys that stakeholders can connect with on a personal level. Fluid Stories offer a framework for understanding not only what the innovation is but also why it matters. This deep sense of purpose is essential for engaging early adopters, teams, and investors, who are driven to make a difference beyond a basic desire for popularity and profit. Fluid Stories keep the focus on the real-world impact of an innovation, ensuring that it continues to address the core needs and motivations of its stakeholders. By framing the product or service as part of a larger journey, Fluid Stories help stakeholders see themselves as active participants in the innovation's mission, fostering a sense of ownership and investment.

Guiding the Innovation Journey

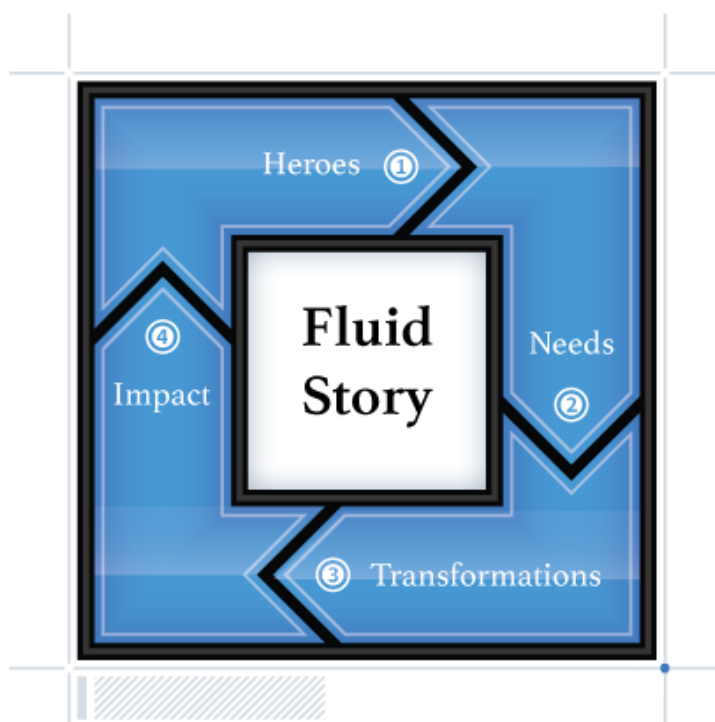
Fluid Stories serve as a guide throughout the FIT process. They keep innovators anchored to their mission, helping them make decisions that are in line with the needs and aspirations of the audience. From identifying trends to mapping journeys and running experiments, Fluid Stories provide a unifying narrative that gives each stage of innovation a clear sense of purpose and direction.

Ultimately, Fluid Stories transform abstract ideas into a vision that resonates deeply with stakeholders, setting the stage for an innovation journey that is as meaningful as it is impactful. In the FIT methodology, stories aren't just told—they're lived, adapted, and evolved, creating a foundation for lasting, value-driven innovation.

The FIT Board: Crafting and Adapting Fluid Stories

At the heart of the storytelling process in Fluid Innovation Thinking is the FIT Board. This tool is designed to help innovators continuously refine and adapt their stories as new insights and trends come to light. The FIT Board acts as a living document, capturing the essence of the innovation and its evolving purpose. It brings together the foundational elements of the innovation, answering essential questions about whom the product serves, why it's important, and how it will deliver value.

Using the FIT Board, innovators are able to keep their stories fluid, adjusting them in response to changing market dynamics or shifts in stakeholder needs. This flexibility ensures that the innovation narrative remains compelling and relevant, even as the innovation journey progresses.



The FIT Board

Fluid Journeys

In the FIT methodology, journeys are the roadmap for guiding stakeholders through their transformation alongside the innovation. Where Fluid Stories create a compelling narrative, Fluid Journeys map out the specific steps and milestones that stakeholders will encounter as they engage with the innovation. This process is designed to keep the innovation focused on real-world impact, outlining the challenges, needs, and experiences of those who will interact with the product or service.

In the FIT framework, Fluid Journeys are more than simple roadmaps; they are adaptable pathways that align with each participant's unique style and pace. Whether you are a *Reflective Builder* who emphasizes careful progression, or a *Creative Analyst* who finds value in unexpected exploration, Fluid Journeys help you chart paths that honor your approach and make innovation personal.

Why Journeys Are Essential for Meaningful Change

For an innovation to be successful, it must do more than just solve a problem—it must provide a path for the people it serves to grow and reach their goals. Fluid Journeys ensure that the innovation remains aligned with the needs of its stakeholders by mapping out their transformation over time. For example, taking pictures went from a limited, personal and familial activity to a heavily social and global event thanks to the connectedness offered by smartphones. These are the types of journeys an innovator might anticipate and address along with the unique obstacles stakeholders might face, showing a clear progression from their starting point to their ultimate goal.

This journey-centered approach allows innovators to remain deeply connected to their audience, offering continuous value and relevance at every stage. Instead of focusing solely on the end result, Fluid Journeys emphasize the process of transformation, making sure that each step of the innovation provides tangible, progressive benefits that resonate with stakeholders.

Crafting a Transformational Experience

Fluid Journeys are not just about guiding stakeholders—they're about creating a transformative experience. Much like smartphones have, in so many ways. By viewing each stage of engagement as a chance for stakeholders to grow, learn, and overcome challenges, innovators build a deep sense of purpose and connection into the innovation. This focus on transformation allows the product or service to become a meaningful part of the stakeholder's life, helping them achieve lasting change and a sense of accomplishment.

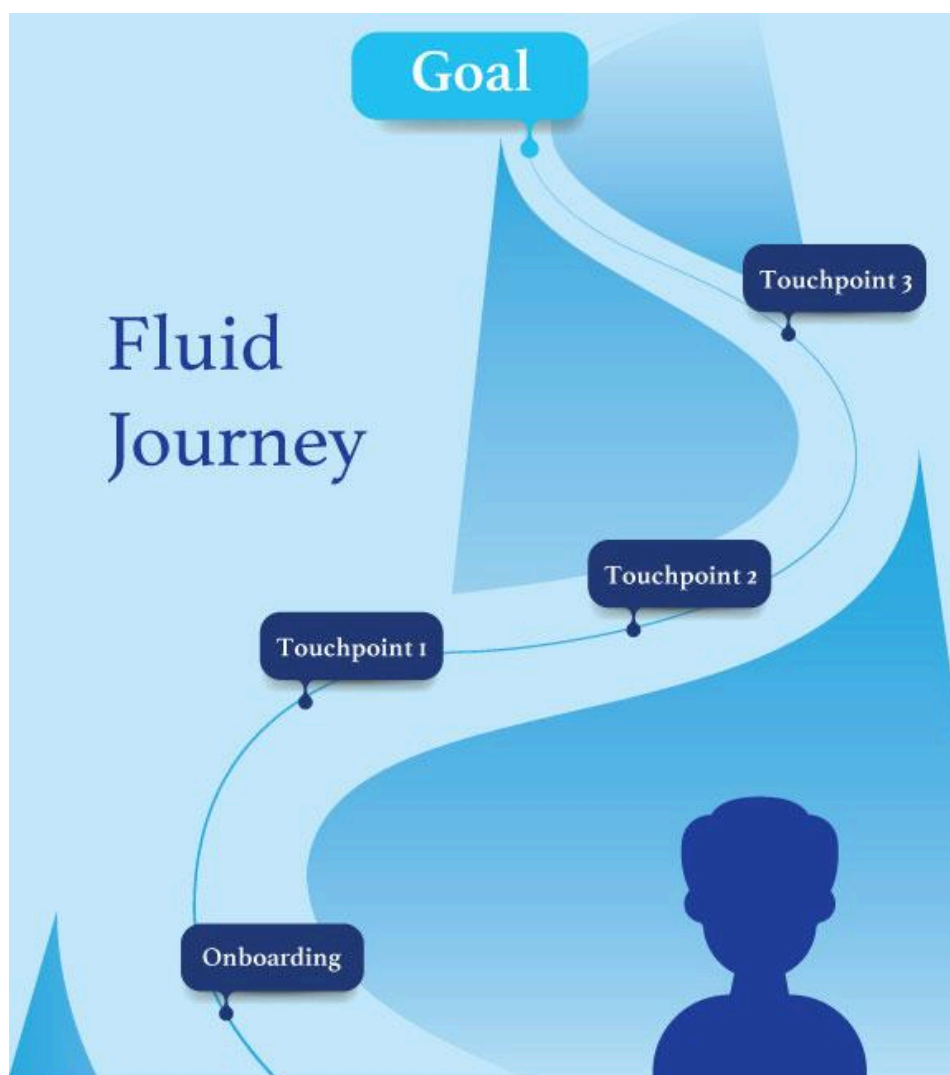
As innovation evolves, so do the journeys. Fluid Journeys are designed to adapt, with the FIT Map continually refined to reflect new insights and feedback. This approach ensures that the innovation stays relevant and impactful, adjusting to meet the evolving needs of stakeholders as they progress on their journey. It could take months or it could take years. It's not about the time to market as much as it is about the time it takes the market to evolve along the transformative journeys brought about through innovation.

The FIT Map: Visualizing Stakeholder Transformation

The FIT Map is the core tool used in this phase, providing a high-level view of the stakeholder's path and how the innovation will support their journey. By mapping out these paths, innovators can identify the main challenges that might block progress, anticipate changing needs, and ensure that the innovation remains adaptable to new insights. The FIT Map highlights key milestones and identifies areas where stakeholders may require additional support, resources, or motivation.

With the FIT Map, innovators create a visual representation of the journey that is rooted in empathy, designed to guide stakeholders from their current state to a future filled with growth and achievement.

This tool ensures that every stage of the innovation process is aligned with the stakeholder's journey, keeping the focus on delivering continuous, incremental value that moves them closer to their goals.



The FIT MAP

Fluid Experiments

In the Fluid Innovation Thinking methodology, Fluid Experiments are where ideas turn into action. This is the phase in which innovations are actively tested, refined, and validated in the real world. Whether we're talking about a simple, but impactful change to a webpage, a digital, or a physical product, experiments bridge the gap between concept and reality, allowing innovators to gather concrete insights, address uncertainties, and adapt solutions based on real stakeholder feedback. This is where the innovation truly begins to take shape, with each experiment guiding the team toward a version of the product or service that resonates and performs in the market. There is a reason this term is plural, there is no limit on the number of experiments - besides the obligation to carry out more than one.

Fluid Experiments give every innovator type a chance to bring their ideas into reality in a way that aligns with their approach. Analytical Strategists may enjoy structured experiments that yield measurable data, while Visionary Designers use experiments as an opportunity to push creative boundaries. Each experiment becomes a playground for testing ideas in a style that resonates with each innovator's strengths. The term, 'playground' is also intentional here. Innovators must know, learn, or re-learn, how to play.

The Role of Experiments in Innovation

In traditional product development, innovations might be fully built and launched before substantial real-world testing takes place, leaving little room for flexibility or adaptation. However, in a pre-chasm, high-uncertainty environment, this approach is risky and often leads to misalignment with the market. Fluid Experiments in FIT provide an agile, iterative approach that continually assesses both the feasibility of the idea and its relevance to stakeholders.

Juicero was a startup that created a high-tech juicer and proprietary juice packets. The product failed because it was extremely expensive, and it turned out that consumers could simply squeeze the juice packets by hand, rendering the machine unnecessary. The company did not sufficiently test whether consumers would find value in such an expensive product, especially when a simpler, manual approach worked just as well. Juicero's misalignment with market needs led to its

quick demise.

The Segway Personal Transporter was hyped as a groundbreaking innovation that would revolutionize urban transport. However, it flopped in the market because the company overestimated consumer interest and underestimated practical concerns such as price, convenience, and infrastructure compatibility. The product was launched with great fanfare but without sufficient real-world testing that might have revealed these barriers to mass adoption.

In hindsight it's easy to criticize decisions to cut costs or reduce time to market at the expense of serious experimentation, but the outcomes, measured in failed investments, loss of revenue,

and the damage to a brand's reputation, make for an ominous warning to any innovator running on a hope and a prayer.

Fluid Experiments enable innovators to pivot and evolve their solutions based on what they learn, reducing the risk of failure and increasing the chances of success. Instead of committing to a single, untested path, this approach allows teams to explore multiple ideas, refine them, and only move forward when there's clear evidence of alignment with stakeholder needs and market demand.

In 2011 Dollar Shave Club disrupted the shaving industry with a subscription-based razor delivery service. The founders experimented with marketing approaches, launching a low-budget yet highly engaging viral video that humorously addressed consumer frustrations with expensive razors. The [video](#) was a calculated risk that paid off, drawing massive attention and validating their unique value proposition. The success was rooted in testing unconventional marketing and delivery models before scaling the business.

In his interview at the [iConic Conference](#), Michael Dubin, the founder of Dollar Shave Club, shared that the decision to adopt a subscription model for razors was driven by a desire to enhance the user experience and align with their habits. He noted that this model would not only fit seamlessly into customers' routines but also encourage them to change their blades weekly, promoting the best possible shave and ultimately transforming bad habits (reusing old blades) into healthier and more effective shaving behavior.

Delivering Incremental Value

One of the defining aspects of Fluid Experiments is the emphasis on releasing incremental, targeted solutions. Instead of waiting for a full product launch, each experiment is a mini-release that provides tangible value to stakeholders. This approach not only helps test specific features or concepts but also keeps the innovation process connected to real user needs, generating immediate value that supports stakeholders on their journey.

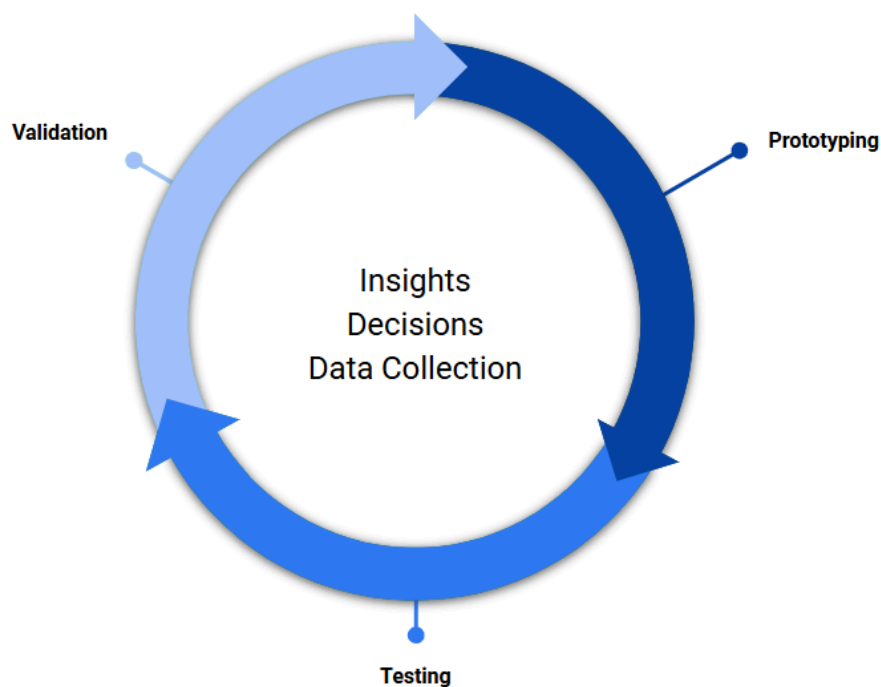
Through these iterative releases, innovators create a continuous feedback loop with stakeholders. Each cycle informs the next, building a solid foundation for the innovation and ensuring that every development phase directly benefits those it aims to serve.

Dollar Shave Club's approach was to test, gather market feedback, and iterate from various experiments over several months in a beta phase before the larger scale launch and viral video. Though at first glance it appeared that they "came out of nowhere", the reality is that they had adhered to key FIT principles in which they knew to identify and meet a real market need, test, validate their ideas, and ultimately prove their worth as a billion dollar acquisition. Had Juicero, Segway, or the many other market flops, opted for a FIT approach, it's not hard to imagine that their outcomes would have been drastically different.

The FIT Lab: A Controlled Environment for Discovery

The FIT Lab serves as the primary tool for running these experiments, creating a structured yet flexible environment where innovation can be tested, adjusted, and improved. Within the FIT Lab, experiments are designed to meet specific goals, focusing on learning, development, and market validation. Each experiment is planned as a small, controlled test that collects valuable data, guiding decisions and revealing insights on whether the innovation is progressing toward its intended impact.

This iterative, learning-focused process allows innovators to remain in a state of constant discovery. By using the FIT Lab to prototype, test, and validate ideas incrementally, teams can course-correct early, saving resources and reducing the time to market for successful solutions.



FIT Experiments – Iterative Learning and Discovery

The 9 FIT Principles

At the heart of FIT's principles is a belief that true innovation happens when we prioritize human potential over mechanistic execution—a philosophy captured by the core value **H > m** (Humans over machines). In a world increasingly driven by automation and rigid processes, FIT stands for a different approach. Here, we emphasize **freedom, creativity, and openness** across three essential dimensions of innovation: **Education, Productivity, and Exchange**.

This human-centered methodology is designed to foster environments where individuals are empowered to think expansively, work meaningfully, and engage collaboratively. By centering on human potential, we unlock the authentic and transformative power of innovation.

Education

1. **Personalized:** Tailors learning to each individual's strengths and passions, making the process meaningful and relevant. This is why the FIT program includes 1-on-1 FIT coaching to match an individual's learning style.
2. **Divergent:** Encourages exploring diverse ideas, broadening perspectives, and inspiring creativity.
3. **Collaborative:** Builds knowledge through shared experiences, emphasizing the value of learning together.

Productivity

4. **Autonomous:** Supports self-directed growth, empowering individuals to take charge of their progress.
5. **Artisanal:** Promotes quality, care, and pride in work, treating productivity as a craft.
6. **Transparent:** Ensures open goals and processes, fostering clarity and trust within teams.

Exchange

7. **Empowered:** Encourages ownership of contributions, fostering pride and responsibility.
8. **Expressive:** Values unique, personal creativity, allowing individuals to contribute authentically.
9. **Accessible:** Ensures everyone has a voice, promoting inclusivity and shared ownership in innovation.

Building a Legacy of Human-Centered Innovation

The principles of FIT—Personalized, Divergent, Collaborative; Autonomous, Artisanal, Transparent; Empowered, Expressive, Accessible—are more than just guidelines; they are a call to bring humanity to the forefront of innovation. They remind us that the true power of innovation lies in human creativity, autonomy, and community.

By committing to these values, we create a space where people are free to express their ideas, inspired to craft meaningful work, and empowered to engage openly. This is the essence of **H > m**—a legacy of innovation that values people over processes, and purpose over mere productivity.

FIT is not about innovation alone, for the sake of innovation. The aim of FIT is to build a world where innovation serves humanity.

H > m

Finding Fluid Trends with the FIT Compass

The first step in any successful innovation journey is understanding the landscape of potential growth. In the early stages, innovators lack extensive data, making it essential to recognize and follow emerging "Fluid Trends"—patterns that indicate possibilities of future adoption. These trends are not fully formed; they exist in a state of flux, offering a glimpse into potential paths toward relevance and adoption. The FIT Compass is a guide to identifying these trends, helping teams use their fluid intelligence to see emerging opportunities and intuitively explore what might crystallize into significant innovations.

The FIT Compass is built upon nine principles that integrate education, productivity, and exchange into the research process. Each principle represents a foundational skill for innovators, combining personal exploration with community-driven insight and collaboration. This approach makes FIT Research not just a tool for discovery but a practice that celebrates individuality while fostering shared understanding.

Action Items for Identifying Fluid Trends

- Identify patterns that resonate with individual strengths and passions, allowing people to follow trends that align with their unique potential (*Personalized Education*).
- Explore a wide range of influences and perspectives to uncover unexpected trends and patterns, fostering a rich understanding of emerging possibilities (*Divergent Education*).
- Engage multiple stakeholders in trend exploration, pooling collective insights to identify significant patterns (*Collaborative Education*).
- Allow individuals the freedom to discover trends on their own, fostering self-reliance and independent thinking in identifying new patterns (*Autonomous Productivity*).
- Approach trend discovery with a craftsmanship mindset, focusing on quality, precision, and depth in pattern recognition (*Artisanal Productivity*).
- Maintain open access to trend insights and analysis, ensuring transparency in the identification and interpretation of emerging trends (*Transparent Productivity*).
- Empower participants to contribute their insights on trends, valuing everyone's perspective and expertise in recognizing patterns (*Empowered Exchange*).
- Recognize and celebrate unique interpretations of trends, encouraging participants to bring their creativity to pattern recognition (*Expressive Exchange*).
- Make trend discovery open to all, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to engage with and contribute to emerging patterns (*Accessible Exchange*).

Step Forward and Shape the Future

In FIT Research, each of these principles is a compass point guiding innovators toward a future grounded in human-centered discovery. By following these principles, the FIT Compass enables teams to see beyond established data and focus on the nuanced, evolving trends that signal future needs and interests. This methodology isn't about predicting success but about engaging with the possibilities and aligning them with human potential, opening the door to a more meaningful and impactful innovation journey.

Crafting Fluid Stories with the FIT Board

At the heart of every successful innovation is a compelling story. In FIT, Fluid Stories serve as flexible, evolving narratives that center on stakeholder needs and drive human impact. These stories are not fixed scripts but dynamic frameworks that guide decisions and keep innovation meaningful. The FIT Board brings Fluid Stories to life, helping teams create stories aligned with emerging trends and personal relevance.

Built on nine action items across education, productivity, and exchange, the FIT Board empowers teams to craft narratives that are inclusive, meaningful, and responsive to change. Through these stories, FIT Storytelling becomes a shared vision, grounding innovation in authentic human experiences.

Action Items for Crafting Fluid Stories

- Craft narratives that reflect individual identities, enabling each person to connect with the story on a personal level (*Personalized Education*).
- Develop narratives that incorporate diverse viewpoints, encouraging broad exploration and interpretation (*Divergent Education*).
- Build narratives through shared experiences and mutual learning, allowing for community-driven storytelling (*Collaborative Education*).
- Encourage individuals to create their own stories within a larger framework, promoting self-directed expression and interpretation (*Autonomous Productivity*).
- Craft stories with care, valuing the artistry in how each narrative is designed to reflect both substance and style (*Artisanal Productivity*).
- Make storytelling processes clear and accessible, allowing others to understand and build on each narrative (*Transparent Productivity*).
- Allow individuals to own their contributions to the storytelling process, ensuring they feel valued and impactful (*Empowered Exchange*).
- Invite authentic, creative expression in storytelling, where each individual contributes something distinct and meaningful (*Expressive Exchange*).
- Build storytelling frameworks that are inclusive, welcoming diverse voices and perspectives in shared narratives (*Accessible Exchange*).

Craft Stories That Drive Engagement

FIT Storytelling isn't just about narrating a journey; it's about creating a shared vision that inspires and guides every action. By following these action items, the FIT Board empowers innovators to craft stories that are not only engaging but also deeply connected to the needs of those they serve. Each story becomes a living blueprint, evolving with new insights and grounded in collective purpose. This approach invites you to go beyond traditional storytelling, making each narrative a powerful force for change and impact in the innovation journey.

Designing Fluid Journey with the FIT Map

Innovation isn't a straight line; it's a journey that respects personal growth and individual potential. In FIT, Fluid Journeys represent adaptable pathways that align with each participant's unique pace, goals, and aspirations. These journeys are created with flexibility, allowing each person to explore, grow, and reach meaningful milestones. The FIT Map serves as a guide for these Fluid Journeys, connecting emerging trends with individual and collective purpose.

The FIT Map is built on nine action items across education, productivity, and exchange. These principles encourage self-directed exploration, quality craftsmanship, and inclusive collaboration. Through these journeys, FIT Mapping transforms innovation into a practice of shared purpose and individual growth, supporting every step with structure and adaptability.

Action Items for Mapping Fluid Journeys

- Map personal growth paths that respect individual learning paces and goals, tailored to each participant's abilities (*Personalized Education*).
- Structure journeys that allow for varied paths and open-ended discovery, welcoming multiple perspectives in the learning process (*Divergent Education*).
- Create collaborative learning journeys where participants learn from each other and build knowledge together (*Collaborative Education*).
- Enable self-guided journeys, where participants take charge of their paths and define their own milestones (*Autonomous Productivity*).
- Design journeys that emphasize quality and mastery, allowing individuals to develop their skills and hone their expertise (*Artisanal Productivity*).
- Define journeys with clear goals and milestones, ensuring all participants understand the direction and purpose of their progress (*Transparent Productivity*).
- Foster a sense of ownership in journeys, where participants have the freedom to shape their paths and make meaningful choices (*Empowered Exchange*).
- Encourage participants to personalize their journeys, allowing for expressive approaches and authentic self-representation (*Expressive Exchange*).
- Create inclusive journeys that accommodate various needs and levels, ensuring accessibility for all participants (*Accessible Exchange*).

Map Journeys That Resonate

FIT Mapping isn't just about planning steps; it's about crafting journeys that adapt and grow with each individual's progress and potential. By applying these action items, the FIT Map equips innovators to create journeys that are both empowering and purposeful, grounded in collective vision and individual goals. Each journey becomes a living path, constantly evolving to reflect new insights and stay aligned with human-centered innovation. This approach makes each journey a meaningful, transformative part of the innovation process.

Running Fluid Experiments with the FIT Lab

Innovation thrives on exploration and testing, and the FIT methodology brings this spirit to life through Fluid Experiments. These experiments are designed to encourage diverse approaches, validate unique ideas, and engage participants in active discovery. The FIT Lab provides a structured yet flexible environment for these experiments, empowering each individual to explore, learn, and grow through firsthand experience.

The FIT Lab is built on nine action items that span education, productivity, and exchange. These guiding points support an approach to experimentation that is inclusive, intentional, and open. By embracing these principles, FIT Experimenting becomes a practice that values autonomy, creativity, and collective growth—fueling innovation through shared discoveries and individual insights.

Action Items for Running Fluid Experiments

- Design experiments that cater to individual learning styles and preferences, ensuring each participant's experience is meaningful and impactful (*Personalized Education*).
- Encourage diverse approaches and solutions in experiments, validating multiple ways of thinking and understanding (*Divergent Education*).
- Conduct experiments that rely on teamwork and shared insights, fostering collective growth and knowledge sharing (*Collaborative Education*).
- Facilitate independent experiments, empowering participants to test ideas and learn autonomously (*Autonomous Productivity*).
- Conduct experiments with meticulous attention to detail, valuing thoroughness and excellence in execution (*Artisanal Productivity*).
- Keep experiments open and transparent, sharing findings openly to foster trust and collective experiences (*Transparent Productivity*).
- Encourage participants to take ownership of experiments, allowing them to explore their ideas and innovations with full support (*Empowered Exchange*).
- Design experiments that allow individuals to express their creativity and ingenuity, validating their unique contributions (*Expressive Exchange*).
- Design experiments that are accessible to a wide range of people, encouraging inclusive collaboration and shared ownership of outcomes (*Accessible Exchange*).

Create Experiments That Unlock Adoption

FIT Experimenting isn't just about running tests—it's about creating an environment where every experiment is an opportunity for growth, learning, and discovery. By applying these action items, the FIT Lab supports a culture of innovation that values both individual contribution and collective insight. Each experiment becomes a step toward understanding, growth, and impact, making innovation accessible, empowering, and meaningful for everyone involved. This approach turns experimentation into a cornerstone of progress and purpose in the innovation journey

The 8 Core FIT Competencies

To bring Fluid Innovation Thinking to life, you need a focused set of skills that empower you to navigate complexity, connect with people, and adapt to change. Each skill aligns with the FIT values of freedom, creativity, and openness. Together, they form the foundation of human-centered innovation.

1. Foresight: Pattern Recognition

This skill involves spotting emerging signals and interpreting complex data to identify future trends. By recognizing patterns early, innovators gain a strategic advantage, positioning them to anticipate changes before they crystallize. *Why It Matters: Helps you stay ahead in new markets.*

2. Resonance: Story-Driven Engagement

Crafting adaptable, impactful narratives that resonate emotionally with stakeholders keeps everyone aligned. Effective storytelling makes innovation journeys relatable and inspiring, grounding the process in real human connections. *Why It Matters: Fosters commitment by connecting people to a shared purpose.*

3. Attunement: Empathic Mapping

Designing with empathy allows you to map user journeys that respond to individual motivations and challenges. This skill ensures that each journey is meaningful, aligning the innovation process with real human needs. *Why It Matters: Deepens relevance, making the user experience more impactful.*

4. Experimentation: Iterative Prototyping

Running small, low-risk tests lets you validate concepts and refine ideas based on real feedback. Iterative prototyping fosters continuous improvement, keeping your innovation responsive and adaptable. *Why It Matters: Supports agile growth, ensuring ideas evolve with real-world insights.*

5. Cohesion: Insight Synthesis

Synthesizing diverse insights into cohesive direction helps you navigate complex projects with clarity. This skill transforms scattered ideas into focused vision, guiding purposeful innovation. *Why It Matters: Creates clarity, enabling focused and efficient problem-solving.*

6. Craftsmanship: Meticulous Craftsmanship

Attention to detail and quality in every step of the process reflects commitment to excellence. Craftsmanship ensures precision, making your work stand out as credible and refined. *Why It Matters: Builds trust, showing dedication to quality and depth.*

7. Clarity: Transparent Collaboration

Sharing progress openly fosters alignment and builds trust. Transparent collaboration invites feedback and creates a shared journey, making the innovation process more inclusive. *Why It Matters: Cultivates trust, ensuring everyone feels invested and informed.*

8. Resilience: Flexible Problem-Solving

Adapting to evolving challenges helps maintain momentum. Flexible problem-solving allows you to shift strategies as needed, keeping solutions relevant in uncertain conditions. *Why It Matters: Enhances adaptability, enabling you to respond effectively to new insights.*

READY?

Embracing the Journey of Fluid Innovation Thinking™ (FIT)

Innovation isn't just about having ideas; it's about bringing them to life in ways that resonate, engage, and create genuine impact. The FIT methodology—encompassing Fluid Trends, Fluid Stories, Fluid Journeys, and Fluid Experiments—guides innovators on a path that emphasizes human connection, adaptability, and purpose. It's designed for those who aspire to more than simply meeting deadlines or fulfilling routine tasks. FIT empowers individuals to tap into their fluid intelligence, unlocking their unique potential to craft meaningful change.

At the heart of FIT are the principles of Education, Productivity, and Exchange, each structured around values of freedom, creativity, and openness. These nine core principles—Personalized, Divergent, Collaborative, Autonomous, Artisanal, Transparent, Empowered, Expressive, and Accessible—serve as the foundation for each stage of the FIT journey. They're not just concepts; they're guiding values that bring depth and substance to every action, helping individuals and teams navigate complex landscapes with purpose and clarity.

From Drudgery to Innovation: Reclaiming Our Humanity

In a world that often prioritizes efficiency and predictability, FIT represents a shift towards reclaiming the human elements of work and innovation. Too often, we're stuck in cycles of crystallized execution—drudgery, uniformity, and fear—where short-term goals and superficial achievements replace genuine purpose. FIT encourages you to break free from this pattern, to embrace a journey that values exploration, originality, and lasting impact.

This methodology is more than a toolkit; it's an invitation to step into a new paradigm where innovation is a journey of self-discovery as much as it is one of creating value. It's about building your legacy and making a difference—not just for yourself, but for others. FIT champions the core value of **H > m** (Humans Over Machines), underscoring the belief that true progress is measured not by what we automate or digitize, but by how we elevate human potential and connection.

Your Legacy Starts Now

Innovation matters because it brings us closer to fulfilling our role as creators, problem-solvers, and dreamers. FIT offers a roadmap to help you move beyond limitations and harness your full capacity for innovation. Whether you're an entrepreneur, an intrapreneur, someone looking to reskill, or simply someone seeking a fresh approach to your work, FIT provides the structure and inspiration to transform your journey.

Now is the time to awaken your Innovation Genius. Step forward with FIT as your guide, and take the first steps towards building a legacy that goes beyond fleeting successes—a legacy that contributes to a better, more human-centered future. Embrace the journey, leverage your unique abilities, and let the principles of FIT help you create something that truly matters.

