Be an Innovator Case Studies

" I find it refreshing that there is a forum for ideas and innovation. In many companies, you don't have the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way and have an impact. This forum allows everyone an opportunity to be heard, to present ideas, and encourages teamwork and participation across channels and lines of business. Many companies create silos and there is little cross-collaboration.

My intent when signing up for my first meeting was for this to be an opportunity to continue to expand my knowledge of CU*Answers, our product and services offerings, and meet fellow employees. This forum allows for internal networking opportunities and access to team members that you may not normally interact with in the normal course of business.

The impact on attitude is a sense of inclusion, being part of something bigger, and having a voice. Everyone has the opportunity to bring their unique perspective to existing case studies or ideas and in the process perhaps discover an idea of their own. "

Laura Zazakis, Lender VP Account Executive, CU*Answers

John Beauchamp – Cut the Waste with eDocuments

What was John's idea?

John Beauchamp tied lean-management principals to eStrategies and implementation of electronic-document-management systems to develop his idea to "cut the waste with eDocuments." eDocument systems are expensive, and his idea provided a methodology for senior management to justify the costs. The time (and expense) that was saved with the new system could be used to offer additional services to members.

How did *Be an Innovator* help grow his idea?

John said *Be an Innovator* came along as he was already developing his idea. What the group did was provide a platform for him to share his idea with people who otherwise would not have heard about it. Two people in particular provided feedback that he found useful. One suggested he use the phrase "cut the waste" instead of "lean." Additionally, the group affirmed that his idea was innovative. John presented the progress on his idea at the first company-wide meeting, and this presentation kept him accountable to have something to report.

How was the idea implemented?

John now includes his "cut the waste" methodology as part of his eStrategy consulting service for clients. Adding "lean" questioning to his consulting has been well received by senior credit union management. They have used his analysis when presenting to their boards of directors the idea of purchasing an eDocuments system.

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> " The innovators group at CU*Answers is designed to challenge our corporate designs for innovations. We value it as a volunteer-employee challenge to the ways we drive change into our network. A group to innovate on the processes of making things happen everywhere we can.
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> It takes practice to put ideas out there, to challenge the entrenched, and to lead in bringing things to market both internally and externally – the innovators group project is to build that experience and for generations of CU*Answers participants to take ownership of the responsibility to champion our future. "

Randy Karnes, CEO, CU*Answers

Barb Cooper – Improve the Software Project Workflow

What was Barb's idea?

Barb felt that software development from the origination of a project sheet all the way to final implementation could be better served by improved communication between all the technical teams. Barb's idea was to focus on ways to reduce waste of time and effort using existing knowledge and skills.

How did *Be an Innovator* grow her idea?

Barb used "Be An Innovator" as a forum for programmers and Quality Control testers to brainstorm ways to reduce waste, improve tracking, and provide better communicate between teams. These efforts would ensure more efficient software development with a more robust final implementation for CU*Answers credit union clients.

How was the idea implemented?

Barb took the ideas of her *Be an Innovator* group to develop a plan of action. She is currently revamping the portal page and other communication tools to create excitement for the efforts of the Programming team. She plans to elicit new ideas though brainstorming sessions with different teams (and through the FEP/ING project) to develop new internal procedures and standards for more efficient implementation of software changes. To assist technical teams in making more informed decisions on these changes, she plans to schedule additional training of the end user's experience in CU*BASE. To increase the transfer of technical knowledge, she plans to increase the number of FAQs in the Answer Book and to provide new employees with a resource to ask questions.

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