

# Find A Way™

Session summary and *quick start guide*.

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“To win the future,  
innovation must be an  
everyday business.”

JOSH LINKNER

We are living in volatile times; a rapidly changing landscape fraught with uncertainty and turbulence. From tech transformation to supply chain issues, it's clear that we can no longer rely on the models of the past and expect the same result.

*To thrive in this new era of business, unlocking organization-wide creativity has become the most important leadership competency.*

My team and I have been helping leaders and organizations cultivate ingenuity, creative problem-solving, and inventive thinking for over 15 years. Through our battle-tested methodology, we inspire people to action, expanding their confidence, and helping them win at the highest levels.

I'm excited to help expand your creative capacity, helping you become better equipped and future-ready.

*JOSH LINKNER*

# The Clear Case for Innovation

“Eight in ten people feel that  
*unlocking creativity is critical to economic growth,*  
yet a striking minority— only 25 percent —  
believe they are living up to their  
own creative potential.”

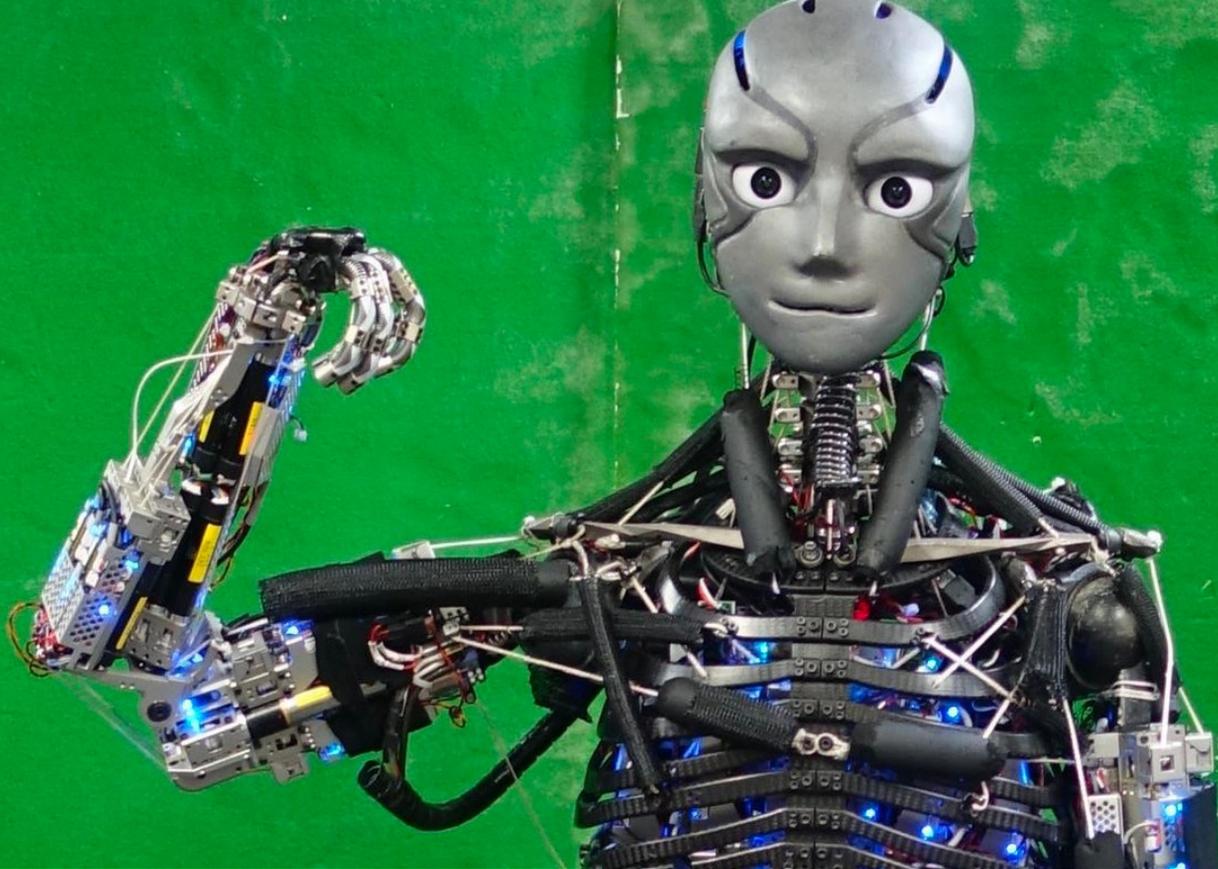
- AdAge study of 5000 business leaders

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“The most creative firms had better financial performance;  
*creativity matters for the bottom line.*”

“Companies with higher scores on creativity are  
twice as likely to deliver above-average total  
return to shareholders and  
*delivered above average growth 2.3 times more*  
often than their less-creative counterparts.”

- McKinsey & Company



“A human worker’s only way to hold on to a job in the future against a digital competitor is to be creative...

*It’s the creative skills that give, and will continue to give, humans an edge over robots.”*

Forrester Research  
Report on artificial intelligence  
and automation

# The New Model.

Everyday people.  
Everyday innovators.

Innovation is an *everyday business*.

“You can’t look in a *new direction*  
by looking harder in the same direction.”

- Edward deBono

## The Ripple Effect

We all learned in middle school how a single disturbance can ripple into a large-scale, pervasive impact. Seemingly small acts throughout history have set into motion revolutionary movements and wide-sweeping transformation. As the rings of change radiate from their source, the smallest creative acts can lead to the largest achievements.

*When you unleash your full creative power,  
you become unshackled and unstoppable.*

# Think Small.

*“The pressure to generate big ideas can feel overwhelming. We know that bold innovations are critical in these turbulent times, but when it comes to breakthrough thinking, we often freeze up.”*

Instead of shooting for a \$10 billion IPO or a Nobel Prize, the most prolific innovators focus instead on Big Little Breakthroughs – small creative acts that unlock massive rewards over time. By building a daily habit of creativity, organizations not only enjoy a high volume of small wins, but the daily practice of micro-innovations is the fastest route to discover the massive breakthroughs we seek.

*Big Little Breakthroughs aren't just for propeller-head inventors, C-suite execs, or hoodie-donning tech billionaires. In fact, they help everyday people become everyday innovators.*

This simple yet effective method is designed for all of us to cultivate the power of human creativity. Focusing on a deliberate approach to daily practice, the proven system enables people from all backgrounds, training, and walks of life to expand their creative skillset and mindset. It helps everyday people unlock inventive thinking and harness innovation to tackle tough challenges and seize bold opportunities.

Instead of wild, risky and expensive moonshots, you'll learn how to unleash small, daily creative acts to drive gigantic results over time. In fact, cultivating high volumes of micro-innovations not only de-risks the creative process, it builds the much-needed skills that lead to colossal transformations... and the creative confidence to take responsible risks.

# INNOVATION, Innovation, and innovation.

History celebrates the innovations that changed the course of civilization such as movable type, penicillin, and the internet. But we often look down on the smaller acts of invention that drive meaningful results while also serving as the building blocks of life's biggest breakthroughs.

*It's time we appreciate the full range of innovation:  
INNOVATION (all caps), Innovation (capital I),  
and innovation (lower-case).*

**INNOVATION** in all caps is the big stuff. Inventing the electric guitar. Digging the Panama Canal. Designing the internal combustion engine. These are the ones we think of when we hear the word innovation, but these are only a small percentage of what human creativity is all about.

**Innovations** (capital 'I') are still meaningful but may not make the history books. Think of a new product that boosts revenue 30% in six months. Or a solution to a pesky problem that results in a 15% boost to the bottom line. These may come a couple times a year and can play a major role in reshaping our lives.

And then there's **innovation** (lower-case) - the less glamorous but highly valuable flavor of invention. Lower-case innovation is the most dismissed, the most bullied, and the most overlooked— and the most common. But that commonness doesn't make innovation less powerful, but more so. What do you think has more horsepower— one magnificent thoroughbred racehorse, or 100 small ponies all pulling together?

Stop thinking of yourself as lacking innovation simply because you haven't patented hundreds of inventions or launched a billion-dollar idea. Instead, let's celebrate all levels of creativity and innovation, realizing the inherent value of all shapes and sizes.



# Awaken the Artist Within

*Artists ask a lot of questions...*

1. What's missing?
2. What could I add or subtract?
3. What's an unexpected approach?
4. What can I borrow?
5. What would happen I broke some rules?



## What jazz musicians (and great leaders) do everyday...

Adapt to changing conditions.

Navigate uncertainty and ambiguity.

Situational awareness; active listening.

Real-time collaboration and problem-solving.

Recovering quickly from setbacks.

Improvise to deliver best possible outcomes.

# Building Your Creative Muscles.

## The 60-second Creativity Development Exercises

- Quick warm up (music, deep breaths, art)
- Pick any challenge unrelated to your work or life
- Don't try to solve with one idea
- Instead, think of ways to improve

*Creativity isn't just born, it's built.*

“When patterns are broken,  
*new worlds emerge.*”

- Tuli Kupferberg



## *Mindset #1*

# Start Before You're Ready

Let's take the initiative to get started now instead of waiting for permission, detailed instructions, or ideal conditions. A willingness to course-correct along the way, adapt to changing circumstances in real-time, and operate with agility is much more valuable than waiting until your entire game plan is fully baked. Some of the greatest innovations started as something else entirely, but they never would have come into being if their creators didn't simply start quickly and adapt frequently.

Anyone with a bank account knows the power of compounding interest and innovation works much in the same way. Those who begin quickly and then make consistent, high-frequency deposits are the ones that enjoy the biggest account balance in the end.

Think of this phenomenon as *Compounding Innovation Interest*.

Simply put, you're far better off starting quickly and adjusting as you go instead of waiting until things are just right.



## *Mindset #2*

# Break It to Fix It

It's time to ditch the tired adage of 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' In fact, everyday innovators proactively go out of their way to deconstruct, examine, and rebuild their ideas and the world around them in order to deliver superior products, systems, processes, and works of art. They don't just look at failures and ask, "Why isn't this working?" They look at successes and ask, "Why isn't this working even better?" They're willing to rock the boat in order to design an even better boat.

In the same way that the milk in your fridge has an expiration date, have you ever wondered why a mandatory refresh date doesn't exist on most things in the business world? When a new system or process is enacted, why is it assumed that the approach should be everlasting? It doesn't make sense to ascribe permanence in a world that's changing so rapidly.

It's our responsibility to seek new versions, to deconstruct and rebuild, to reimagine and pursue a better way. Everyday innovators are constantly examining current conditions, looking for opportunities to break and then create new ones.

Upgrades can pay significant dividends when applied to products, team, production practices, safety standards, sales efforts, training, and nearly every other system, big or small. The same method used to reinvent an industry can apply all the way down to retooling how you run your Monday morning team meeting.



### *Mindset #3*

## Use Every Drop of Toothpaste

Counterintuitively, being resource-constrained can fuel creative breakthroughs so we must develop a scrappy approach to doing more with less. Resourcefulness and ingenuity become powerful weapons in the fight for superior innovation.

When most of us think of innovation, we quickly create a mental checklist of all the resources we lack. There never seems to be enough time, money, raw materials, support, bandwidth, computing power, training, or staff. We allow the apparent lack of resources to trick us into thinking we can't forge ahead, but in fact, getting scrappy is a hallmark of creativity.

Everyday innovators use their internal resource of imagination to compensate for any lack of external resources. They realize that constraints drive breakthroughs far more often than abundance. They outpunch their satiated rivals by remaining hungry, squeezing every last drop out of their proverbial toothpaste tubes.



## *Mindset #4*

# Seek the Unexpected

Successful everyday innovators are downright allergic to the tried-and-true. They prefer unexpected approaches to obvious ones, challenging conventional wisdom by searching for unorthodox ideas. They have a penchant for discovering oddball, sometimes even bizarre ideas in order to discover better outcomes.

Most of us make decisions -- big and small -- within a generally accepted range of possibilities. We've established left and right guardrails to ensure we don't drift too far afield, largely to protect ourselves from unfavorable consequences. Yet counterintuitively, the very act of playing it safe has become the riskiest move of all. We may not get laughed out of the room, but we run the far more frightening risk of mediocrity and irrelevance.

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To fight back, everyday innovators push themselves to explore the unexpected. They discard obvious ideas in favor of unorthodox ones. They realize that those strange, peculiar, weird ideas are the ones that stand out and make history.



## *Mindset #5*

# Fall Seven Times, Stand Eight

Setbacks are inevitable, but everyday innovators use creative resilience to overcome adversity. Mistakes are a natural and important part of the innovation process and can be flipped into advantages when studied and embraced.

The Fall Seven, Stand Eight philosophy is best described as the intersection of creativity and resilience. It's not a Pollyanna you-can-do-anything cliché, but rather a deliberate response to adversity. Instead of dogged persistence, everyday innovators use setbacks as an opportunity to bounce back with a different approach each time, using inventive thinking to guide the way.

Removing the judgement of right or wrong, they view stumbles as data which can inform subsequent creative attempts. Fusing tenacity with imagination, the fight is won through a series of creative tweaks and adaptations.



# Tactics + Techniques.

## *The Judo Flip.*

When facing a problem or an opportunity, start by taking an inventory of conventional wisdom. How has it always been done before? How do we normally do this? Next, ask the crucial question: what's the polar opposite? Instead of complying with tradition, what might happen if you judo flipped it?

## *The To-Test List.*

We all have a to-do list, but the best innovators also keep a running to-test list. All ideas - good or bad, big or small - get added on a regular basis without judgement. The mere existence of the list will boost your creative capacity.

## *Option X.*

Instead of gravitating to the tried-and-true, challenge yourself to seek unexpected, unorthodox ideas. Before selecting "a", "b" or "c", pause for a moment to consider if fresh, non-traditional approaches might work instead. Forgo option "a" in favor of option X.

A person with extensive tattoos on their arms and chest, wearing a dark blue t-shirt, dark blue pants, a black and white baseball cap, and white sneakers with red accents. They are in a crouching pose on a wooden floor, with their hands resting on their knees. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

**Big  
Ideas.**

Let go to *move ahead.*

Reduce risk through *experimentation.*

*Confidence* isn't expecting to get it right.

It's knowing how to *bounce back.*



# Find A Way™

*The power of ingenuity + resolve*

Every problem can be solved; every opportunity can be seized. Through a proven framework of ingenuity, you'll develop the skill needed to navigate turbulent times.



## New York Times bestselling author **Josh Linkner** is a rare blend of business, art, and science.

On the business front, he's been the founder and CEO of five tech companies, which created over 10,000 jobs and sold for a combined value of over \$200 million. He's the co-founder and Managing Partner of Mudita<sup>+</sup> Venture Partners – an early-stage venture capital firm investing in groundbreaking technologies. Over the last 30 years, he's helped over 100 startups launch and scale, creating over \$1 billion of investor returns.

While proud of his business success, his roots are in the dangerous world of jazz music. He's been playing guitar in smoky jazz clubs for 40 years, studied at the prestigious Berklee College of Music, and has performed over 1,000 concerts around the world.

His experiences in both business and music led him to become one of the world's foremost experts on innovation. Josh is the co-founder and Chairman of Platypus Labs, a global research, training, and consulting firm.

Today, he's on a mission to help leaders **Find A Way**<sup>™</sup> through creative problem-solving, inventive thinking, and ingenuity.

# Next Steps.

- ❑ **Start your 'to-test' list**  
Remember, the mere existence of the list will boost your creative output by keeping experimentation top-of-mind.
- ❑ **Begin daily creativity exercise**  
It only takes 60-seconds a day to build creative muscle mass.
- ❑ **Practice applying the 5 mindsets**  
Inject fresh perspectives into your daily groove wherever possible.
- ❑ **Grab your copy of Big Little Breakthroughs**  
Ready for more actionable insights and proven frameworks to take your creative potential to the next level? [Buy the book here.](#)
- ❑ **Follow Along on Socials**  
Stay up to date with Josh's social media where he posts fresh content each weekday.  
  
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