Introduction to Innovation

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Week 1 seminar. Course logistics are in comp1100[1].

Outline

1. Course overview and expectations
2. What innovation is, and why we need a process
3. The Lean Startup and customer development
4. Customer discovery, step by step
5. Divergent thinking; the project challenges

What is innovation?

See innovation[2] — several definitions, Drucker on value being what the customer gets out (not what the supplier puts in), the product-failure table that makes "no market fit" a 35% risk, and the four shifts from development to innovation.

[1] courses/comp1100/comp1100.pdf
[2] courses/comp1100/innovation.pdf

The four shifts, briefly: from a client to a **market segment**; from a system to a **value proposition**; from development to **experimentation**; from a requirements specification to a **Minimum Viable Product**.

The Lean Startup

See lean-startup[3] — the customer development process (discovery → validation → creation → building), the search/execution split, the pivot, and Paul Graham on the mistake you are going to make.

Customer discovery

See customer-discovery[4] for the full four-step process, the user/customer distinction, the medical alert system worked example, early adopters, and the seven customer development heuristics.

The single sentence to carry out of week 1 is heuristic #1: **there are no facts inside your building, so get outside.**

Divergent thinking

When generating ideas: don't challenge or criticise; quantity, not quality; don't analyse or organise (but do record and draw). *Then* identify significant themes and refine. See innovation[5].

The challenge

> Improving the student experience at UQ (and beyond?)

Teams pick one or two from the project challenges.

Key takeaways

- Innovation = creating value for someone.
- Failure is often because we do not understand our market.
- Success is more likely if we get out of the building.
- Innovation process = generate and test ideas early fail early.
- Failure = opportunity to learn.

[3] courses/comp1100/lean-startup.pdf
[4] courses/comp1100/customer-discovery.pdf
[5] courses/comp1100/innovation.pdf

Homework

- **Decide this week** whether you want to do this course — and if not, unenrol.
- Read the course overview.
- Read Chapter 1, Introduction to innovation.
- Read the chapter on Customer discovery.

Next week

Seminar: 2025-08-04-business-model-canvas[6]. Studio: team allocation and team dynamics.

[6] courses/comp1100/2025-08-04-business-model-canvas.pdf