



## TRAINING FOR TECHIES

Helping Technical Teams Connect, Lead, and Innovate

### Innovation Self Assessment: 20 Qualities of an Innovator

How can you be sure you are cultivating the qualities of an innovator? Below is a self assessment adapted from the work of Mitchell Ditkoff, a contributor in the field of creativity and innovation.

**1. I challenge the status quo** – dissatisfied with the current reality, questions authority and routine and confront assumptions.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**2. I am curious** – actively explores the environment, investigates new possibilities, and honors the sense of awe and wonder.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**3. I am self-motivated** – responds to deep inner needs, proactively initiates new projects, intrinsically rewarded for efforts.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**4. I am visionary** – highly imaginative, maintain a future orientation, thinks in mental pictures.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**5. I entertain the fantastic** – conjures outrageous scenarios, sees possibilities within the seemingly impossible, honors dreams and daydreams.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**6. I take risks** – goes beyond the comfort zone, experimental and nonconforming, courageously willing to “fail”.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**7. I am interactive** – changes work environments as needed; questions, wanders, walks or travels to inspire fresh thinking; given to movement and interaction with people and the environment.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**8. I am playful/humorous** – appreciates incongruities and surprise, able to appear foolish and child-like, laughs easily and often.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**9. I accept myself** – withholds compulsive criticism of my own ideas, understands “perfection is in the enemy of the good,” unattached to “looking good” in the eyes of others.

Very Often \_\_\_\_\_ Often \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_\_\_ Never \_\_\_\_\_

**10. I am flexible and adaptive** – open to serendipity and change, able to adjust game plan as needed, entertains multiple ideas and solutions..

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**11. I make new connections with the mundane** – sees relationships between seemingly disconnected elements, synthesizes odd combination, and distills unusual ideas down to their underlying principles.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**12. I am reflective** – incubates on problems and challenges; seeks out states of immersion; ponders muses and contemplates.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**13. I recognize patterns where others don't** – the perceptive and discriminating, notes organizing principles and trends, sees (and challenges) the “Big Picture”.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**14. I tolerate ambiguity well** – comfortable with chaos, able to entertain paradox, doesn't settle for the first “right idea.”

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**15. I love learning** – continually seeks knowledge, synthesizes new input quickly, questions assumptions and balances information gathering and action.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**16. I balance my intuition with analysis** – alternates between divergent and convergent thinking; entertains hunches before analyzing them; trusts your gut, yet uses your head.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**17. I know when to collaborate and when to think on my own** – balances rugged individualism with political savvy, open to coaching and support, rallies organizational support as needed.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**18. I am a good communicator** – communicates ideas effectively, translates abstract concepts into meaningful language, creates prototypes with ease.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**19. I am resilient** – bounces back from disappointment, learns quickly from feedback, willing to “try, try again.”

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**20. I am persevering** – hardworking and persistent, champions new ideas with tenacity, committed to follow-through and bottom-line results.

Very Often\_\_\_\_\_Often\_\_\_\_\_Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_Rarely\_\_\_\_\_Never

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**II. Mark your top 3 to 5 strengths and your lowest 2 development needs.**

### Strengths

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### Development Need

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Remember:

**You are known in your career for your strengths**, so keep your career development focused on what you do well. Unless your development need will stop you from doing your present job well or keep you from your next career move, put your focus on managing it rather than improving it. Always focus on your strengths whenever possible.

1. What might you do to leverage your strengths?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What might you do to manage your development need(s)?