



<https://www.istockphoto.com/vector/leadership-of-business-concept-business-illustration-gm1213537797-352726593>

### **Learn from the picture**

This picture is the one that I chose to express my understanding of collaboration and innovation. In this picture, there's a big smile face with a light bulb inside it. Inside the bulb, there is a tiny word, "idea," glowing brightly, which represents innovation. Above the bulb, a small person is pouring light just like showing outcomes of innovation, and below, a group of people are working hard to keep the light working. Their teamwork keeps the idea bright, showing that it's not just one person's effort, but everyone's effort that turns a small thought into innovation. This picture perfectly shows my understanding of collaboration and innovation. Just like the "idea" in the bulb needs the collective effort to emerge, I believe that one's intelligence is limited, but the power of collaboration can achieve innovation and greatness. Collaboration is important because working alone often leads to a one-sided view, and thinking about the problems can be restricted. The advantage of collaboration is that it allows us to think in comprehensive ways and makes it easier to produce innovation during discussions. In order to achieve this, my team members and I must learn to brainstorm and bring innovation to life

In my experience, breakthrough works are almost always the result of collaboration effort. It's through this collective force that innovation comes true. I will introduce one of my

experiences during the project in COMM1120 with Kolb's learning cycle, which impressed me deeply and told me the importance of collaboration and innovation.

### Concrete Experience:

When my team and I prepared a presentation, there was a big problem: many people were overusing Acetaminophen, a common substance in non-prescription medicine, because of many reasons including lack of consciousness, psychological dependence on drugs or insufficient government promotion. This mistake has caused more than 500 deaths and 2600 hospitalisation per year. So our team aimed to find a better way to deal with this problem.

At first, we thought one plan that change the package of medicine to warn customers, but it was too expensive. Then, we considered phone advertising, but it was expensive too and not convenient for old people without smartphones. After discussing with our teacher, who advised us to focus on customers' needs. We pondered over everyday items like voice assistants and markers, but these ideas were unavailable in the end. One day, one of my teammates saw a leaflet of hamburger on the table and a creative idea came into his mind. He suggested we could design a leaflet of medicine. We thought for days and finally designed our two leaflets as below, which would be given to customers with medicine to remind them not to overuse medications.



Both leaflets have split-screen design. The left one shows a healthy and energetic person in a bright and colorful environment on the left side, while on the right side is a person surrounded by pill bottles, showing the negative effects of overmedication. The right one shows risk warnings of overdose on the left side and healthy lifestyles on the right.

This process helped our team to fully understand how to achieve collaboration and innovation and taught us the benefits of brainstorming. We were very happy to develop a practical and innovative solution to drug overuse.

### Reflective Observation:

When I think about our whole process, I know that there are many factors we need to consider, including whether our new idea is available, easy to operate, and how much it will cost. Our team members came up with ideas from different views, but sometimes we were disappointed with the bad ideas. Fortunately, we never gave up and kept discussing, thinking, even asked our teacher for help. In the end, we found that our best solution is to create a way that is easy to use, not expensive, and helpful to customers. Luckily, we came up with the final plan, "a leaflet".

### **Abstract Conceptualization:**

In the process of the project, we tried to make our ideas work well for everyone. The first concept is "user-centered design," which means we should create something that most people find helpful and easy to use (Norman, 1988). The second concept is "information design," which means we should make sure the information we give to others is clear, no matter how old they are. Lastly, "cost-effective" is also important, which points out that don't be too expensive. The things can be used by most people as possible, without costing too much money (Porter, 2010).

### **Active Experimentation:**

This experience made me think about how we can achieve collaboration and innovation. Our team focuses on creating things that are both easy to use and of high quality, and make sure they are not too expensive. In this way, we can really make a difference for people and help them solve their problems. In the future, if I want to create some new ideas, I will lead my team to work and discuss together. I think communicating regularly is a great way to ensure that everyone on the team understands the end goal, knows how their work can be part of the big picture (Edmondson, 2012), and works hard. And I should encourage everyone in team to speak out and share their ideas, as you never know where the next great idea will come from (Burt, 2004).

### **References:**

Burt, R.S. (2004). Structural holes and good ideas. *American Journal of Sociology*, 110(2), 349-399.

Edmondson, A. (2012). Teamwork on the fly. *Harvard Business Review*, 90(4), 72-80.

Norman, D.A. (1988). *The Design of Everyday Things*. New York: Basic Books.

Porter, M.E., 2010. What is value in health care. *N Engl J Med*, 363(26), pp.2477-2481.

