

Using online surveys can help you quickly assess your innovation culture. But surveys tell you only so much. It’s also important to take the time to actually speak with real live people. In addition to using the *Invisible Advantage Survey*, it’s also helpful to conduct one-on-one interviews or focus groups with key employees and other stakeholders for a deeper dive into the issues and opportunities. Ask them questions. Interview them. Dig deep to find the root causes of innovation barriers. Get them to talk about innovation success stories that reveal success factors that can be built upon for the future. Here are a few questions to use as a starting point:

1. Innovation is clearly important for your future. How do you define “innovation” for the organization overall? How do you define it for your own function in terms of your role & value delivered?
2. What do you see as your *strengths* when it comes to “innovation?”
3. What do you see as the biggest *barriers* to innovation?
4. What are success stories and examples of times when you’ve been part of or seen the organization being especially innovative? Who was involved, what happened, and what were the success factors?
5. Describe your personal vision for how the organization operates in 3-5 years when it comes to innovation – what’s changed strategically, operationally, and culturally?
6. What do you see as the biggest need and opportunity to build capability to create a true culture of innovation? Consider:

* **Leadership** (vision, communication, sponsorship, cross-functional coordination, etc.)
* **Organizational Structure** (formal organizational structures, etc.)
* **Processes** (within & across functions, etc.)
* **People** (skills, knowledge, experience, etc.)
* **Metrics** (measure of innovation success, etc.)
* **Recognition & Rewards** (formal & informal recognition, awards & incentives, etc.)
* **Technology** (internal systems, customer focused, etc.)