

IKD

Inspiration - Knowledge - Development

MODEL

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Survival kit for Entrepreneurs

Method
Tips
Checklist



Introduction

The IKD - Model has been developed through many years of seminars and workshops there I have been inspiring people to identify and realize new opportunities in their businesses or life.

To force someone to learn something or to push individuals into unwanted changes is not the successful way of doing things. If people are inspired to learn or want to make or participate in change - it is so much easier.

When you get inspired you will start to seek and find new knowledge. With new knowledge and inspiration you will then develop and create a platform for more inspiration, and you have initiated a very positive process.

I have realized that a series of activities and actions need to be considered and taken to solve problems, identify new ideas, develop businesses or organizations, lead individuals to learning and ultimately build competences. A single activity is not enough.

In my world, it's a matter of starting a process and continue with it until you reaches the final goal. Of course there are a lot of "Change-process-management-models" and "Change-agent-training-programs" but in my opinion these are far too complicated to effectively be used in the daily business of a small company - or in a Solopreneur role.

It is common that the "IKD-components" are used one by one. Either there are Inspirational activities or Knowledge based activities or actions for Development. These could of course help launch changes, but the problem and one the reason for failing in the change process is that it seems to be invisible walls separating these activities.



Inspiration
Knowledge
Development

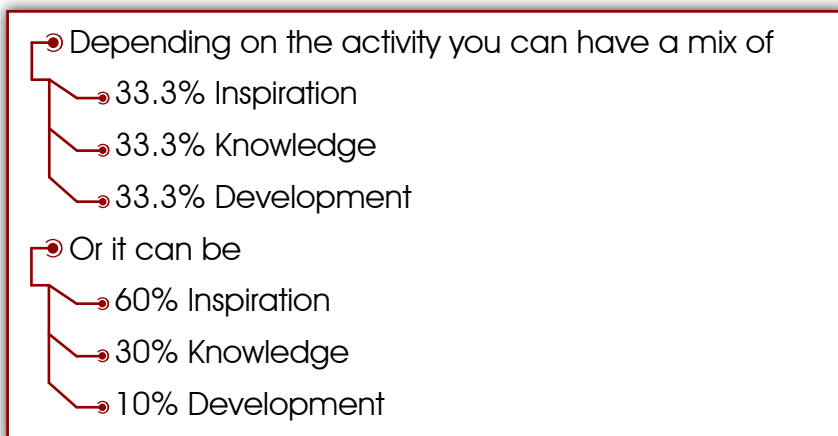
**"Get Inspired, Acquire new Knowledge and
let the Development start"**

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IKD-Model

The “secret” is to put all the components together in a process, no matter what activity you are involved in. If you are preparing a sales presentation, arranging a workshop, training your customers, conducting a meeting or informing your staff remember to bring a bit of each. The proportions of the three components will be different from case to case, but keep in mind to bring them all together!



How you combine the components depends on the situation and the objectives and goals that are set for the activity.

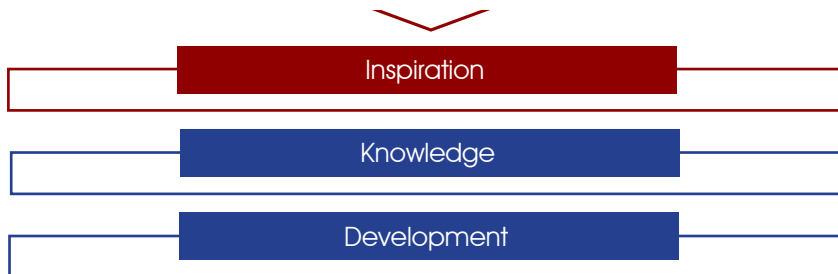
In this short version of description of the IKD-model the focus will be on how to use the IKD in a Micro sized company or how you can use it as a Solopreneur.

You will also find that in this particular e-Book of the IKD-model a fourth step is added, Evaluation. Bringing new ideas into your business also requires a follow up and evaluation of the results and the process itself. The Evaluation will be an important part of the learning process – which will transform experiences to new knowledge and skill and continue the positive process.

I hope you will find the following pages inspirational and that you can implement the new knowledge in to your daily development of your business. The visible result in your evaluation is both yours and mine target.



Inspiration



The first step in a change and development process is the Inspiration. If you don't have a sense of motivation and passion to accomplish something, you most likely will walk away without any further action.

You obtain Inspiration in various ways and it is always a good idea to start with a "Business Intelligence" session where you are researching what others are doing or sometimes even more interesting, NOT doing.

Besides watching others general trend spotting and following the global transformation of attitudes, needs and behaviors could be very useful. One interesting task is to translate and interpret the global phenomenon into the impact it will have on your specific target market. By doing this you might be able to identify new market niches for your current products and services.

To be inspired by others and to study good examples is a great motivator for us all, a motivator that helps us stay competitive and ready for new opportunities.

With a great inspiration you will also have the energy required to take the steps that includes risk willingness, hard work and investment in time and money.



What are the others doing?

A really good idea could be to check out other actors in the same business as you, but in different regions or even countries. We refer to them as actors because they are not competitors but may be similar to your product or service line. There is a lot to learn just by observing others and just to “steal with pride” their success. Identifying number one in a market and compare it with your own business is a good benchmark that will give you an idea on what to adopt. With your new business model in place, you can copy the indicators for the business success and measure your own development.

We tend to hesitate to copy ideas from colleagues and competitors in the market, but did you ever think about copying from a totally different sector of the market? What can you learn from a grocery, a retailer, a consultancy company, a car dealer that can be used in your business?



When you study this and get inspiration and ideas from others, put some effort and creativity into the process of drawing new Business Models in your mind. Put yourself in a situation where you already are successful in the new business situation. (The [Business Model Canvas](#) can be recommended if you are not already using it or some other model.)

To copy the first type is actually more maintaining your business, adopting models others already use. To copy the second kind is often a bit more innovative and brings the advantage to do business in a totally different way compared to that your competitors are doing.



- So there are two approaches you can use:
 - Same Business Sector – different Market
 - Different Business Sector - same Market

What are the others NOT doing?

Why don't we have businesses selling and delivering ice blocks today? Of course almost everybody has a cooler these days. (Selling ice cubes to parties is a new niche!)

Why don't we have shops selling blue butter? Probably because nobody is aware of that he/she need or want blue butter and nobody is asking for it.

To be "first" with a new Business Model provides both a high risk and a high potential.

Often, in a situation when there has been little or no product/service development or any development at all in the business life cycle, a situation of the "sinking ship" occurs.

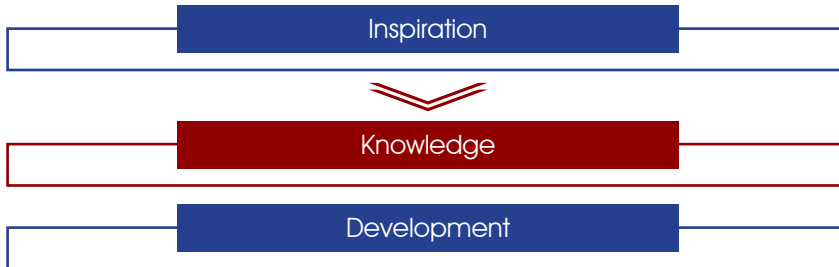
To be the last one leaving the "sinking ship" can give you a momentum of a strong position in the remaining part of the market - but at the same time your competitors are heading for new businesses while you are getting closer to the end of yours.

As an entrepreneur you might be in a situation there you see "too many" new opportunities and you have difficulties to focus on the part that generates cash flow. It is likewise a danger in keeping to the old cow to long.

When you have identified an opportunity you are ready to realize and you find out that there is no one doing this kind of business yet remember to keep in mind that there could be five more entrepreneurs planning on the same thing in this particular moment. Don't wait until it's too late!

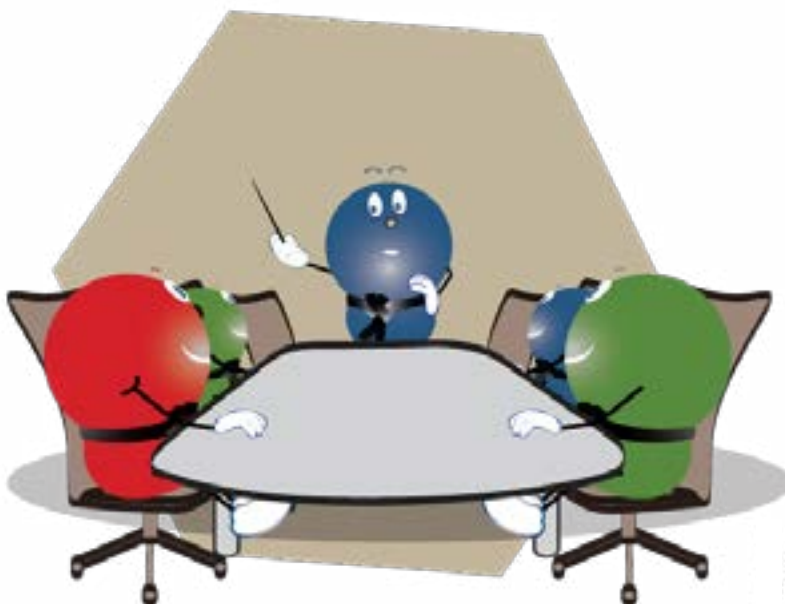
- There could be several reasons why nobody has thought, or rather done something, about this already:
 - Nobody has been losing business with their current Business Model
 - Nobody has realized the opportunity yet
 - Nobody has been able to design a new usable Business Model yet
 - Somebody is waiting for the market to get mature
 - Somebody is just about to do it

Knowledge



As soon as you are inspired and have seen new opportunities developing, you start looking for what is required by you and your business. What does it take to be able to realize these opportunities and move forward?

You will start a process of collecting information, acquiring knowledge, building the competence and initiating the development of the new Business Model. – For this you need to understand what type of new knowledge is required and what specific skills you need to develop to master the creation, sales and delivery of the new product or service.



What do you need to know to do it?

The first step is to find out exactly what information is required. (Using Who, What, Where, When, Why and How much helps you stay focused.). When you are aware of what you want to do - you will begin to ascertain what is required to be able to create, sell and deliver the new product or service.

- So start with the three stages
 - 1. What do you need to know to create the product?
 - 2. What do you need to know to sell the product?
 - 3. What do you need to know to deliver the product?

When you have described the required knowledge and skills in the different stages to make the process complete from idea to functioning revenue stream you can continue with checking it against the knowledge you already have gathered in your Business. Remember to consult your employees, if any, about their knowledge and experience. Compare the requirements against your own knowledge and experience.

You need to close the gap between the required knowledge and the current knowledge to get the product or service into your business and out in the market.

- So the two tasks are:
 - Description of knowledge needed
 - Description of knowledge currently held
- The result will be the:
 - Knowledge gap to close

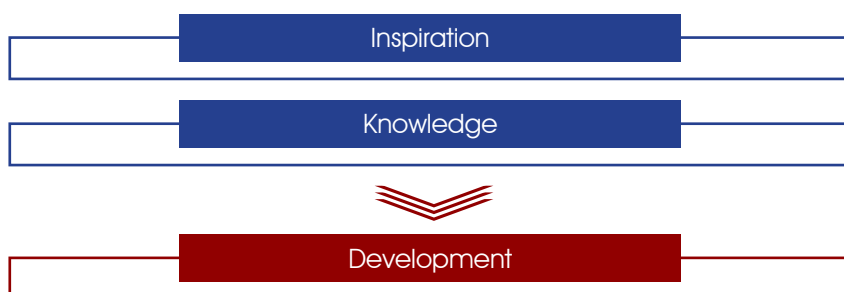
How can you obtain the knowledge?

Once you have identified the knowledge you can start to look for it.

- Some lead questions to determine where and how to get the specific knowledge are:
 - Do I need to buy it or can I get it for free?
 - Who is providing the knowledge? Is the source credible and trust worthy?
 - Can I just read about it to assimilate the knowledge?
 - Do I need some explanations, a special jargon or contextualization from an experienced person or expert to get the knowledge?
 - Is this knowledge available in a format I can handle?
 - Can I get it on-line?
 - Is this knowledge a short and easy process to obtain or will it take me considerable time and additional effort?
 - Who can give me tips, provide me with recommendations, guide and mentor/coach me in the process of closing the knowledge gap?

- Based on the awareness of the knowledge gap, you will subsequently need to determine the best way to close the knowledge gap. Summarize the following:
 - Source
 - Format
 - Cost
 - Effort
 - Timeframe

Development



Once you are inspired and have the required knowledge you can take immediate action to develop the new product or service and realize the “best fit” business model to apply and use.

It is not enough to have the idea and know how - you need to do it as well.

How can it be done?

Now that the idea is clear and the knowledge gap is filled you can start working on a detailed plan for reaching your goals. Either it is a total change of your entire business model or just for a specific product.

You may end up with different alternatives or pathways for achieving your new business model. At this point it is about time to determine how to apply your model in your specific business. With the resources you have and with the identification of target market you can now move ahead.



How can you do it?

The difference between “How it can be done” and “How can I do it” depends on the resources you have and the specific target group you have identified.

You need to be realistic at this point – and not become overenthusiastic if you don’t have the necessary resources or the necessary “control” over the target group. Overestimating your potential success may lead to failure in meeting your objectives. Misjudging your target and effort for the initiative creates frustration and leads to failing in focusing on the end result.

- Ask yourself the following questions to determine how you can do it:
 - What’s the timeframe for the implementation of this new business model or product?
 - What can I put aside or change to give room for this activity?
 - How well will my target group understand and see the value of my proposition?
 - How can I build capacity for the sales and delivery?
 - How prepared am I to meet the demands by my customers?
 - Will the quality of my product be positively or negatively affected?

Finally after getting through all these steps - you are ready to “go for it”!

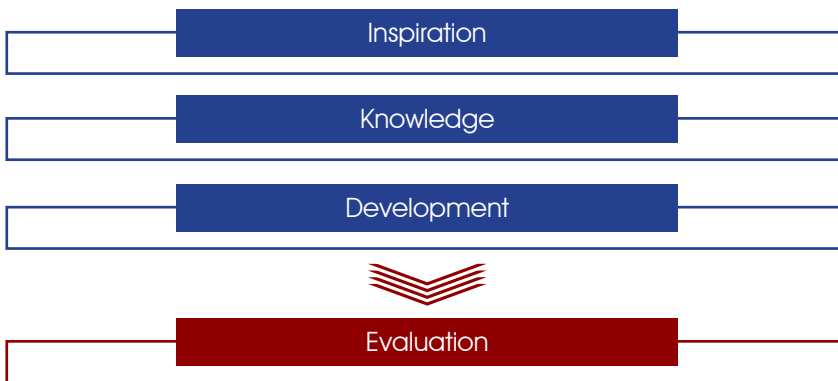
There are three things you need to keep in mind:

Be focused - stick to your plan

Be patient - don’t expect immediate results

Be persistent - don’t give up to quickly

Evaluation



This stage is, as mentioned before, actually outside the origin IKD-model itself but is never the less a very important one. It is important to your business and for your personal development as entrepreneur.

The lifelong learning perspective that helps us develop our competences as well as our businesses requires some tools to make it more structured and easier to access in the future.

- To be able to learn from both your successes and failures you need to reflect on:
 - What did I plan?
 - What did I actually do?
 - What happened?
 - What´s my evaluation of the result compared to my estimates?

Failures that we don't learn anything from - are the true failures.



How did you do it?

Don't look at the original plan - instead describe what you actually did - and review the outcomes

When you have described what you actually did and what the outcomes were - you can compare it with your plan. Describe both the activities and the result. Analyzing the process you have been working in, and what you experienced from it, is very valuable for the evaluation and for planning the next process.

- Be honest and describe what you really have done, not what you intended or meant to do (forget the reasons and excuses). What can be considered and reflected on includes:
 - Activities
 - Time
 - Content
 - Focus
 - Reach of target group
 - Channel
 - Value Proposition
 - Hinders and stoppers experienced
 - Unexpected support and reactions



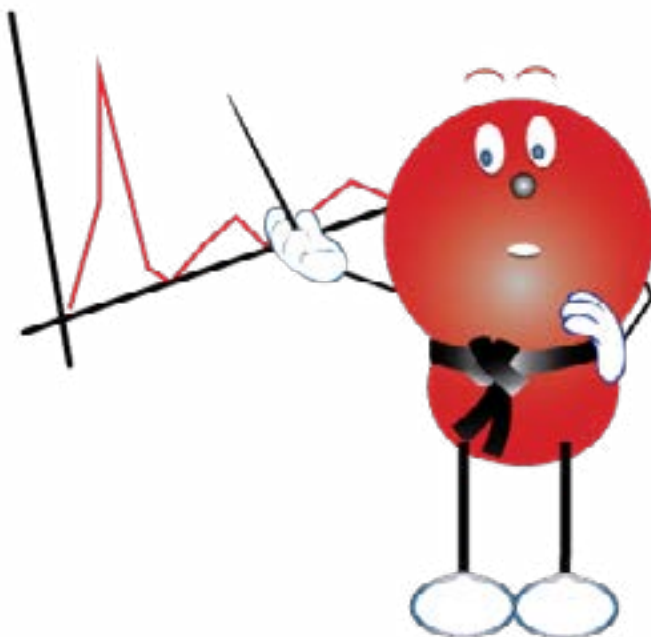
What did you learn?

Finally you are ready for the analysis of the process.

When you compare what you planned to do and what you managed to do you will most probably find divergences.

- Typical questions in completing the analysis are:
 - What worked well?
 - What could be done more efficient?
 - What do I need to change in the product?
 - What do I need to change in the model?
 - What do I need to change in the activity plan?

With all this in your clear view - you are ready to start all over from stage 1 Inspiration again!



Cheat Sheet

Inspiration – Knowledge – Development – Evaluation

Activity	Done	Note
Inspiration		
What do others do?		
What do others not do?		
Knowledge		
What do I need to know to do it?		
How can I get the Knowledge?		
Development		
How can it be done?		
How can I do it?		
Evaluation		
How did I do it?		
What did I learn?		

Use this Checklist to make sure you have considered all steps in the model.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

About the Author.

In 1999 Kenneth OE Sundin started SMEBOX, a toolbox for Small and Medium sized Enterprises. He is based in Sweden but works with an international perspective and is active on the global market.

Kenneth OE Sundin is also the Founder and Inspirational Manager of SME Academy, an international network based on the knowledge FOR and ABOUT SMEs.

SME Academy is the network for all of you working with or in SMEs around the world. With main focus on solo- and micro sized companies

The key words of SME Academy are Inspiration, Knowledge and Development – the basics for any Entrepreneur who wants to run a sustainable and competitive Business.

"I started my first Business in 1986 and since then I have been lucky enough to succeed in a number of different Businesses and Projects.

Today people tell me I am a Serial Entrepreneur, and I don't mind, but my focus is to catch the next opportunity before it's gone. I want to share my successes and challenges with "solopreneurs" and owners of micro sized companies all over the world." Kenneth OE Sundin



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Managing Director SMEBOX AB



We wish you good luck with
the use of your survival kit

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