



Chart Your Course as  
The Innovative Admin™

Plans of Action  
[www.TheInnovativeAdmin.com](http://www.TheInnovativeAdmin.com)

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# Chart Your Course as *The Innovative Admin*<sup>TM</sup>

## Getting Started

Welcome to the next journey on your administrative career path that will lead you toward becoming *The Innovative Admin*. I'm so glad you're here.

### **Review the Roadmap and Chart Your Course**

To get started using *The Innovative Admin* book, read it through from cover to cover to gain a good overview of the components involved in becoming *The Innovative Admin*. As you read, flag or highlight the chapters where you know you need to spend more time later. Most of the chapters contain an “action plan” at the end to give you a roadmap for getting started and taking immediate action. We have also made them available to you in this convenient downloadable file.

Once you have a good overview of all of the material, use the book as a guide to chart your course throughout the upcoming year. You may want to break it down into weekly or monthly goals so you stay on track. The best way to make changes and experience results is to take action and track your progress.

### **Your Implementation Plan**

For your convenience, we have made all of the action plans from this book (plus a cover) available in an electronic download at [www.TheInnovativeAdmin.com](http://www.TheInnovativeAdmin.com). We did this so you can download these action plans, put them in a three ring binder (your Innovation Binder!), and use them to begin tracking your personal progress and transformation over the coming weeks as you implement what you learn.

I also recommend you start a journal or insert blank sheets of lined paper in your Innovation Binder to begin journaling as you work through the material. You will want something in which to take notes and capture thoughts as you are inspired by the various examples and ideas shared throughout this book. Having your action plans and writing paper in the same binder will keep you organized.

A lot of what I'm going to share and recommend requires you put some thought and effort into making changes in how you currently think and work. It will require establishing new habits and eliminating old habits that are not supporting you in this endeavor. There are no shortcuts. You have to do the inner work to experience the outer results of change and transformation you are looking for in your life and career.

*So if you're ready to transform your thoughts and behaviors—and in doing so, transform your career—let's get started!*

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## Chapter 4: Choose the Innovation Mindset

### PLAN OF ACTION:

-  Consciously choose the innovation mindset. Commit to taking positive, forward action daily – even if you only do one thing toward becoming a more innovative thinker each day.
  
-  Think about and identify the obstacles (e.g., people, beliefs, etc.) that may be holding you back. Write down in your journal or Innovation Binder any thoughts or ideas you have about removing those obstacles so they no longer stunt your professional growth.

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## Chapter 5: Understand How the Innovation Mindset Works

### PLAN OF ACTION:

-  Think about an innovative idea you've had and implemented. How did the innovation mindset adoption curve apply to the implementation of your idea?
-  Think about an idea you've had that did not work the way you intended. How did you handle it? What did you learn from it? How did it impact future ideas you tried to implement?
-  Note your answers to the above questions in your journal or Innovation Binder.

## Chapter 6: Turn Your Thinking Upside Down

### PLAN OF ACTION:

-  Identify some areas of your personal or work life that you could look at in a new way.
-  Take a look at all of the regular, routine things you do out of habit and see if there are some areas where you can turn your thinking upside down. Identify better, more efficient ways of doing them.
-  Is there something that frequently bugs you? What is it? What are you currently tolerating that you'd like to change? Begin brainstorming ways you could turn your thinking upside down and resolve these situations.
-  If you currently work on project teams or coordinate events and meetings, implement post event wrap-up meetings to evaluate what worked well, what didn't work well, and what could be improved for next time.
-  Identify something you want to accomplish or achieve. In your journal or Innovation Binder, make a list of 50 ways you can achieve it in the next day, week, month, or year (depending upon the appropriate timeframe for the item you select). Repeat this exercise regularly for each new challenge you face or problem you want to solve.

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## Chapter 7: Collaborate to Innovate

### PLAN OF ACTION:

-  Identify a list of positive, innovative people you would like to include in your new personal innovation lab in your journal or Innovation Binder.
-  What types of information, ideas, and resources do you currently share with others? How do you share them?
-  What types of information, ideas, and resources could you share more frequently? The more you give, the more you receive.

## Chapter 8: Know Yourself Inside Out

### PLAN OF ACTION:

- Create a list of your own personal gifts, talents, abilities, skills, passions, and personality traits in your journal or Innovation Binder. Review any personality or skills assessments you've completed to jog your memory.
- Identify which personality or strengths assessment tools might help you better articulate what makes you uniquely you.
- Take a personality or strengths assessment and review your results.
  - Did the assessment accurately reflect or describe who you are?
  - What did you learn from taking the assessment?
  - Place your assessment results in your Innovation Binder.

## Chapter 9: Start Journaling

### PLAN OF ACTION:

-  Purchase a bright, cheerful journal and a smaller journal or notepad for when you're "on the go" and/or create your own Innovation Binder. (Remember to download the complimentary cover, spine, and action plans provided for you at [www.TheInnovativeAdmin.com](http://www.TheInnovativeAdmin.com).)
-  Setup an online folder or install an applicable software program where you can capture ideas when you are on your computer or electronic devices throughout the day.
-  Create your first journal entry using the "starters" listed in this chapter.
-  Commit to carrying the smaller journal with you all of the time.
-  Commit to writing in your regular journal at least once a week – daily is encouraged.

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## Chapter 10: Create Space for Innovation

### PLAN OF ACTION:

- When would be the best time each day for you to schedule 5, 10 or 15 minutes of innovation time?
  - Schedule it now!
  - Honor your commitment.
  - Use the ideas in the upcoming chapters to determine what you should do each day during this time.
  
- Pull out your journal or Innovation Binder and start jotting down ideas on how you can create the space for innovation:
  - Professional development day or half day
  - Personal day or half day off
  - Vacation
  - Change your office space and environment
    - Add or move plants or flowers
    - Move furniture
    - Organize your workspace
    - Catch up on filing
    - Add a desk lamp
    - Add a new office supply item
    - Other ideas: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Change your schedule
  
- Where could you cut down on some television time to create more innovation and personal recharging time in your day?

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- ☐ Examine your habits, how you spend your time, activities you participate in, affiliations you have, etc. Are these things serving you as productively as they used to...or as they should? Identify areas where it may make sense to let go of the old to create space for something new in your life.

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## Chapter 11: Find a Hobby

### PLAN OF ACTION:

- List in your journal or Innovation Binder:
  - What hobbies have you had in the past?
  - Which of those hobbies would you like to start pursuing again?
  - What new hobbies might you like to pursue?
  
- Schedule 15 to 30 minutes to spend on a hobby within the next seven days.

## Chapter 12: Develop Your Business Acumen

### PLAN OF ACTION:

- Identify which websites or blogs you find beneficial for your industry, profession, hobbies, and interests in your journal or Innovation Binder. Subscribe to a few RSS feeds so you can receive regular updates.
- Identify newsletters or ezines related to your industry, profession, hobbies, and interests, and subscribe to them via their websites.
- Research social media sites for key influencers in your industry, profession, hobbies, and interests.
  - Follow, like, or connect with them.
  - Observe what they are sharing and posting.
  - Consider joining social media networks you may not be using yet, such as Twitter, LinkedIn, or Facebook.
- How can you better utilize your lunch break?
- What could you listen to, read, or watch while you exercise?
- What could you safely listen to or read when you have downtime, like riding (not driving!) in the car, commuting to work on a train, etc.?
- Review the list of questions provided in this chapter to quiz yourself at the end of each week to see what you've learned about your company, profession, industry trends, etc. Record the answers in your journal or Innovation Binder.

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## Chapter 13: Develop a Personal Advisory Board

### PLAN OF ACTION:

-  Develop a list of names in your journal or Innovation Binder that you'd like to have on your personal advisory board.
-  Make a list of ways you can more regularly interact with, spend time with, or learn from some of those people (e.g., schedule a lunch date, pursue a formal mentoring relationship, join a professional association, attend networking events, follow or connect with people on social media sites, attend training sessions they provide, read their blogs and books).
-  Make a commitment to yourself to do at least ONE thing this week that causes you to interact in some way with one of your personal advisory board members. Repeat weekly.

## Chapter 14: Tackle Technology

### PLAN OF ACTION:

-  Identify where you may lack technological knowledge.
-  Do some research on the best training options available to you for correcting that deficit.
-  In your journal or Innovation Binder, map out a personal technology training timeline for the next 12 months that facilitates filling the knowledge gaps you have.

*HINT: This is another great goal to work into your annual performance review at work. It may also help you gain your employer's financial support for taking additional courses.*

## Chapter 15: Commit to Lifelong Learning

### PLAN OF ACTION:

 In your journal or Innovation Binder, identify some areas where you'd like to learn something new, continue developing your skills, and stretch your comfort zone. Don't limit yourself only to skills you need at the office or for career development. Open your mind and yourself to new things outside of your job as well, and it will open doors for you in unexpected ways. Here are some ideas to get you brainstorming:

- Archery
- Ballroom Dancing
- Blogging
- Cartoon Drawing
- Cooking Classes
- Community / Charity Events
- Event Planning
- Foreign Language(s)
- Gardening
- Job Hunting
- Leadership Development
- Management
- Multi-media PowerPoint Presentations
- Music Appreciation
- Outdoor Activities
- Pilates
- Professional Association Membership

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- Public Speaking
- Scrapbooking
- Social Media
- Software Programs
- Sports
- Stamping
- Travel Planning
- Website Development
- Woodworking
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

-  Do some research to find out where you can learn more about the areas you have selected (e.g., online courses, community college classes, local retailers, books, blogs/websites, seminars, associations, people you know).
-  Make a commitment to yourself to do at least **ONE** thing this week to further your knowledge in one of the areas you identified (e.g., read a book on the topic, subscribe to a free newsletter, sign up for a class). Then repeat this again next week and the next week...you get the idea.
-  For added accountability, choose one area to include in your goals for the upcoming year when you have your annual performance review.

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## Chapter 16: Exercise Initiative

### PLAN OF ACTION:

- Find a copy of the book *1001 Ways To Take Initiative At Work* by Bob Nelson.
  - Read the book.
  - Identify areas where you can begin to take more initiative at work.
- Identify how you typically approach taking initiative using Stephen Covey's seven levels of initiative. Think about what you can do to advance yourself further up the initiative ladder.
- Begin taking more initiative!
- Keep a log in your journal or Innovation Binder of when and how you took initiative and the outcomes of each occurrence. Then evaluate how you did and what you'll change or do the same the next time. Keep taking those baby steps forward as you become more comfortable exercising initiative!

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## Chapter 17: Seek Challenges That Stretch You

### PLAN OF ACTION:

- Think about opportunities that may already be surrounding you.
  - Are there projects at the office that you'd like to participate in but haven't specifically been asked to support?
  - Are there annual charity events that your company sponsors that you could volunteer to get involved with?
  - Are there professional certifications such as becoming a Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) or a Certified Administrative Professional (CAP) that you could pursue?
  - If you belong to professional associations, have you considered becoming a committee member, committee chair, or even running for a board position?
  - What are some of the community or professional organizations in your area?
  
- Find out how you can become more involved in one of those opportunities you identify.
  - Ask your executive during your next one-on-one meeting or during your annual performance review.
  - Research professional certifications you want to pursue and determine what's involved in achieving them.
  - Ask the organizations you belong to where they need more support or express your specific interests in how you'd like to get more involved with them.
  
- Let the stretching begin...take action and get involved.
  
- Keep track of the challenges you face, the things you learn, and the contacts you make throughout the experience in your journal or Innovation Binder.