

# Choosing a Real Problem to Address

# Concept Development Process

## A. Choosing a Real Problem to Address

# PROBLEM FIRST

Probably the biggest myth about innovation is that it's about ideas. It's not. It's about solving problems.

Nobody cares about what ideas you have, they care about the problems they have. So don't worry about coming up with a brilliant idea. If you find a meaningful problem, the ideas will come.

The problem with ideas is that so many of them are bad. Remember New Coke? It seemed like a great idea at first. Yet what the marketers missed is that many had an emotional attachment to the old formula and that created a huge backlash.

# Researching Problems

# Look for **problems** that cause real **pain**

1. What do you find annoying?
2. Talk to other consumers.
3. Talk to people in your industry.  
What are their pain points?

4. Look for new niches  
(customer segments not now adequately served)
5. Find a product or service that needs improvement
6. Lower manufacturing cost of an existing product

## 7. Research emerging trends.

*Make sure to catch the start of the wave so you don't get wiped out. Don't be a "me, too."*

## 8. Sometimes a new product creates a demand for a related product line, as cell phones led to demand for protective cases.

China is buying less of our recycled  
plastic and cardboard





# Self-Driving Cars

What opportunities will this create?

Video showing unnerving effect of driverless cars on fast-food drive-up window servers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lN85JXpV69A>

Self-driving trucks?

# Millennials want to live in cities

## What problems will they face?



# Global warming

What problems will this create?



# Banned in Washington D.C.



“Plastics” scene from *The Graduate*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSxihhBzCjk>

What trends do you see emerging?

What problems (opportunities for entrepreneurs) will they cause?

