

# 10 Tips for Being an Innovator at ACT: A Personal Approach - ACT

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Allied Command Transformation (ACT) innovates. We may not think that we do but, we do. I have been involved in many innovative activities at ACT and am quite aware that many in our headquarters are influencing the Alliance in new and daring directions. There's an old saying: "Fortune Favors the Brave" – and nowhere is that truer than in the innovation game. Incremental improvements will only allow incremental change. I offer the following tips learned during my decade at ACT and SACLANT (yes, it too was innovative in its own way).

## 1 - Understand Why We Exist

ACT provides products and services to the Alliance in the form of innovative thoughts, concepts, experiments, events, papers, and policy. We have been successful in the past and will be successful in the future. However, in order to work towards a common future we must fully understand why ACT was created and where we need to go. The words we used in 2003 were slightly different than what we use today but essentially mean "ACT transforms NATO on behalf of the Alliance by delivering quality capabilities, advice, and training."

## 2 - Be Enthusiastic

Be passionate. Focus on the things that you want to change. You must become an evangelist and encourage your colleagues to support you. It is generally agreed that optimists are more creative, motivated and innovative. "A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." Winston S. Churchill

## 3 - Persistence

The movie Galaxy Quest uses the phrase "Never give up, never surrender." I also advocate persistence. One thing that I respect about ACT is that our innovative thinkers persevere. Having faith in ourselves to succeed; one of our greatest strengths.

## 4 - Do Not Fear Change

Innovators constantly reflect about the need for change. Trying new ventures is risky, standing still is riskier. In some instances you need to stick your neck out and take a chance. The Alliance has too much at stake to not provided needed influence.



**in·no·vate** [in-uh-veyt]  
to introduce something new; make  
changes in anything established

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