



Innovation and product development

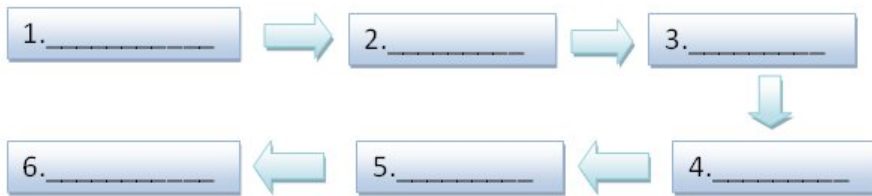
Lesson code: 12BJ-F6C9-PB6V

Intermediate (B1-B2)

American English

1 Development stages

Look at the following typical stages in designing and developing a new product. Put them in order.



Have you been involved in any of the above stages? If not, which of the stages would you like to be involved in?

2 Collocations

Complete the sentences below with the following verbs:

carry out identify launches recall release trial

1. When designing new products or services, it is very important for companies to _____ market research.
2. Before the final version of a new program is ready, software developers usually _____ a beta version.
3. When a product is ready in its final form, the company _____ it on the market.
4. Pharmaceutical companies _____ new drugs to make sure they are safe and effective.
5. If a newly launched product has a design fault, the company may need to _____ it.
6. Market research can help a business _____ unfulfilled customer needs.

Now think of examples of the above activities.



3 Market research

Match the terms to their definitions:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. focus groups | a. collecting marketing information by asking people questions face-to-face |
| 2. market surveys | b. demographically diverse groups of people who participate in discussions about particular products before they are launched |
| 3. field trials | c. organized activities, e.g. questionnaires, to obtain information about markets or customers |
| 4. personal interviews | d. tests carried out in the environment in which a product will be used |

In pairs or groups, think of an innovative product or service. What kind of market research would you carry out before and after the design stage?

4 Innovation

Study the following words and expressions for describing technological innovations. Put them into the correct categories below:

ahead of its time
low-tech

behind the times
obsolete

cutting edge
outdated

high-tech
state-of-the-art

Very modern: _____

Old-fashioned: _____

Describe the products below using the adjectives above. If a product has existed for some time, try to compare the time when it was launched and now. Example:

"Windows 95 was considered to be state-of-the-art when it was released. But now it is outdated."

the latest iPhone
the CD player

Windows 95
color TV

the iPad
laptop computers

the mp3 player

What other products could you describe with the words and expressions above?

5 Talking point

Discuss any of the following questions:

1. What do you think has been the most important new invention in the last 50 years?
2. What do you think will be the next biggest technological innovation?
3. Do you think that there will be more or less new innovation in the future?



4. How difficult is it to develop innovative products or services?



1 Development stages

Go through the terms with the students. Clarify any unfamiliar terms:

conception -- forming an idea

design -- planning and deciding on the look, features, and functions of a product or service

development -- the stage of building or creating a product

testing -- checking the quality, performance, or reliability of a product or service before launching it on the market

market research -- collecting and analyzing information about the market for a particular product or service

rollout/launch -- introducing a new product or service onto the market

Answers:

1. conception
2. market research
3. design
4. development
5. testing/trialing
6. rollout/product launch

2 Collocations

1. carry out 2. release 3. launches 4. trial 5. recall 6. identify

3 Market research

1. b 2. c 3. d 4. a

4 Innovation

Very modern: state-of-the-art, cutting edge, ahead of its time, high-tech

Old-fashioned: obsolete, outdated, behind the times, low-tech

