

[SQUEAKING] [RUSTLING] [CLICKING]

LUIS PEREZ-BREVA: Episode 1, Congratulations, you are a terrible robot.

You may already know a lot about innovation. Even if you are an expert or you have already made millions, for the next hour or so, which is what this series of videos is meant to last, I ask you to open your mind to a new possibility while I take you through what we have learned as we have developed and practiced what has become the MIT way to do innovation.

Why? There are well over 40 years' worth of technology sitting out there on the proverbial shelf, waiting for a new generation of hands-on innovators, someone like you, to put them to use to make a real problem go away sustainably-- that is, for good. It just takes another innovation mindset.

To be clear, I am not talking about another app or another social media scheme or yet another startup pitch. I am inviting you to get real and to believe there are technologies out there you can master to make the problem you care about go away, even if you do not think you have the right background.

Flying cars to solve traffic? Local manufacturing to address inequality? The question isn't whether the problem you care for can be solved. Rather, the question is, how you are going to do it and which technologies you will bring together to do it sustainably.

You have plenty of options. We have created this free video course to share with you the MIT way of thinking about and doing innovation. You'll learn about the mindset we've instilled for nearly two decades in hundreds of MIT students. It is based on concepts in the course I lead called Innovation Teams, or iTeams for short. iTeams students learn how to solve problems with technology and move technology from lab to impact.

Let me tell you a little about these students. You might see yourself in them. They come from all backgrounds and life experiences, ranging from humanities and business to engineering.

Some have been in industry for years. Some are self-made professionals or entrepreneurs or investors. Some are pursuing a master's or PhD degree. And some have just started college.

When they first come to iTeams, most have thought and read about innovation, sometimes a lot. Through their readings, they've been trained to think that they are limited to ideas that fit their background. They have been told that when it comes to innovation, they have to find a disruptive idea or to follow recipes with steps like robots do.

Chances are, you have thought or read a lot about innovation, too. That's fine. If you are anything like our MIT students, you will soon discover that you have been looking at a rather narrow view of innovation. And you're missing out on about 95% of what you can do.

Here's what I mean. If you, too, have been thinking about finding the disruptive idea or about applying some step-by-step innovation recipe like "try, fail, rinse, repeat" that sounds like something we may ask a robot to do, you are missing out. There is more you can do.

Humans make for terrible robots. But we make great Leonardo da Vincis. Leonardo did not seem to pay attention to some difference between the humanities, the arts, engineering. He treated the world around him as his lab, and he invented technologies-- water pumps, flying machines, painting techniques-- to make that world work another way.

These videos present a whole new way to think about innovation, innovation understood as making problems go away with technology as a tool. To get you there, we'll give you tips for how to imagine and make ideas tangible the way generations of creative engineers have.

In the videos, you'll learn that one technology can lead to many ventures, that you do not need to paint every problem as a catastrophe, that ideas look different at the start. The best ideas look rather bad. You'll learn what the real garage culture looks like, how to fund innovation for impact, to prototype problems, not products, and to progress by being wrong.

It may feel counterintuitive at first. Some of my students start out thinking the content is a bit contrarian. But as you watch it, you'll see it is easy and straightforward. It only feels counterintuitive because we train our entire lives to carry out jobs robotically and to try to be right at every step.

You are not a robot. This mindset for innovating has helped many of my students start new, highly innovative companies. Our MIT class and program has proven quite successful at moving technology into the world. You are in the company of thousands of MIT students.

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