

Jugaad, the art of improvisation as an innovative mindset

By [Amandine Robin](#)

30 Sep 2016

Innovation processes are being challenged by creative improvisation, even in the biggest technological companies governed by acute knowledge and experience.

Jugaad is “a colloquial Hindi and Punjabi word literally meaning a hack”, says Wiki, representing an innovative fix or “creativity to make existing things work or to create new things with meagre resources” (Wikipedia). Jugaad innovation refers to **ingenuity, frugality, flexibility and resourcefulness**.



Motorbike jugaad © DishoomDishoom on [Samosapedia](#).

It's amazing how constraints drive creativity and innovation. Jugaad is an excellent illustration of that, its initial motivation resulting from a lack of resources mostly.

Jugaad is also about going back to the deep essence of things, having a deep understanding of consumer needs to **identify nonessential features** that don't provide value for money and remove them to reduce costs.

More and more large companies are using the principles of Jugaad innovation to maintain their growth despite the challenging economic climate. For example, Tata set new industry benchmarks worldwide with the Nano – the cheapest car in the world launched in 2009 at \$2,000. Or GE Healthcare with the Mac 800, a low-cost electrocardiogram in a backpack developed by its Indian engineers. SELCO India came up with an innovative business model based to deliver affordable

pay-as-you-go electricity to underserved Indian areas. Philips is also using Jugaad to develop products for emerging markets or increasingly competitive developed markets.

Flexible thinking and action, as opposed to linear planning and processes, is a key principle. Firms using Jugaad innovation are highly adaptable, they explore various options at a time and can adjust their business model.

How do you think you or your organisation can benefit from Jugaad innovation? To begin with, let's shift our mindset and apply a fresh eye on things in order to do more with less and keep it simple.

Don't hesitate to **target unattainable goals** in cost, time or function as it can lead to very ingenious disruptive solutions.

ABOUT AMANDINE ROBIN

Amandine Robin is a design thinker. She co-founded Innovative Matters, a strategic innovation lab with Dora Jurd in 2014. Innovative Matters is dedicated to designing innovative concepts and building consistent brand experiences.

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