

Coming up with a Successful Innovation Process in an Organization

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Abstract: Innovation is a collaborative process by which organizations abandon old paradigms and make significant advances. Innovative ideas come from several sources, including unreasonable demands or goals and time pressures. However, there are many blocks to innovation. An innovative idea is not helpful to an organization unless it is tested and implemented. The perfect solution is sometimes there; as a vision, a thought, a dream or just a wish. But it is often far too complex for an individual to take it into reality. There are many examples of individuals who have great ideas but do nothing with them. Their organizations do not even know of these concepts. Unfortunately, these ideas die. They die because the creator kills it! They may recognize that the idea may negatively impact their job or the job of their co-workers. They do not know how to explore the idea to take it from a vision to a reality. Furthermore, They rationalize that no one would ever agree on how to structure such their concepts or pay for them. Just how many innovative ideas in your organizations regularly go nowhere because they are not linked to overall Business Improvement Strategies. In order to protect innovative ideas, organizations need to create a forum for the Innovation Process.

Keywords: Process, successful, innovation, organisation, coming-up.

INTRODUCTION

Innovation refers to the introduction of a new good or a new quality of a good, method of production, market, source of supply, and/or organization in an industry [1]. It also refers to improving on an existing concept or idea using a step-wise process to create a commercially viable product.

Innovation is stereotypically viewed to be the wheelhouse of small and start-up companies since they tend to be very dynamic, but as we shall see, it is also a vital and viable aspect in big companies [2].

The most fulfilling thing about an innovation is being able to actualize an idea into a successful concept. To do this, you need to go through a long and complex process. For you to succeed you must

understand the process well and must have the support needed; this is what differentiates a successful innovation process from an unsuccessful innovation process.

The Innovation Process

Organisations actively seek to manage the innovation process. These steps illustrate the general life cycle that characterises most innovations. Of course, as with creativity, the innovation process will suffer if it is approached too mechanically and rigidly.

The organisational innovation process consists of developing, applying, launching, growing and managing the maturity and decline of creative ideas. This process is depicted in Figure-1 below.

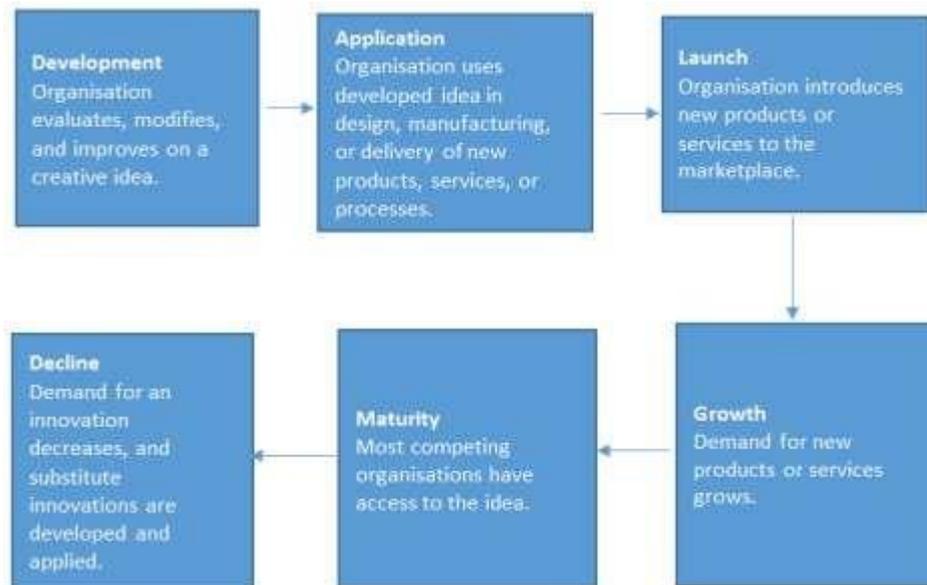


Fig-1: Organisation innovative process [4].

Innovation Development

Innovation development involves the evaluation, modification and improvement of creative ideas. Innovation development can transform a product or service with only modest potential into a product or service with significant potential. Parker Brothers, for example, decided during innovation development not to market an indoor volleyball game but instead sell separately the appealing little foam ball designed for the game. The firm will never know how well the volleyball game would have sold, but the Nerf ball and numerous related products generated millions of dollars in revenues for Parker Brothers [4].

Innovation Application

Innovation application is the stage in which an organisation takes a developed idea and uses it in the design, manufacturing, or delivery of new products, services or processes. At this point the innovation emerges from the laboratory and is transformed into tangible goods or services. One example of innovation application is the use of radar-based focusing systems in Polaroid's instant cameras [5]. The idea of using radio waves to discover the location, speed and direction of moving objects was first applied extensively by Allied forces during World War II. As radar technology developed during the following years, the electrical components needed became smaller and more streamlined. Researchers at Polaroid applied this well-developed technology in a new way [2].

Application Launch

Application launch is the stage in which an organisation introduces new products or services to the marketplace. The important question is not "Does the innovation work?" but "Will customers want to purchase the innovative product or services?" History is full of creative ideas that did not generate enough interest among customers to be successful. Some

notable innovation failures include Sony's seat warmer, the Edsel automobile, and Polaroid's SX-70 instant camera (which cost \$3 billion to develop but never sold more than one hundred thousand units a year) [6]. Thus, despite development and application, new products and services can still possible fail at the launch phase.

Application Growth

Once an innovation has been successfully launched, it then enters the stage of application growth. This period is one of high economic performance for an organisation because demand for the product or service is often greater than the supply. Organisations that fail to anticipate this stage may unintentionally limit their growth, as Gillette did by not anticipating demand for its Mach III razor blades. At the same time, overestimating demand for a new product can be just as detrimental to performance. Unsold products can sit in warehouses for years.

Innovation Maturity

After a period of growing demand, an innovative product or service often enters a period of maturity. Innovation maturity is the stage in which most organisations in an industry have access to an innovation and are applying it in approximately the same way [3]. The technological application of an innovation during this stage of the innovation process can be very sophisticated. Because most firms have access to the innovation, either as a result of developing the innovation on their own or copying the innovation of others, however, it does not provide competitive advantage to any one of them. The time that elapses between innovation development and innovation maturity varies notably, depending on the particular product or service. Whenever an innovation involves the use of complex skills (such as a complicated manufacturing process or highly sophisticated teamwork), moving from the growth phase to the

maturity phase will take longer [1]. In addition, if the skills needed to implement these innovations are rare and difficult to imitate, then strategic imitation may be delayed and the organisation may enjoy a period of sustained competitive advantage.

Innovative Decline

Every successful innovation bears its own seeds of decline. Because an organisation does not gain a competitive advantage from an innovation at maturity, it must encourage its creative scientists, engineers and managers to begin looking for new innovations. This continued search for competitive advantage usually leads new products and services to move from the creative process through innovation maturity and finally to innovation decline. Innovation decline is the stage during which demand for an innovation decreases and substitute innovations are developed and applied [4].

CONCLUSION

Innovation can happen by chance, without a determined effort or specific methodology. But when it does, it's more like luck than strategic progress. While there is a role for serendipity in strategy – being able to take advantage of pleasant surprises -- too often, that's the only way companies approach innovation: with fingers crossed. The same organizations that diligently recruit to fill their ranks with clever and creative people often fail to put in place a process that seeks to get the best out of those people. These teams will, given the chance, create new products, new services, and new ways of getting things done. But relying on random efforts is like risking an organization's future success to a straight up roulette bet – or at the velocity of change today, maybe keno is a better analogy.

Instead, managers should develop and apply methodologies that create a consistent, predictable and sustainable path for innovation. They can begin by recognizing that innovation is no longer a stretch goal, but essential to survival. Thus, the development of a highly productive innovation capability is one of the most important strategic priorities for any organization.

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