

Improvement Initiatives

"Change – for the better!"

Inside this issue

Innovation Management 101	1 - 3
Dressing Sexy at Work?	2
Leaning Out the Corporate Logo	4
Change - It's All About the Culture	5 - 6

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re: Innovation

Management 101

by Ali Eftekhari April 19, 2009

Innovation management (IM) is the discipline of managing processes in innovation. It can be used to develop both product and organizational innovation. Without proper processes, it is not possible for R&D to be efficient. Definition of IM is therefore:

a set of tools that allow managers and engineers to cooperate with a common understanding of goals and processes ...

Today's Organizations mainly rely on intellectual properties, and in elite positions, creativity and innovation are the golden keys for the organizational success.

The highly competitive nature of today's business needs creative and innovative ideas for dominant success. Although good service is the essence of a successful business (in long term), novel ideas are jumping advancements; thus, a company has no chance to win this competitive game in the absence of creativity and innovation.

Innovation Management

Initially, innovation management was formed to provide an efficient managing system for Research & Development (R&D), but it has now spread far beyond this area due to the importance of innovation in various fields of business.

In general, innovation management has

continued on pages 2 & 3 ...

Innovation Management Magazine <http://www.innovationmanagement.se/>

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YIKES, SPIKES !**Dressing Sexy @ Work?**

Depending on the career, dressing sexy at work can give you a competitive edge or ruin your chance to rise to the top.

With casual clothes, becoming the norm in most 9 to 5 work environments dressing sexy at work in the 21st century can be difficult to define.

Too often, what women wear to work now mirrors the sexy form-fitting fashions of today.

However, a woman can be one bare midriff, too tight shirt and mini-skirt away from career clothing suicide.

If conservative office attire is the way to the top at work, keep that push up bra, lacy thong and midriff top well hidden under your suit ...

Get all the Fashion 411 @:

http://careervanity.com/can_i_dressSexyatwork.htm/

<http://money.cnn.com/2006/11/07/news/economy/dress.fortune/index.htm>

Innovation Management ...

two main duties to manage both input and output of innovative materials.

In the former case, innovation management must conduct the flow of innovative ideas (like new discoveries) into the organization for subsequent usages. In other words, it is needed to collect all relevant external innovations to serve the internal innovative system.

In the latter case, the internal innovation should be managed in a proper manner. According to the customers needs, an organization always should have new products and services to satisfy their needs. Internal innovative system is responsible for analyzing the external needs, estimating the internal possibilities, and proposing new innovative ideas.

Creative People in Creative Organizations

Due to the importance of creativity and innovation for an organization, in a modern management, it is necessary to distinguish creative people.

In general, people in technical positions, associated with elite positions (leading the organization strategy), are divided to two groups: creative people and their assistants.

This creative group is divided to two different groups namely initiators and problem solvers. The initiators are indeed creative people who "have that additional mental ability that

enables them to recognize previously unrealized problems and to evaluate their importance ... It is one thing to have an idea about specific problem; it is quite another to have an idea about what it is that is worth having an idea about" (Hilberry 1953).

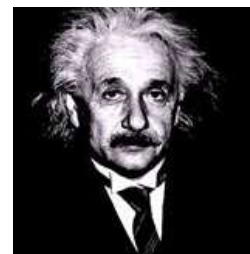
Although problem solvers are key persons in an organization (particularly in critical situations), the problems should be introduced to them, as they are not problem finders. In other words, problem solvers should follow the initiators (though not exactly the relationship of creative people – assistants).

The initiators are also divided to two distinguishable groups viz. discoverers and inventors. Although these two groups are usually considered identical, they are significantly different.

Discoverers work on a higher creative position of the organization by dealing with the question "why?" for analyzing a phenomenon or a problem; but inventors serve the routine performance of the organization by struggling with the question "how" things work and can be made to work better.

It is obvious that distinguishing these creativity-based groups is an important duty of the management system, and

continued on page 3 ...



Creative Thinker Albert Einstein

March 1879 - April 1955

Innovation Management continued ...

is only possible in the light of modern aspects of creativity and innovation management.

Risk Management

Creativity and Innovation management is somehow and somewhat risk management.

When dealing with novel creative ideas, the results are not guaranteed at all. Thus, not only it is needed to find, propose, and perform novel creative ideas, but also an essential requirement is to forecast the future performance in action.

In general, such managers should be a risk taker, multidimensional analyzer, prospector, futurist, and somehow discreet.

References

J. Balderston, P. Birnbaum, R. Goodman, and M. Stahl, *Modern Management Techniques in Engineering and R&D*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1984.

N. Hilberry, *Elements of Basic Research Management Philosophy at Argonne National Laboratory*, Argonne National Laboratory, Lemont, Illinois, 1953

Read more at Suite101: [Creativity and Innovation Management: Managing System for Creative and Innovative Performance | Suite101.com](#)

Learn more at:

http://www.1000ventures.com/business_guide/innovation_mgmt_main.html

<http://sloanreview.mit.edu/special-report/innovation/>



dreamstime.com

Innovation Management objectives:

1. Effect a shift in the way the organization sees itself where innovation is recognized as the way of doing business
2. Deciding upon the innovation strategy that best fits the organization's situation, and enable it to attain its vision.
3. Creating a portfolio of innovation projects to translate competitive strategies and to manage risk across the whole organization.
4. Define a criterion for the selection and prioritization of projects within the portfolio to weed out less probable projects as soon as possible
5. Effect the necessary structural changes to arrange skills throughout the organization in competence centers, to enable the formation of the right team for the purposes of the innovation project.
6. Arrange current and potential future alliances in a portfolio that can be tapped when needed, and define when and how such alliances are to be made (governing conditions).
7. Foster an organizational culture that promotes innovation by allowing employees time to innovate and the implementation of their own ideas for improving job performance.
8. Develop and implement methods that enable tapping into the organization's intellectual capital.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO MANAGING INNOVATION

http://www.innovationtools.com/PDF/Integrated_Innovation_PLI.pdf

Top 5 tips for Logo Design

- 1) Understand what a logo is and what it represents
- 2) Know rules and principles of Logo design
- 3) Learn from other's
- 4) Establish your own design process
- 5) Learn about Logo software

Additionally, a logo must be:

- **describable**
- **memorable**
- **effective without color**
- **scalable i.e. effective when just an inch in size**

Select Comfort Stores re-branded to the simplified 'sleep number' logo ...



Leaning out the Logo - Albert J. Perotti, III

Don't let your logo put limits on your business.

Starbucks sells more than just coffee - such as quick snacks, baked goods, pastries, sandwiches, etc. Plus, when you remove the words, there are no translation problems. Baskins Robbins' new logo downplays its' history and embeds the famous "31" within the letters. Besides ice cream, it offers decorated cakes and other delights. Today, it offers over 100 flavors of ice cream.

Remember - with all the intended meaning, or lack thereof, around these designs - consumers will ultimately determine if these marketing ideas will prove effective.

More information available at:

<http://www.davidairey.com/5-vital-logo-design-tips/>



Baskin *31* Robbins.



Learn more about famous logos at:

<http://www.famouslogos.us/>

Like Penicillin, it's all about the culture ...

by [Jim Shaffer](#)

Hands down, the first issue should be addressing the cultural aspects of taking the organization to a higher level of performance.

I've been brought in to "fix" numerous lean implementation efforts because the companies didn't understand that while lean has many tools, techniques and processes, what makes it sustainable at Toyota and elsewhere is the mindset or culture that underpins it. The cultural aspect, the soft side of business, addresses fundamental values. It focuses on leadership, communication, involvement, learning, performance management, high involvement, rewards and recognition. It requires people to think differently. Although many companies secure superior gains through lean, many also hit a wall and don't get anywhere near the results they could largely because they didn't manage the cultural and technical aspects together.

Ironically, it's the soft side that's often the hard part.

The technical side is the "what," of a change effort. The cultural side is the "how," how we do the "what."

In companies where lean hits a wall it's almost always because the leadership has implemented the "what" in ways that are consistent with traditional top-down management thinking. To skeptical employees, lean becomes viewed as another management program of the day that will eventually pass rather than an altogether different way of running the business—the "how."

Here's an example.

As important part of lean is a visual daily management system that enables people to "see at a glance" how they're doing against specific goals and what might be impeding progress. While it's a key part of a communication process (the hard), it's really a critical component of a process to align people of an organization who are learning together to add more value to the customer (the soft).

[continued on next page ...](#)

Like Penicillin, it's all about the culture ...

One of our client's visual management systems on the surface was “by the book.” Scoreboards were nicely designed, updated regularly and relatively well-positioned throughout the organization. The “what” was impeccable?

But employees didn't understand what the process was for, or why the boards were there, and they had no idea what some of the numbers meant to the company or to them. Managers responded: "But we told them." Obviously, not well enough. Well-intentioned managers and engineers had installed scoreboards (what) but had not involved people in the process of designing, testing, distributing or daily updating the boards (how). The visual management system was part of “management's program.”

Why does this happen?

First, installing techniques and tools is easier than building relationships where uncontrollable human idiosyncrasies can wend their way into the process.

Second, many traditional managers have never seen, felt and/or smelled the kind of culture that's required to create a lean culture. They often enter lean relatively naive and assume traditional leadership roles. Their leadership selection, measurement and accountability systems remain unchanged when we expect different behavior from them.

Leaders can pick up any one of hundreds of books that explain how to install a problem-solving technique, conduct root cause analysis, facilitate a kaizen event or install pull systems. Those books contain lots of diagrams, drawing and photographs that can help with installation. But what they don't do is explain in sufficient detail how to tap into the potential that a passionate, highly engaged group of people can bring to a business.

I suggest leading with a lot of work around cultural issues - integrating and implementing the cultural and technical aspects of lean in parallel.

Off the Page ...

Microsoft Becoming a Failure: 12 Brand Mistakes with High Costs (*Despite the 'Innovation' angle ...*)

Analysts continue to criticize Microsoft and consider its prospects as cloud computing and competitive products dim the prospects for the company's operating systems.

A History of Failed Brands

Indeed, Microsoft has a long track record of failed brands. Here are a dozen examples:

Vista: This failure hurt the most. Microsoft is synonymous with operating systems, so a failed product in this category was a body blow. Released in January 2007, by April 2009, the software had only achieved a 24% share of PC operating systems. Most people still prefer to limp along using decade-old systems.

Kin Phone: It took years and billions of dollars to develop, but only sold 503 units after 48 days on the market. In terms of financial cost, this brand inflicted plenty of damage.

Tablet PC: The failure of this brand chipped away at Microsoft's reputation as an innovator. Ground-breaking when Microsoft first announced it ten years ago, the Tablet PC was surpassed by better design and better marketing of the iPad and Samsung's Android.

Zune: An innovative reputation can't be won with copycat products. Microsoft's Zune portable media player has not been able to effectively compete with Apple and its iPod.

MSN: As Microsoft struggled with MSN Search, which became MSN (with the butterfly), then Live Search and now Bing, Google started, grew, and now dominates.

WebTV: The internet over television sounded like the holy grail of convergence. But the product never produced a revenue stream as its tech-averse customer base created an expensive customer service nightmare.

Passport: Microsoft demonstrated branding cluelessness by originally calling this "thing" Microsoft Wallet, then Passport, then .NET Passport, then Microsoft Passport Network, then Live ID, then Windows Live as part of MSN. Phew! Moreover, entrusting sensitive information to a company known for operating systems with massive security bugs, Passport was a no-go. The service closed August 2009.

Encarta: Why pay for a limited and outdated encyclopedia when there is Wikipedia? This brand finally expired on March, 2009.

Bob: Bob was meant to be a user-friendly Windows interface, but turned into a laughing-stock that perennially makes the "worst of" lists. "Bob" appears to be an internal project name that somehow escaped as a public-facing brand name on an embarrassing product.

Money: Brand trust issues aside, Microsoft Money could not compete against online banks, free personal finance tools and more established and robust financial software products.

WinCE: Yup, this product made people “wince”. This personal digital assistant software brand represents years of trying, failing and eventually giving up.

“I’m a PC”: In answer to Apple’s successful “I’m a Mac” branding campaign came the inexplicable “I’m a PC” answer from Microsoft. In addition to adopting an “I know you are, but what am I” brand positioning, the campaign didn’t identify the brand Windows beyond a logo and said nothing about the “V-Word” (the failing Vista operating system). Why invest in advertising a generic like a PC?

Key Factors in Microsoft’s Branding Failures

- 1) Poor design: Apple’s brand is built on excellent, innovative design. Microsoft design is generic and old-fashioned.
- 2) Inconsistency: The Apple product brands all support key brand attributes of the parent company: coolness and easy usability. Microsoft branding is all over the map, with some product brands having almost no association with the parent company and with no brands sharing a unifying attribute that would bring them all together as Microsoft.
- 3) No jumping off point: Apple has always been about devices integrated with software, making it easy to create new products of all kinds. Microsoft was just an operating system, and a bug-ridden one at that.
- 4) Problems with trust: Microsoft has been seen as arrogant and pushy. Its reputation has never recovered from the anti-trust lawsuit in the 1990s.
- 5) Poor follow-through: Beyond a launch announcement and a few ads, many Microsoft products flounder unsupported.

Lots of money and really smart people are Microsoft strengths, but the company cannot reach its full potential without smarter branding. Little by little, newcomers like Google and old competitors like Apple will eat their lunch.

SOURCE:

<http://merriamassociates.com/>

<http://merriamassociates.com/2010/12/microsoft-becoming-a-failure-12-brand-mistakes-with-high-costs/>