

4.2 Tools for Innovation Management

This book gives an access to several handbooks and guidelines in the field of Innovation Management developed by the SEPT Competence Center at Leipzig University.

- **Managing the Fuzzy Front-End of Innovation**
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- **Innovation Awareness (InnoAware)Toolbox**
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Managing the Fuzzy Front-End of Innovation

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Introduction

One of the authors' main motivations to publish this book is the need to raise the success rate of innovation projects undertaken by enterprises and organizations.

The emphasis placed by the authors in the fuzzy front-end of the innovation process is due to the fact that, within their experiences in the different fields of economic activity, they have repeatedly witnessed the decisive impact that this fuzzy front-end has in the fate and results of the innovation projects. When investing the necessary resources, using suitable human resources and promoting essential intangible capacities to cover the demands of this crucial period, it is possible to reduce the risk of failure of the innovation projects. The high rate of failure is not only related to the very nature of the innovation, which essentially means the attempt of something that has not been previously carried out. Many projects fail because of mistakes or deficiencies in the management of their front (early) phases, and these failings are often explained on one hand by the lack of analysis and poor planning, and on the other hand, by the insufficient use of management tools that can bridge knowledge, strategy and practices.

The two sections of this book pursue two main objectives: first, to deliver the reader the conceptual basis to understand the *why and how* of innovation management with a strict orientation towards market. Since an isolated application of methods and tools, without previously establishing a clear action line and without defining priorities, generally leads to realizing pointless efforts and incurring costs, which could be avoided. Both those who assume a leadership role in decision making and those who from their most specialized areas intervene in innovation projects, must understand innovation as a process incorporating multiple factors, areas and dimensions, and which implies certain complexities for the management and the employees. In this way, it is possible to count with the necessary elements to practice analysis and develop strategies. Based on this approach it is possible to begin with the implementation of tools, which allow materializing strategies.

Both the conceptual approach in the first section of the book, and the set of tools presented in the second section, arise from the practices of German companies and their successful innovation approaches.

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Innovation Awareness (InnoAware)Toolbox



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Introduction

Nowadays pursuing typical cost reduction strategies alone is not enough in order to stay competitive and achieve a decent market share. These days, customer needs have become more manifold and complex, so that integrating these needs along each step of the business development process is indispensable. Hence, addressing customer needs and staying competitive require new creative strategies that allow for the inclusion of new factors in the business model development. In recent years businesses have tried to overcome these challenges by employing innovation methods and tools in their companies. Innovation is understood as: the successful commercialization of an idea, research result, or invention. Innovation creates business value through new products, technologies, services, and processes. “New” means to the market or the firm and does not have to be new to the world.

In market-driven innovation processes, the company’s attention is focused on the newly discovered unfilled need of the potential customers. Today’s possibilities to access information worldwide have changed the role of the customer in the global marketplace. Market-driven innovation management requires a systematic approach that allows for understanding and developing solutions that effectively respond to the fulfilment of the customers’ needs.

In order to improve the competitiveness of Egyptian enterprises and foster innovation in the local context, the Industrial Innovation Strategy in Egypt has been developed within the framework of a bilateral technical cooperation project under the guidance of the Egyptian Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) with technical assistance provided by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The first measure of MTI’s innovation strategy – InnoAware – seeks to raise interest in innovation as a potential source of growth for SMEs through implementing workshops, networks, events, etc.

The InnoAware Toolbox is designed in such a way that innovation experts can use the described tools in three different environments: with companies, start-ups, or higher education institutions. For each tool one or more innovation techniques are presented and detailed guidelines for implementing the tools are provided ¹.

In order to implement InnoAware, it is necessary to train innovation experts to make them familiar with the InnoAware Toolbox. This will allow them to develop and implement a number of activities to effectively spread knowledge on innovation through intermediary organisations all over Egypt. Therefore the specific objectives of the InnoAware Toolbox are:

- To equip innovation experts with tools for planning events to create innovation awareness.
- To guide innovation experts in the development of an implementation plan for InnoAware events.
- To promote innovation and its key role in growth and competitiveness of Egyptian enterprises.

The InnoAware Toolbox was developed based on the experience of the iN4iN Network (www.in4in.net).

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