Managing Process Innovation: From Idea Generation to Implementation (Series on Technology Management)

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This book will take the reader through a systematic examination of the factors involved in process innovation. It starts with the considerations to be initiated in the boardroom and at group management level and develops into a hands-on guide for middle management and professional engineers directly involved in the innovation of process technology. The book initially puts process innovation in a corporate perspective, providing a framework for the development of a corporate process innovation strategy. Some new methodological tools are also introduced which support the targeting and proper roadmapping of improved process capabilities, and the progression of customer and end-user product demands, into raw-material specifications in a well-managed supply and demand chain.

Various aspects of the design of a process innovation organisation are reviewed in a later section. In the context of the development of process technology, this book advocates the importance of delineating and clarifying corporate work processes. Various environments for development work are discussed, from initial test work to pilot-plant testing and the use of demonstration facilities to achieve lean process innovation. The importance of an open collaborative approach is stressed. This includes involving external equipment manufacturers at an early stage as well as collaborative development of customers' use of the products in their production processes, with a view to excellence in future application development.

Process innovation will not, however, generate profit or reduce operating costs until the new or improved process technology is operating well in the plant. Best practice for start-up of new process technology and process plants is examined, starting with a fresh outlook on technology transfer in general. This often-neglected area of management of process innovation is, in fact, of an importance equivalent to that of a product launch in the development of new products. The final part of the book closes the circle, discussing how to implement and measure the strategic intent of process innovation. Improving the general performance of corporate process innovation is then covered by going through success factors and key performance indicators, and their aggregation on a corporate level.

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