

Preface

As organizations integrate further into the global economy, managers need to predict their competitive outlook and rapidly adapt their innovation strategies to meet their competitors head on. Many studies have been published and indeed special issues of top flight management journals have been devoted to innovation, yet the drivers of success in systematic innovation are not well understood from a theoretical level, hence existing practical insights are not well-founded.

The book takes an international cross-case perspective to explore how organizations build innovation capability. Eight case studies were developed in France, Germany, Australia and Thailand, in various industry sectors, ranging from manufacturing, mining, biotechnology and computers. Each case study explores the role of the central constructs of e-Commerce, sustainable development orientation (SDO) and New Product Development (NPD) in developing innovation capability for the respective organization.

The book justifies the efficacy of building innovation capability so that the present manager's perception of innovation as a technically-driven strategy is expanded to include innovation as a competitive business strategy. The book primarily informs managers and management researchers in terms of "what works, why and how it works" in building innovation-driven organizations. Based on qualitative multiple cross-case analysis, the book articulates the dimensions of innovation capability in organizations, and how innovation capability is developed and exploited. The key drivers of innovative organizations are also identified.

The "breakthrough" contribution of this book is to identify and crisply articulate innovation capability in a comprehensive manner, and as an integrative construct. Most previous books have focused on only one aspect of innovation capability, perhaps reflecting the specialized nature of these past researchers. This book takes an integrative multi-case study perspective.

The book develops new theory in the field of innovation management that leads to new conclusions of general value and practical insights for executives wishing to improve the innovation outcomes of their firms. Conversely, we identify which practices create the greatest barriers to innovation, and hence should be addressed in more detail during the commercialization process. This will prevent the waste of scarce organizational resources. Identifying time delays between the introduction of an innovative idea and improvement in the company's corporate performance is valuable because it will help reassure managers that innovation is a worthwhile investment, even if it does take time.

Milé Terziovski
Melbourne, Australia
February 2007