College of Business book review by Paul M. Di Gangi

Title: "The Open Innovation Revolution: Essentials, Roadblocks, and Leadership Skills"

Author: Stefan Lindegaard

Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Length: 226 pages

Price: $34.95 (hardcover)

Reading time: 3 - 5 hours

Reading rating: 9 (1 = very difficult; 10 = very easy)

Overall rating: 3 (1 = average; 4 = outstanding)

If you think you have what it takes to lead an innovation revolution inside your company but just don’t know how, then Stefan Lindegaard’s book titled “The Open Innovation Revolution” is the perfect guide to get you started. In his book, the author reveals a roadmap to what it takes to be a successful intrapreneur – entrepreneur inside an organization - and how to fight the steady resistance you will encounter along the way towards changing how your organization thinks about innovation.

Would it surprise you to know that nearly half of Proctor & Gamble’s innovation activities occur outside its own walls? Through its Connect & Develop initiative, P&G has come to embrace the open innovation strategy and reap the rewards of leveraging a global community of scientists to develop its next generation of innovations.

For a company to be open in its innovation strategy, it must foster a culture that loathes the phrase “Not Invented Here.” As the author describes in the opening chapters, open innovation is the integration of external resources throughout the organization’s entire innovation process. If implemented successfully, organizations increase their revenue and market share due to reduced spending on R&D, improved success rates on new products, faster development cycles, and shorter time to market for its products.

As a world renowned blogger and innovation thought leader, the author understands the importance of getting to the point quickly and providing an outline of the key points that can be quickly accessed on the job. Each chapter concludes with a summary of the main points discussed and action items for how to be a successful open innovation champion. Not to be taken only at his word, each chapter also includes organizational examples and commentary from innovation leaders that have already succeeded in implementing open innovation strategies. A wide range of companies such as Campbell’s, General Mills, and Grundfos demonstrate that an open innovation strategy can succeed, but it requires more than just implementing processes.

As the author repeats throughout the book, knowledge does not reside within processes – it resides within people. Therefore, the first step to becoming an open innovation company is to have the right people with the right skills in the right positions to ensure success. More specifically, you need two types of people – innovation leaders that understand organizational strategy and how open innovation fits within an organization’s overall business model and intrapreneurs who focus on the details and accomplishing the vision outlined by the innovation leaders.

Not to worry though, the author provides useful exercises and techniques on how to become a successful intrapreneur including tips on how to breakdown the many roadblocks that appear as you challenge the status quo in your organization. Whether it is learning how to defeat corporate antibodies or networking with a purpose or simply effectively managing time, the author provides tips on how to position you for success. For instance, spend a few moments reflecting on how you budgeted your time today? How much of your time was spent on meaningless tasks that were not directly related to achieving your goals? This simple question is meant to draw your attention to the importance of controlling the resources that are essential to your success and not letting the resources control you.

Stefan Lindegaard has written a book that is full of stories from businesses that have already walked the walk and emerged victorious. Written in the language of a new generation that is short on time and focused on getting to the point, “The Open Innovation Revolution” is a thought provoking guide to becoming an innovation leader within your company.

Paul M. Di Gangi is an assistant professor in the College of Business at Western Carolina University. For previously reviewed books, visit us at our website at [www.wcu.edu/cob/](file:///C:\Documents%20and%20Settings\crain\Local%20Settings\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\Q1BVZC4B\www.wcu.edu\cob\).