Mapping the Innovation Process

_____

_____

2005 Joe Tidd, John Bessant, Keith Pavitt

Mapping the Innovation Process

At a generic level, innovation is a core business process concerned with renewing what the organization offers the world and the ways in which it creates and delivers that offering. And to do this they all need to carry out these activities:

- *Searching* – scanning the environment (internal and external) for, and processing relevant signals about, threats and opportunities for change.
- *Selecting* – deciding (on the basis of a strategic view of how the enterprise can best develop) which of these signals to respond to
- *Implementing* – translating the potential in the trigger idea into something new and launching it in an internal or external market. Making this happen is not a single event but requires attention to:
    - o *Acquiring* the knowledge resources to enable the innovation (for example, by creating something new through R&D, market research, etc., acquiring knowledge from elsewhere via technology transfer, strategic alliance, etc.).
    - o *Executing* the project under conditions of uncertainty which require extensive problem-solving.
    - o *Launching* the innovation and managing the process of initial adoption
    - o *Sustaining* adoption and use in the long-term – or revisiting the original idea and modifying it – reinnovation.
- *Learning* – enterprises have (but may not always take) the opportunity to learn from progressing through this cycle so that they can build their knowledge base and can improve the ways in which the process is managed.

But they differ widely in the ways in which this is done and the importance of different elements. In this exercise pick a sector – e.g. food retailing, airlines, chemicals, public administration – and draw a map of their particular version of this process. How does it work out in practice? Where are they likely to need or to place most emphasis?

(The above exercise can be used to generate a class discussion around process models. Chapter 2 of the book provides some guidelines and illustrations.)