

MANAGERIAL CAREERS IN INNOVATION

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Innovation - field and attitude

As a general concept, innovation represents the sum of activities led through a complex process by which elements of novelty in the economic and social areas are generated, assimilated and exploited.

The definition used and widely accepted in the European Union through the Oslo Manual is: "An innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or of a process, a new marketing method, or a new organizing method in the business practice, in organizing the work place, or in foreign affaires". Nevertheless, the minimal requirement for an innovation is that the product, process, marketing method, or organization method has to be new (or significantly improved) for the company.

Managerial careers in innovation

The organizing of innovation activities in a company must start with defining the potential sources of ideas, and with the possibilities to use them for the development of the company. The personnel's creativity is essential in innovation process development in the company. Many times, the ideas are outside the company, and experience shows that the majority of creative companies were not those that created innovations by implementing their own ideas or research. Most of the times, small companies, very flexible, without investing much in research, benefitted from the research carried out in large companies, with large research budgets and a remarkable advance in the field, but which did not know to take advantage of their own creative effort. Hence, for a company to be innovative, the creativity of its personnel is a necessary factor, but sufficient too. For this reason, the innovation process, being a long term investment, must be conducted as any other economic activity, with benefits for the company and for the entire society. Therefore, to carry out efficiently the innovative processes in the company, managers specialized in this field are required, called innovation managers.

Conclusions

Albert Einstein said that "Imagination is more important than knowledge". This is a big truth valid in the current period, especially in the field of innovation. But for the innovation managers, both the knowledge and imagination are essential, even more now when, in the condition of decreasing global material resources, the economic process will be able to continue only by exploiting the closest resource - the human brain.

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