



1.6 General Frequently Asked Questions

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What does an Innovation Maturity Model add to the world?

The Innovation Maturity Model is the first truly international guide to help organizations become more innovative. It is a highly structured, comprehensive and thorough way to pragmatically organize all innovation management activities in any organization. It can apply to businesses, but also to not-for-profit organizations, as public services, schools, churches, sports organizations. Many organizations have some structure and process built around innovation, but seldom are they as thorough and comprehensive as is required. We have the passion to help others become more innovative using the Innovation Maturity Model. With this maturity model, organizations build their own Innovation Management Systems.

Why would organizations implement this at all?

In today's economy, efficiency and effectiveness is important. They only lead to operational effectiveness. Commoditization is also increasing rapidly, and so is the speed of market and technology change, and therefore innovation as a capability becomes more and more important. At the same time organizations have to do this with the same people and probably at lower cost levels. Organizations could create their own innovation management system to increase their innovation effectiveness and efficiency, generating more and better output at the same or lower cost in times of shortages.

Does creating an Innovation Management System put an extra burden on organizations?

This Innovation Maturity Model organizes *innovation excellence*, which is quite new. It is an advisory and scalable maturity model, which means that the result is not to document 'for the record', but just captures what the organization wants to and should document. The end result of assessments is not acquiring an innovation certificate, but to record progress on a scale of innovation capabilities over time. It is an innovation maturity management model. If all you want to do is execute on a simple idea, don't use an Innovation Maturity Model.

Is there still a need for Innovation Management Systems in a complex world without central controls?

Actually, it is quite the opposite. The need for adopting a solid Innovation Management System is *increasing* if partnering (with e.g. Open Innovation) becomes the norm rather than the exception. Now that more and more organizations have more complex interactions with their environments (e.g. through open innovation programs), and new innovations can come from organizations of any size or shape, standardizing on terminology, tools and processes and benchmarking become *more* important rather than less. An Innovation Maturity Model reduces clutter and noise in communications between organizations and helps improve partnering.

Who actually benefits from implementing an Innovation Management System?

This Innovation Maturity Model does three things:

1. it helps professionals to assess their organization's innovation strengths
2. it helps consultants to assess organizations on innovation capability
3. it helps professionals to increase their level of proficiency in innovation in a structured way, to further their careers.

I think Innovation Management Systems are in the way of innovation. Why should I adopt this at all?

We have some observations that may help you see this in a different perspective:

1. This documentation set will provide guidance on how to quickly but thoroughly make progress on implementing your own innovation management system.
2. The framework is advisory rather than prescriptive: people are in charge to determine what they want to do, how deep and wide they implement it. *Every organization should implement its own version* (if you start using other people's processes, you are on the wrong track)
3. The standard is a path towards improvement rather than a one-off evaluation, meaning you want to monitor progress over time, and using the framework to get advice on how to improve performance, not draw simple conclusions.

I think Innovation Management Systems may inhibit our creativity, serendipity or entrepreneurship. Why do we need this?

There are certain aspects of innovation that cannot be managed by exerting traditional forms of planning-and-control management, such as creativity, serendipity or entrepreneurship. It would be pretentious to say that you could. However, there are two important points to realize:

1. The fact that some elements cannot be entirely planned or controlled does not release professionals from responsibilities for managing the elements where you actually can
2. If creativity, serendipity or entrepreneurship cannot be managed, they can at least be facilitated, so that people can perform at their best in circumstances that are advantageous to innovation. You *can* manage the processes around facilitation meaning you create proper conditions under which they can flourish, and write it down in a standard like we do here.

What concrete innovation management problem do you address?

Through our project (funded by a foundation), a very fundamental question has been raised (and addressed), that rarely innovations are repeatable, and performance stable. Innovation typically has a one-off character in that companies, and individual products, may be successful, but rarely repeatable and stable over time. Using an innovation management system, organizations can significantly improve their innovation management capability. This will help them increase revenues, lower costs, and get more out of their current pipeline. The framework is universally applicable to all kinds of organizations.

What is the status of the Innovation Maturity Model, and its scale?

The core texts and tools have been completed, and PDMA and TIM Foundation are working on more auxiliary documentation, which will be vetted by an international team of experts on innovation and new product development. It has been rolled out since the fall of 2013, including an assessment toolkit to help organizations use it for assessments and training purposes.

What are the expected effects of adopting an Innovation Maturity Model in your organization?

The expected effects are such, that by adopting this Innovation Maturity Model way of thinking

and working, organizations may get significantly better at innovation management, and may improve their innovation performance as a result: meaning innovate better, cheaper, faster and with more lasting effects.

What insights can be derived from the Innovation Maturity Model? What are the lessons learnt? And to what extent, are these insights relevant?

What we have learned in the meantime, is that introduction of an Innovation Maturity Model can be a steep learning curve for most organizations, *one that is almost never understood fully in one cycle*. At the same time, the majority of them will need to learn and adapt sooner rather than later. Also, that implementing an Innovation Maturity Model is a very rewarding and productive way to let an organization learn to improve its own innovation capability. It is a path to follow, not a point to reach. Moreover, that once organizations do understand the needs they have, their performance increases significantly.

Need more information? Check out www.pdma.org for the Innovation Maturity Model, or www.timfoundation.org for more detail for partners and expert users.