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1.3 Why Should You Use an Innovation Management Standard and Maturity Model?

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Many, probably most organizations have issues with innovation, and particularly with organizing *repeatable, and lasting* innovation capability. Many organizations are just built on one great idea which is developed, and flourish on ongoing business becoming better, faster, cheaper. Limited, one-time hits, ad-hoc, and sometimes accidental innovation seems to be a widely spread feature among organizations. Why is this the case, is it a lack of creativity, expertise, resources, determination or necessity? Is it because of their business model, culture, leadership or simply lack of will to innovate or invest? Or is it, because there are issues with all of these, and more particularly, with connections between those individual factors linking them into a system?

Could it be that organizations have not developed systemic capability to innovate?
Organizations aiming to improve innovation capability will typically attempt the initiative with some type of innovation methodology or technique which often does not cover the entire three phases of the innovation cycle consisting of the front end, middle and back end, or all the activities required within those phases. *Seldom will they address all of the individual factors that influence innovation management success.* Proper innovation management tactics need to address six fundamental questions which are the following:
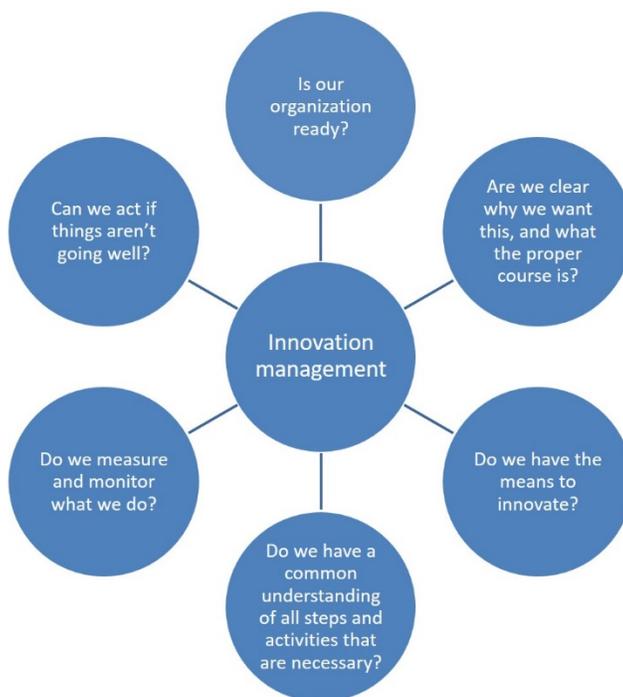
Golfers will not score well with 3 or 4 clubs in the bag. Each club in the set has a purpose, and implementing only partial innovation capability will provide an organization with

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limited or no success. Haphazard approaches to innovation can only lead to dissatisfying results, time and money wasted, and employees will be left frustrated, and highly unlikely to participate in the next feeble attempt to innovate.

If you want to innovate, do it right the first time!
Doing it right the first time starts with acquiring an understanding of innovation management with a holistic view, followed by commitment. This requires that you make the whole organization embrace innovation. A holistic and systemic view of innovation within an organization will address the six elements of innovation management:
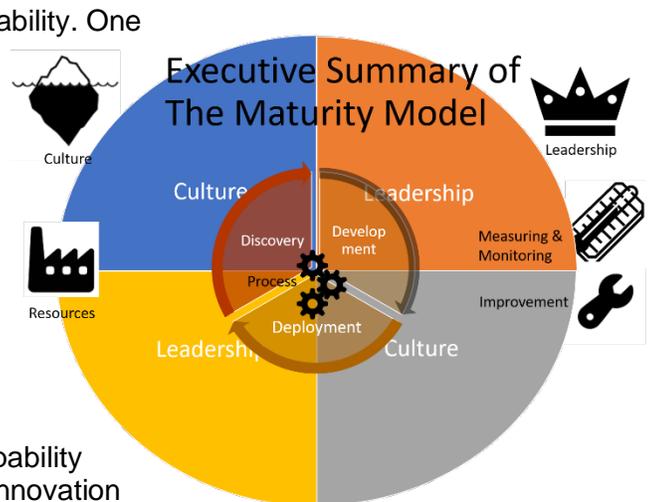
The six questions above translate into six identifiable factors that come into play when improving innovation capability: Culture, Leadership, Resources, Processes, Monitoring & Measuring and Improvement.

These factors together form a maturity model that helps organizations build innovation capability. Each element is essential for establishing lasting innovation capability. Building coherent innovation capability is a step up from simple tools and processes. It is more than just the front end, middle and back end of the innovation cycle, along with the methods, techniques and tools used to implement them, as it improves the innovation capability of the entire organization.
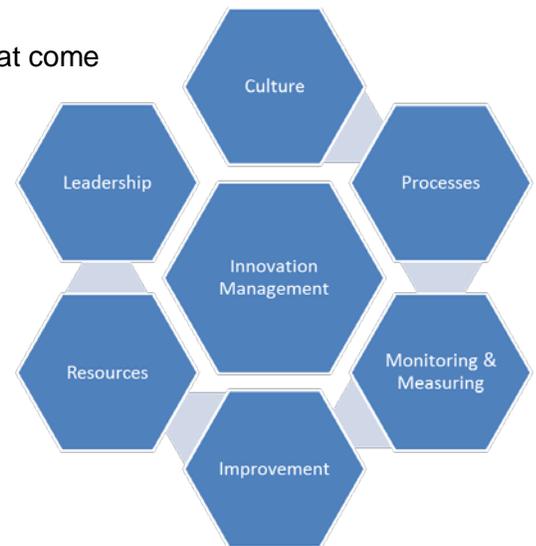
Characteristics of Innovation Capability
Each organization needs to build unique innovation capability. One innovation process does not fit all organizations. To be really successful: *invent your own. Don't adopt other organization's version of processes and methods.* It is one of the most important reasons why superimposed processes such as gated or phased development processes have serious drawbacks. It is also the prime reason why many tools and models proposed in management books don't work. They were not designed for your environment in the first place. Some organizations require policies, procedures and/or instructions for innovations where they are deemed necessary. However, solid, proper innovation capability evaluates its own effectiveness. Effective innovation capability drives the requirements through the flow in the form of innovation objectives that are monitored and measured over time.

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Culture
Innovation Capability establishes a culture that fosters creativity and innovation and this starts with innovation being a core function within the organization, not a side line activity or short term initiative. The organization's culture should, among others, address the following aspects:

- Facilities, human aspects of the work environment and surroundings
- Regular top down and bottom up communications
- Continual leaning and the sharing of knowledge acquired
- Time allocated for participation in innovation activities on a regular basis
- Collaboration between employees at all levels of the organization, including other stakeholders
- Employee recognition for innovation participation is practiced

Leadership
Executive Management with participation and input from stakeholders will develop measurable innovation objectives and communicate these objectives to all employees and levels of the organization. All levels of management (Executive, Middle Management and Supervisors) will support and encourage creativity and innovation within the organization. All levels of management participate in innovation activities and review all innovation activities on a regular basis.

Resources
Resources are allocated for innovation activities, which includes the continual implementation and improvement of Innovation Capability and individual innovation projects. Resources include people, finances and an adequate infrastructure. Innovation Capability will be managed by an assigned individual and board. Cross-functional teams are assembled for the phases of the innovation cycle.

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Processes

Processes are in place to continually implement and improve Innovation Capability and to fully implement the front end, middle and back end of the innovation cycle. These processes will utilize a variety of relevant methodologies, techniques and tools and will leave an assessment trail.

Measuring and monitoring

Measurements and metrics are established to determine the effectiveness of Innovation Capability in meeting the organization's innovation objectives and individual innovation project objectives. These measurements and metrics are subject to continual improvement and are reviewed and communicated on a regular basis.

Improvement

Continual improvement is implemented to:

- Improve/increase the organization's innovation maturity
- To meet and surpass innovation objectives, both system and projects
- To keep up with new technologies and a changing environment

Done correctly, organizations go through successive steps in their innovation maturity lifecycle: they are aware of a necessity for change, commit themselves to the change, lead the change effort, improve innovation capability and assess the improvements made.

More information? Check out www.timfoundation.org for more detail.