

Foreword

Every product has a life cycle, making constant renewal a core task of every business. This is especially true of German companies, which are typically forced to create a competitive advantage through being highly innovative rather than through low-cost production. It is, therefore, vital for these businesses to monitor and acknowledge the many academic findings in the field of innovation management. No easy task: there have been countless studies pertaining to innovation management, and it is often difficult to obtain clear and specific results. This is also partly due to the fact that such studies regularly come to different conclusions. For example, Larker (1997) is only able to identify a negative correlation between customer contributions and success in innovation, whereas Slater et al. (2007) conclude the exact opposite. The differences between the various studies and their findings can be explained by a number of factors, and by situational factors in particular. Thus the question remains: What generalizable statements can be derived from these myriad studies? The answer lies in a meta-analysis covering all the individual studies, and so far four prominent meta-analyses have been published in the field of innovation management. However, these meta-analyses manage to raise serious questions themselves, which limits generalizability, which leads to repeated calls for new meta-analyses on this topic.

This is the starting point for Markus Sattler's thesis. This dissertation responds to the overarching research question: What are the key success factors of innovation management at company level? In providing his answer, Mr. Sattler reviewed a number of previous research projects, synthesized the resulting data, and analyzed this data as a whole. As such he was able to filter out overarching findings relevant to innovation management and to resolve, or at least take one step closer to resolving, existing disparities between past studies.

Mr. Sattler took an interesting approach to this project. To begin with he undertook an extremely comprehensive review of the available literature concerning innovation management. As a result, this work is incredibly valuable for subsequent researchers, who will benefit enormously from its discussion of all key studies thus far that deal with success drivers in innovation management at company level.

The subsequent quantitative linking and evaluation of a key section of these studies allowed Mr. Sattler to arrive at his own conclusions. As a result he is in a position to offer valuable advice, to industry practitioners in particular, on how to develop successful innovation management within a company. This dissertation highlights key overarching findings that, al-

though possibly already stated in specific individual studies, have so far certainly not been consistent across all studies.

In line with its tremendous value to both theory and practice, this work truly deserves as wide an audience as possible.

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