

A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO INNOVATION THROUGH

“LA SALLE MATRIX THINKING”

RENU BHARGAVA

Director, Indira School of Business Studies, Tathwade, Pune, Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT

The paper presented involves a review of Matrix Thinking presented by **Roger La Salle**, who is the creator of the "Matrix Thinking"™ technique. The author has presented the concepts developed by Roger La Salle in his Matrix Thinking. Author has explored Rogers's advocacy in using structured methods for managing business innovation to become an effective way to improve the ideation process. In this paper, structured models of innovation and product development are reviewed and an approach to them is presented, based on research conducted by Roger and brief cases presented which represent examples of some products and relevant innovation attached in their development. The conclusion brings forth implications for managers, such as the need to train employees in structured methods, and the implications for those who teach innovation management are discussed. The structured approach to innovative and opportunistic thinking is represented by several purpose developed thinking platforms (Matrices) that have been developed into complete learning modules delivered through agents in more than 26 countries as researched by Roger and more recently licensed to Deloitte, one of the world's largest consulting firms for e-learning (Roger LaSalle, 2010). In support of the aim of the paper, it is not the intention of the author to provide exhaustive critical reviews of the literature. Such a task would be an onerous, voluminous and ultimately unnecessary because exhaustive literature reviews already exist. For the purpose of this paper, a select sample of pertinent literature that support the arguments made is included in the review. According to the author the thinking matrices such as those presented, or purpose built matrices, depending on the issue at hand are a powerful way to harness the combined power of a group of people for the development of new insights and knowledge. The author suggests the utilization of this Matrix for Opportunity Capture and Systematic Thinking. The matrices presented provide more than 100 such thinking stimuli in a structured matrix format that gets everybody "on the same page" and all making innovative contributions to the problem at hand (Roger 2002). The managerial implications, including the need to train employees in structured methods and creativity, are also analyzed. The first section of this paper presents a literature review covering topics such as structured methodologies and new product development (NPD) education. The second section deals with analysis of Rogers Matrix Thinking and in the third section of conclusion the author prescribes Matrix Thinking and its conceptualization in driving innovation and presents the view that teaching structured methods is a potent way to enhance the innovative capabilities of companies and to develop creative products for the marketplace.

KEYWORDS:Innovation, Opportunity, Business Plan, Market Risk, Matrix Thinking