

Driving Innovation by Enhancing Employee Roles: The Balancing Act of Employee-Driven Innovation

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Abstract : Our purpose is to investigate how the relationship between employees and innovation management processes can drive organizations to successful innovations. This research is deeply related to a new way of thinking about human resources management practices. It's not simply about improving the employees' engagement, but rather about a different and more radical commitment: the employee can take on the role traditionally played by the customer, namely to become the first tester of an innovative product or service, the first user/customer and eventually the first investor in the innovation. This new perception of employees could create the basis of a novelty in the innovation process where innovation is taken to a next level when the problems with customer driven innovation on the one hand, and employees driven innovation on the other can be balanced. This research identifies an effective approach to innovation where the employees will participate throughout the whole innovation process, not only in the idea creation but also in the idea definition and development by giving feedback in parallel to that provided by customers and lead-users.

Keywords : employee-driven innovation, engagement, human resource management, innovative companies

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