

Preface

This book is for students and managers who want a practical but academically rigorous guide to Innovation Management. It is based on a framework of innovation management – the Innovation Pentathlon – which was developed from our research and has been used extensively in our work with companies. Our research showed that senior managers felt the need for an overall framework to help them understand the innovation performance of their companies, as well as tools and techniques they need to improve it. At a meeting in 2000, where over twenty European universities presented the results of their research to industrialists, a senior manager from the GlaxoSmithKline pharmaceutical company commented forcibly that he needed integrative tools for innovation management, not the ad hoc collection of, what he called, ‘snippets of best practice’ given by university researchers. Managers recognize that there are many facets to managing innovation: it involves strategy (for example, whether to be first-to-market, or to be a fast-follower); people management (for example, organizing and motivating teams); good project management (for example, in striving to meet challenging time-to-market goals); and much else. Integrating the many facets of innovation management is the challenge, and managers in the real world need all the help they can get from the academic world.

This book borrows ideas and concepts from a range of disciplines, from economics to organizational behaviour and change management. Throughout the book, we have tried to present a clear outline of the theory relating to each topic together with illustrative examples of how it has played out in practice. There are 67 half-page ‘mini cases’ and one multi-page case study per chapter; a total of 77 in all. In writing these cases we have deliberately sought to achieve parity between the manufacturing and service sectors – too often the service sector is not done justice in writings about innovation management. In addition, we have tried to provide a truly international mix of cases. The table on pages xii–xv lists both the mini and main cases per chapter. Additional teaching material such as study questions, teaching notes and slides are provided on the associated web site.

There are no ‘quick fixes’ in the complex field of innovation management. Therefore, the challenge for managers is not just to adopt the ideas in this book but to adapt and blend them to fit the context their organizations face. We wish them every success in meeting that challenge.