

# Introduction

*"The Stone Age didn't end because they ran out of stones..."*  
- Sheikh Yamani

This is, without question, my favorite innovation-related quote, even if it is taken slightly out of context. Placing it in the correct context, Sheikh Yamani was explaining that the world will not come to an end when the Earth's oil reserves finally dry up. He opines that there will be new, innovative alternatives available before that very disruptive event occurs.

The reason I list it as my favorite innovation-related quote is because it most clearly illustrates the concept of what this book is about...change through ideas. The Stone Age ended, quite simply, because something better came along...bronze. And the Bronze Age ended when an even better alternative arose...iron.

From the beginning of recorded human history, the concepts of creative problem solving and idea generation have been present. Innovation, or the process of leveraging those creative new ideas for commercial gain, undoubtedly arose shortly thereafter.

Today, the processes of new discovery, innovative invention, and improvement to old design continue, albeit at an exponentially faster pace. In response to this explosion of innovation and creative thought leadership, modern organizations are no longer relegating these processes to the research & development or marketing departments. The

goal today is to embed an innovation culture into each and every area of the company.

This book seeks to explore the entire innovation management discipline from problem identification to the concept of continuous innovation efforts. Therefore, each part of the book is divided into a logical structure for managing the creative thought process and leveraging ideas for business advantage. It is designed to provide you with a management premise, followed by various strategic approaches for delivering and managing the concept presented.

Additionally, the title of the book includes “desk reference” because it attempts to organize a compendium of foundational definitions, concepts, thought leadership and models as they relate to planting idea seeds with the hope of harvesting profitable innovation.

With that being said, this body of work is not in any way intended to be the definitive voice of all things innovation or business creativity. It is simply a collection of proven management tools for developing and delivering the fresh, new products and/or services that an increasingly savvy and competitive consumer marketplace demands.