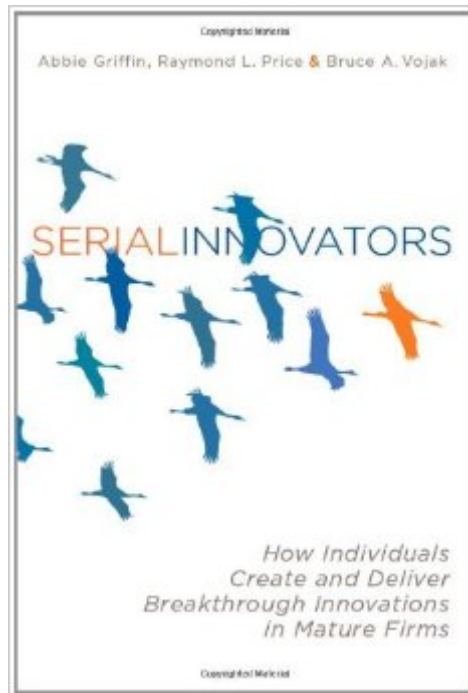


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Serial Innovators: How Individuals Create And Deliver Breakthrough Innovations In Mature Firms



Synopsis

Serial Innovators: How Individuals Create and Deliver Breakthrough Innovations in Mature Firms zeros in on the cutting-edge thinkers who repeatedly create and deliver breakthrough innovations and new products in large, mature organizations. These employees are organizational powerhouses who solve consumer problems and substantially contribute to the financial value to their firms. In this pioneering study, authors Abbie Griffin, Raymond L. Price, and Bruce A. Vojak detail who these serial innovators are and how they develop novel products, ranging from salt-free seasonings to improved electronics in companies such as Alberto Culver, Hewlett-Packard, and Procter & Gamble. Based on interviews with over 50 serial innovators and an even larger pool of their co-workers, managers and human resources teams, the authors reveal key insights about how to better understand, emulate, enable, support, and manage these unique and important individuals for long-term corporate success. Interestingly, the book finds that serial innovators are instrumental both in cases where firms are aware of clear market demands, and in scenarios when companies take risks on new investments, creating a consumer need. For over 25 years, research on innovation has taken the perspective that new product development can be managed like any other (complex) process of the firm. While a highly structured and closely supervised approach is helpful in creating incremental innovations, this book finds that it is not conducive to creating breakthrough innovations. The text argues that the drive to routinize innovation has gone too far; in fact, so far as to limit many mature firms' ability to create breakthrough innovations. In today's economy, with the future of so many large firms on the line, this book is a clarion call to businesses to rethink how to nurture and thrive on their innovative workforce.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I bought this book on a hunch, based on its title -- and I wasn't disappointed. This is EXACTLY the book I was looking for to describe serial innovators. (Serial innovators are also known as innate innovators. When they turn their skills to business, they may become serial entrepreneurs.) The book is concise, about 200 pages, and packed with valuable information and ideas. The first part of SERIAL INNOVATORS reviews existing research (including vivid case studies) pertaining to serial innovators; it suggests theories to explain serial innovation's outcomes. The book's second part gets more deeply into the experience of serial innovation and serial innovators -- something I wanted to understand fully, being a serial innovator myself; now I do. The third part is a how-to for organizations wanting to position, encourage, support, and gain the fullest value from its serial innovators, from first good idea to implementation and application. SERIAL INNOVATORS is subversive, as are the objects of its scrutiny. Much has been written (and continues to be written, whole carloads, even) about "training" innovators, discovering the innovation in everyone, etc. Consultants are scrambling to get on the innovation-management gravy train. But as the research results described in this book correlate with my own experience as a professional serial innovator and entrepreneur: innate innovation is just that -- apparently inbred -- and cannot be learned through expensive, ineffectual exercises or consulting. Counseling is more like it. Serial innovators tend to break with convention, manage things in their own way, frequently fail -- and when they succeed, often at great personal cost and effort, deliver brilliant, game-changing innovation.

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