CIO – Innovation management best practices
Tools – Step One – Diagnosing the Situation

Understanding the current situation and environment for change and innovation is perhaps the most important of the five steps in the process of innovation improvement.
You know you have an innovation problem if; there are few good new ideas forthcoming from the organization, if the ideas, once identified stall or disappear from the backlog of potential ideas, or when implementation is inefficient and failures outnumber successes.

By knowing more about peoples' attitudes towards change, top management can be better prepared to make the appropriate decisions.

Each organization has its own DNA for innovation. Just as in medicine, a prescription for a personal medical issue is based on as full, seldom complete, an understanding of the current condition of the patient. Part of this understanding derives from knowing stakeholders views, especially the views held by management and staff, but equally significant are the views of those outside the organization, for example, those in the supply chain.

Understanding the views of staff on issues of policy and management practices is key to deciding why, where and how to make improvements. Do the current policies and management practices encourage innovation? Is there a sense that good ideas abound within the organization but never surface? Is there a problem in moving good ideas through to commercialization? Does the organization cycle in and out of innovation but seem not able to sustain innovation?

Some organizations have structures which encourage innovation, some do not. Perhaps the process of idea management is too elaborate; there may be too many layers of management or gates to pass through, or committees to convince. Delegation of authority to make decisions that could move innovation ahead may be missing. Is there disconnect between top management and the process of innovation?

While structures, policies and management practices designed to encourage innovation are important, people are the key. Are the best people employed in the right positions? Are those who are innovators empowered to move ideas forward? Is the process of innovation just slow?

Improving innovation performance is complex and often remedies are not obvious! Does the organization invest in innovation, in research and development (maybe R&D is not relevant to all organizations), invest in people? If in-house people are not up to scratch, is there room for making acquisitions, hiring consultants or upping the hiring of talent?

Our web site; http://www.corporateinnovationonline.com provides an on-line survey which is unique. The survey – comprised of 25 questions – is the only survey available on line which asks you for your opinion on the 'Ideal' management practices which encourage innovation. You also get an opportunity to provide your 'Reality', and compare all of this to other respondents and get a free customized, printable report of your results. Survey results can provide useful insight into the real views of stakeholders regarding the conditions in a specific organization but it is only a first step.

Several diagnostic tools are provided under this tab.

Building, sustaining and articulating innovation management best practices