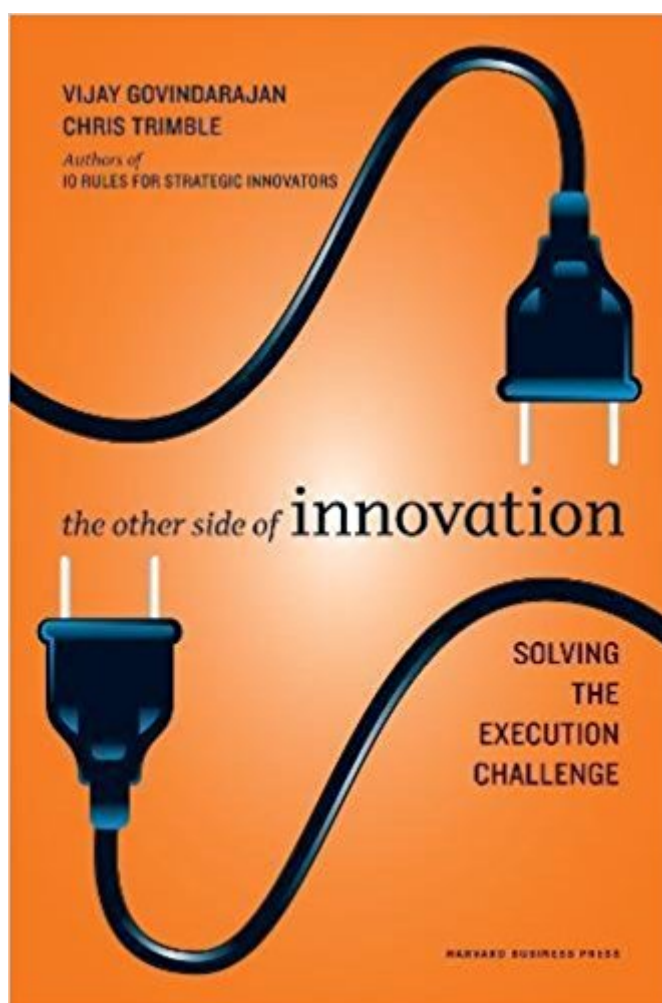


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# The Other Side Of Innovation: Solving The Execution Challenge (Harvard Business Review (Hardcover))



## Synopsis

Companies can't survive without innovating. But most put far more emphasis on generating Big Ideas than on executing them; turning ideas into actual breakthrough products, services, and process improvements. That's because ideating is energizing and glamorous. By contrast, execution seems like humdrum, behind-the-scenes dirty work. But without execution, Big Ideas go nowhere. In *The Other Side of Innovation*, Vijay Govindarajan and Chris Trimble reveal how to execute an innovation initiative; whether a simple project or a grand, gutsy gamble. Drawing on examples from innovators as diverse as Allstate, BMW, Timberland, and Nucor, the authors explain how to:

- Build the Right Team: Determine who'll be on the team, where they'll come from, how they'll be organized, how much time they'll devote to the project, and how they'll navigate the delicate and conflict-rich partnership between innovation and ongoing operations.
- Manage a Disciplined Experiment: Decide how team members can quickly test their assumptions, translate results into new knowledge, and measure progress. Give innovation leaders a tough but fair performance evaluation.

Practical and provocative, this new book takes you step-by-step through the innovation execution process; so your Big Ideas deliver their full promise.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Other Side of Innovation is packed with clear recommendations about how to put its

findings into practice&#133;Ã¢â - Research Technology Management&#147;How do companies generate new ideas? And how do they turn those ideas into products? Hardly a week passes without someone publishing a book on the subject. Most are rubbish. But *The Other Side of Innovation: Solving the Execution Challenge* is rather good &#133; In their new book [the authors] address two subjects that are usually given short shrift: established companies rather than start-ups and the implementation of new ideas rather than their generation.Ã¢â &#150; *The Economist&#147;&#133;*a veritable how-to guide for CEOs and entrepreneurs.Ã¢â &#150; *Inc. Magazine&#147;*Excellent in-depth case studies&#133;Ã¢â &#147;well-written bookÃ¢â &#147;Summing Up: RecommendedÃ¢â &#147;CHOICE Magazine

Vijay Govindarajan is the Earl C. Daum 1924 Professor of International Business and the Founding Director of the Center for Global Leadership at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College, and the 2008 Professor-in-Residence and Chief Innovation Consultant for General Electric. Chris Trimble, a well-known innovation speaker and consultant, is also on the faculty at Tuck.

When it comes to innovation in a large company finding great ideas is the easy part- especially when you're fortunate enough to be surrounded by thousands of the most knowledgeable, intelligent, and hard working people in your field. The hard part is taking those ideas and translating them into new business efficiently and without harming the ongoing operations that make your company great today. For anyone involved in an innovation effort this book is almost as therapeutic as it is inspirational and instructional. The author was not only able to very clearly identify and articulate many of the struggles involved in a successful innovation effort but also frame them in such a way as to allow the reader to fully understand their origins and how best to resolve them. For me reading this book really made everything click. It filled in gaps in my personal understanding that were acting as roadblocks to making truly significant progress and then built upon that foundation to provide a solid framework upon which all innovation teams should incorporate into their own processes and ideology. Needless to say I very highly recommend anyone involved in the innovation process to read and understand the principles taught in this book.

It's been my experience that books on innovation tend to "miss." They are typically either so rooted in specific case studies that drawing any general conclusions is impossible (the whole point of the exercise), or they feel like they were written by a life coach as opposed to a business strategist who has sat in the war room, fired, hired, and solved. This book is neither of those things. What it is, is

absolutely superb. Vijay Govindarajan is less a student of innovation than he is of the people, business engines, corporate realities, and interconnectedness that ties them all together. He writes simply and unpretentiously, and avoids the poisonous pitfall of using his book to shout from the academic pulpit "I HAVE SOLVED MAN'S AGE OLD STRUGGLE WITH NEW PRODUCT AND IDEA DEVELOPMENT!" Which, he has not. But he gets close that he has accurately laid out patterns of human behavior that are universal across all industries and companies, excluding aberrant outliers (startups, for one). I would recommend this book to anyone who has the ability to look critically enough at themselves to recognize that they could be doing better. Five stars, only because six wasn't an option.

I agree with many of the reviewers of this book who were pleased to see a book about the less-exciting aspect of innovation: execution. Although not as exhilarating a topic as the fuzzy front end of innovation, execution is CRITICAL!!! As a seasoned consultant, I can say with some authority that execution is a challenge for at least 90% of my clients, and certainly with the engagements that I've been involved with. Many times organizations believe that their efforts should focus on the important first step of problem identification and then fall short on implementation. The implementation stage typically involves barrier analysis--and foresight. It takes skill to anticipate obstacles or to deal with them expeditiously as they occur, and we most of us know, this is a large part of the execution/implementation battle. Govindarajan and Trimble do an excellent job of describing a model that's research-based, yet pragmatic and realistic. Building the right teams are critical to innovation--as is the ongoing task of managing disciplined experiments. So much can be learned by the trial-and-error processes of Thomas Edison, Einstein, DaVinci, etc. and their innovation successes. Yet in the busy work environments of today, learning most often takes a second seat to profits and quick wins. In concluding, let me say that I've found all of Govindarajan and Trimble's books on innovation helpful and informative, starting with 10 Rules for Strategic Innovators, this book, the companion to this book, a fable entitled How Stella Saved the Farm, and their latest book, Reverse Innovation. All are fascinating reads and all offer pearls of wisdom.

We purchased both the hardcopy as well as the Kindle version for an independent and virtual "book club". Quick read, engaging and deserves several readings as new ideas emerge from the KLUB. Have also ordered the author's prior book and occasionally following some of the companies referenced in the book case studies. Would recommend for group read and to establish a "common communication language/use of terms" for a similar virtual book club.

I found this excellent book very useful because it has a unique approach to executing innovation initiatives - strategies or projects. It is practical, and has real life examples from companies - BMW, John Deere, Nucor, Allstate - that succeeded in executing their innovation. The authors start by identifying that the biggest challenge is NOT to define a given innovation strategy or project, but executing it. So, they propose that we i) Build the Team, and ii) Run a disciplined experiment. What makes this book unique, when compared to other innovation books, is that it shows real life examples to illustrate their point. It has the right balance between academics and practical solutions. We have to recognize, though, that some of the concepts and proposed solutions might be easier to implement in bigger, Fortune 500 companies. Nevertheless, the concepts and solutions could be adapted to smaller divisions or business units. I would highly recommend this book specially to those who are seeking to implement a novel project, launching a new product, or executing an innovative strategy.

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