

# Preface

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The *Treasure Chest* is part of Prentice-Hall's *Six Sigma for Innovation and Growth Series*. This book serves as a consolidated "how to" reference book of Lean Six Sigma, covers growth and innovation tools, provides an overview of methods and the tools to which they align, and offers an overview of additional best practices used to manage a successful Six Sigma growth initiative. The *Treasure Chest of Six Sigma Growth Methods, Tools, and Best Practices* guides you in selecting the *right tool* to answer the *right question* at the *right time*. The *right question* drives the requirement or need to be addressed—regardless whether the requirement comes from your customer or a business need. Understanding the overall objective, or requirement, helps determine which Six Sigma methodology to use. The *right time* dictates what else you know given where you are in your approach. Understanding whether you are in the planning, designing, implementing, or maintaining phases of an overall process determines which process step, thereby the context of the question being asked. Finally, the *right tool* should be the last question asked, as it is based on first knowing what is required and at what point you are in the process.

The *Treasure Chest* is a desk-reference book for people interested in growth, operations excellence, and business-process improvement. This book speaks to the general business practitioner, business analyst, manager, and leader, regardless of the business context. It is for profit or non-profit enterprises; large or small firms; whether in headquarters-function, plant, or field location, regardless of functional discipline.

The book covers a range of applications from strategic planning aspects of business (offering portfolio renewal) to presenting development and launch preparation, from post-launch operations management to offering discontinuance. Whether contributing a new design (product and/or service), proposing a new process, evaluating a portfolio of offerings, or managing a current portfolio of offerings, this book compiles the resources that help drive growth proactively and presents them in a quick-reference format for easy navigation. This book takes the hassle out of researching the methodology and tools so you can immediately begin to find solutions for your discipline.

The *Treasure Chest* speaks primarily to business people who need practical "hands-on" guidance and answers to the following questions:

1. How do you select the appropriate tool based on the business need (or question being asked) and the required deliverables?
2. How do you use the tool, what inputs or data are required, and what comprises a step-by-step procedure for each tool or technique?
3. How do you analyze the tool's output and decide on the next course of action?

This book was specifically written for general business disciplines, such as marketing, strategic planning, pricing, finance, customer administration, sales, services, support, maintenance, and parts and supplies distribution. This book also is targeted to the technical engineering and research community searching for candidate tools that support communication, project management, risk mitigation planning, and change management requirements.

### *Common Language*

Communication presents a challenge when a collaborative team speaks a different language, different filter, different perspective, different interpretation. *Successful* innovation and growth rely on the integration and collaboration of multiple disciplines, often represented in a *cross-functional team*. Such teams may be comprised of internal, functionally distinct professionals or any combination of external partners, clients, and sometimes even competition. Regardless if the goal requires creating something from scratch or fine-tuning the management of current offerings, the combination of multiple disciplines, capabilities, and perspectives greatly enhance the end results of this work. However, this collaborative work requires a common language to understand and integrate the diversity.

The methods and tools presented in this book assist with interpretation of different perspectives and provide a common platform, foundation, and language from which multiple views can work in harmony. Interestingly, *each discipline has its own unique language, different thought-processes, and/or different tools that characterizes its work*. Sometimes, perhaps with minor adaptations, a tool considered commonplace by one discipline can be viewed as an "a-ha" eureka discovery to a second group when properly applied. Tools commonly used by marketing groups can excite a technical team if introduced at the appropriate time. For example, a communication summary tool or prioritization tool may be overlooked because it is a "soft tool," but it actually can fit perfectly when communicating "big picture" thinking. Similarly, if the time is right, marketing teams enjoy the rigor of techniques from the technical counterparts to provide a fresh perspective.

*Treasure Chest* embraces tools used by both the technical and non-technical communities and describes when and how to use them. It contains the business tools and methods for innovation and growth to facilitate best practices sharing and a "common language" across multi-disciplined teams. It also integrates some key technical tools appropriate for general business use (or understanding).