

FOREWORD

To survive in today's global market, companies must possess the capability to continually reinvent themselves in response to changing customer needs and aggressive worldwide competition. History has shown us that companies that were once icons in their respective fields can lose their competitive advantage.

To grow and prosper in this climate, companies must develop and sustain the capability to offer superior products and services that are aligned to existing and emerging customer needs. Companies must possess the capability to create value that customers are willing to pay for. Real leaders help to direct the evolution of their markets through insight, vision, and, most important, the ability to execute. The pressure is always on! Successful companies never sit back, for they recognize that there is always someone out there who wants their business.

In support of this mission, companies must possess robust, highly efficient new product development and commercialization processes. Obviously, this includes the capability to create robust and tunable

technologies that can ultimately provide commercial value for the company. These aligned capabilities must work as an efficient, lean system to produce a steady, predictable stream of successful product launches. Many companies exhibit excellent subsystem performance but fail to achieve the ultimate goal due to a lack of coordinated planning and execution.

Effective business and technology leaders recognize the importance of properly managing this critical business process, for this is the lifeblood of the corporation. Leaders must see the whole picture, the end-to-end process, and understand the manner in which the pieces interact. Leaders are responsible for managing the company's scarce resources wisely to achieve business goals and objectives. Companies simply cannot afford to allocate resources to fixing newly released products or creating products that fail to garner market appeal.

This text provides an essential roadmap for business and technology leaders as they strive to achieve excellence in new product development. It discusses the role that DMAIC Six Sigma has played in process improvement, while clearly focusing on the application of lean Six Sigma thinking on the prevention of defects and the promotion of successful product launches. It provides a logical framework that leaders can adopt to promote excellence in all facets of new product development, including, but not limited to, market sensing, portfolio management, technology development, commercialization, and post-launch service and support.

In closing, this text is worth the read. It brings it all together for business and technology leaders. I want to thank C. M. Creveling and the PDSS team for creating this valuable tool. Well done!

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