Confectionery New Product Development:

Stages-and-Gates meets Agile

Winning at innovation involves careful consideration, selection and application of new product development processes

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One of the topics in mastering the fundamentals of innovation management is innovation process design. Some variant of a *Stages-and-Gates* process defined below is typically used in the confectionery industry, particularly for developing and launching new products. Herein, we consider how confectionery might look utilizing more modern practices such as *Agile Development* and *Lean Start-up* used in technology and other industries to renew and update a tired and under-performing stages-and-gates development process.

Through a simulated case study drawn from composite experiences, we examine the principles, benefits, shortcomings and possible marriage of alternate processes in a real-life confectionery new product development scenario. The case illustrates some important options and considerations in selecting and optimizing a more modernized innovation development process and possible organizational ramifications of doing so. It is hoped that this case helps in understanding the basics of these alternative processes and in considering the strategic, organizational and cultural dynamics that govern such application within your own organization.

KANDYCO CASE STUDY

KandyCo is a typical manufacturing confectionery snack company. It has a continual need to bring new products to the market, both to grow the company and to maintain relevance and vitality of its brands with consumers and trade cus-

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PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES BACKGROUND

Before delving into the specifics of designing and innovating for new product launches using these practices, it is important to review a few definitions for product development models in common use today.

Stages-and-Gates Development

The *stages-and-gates development* process came to the fore in the 1980s through 2000s, when Stage-Gate International popularized the systematic operation of a linear progression through evolving readiness stages toward final launch of a new product.

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