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# Winning At New Products: Accelerating The Process From Idea To Launch, Third Edition



## Synopsis

For over a decade, *Winning at New Products* has served as the bible for product developers everywhere. In this fully updated and expanded edition, Robert Cooper demonstrates with compelling evidence why consistent product development is so vital to corporate growth and how to maximize your chances of success. By any measure, most product concepts never make it to market, and of those that do, most fail. *Winning at New Products* cites the most recent research and showcases innovative practices at such industry leaders as 3M, Exxon Chemical, and Guinness to present a field-tested game plan for achieving product leadership. Cooper outlines specific strategies for assessing risk, marshalling the appropriate resources, engaging customers in the pre-development discovery phase, evaluating your project portfolio, ensuring true cross-functional collaboration, and, most importantly, applying a rigorous process for making sound business decisions at every step—from idea generation to launch.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

REVIEW: (Rev of 2nd edition) It is now widely accepted that innovation is a core competence that is required by nearly all organizations. As a result, many companies have been very successful at generating new innovations. However, generating innovations is just the first step and an excess of innovations in many companies has created a need for good management processes to deal with them. These are the issues addressed by this book and there may be no other place where these issues are addressed as thoroughly and well as here. The author provides a thorough review and

analysis of each step of the development process from idea to commercial launch. While the book can be slow reading at times, I firmly believe the author's method of separating the process into stages and providing screening mechanisms between the stage are excellent advice. Following these methods should lead to: (1) accelerated product development, (2) increased success rate of new products, and (3) a more effective and efficient new products development process.

Accordingly, the book should be especially useful to those managers responsible for portfolios of new products. If this is you, this book is highly recommended.**STRENGTHS:** The book provides a very thorough review and analysis of the new product development process from innovation through to launch. The author has done a very thorough review of the research in this field and the book does an excellent job of citing other material. The book also contains an appropriate use of graphics for illustrating some points.**WEAKNESSES:** While the book doesn't focus on any particular industry, its teachings are probably most applicable to more traditional product companies (e.g. P&G, DuPont).

Robert Cooper developed the stage-gate methodology for new product development in the 1980's. It has had a profound effect on most large firms and many smaller firms. This structured approach to managing the inherently risky and complex cross-functional process of new product introduction has become a staple of MBA programs. Five stages and approval gates are used to manage the funnel from idea generation/discovery to project scoping to business case to development to testing/validation to launch/post-launch review. The third edition text outlines the basic structure. It provides best practices and practical advice for each stage. The author emphasizes the importance of speed and ways to use the stage-gate approach to deliver timely results, addressing the common criticism that the stage-gate process is inherently inflexible and slow. The 6 F's approach includes flexibility, fuzzy gates, fluidity, focus, facilitation and forever green. The basic risks of an overly rigid gate system are addressed, perhaps over-addressed. There is no in-depth treatment or review of alternate approaches to new product development that make time to market the primary focus. A significant amount of survey research is presented to define product introduction pitfalls and critical success factors. None of this is surprising, but the many lists provide a framework for product management practitioners to evaluate the effectiveness of their processes. The book provides several useful decision-making frameworks, including marketing/technology success factors, new to company/market, risks through time, risk/reward grids, gate decisions, and portfolio reviews. Overall, this is the best new product intro text available.

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