

Entrepreneurial Innovation

Why, through passion and a culture of volunteering,
those who persevere and those who quit
can both win in the end

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Ivo Aarninkhof
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For our children, many of whom will hopefully bring innovations in organizations, in businesses, in government, or as entrepreneurs, in a voluntary and service-oriented way for society.

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Preface

Have you ever wondered when innovations are successful? Why some innovative companies seem to be winners and others losers? Do you also sometimes think about what social contributions you have made? About how close to each other happiness, wisdom, and decline are? Why some people are quicker to judge than others?

Do you ever worry about the impact of your own efforts on your health and stress level? And are your doubts about the development of new products, services, and innovations, constantly (too) big?

A lot of questions. Fortunately, there are also things we do or (can) know. In this book, you learn to become more certain about important issues, and also to deal with uncertainties. Your own person and everything you are striving for are the guiding principles here. Awareness can give you peace of mind and encourage you to do new things. From the passion that comes with it, you can innovate faster and better. And you will also enjoy that process much more.

A new development - innovation - offers adventure, gives insight, but also frustration, and it will help you to make choices that fit within your own moral compass. This book offers an overview for you, whether you are an employee, an entrepreneur, or a volunteer. I share my experiences about key successes and the challenges you may encounter in the world of innovation development.

The target group of this book is diverse: innovation-oriented entrepreneurs from various industries, employees of large companies or SMEs, healthcare and education administrators, board members, engineers, and last but not least: volunteers. This book is for anyone who is working on innovation or wants to create or change something. This book helps you to think about the most essential steps in the marketing of innovations. While reading, you will find out what role you play and how you can fill it in differently. Preferably together with your team.

This book is based on my experiences as an SME entrepreneur, an employee of a big corporation, a techno starter, and a volunteer. The diversity of insights from these worlds comes together here. Each organizational form has its specific strengths, it is instructive to understand the powers playing behind them. By combining the specific strengths and making them transparent, you can become more aware of the many opportunities. You will innovate more powerfully by doing so, and this book will help you with that. It presents a mirror that will show you where you stand and how this relates to your experiences. It will offer tools for your team(s), not only to develop an innovative product within your own organization but also to bring the result of this effort to the market.

The unique knowledge mix that I have built up in SMEs, corporate businesses, as a techno starter, and in volunteer organizations is translated into the Entrepreneurial Innovation method, which is characterized as **voluntary innovative passionate entrepreneurship**. Applying the method can lead to even more successful innovations.

In this book, I share practical knowledge and experiences from product development to inspire as many people as possible. The goal is to contribute to the creation of relevant, meaningful, and healthy innovations and thus promote the happiness of our posterity.

I wish you joy and voluntary dedication when reading this book and implementing the message it describes.

Deurningen, May 2022

Ivo Aarninkhof

Chapter 1: Introduction

You have a dream. You're almost done with your studies or you want to change jobs from a big corporation to a small startup. You're looking for passion in your life, maybe you want to go for a PhD. Suddenly, you get a chance to make a big move. Your boss gives you a few million euros to spend on the project of your dreams. You can start your own company. Or you can start working for a multinational; you get an unexpected promotion. What will you do? Do you think of how to make society healthier? Do you fly back and forth between hope and fear, what awaits you, what if it all fails horribly? You often only hear the success story. In paradise, you have high peaks and unprecedented dreams. In the snake pit, you have to deal with self-interest, sacred cows, and vanity.

The learning curve you go through is different for everyone. Both in terms of the steepness, and for the leveling-off moment. How do you deal with the learning moments in life? What influence do you have on your team, colleagues, or fellow human beings, in your job or while volunteering? If you know that, you can also understand how your experiences contribute to your future steps.

In this book, we look at it from the perspective of developing something - a product, a piece of software, a service, or new law - better, faster, and more reliably. Everything in there is related to passion and happiness.

These words, *passion and happiness*, recur often in this book. Understanding and perfecting your own passion is an art you can teach yourself. Happiness is - to a certain extent - something you force on yourself and occasionally it overwhelms you. Much more important is: how do you deal with good and bad luck?

This book makes you aware of the influence you have on how you bring innovations to the market. You create innovations out of your deepest passion and conviction; if all goes well, you bring them to the user with pleasure and a sense of functionality, thereby contributing to a meaningful society. Such an attitude helps to take innovations to the next phase consistently and creatively. The foundation for these innovative insights is formed by three important pillars: the Elementary Basis, the Trias Entrepreneurias, and the Culture of Volunteering.

The **Elementary Basis** is the palette of building blocks or tools that help you take your innovation one step further. They are crucial in the successful development of a new product, process, or service.

The second group of elements is the **Trias Entrepreneurias**. This concept builds on the basic idea that various types of organizations (techno starters, SMEs, and corporations) have their own entrepreneurial strengths. The starting point is that you are able to combine these different strengths and apply them within your own innovation process.

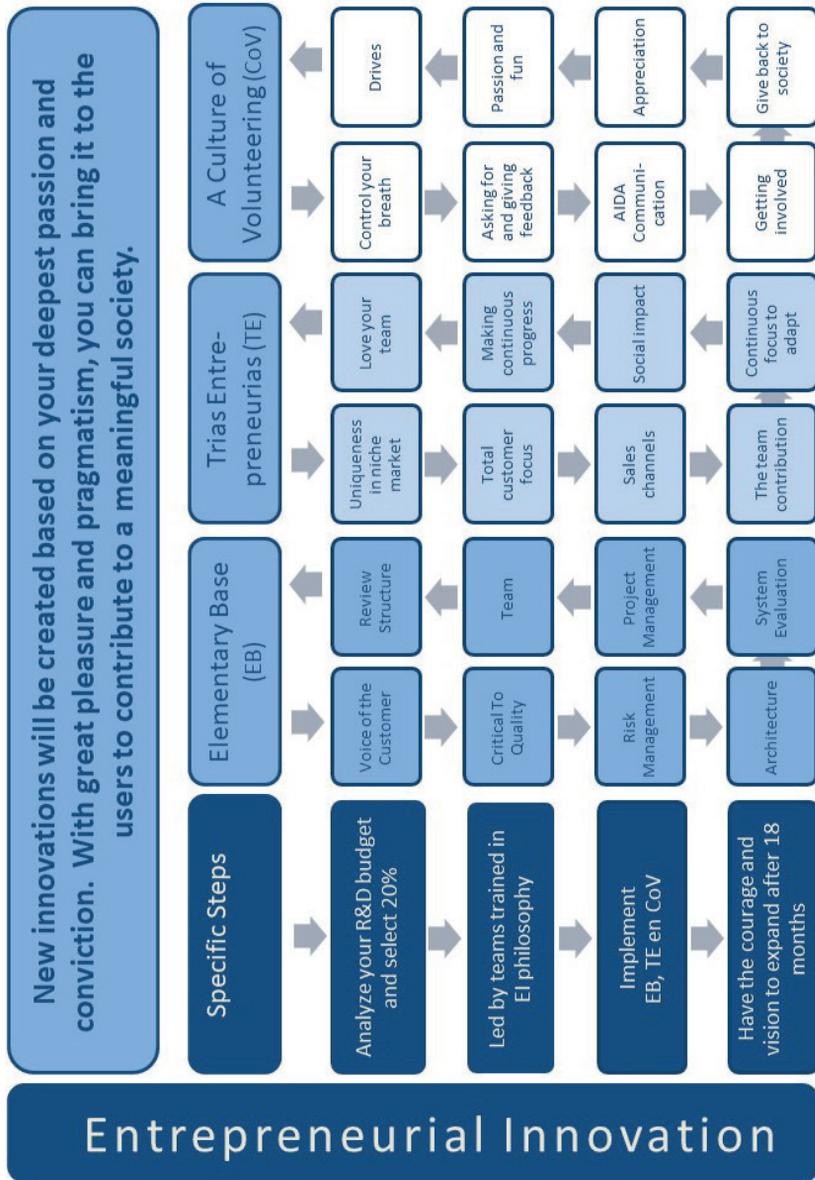


Figure 1: Overview of Entrepreneurial Innovation

The third pillar is characterized by the **Culture of Volunteering**. The various elements from this group are interspersed with your own drive, your passion, and your enthusiasm; the key challenge is to invite these drives directly into your innovation process.

Figure 1 shows these three main groups. Each of the main groups has eight steps that are important to maximize the success rate of a specific innovative activity. Applied in combination, this leads to the principle of Entrepreneurial Innovation. Looking at product and process development from this perspective shows how future product innovations can occur.

In chapters 2, 3, and 4 we will elaborate on these three pillars. For each group, we add practical examples that offer support to those who get to work with them. In chapter 5, everything comes together and we give, again based on real-life examples, insight into the practical application of Entrepreneurial Innovation. Chapter 6 offers a glimpse into the future, after which we reflect on the core values of Entrepreneurial Innovation in Chapter 7.

All in all, this book aims to be a guide for you in your innovative work; it can give you and your team an advantage over the competition.

Chapter 2: The Elementary Basis

To successfully bring innovations to market, a good foundation is needed. This foundation consists of the elements that are necessary to actually develop a good innovative product. We call this the Elementary Basis. Think of elements like listening carefully to the customer, risk management, adequate application, and a timely review of the innovation progress. Of course, the customer and the user determine whether they will buy and use your innovation. But without creativity in thinking, the freedom to undertake, and your own passion, a great idea will not easily turn into a success.

An innovative idea always starts with the elementary question you have to ask yourself. We call this the Voice of the Customer. Within product marketing, a distinction is often made between upstream and downstream developments. Upstream input is obtained by listening carefully to the needs of those who use your products and the clients to whom the product applies. This input helps you to further shape the product and idea, which will eventually be laid down in a final design for production.

For the Elementary Basis, we focus on everything up to the moment the product goes downstream. After that, the product actually goes to users on a larger scale and can start making a meaningful contribution to society.

Numerous methodologies, such as Critical-to-Quality thinking and various Six Sigma applications, contribute to