



The Smart Organization: Creating Value Through Strategic R&D

By David Matheson, James E. Matheson

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Why do some firms continually make poor R&D decisions while others can deliver a stream of successful products and services? According to the Mathesons, successful firms have internalized the nine interlocking principles of smart R&D - the building blocks of a corporate culture that emphasize making the right strategic decisions at the right times, and aligning organizational practices to support these decisions and sustain their results. The nine principles include embracing uncertainty, opening information flows, and encouraging systems thinking. Once in place, these values enable companies to make appropriate choices about their R&D planning, portfolio management, and project strategies. The authors stress the importance of evaluating trade-offs, investigating alternatives, and getting buy-in across functions to ensure that decisions will be viable from both technological and managerial perspectives. They use best practice examples from companies including General Motors, Pilkington Glass, and BankOne of Ohio to demonstrate that the methods used to enrich R&D planning can be applied more broadly to create, in effect, the smart organization.

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Editorial Review

Review

"If more companies were to act like this, there might be less demand for off-the-peg strategies from consultants." -- *The Economist*, July 11, 1998

From the Back Cover

Over the past eight years, we implemented new decision processes based on the nine principles found in *The Smart Organization*. The result has been a change in the openness of our decision processes, the evolution of an improved attitude toward learning, and significant value added for GM's shareholders. --Vincent P. Barabba, General Manager, Corporate Strategy and Knowledge Development, General Motors Corporation

This major work describes the practices that permit an organization to derive the most benefit from making quality decisions following the fundamental methodology of the Stanford school of decision analysis.' The Mathesons' book draws on more than 30 years' experience in management consulting and research. Their design for the smart organization' should capture the attention of any smart executive leader. --Ronald A. Howard, Professor and Director, Decisions and Ethics Center, Department of Engineering-Economics Systems and Operations Research, Stanford University

Bayer has used the SDG approach for the last six years, and we have found the process extremely useful. The *Smart Organization* elucidates both process and methodology, using a clear concept and lively examples from real business situations. --Dirk Suwelack, Ph.D., Head of Strategic Planning, Business Group Pharmaceuticals, Bayer AG, Leverkusen, Germany

With sharply drawn examples from Medieval longbows to space shuttle o-rings, the Mathesons' book enables us to carry home vivid pictures of the path to organizational enlightenment. The fundamental principles they outline were the guide to the re- engineering of drug discovery and development at Eli Lilly and Company. --W. Leigh Thompson, Ph.D., M.D., Retired Chief Scientific Officer, Eli Lilly and Company, and CEO, Profound Quality Resources, Ltd.

About the Author

David Matheson is a principal in Strategic Decisions Group's London office and director of the research efforts that identified the best practices and the Nine Principles of Smart R&D. Jim Matheson is a world-recognized authority on decision analysis and its application. He is a co-founder and director of Strategic Decisions Group, an international management consulting firm headquartered in Menlo Park, California, and director of the firm's R&D practice.

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