


# Chapter 12

## Innovation Spontaneity in the Portuguese Molds Sector: Case Study

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Knowledge and innovation are sources of sustainable competitive advantage in today's complex and turbulent environment, motivated, in essence, by globalization. The spontaneity of innovation is assumed as a fundamental part of a strategy that involves several characteristics, which the authors highlight in this work. The management and coordination of this characteristic enhance organizational excellence. Effectively managing spontaneity allows for differentiating, innovating, and creating a competitive advantage. This finding was analyzed through a case study carried out with two institutional actors in the Portuguese mould industry. To observe this characteristic and to understand how the two actors studied codify, create, and transfer, the dyadic relationship was studied, that is, the cooperation between the National Association of the Mold Industry (CEFAMOL) and the Technological Center Industry of Molds, Special Tools, and Plastics (CENTIMFE). In total, two in-depth interviews were conducted. The study shows that cooperation is the key to gaining added value through spontaneous innovation.*

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-7578-2.ch012

## **INTRODUCTION**

Competitiveness is based on dynamic factors, namely knowledge and innovation. Zheng et al. (2017), points out that “in the era of competitive dynamics, knowledge technology emphasizes its accumulation, as the acceleration of industrial intellectual capital for its use in innovation has been the important mission of all industry players around the world. The concept of innovation management has become a matter of concern for many organizations and managers. This article aims to understand and clarify the importance that innovation management has in the daily life of organizations and the learning for it, considering, as its mainstay, the characteristic of spontaneity

## **Theoretical Framework**

Schumpeter (1939) points out that “we will simply define innovation as the creation of new production functionalities. This encompasses new products, as well as new forms of organization such as mergers, access to new markets, and others” (p. 84). For Drucker (1997), “Innovation is the specific tool of entrepreneurs, the means through which they explore change as an opportunity for a different business or service. It is possible to present it in the form of a discipline, learn it and practice it” (p. 35). Companies that develop management practices and behaviours in permanent change foster and increase innovation such as Plessis (2007), Chang and Lee, (2008), Mu, Peng and Love (2008), Tseng, Pai, and Hung (2011), Mundra, Gulati, and Vashisth (2011). The management of innovation is fundamentally concerned with relieving its complexity and understanding spontaneity. This is an essential feature to consider, since the rapid technological evolution, the experiences acquired, and the knowledge created and codified are becoming outdated, making it necessary to create and develop new knowledge (Kluge et al., 2002; Gonçalves, 2006; Cantner et al., 2009; Uotila et al., 2009; Pasher & Ronen, 2011). According to Kluge, Stein, and Licht (2002), the measure effective in combating perishability is speed. In this regard, Nonaka (1991) points out that “in an economy where the only certainty is uncertainty, the only sure source of maintaining competitive advantage is knowledge. When markets change, technologies proliferate, competitors multiply, and products become obsolete overnight, successful companies are those that consistently create innovations, disseminate them widely throughout the organization, and quickly fit them into new technologies and products. These activities define the “creator of innovation” company, whose core business is its spontaneity. Cunha, Rego, Cunha, and Cardoso (2007) add: “speed becomes a central variable for the management of innovation” (p. 744). The last generation (the 5th generation), according to Miller (1995), whose name refers to the integrated system, continuous innovation, flexibility, adaptability, the creation of networks; differs from the previous one by the speed factor

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