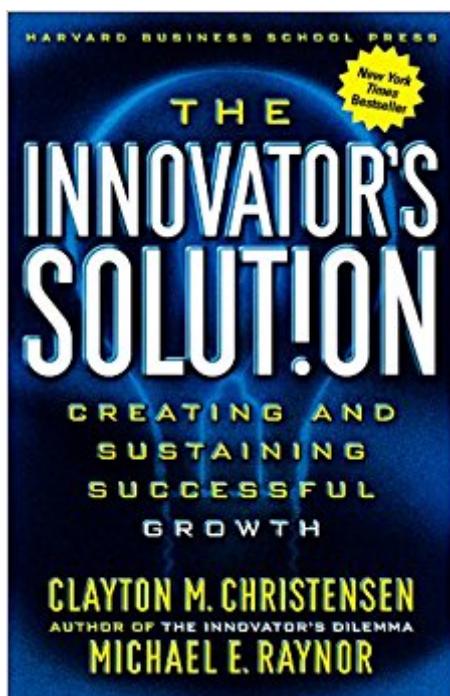


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# The Innovator's Solution: Creating And Sustaining Successful Growth



## **Synopsis**

A seminal work by bestselling author Clayton M. Christensen. In his international bestseller *The Innovator's Dilemma*, Clayton M. Christensen exposed this crushing paradox behind the failure of many industry leaders: by placing too much focus on pleasing their most profitable customers, these firms actually paved the way for their own demise by ignoring the disruptive technologies that aggressively evolved to displace them. In *The Innovator's Solution*, Christensen and coauthor Michael E. Raynor help all companies understand how to become disruptors themselves. Clay Christensen (author of the award-winning *Harvard Business Review* article, "How Will You Measure Your Life?") and Raynor not only reveal that innovation is more predictable than most managers have come to believe, they also provide helpful advice on the business decisions crucial to truly disruptive growth. Citing in-depth research and theories tested in hundreds of companies across many industries, the authors identify the processes that create successful innovation; and they show managers how to tailor their strategies to the changing circumstances of a dynamic world. *The Innovator's Solution* is an important addition to any innovation library. Published by Harvard Business Review Press.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 304 pages

Publisher: Harvard Business School Press; 1 edition (September 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1578518520

ISBN-13: 978-1578518524

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 6.5 x 1.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 142 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #55,792 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #33 in Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Planning & Forecasting #95 in Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Strategy & Competition #101 in Books > Business & Money > Small Business & Entrepreneurship > New Business Enterprises

## **Customer Reviews**

Christensen (*The Innovator's Dilemma*) analyzes the strategies that allow corporations to successfully grow new businesses and outpace the other players in the marketplace. Christensen's earlier book examined how focusing on profits can destroy even well-run corporations, while this

book focuses on companies expanding by being "disruptors" who are able to outpace their entrenched competition. The authors (Christensen is a professor at Harvard Business School and Raynor, a director at Deloitte Research) examine the nine business decisions integral to growth, including product development, organizational structure, financing and key customer base. They cite such companies as IBM, AT&T, Sony, Microsoft and others to illustrate their points. Generally, the writing is clear and specific. For example, in discussing whether a company has the resources necessary for growth, the authors say, "In order to be confident that managers have developed the skills required to succeed at a new assignment, one should examine the sorts of problems they have wrestled with in the past. It is not as important that managers have succeeded with the problem as it is for them to have wrestled with it and developed the skills and intuition for how to meet the challenge successfully the next time around

&#147;The process of Low End Disruption is beautifully described in Clayton Christensenâ™s series of books: The Innovatorâ™s Dilemma, The Innovatorâ™s Solution and The Innovatorâ™s DNA. If you havenâ™t read them, you should. Whatâ™s amazing about these books is not only how important their conclusions are but how well researched they are.â•&#151; TechCrunch

This book is the second of the christensen's Innovators saga. It refreshes and give a deeper insight to the concepts of sustaining vs disruptive innovation and adds several elements that you have to keep in mind to set up the strategy for your innovation. More than an "how to" is a kind of "how not to" make "autopilot" mistakes. I have been in GE for almost 15 year, and I have seen most of the things here described happen. And they happen because of the inherent business dynamics described in this books. Read it if you want to take the right steps. I consider the christensen's trilogy one of the 3 pillars of business strategy, togheter with game theory and classic Porter's. If you want to add a further step to the hints suggested here may be worth to read also the Blue Ocean Strategy, that is senseless without the concepts here described. There are two regrets about this book: the first is that the subject is complex, and depicts evolving scenarios. So crafting out of the book a "check list" to follow, is hard task. If the author would have added it, would have simplified the life of us - that have to use his theory - quite a lot. So be ready to sweat a bit in order to use this book for your innovation...because it absolutely deserve it! the second is that much of the examples are depicted as "large companies dealing with innovation" while my point of view is more that of "entrepreneur launching an initiative". so I need to "EXTRAPOLATE" the hints to be used in this situation. Feasible, but again: not easy - neither prompt.

The innovator's solution is a hard book for me to review. At times, I felt this was one of the best books I've ever read, but at other times I would have wanted to throw it away. That's also how I ended up giving it a 3 star review. It's a good book, but I wouldn't recommend it quickly. As the title suggests, the book is a follow-up on the Innovator's Dilemma, which has been a classic business book on how large established companies are surprised by disruptive technology that eventually causes the downfall of the company. The Innovator's Dilemma explained these dynamics and how they happen even when managers in companies make the most "logical" decisions. The Innovator's Solution dives further into this dynamic and tries to answer the question "what can you do about it?" and especially, "How could you sustainably cause disruptive technology". The book is wonderful and insightful about the meta-level dynamics between and inside companies. There are probably few books that describe these dynamics so well. The book is admittedly theoretical in the way that the authors present a theory and describe how, according to their theory, you could build companies that constantly create disruption... yet admit that no company in the world has ever done that. It is traditional in the sense that most of the organizational dynamics they describe are assuming fairly traditional and hierarchical organizations... evidence from the focus on the role of the CEO. I guess this is a fair assumption still in 2012 as most organizations still do work that way... but on the other hand there are signs that this is changing. I felt some examples from the book were wrong at times or at least showed that the authors aren't that technical. Especially examples related to software, computers or related to Apple and phones seemed off. This annoyed me at times leading me to put the book down for a while, only to resume again a bit later. The book contains ten chapters and an epilogue. Roughly the first six chapters talk about market dynamics and how companies react and the last three chapters talk about what you can do within your companies. The epilogue is a summary and suggested "actions" chapter. In the first part, the authors explain that decisions need to be based on a theory and that they are going to attempt, in the rest of the book, to present a theory for making decisions. This theory ought to help companies make better decisions related to products. The authors go on to show how existing marketing techniques often segment incorrect and they ought to focus on "job to be done" rather than different characteristics (a theme that will repeat itself throughout the book). It then describes two different disruptive technologies: 1) low-end, and 2) new market. Then explains the type of customers and scope to focus on. Chapter 5 and the talk about modularization vs integration felt a bit old-fashioned, and especially not that relevant with the increase of software development in the world. Chapter 6 talked about a wonderful market dynamic related to commodization. The second part makes things a bit more concrete and talks

about what you can do within your organization. First it covers organizational structure, then two different strategy processes and how good companies switch between them. Then it has an interesting look at the financial support behind product development and distinguishes "good money" from "bad money" and suggests to focus on "good money" that is "patient for growth but impatient for profit". I loved the organizational dynamics that it described of how organizations invest in disruptive technologies but then cannibalize them when there is a downturn on their main business. The last chapter focuses on the role of the CEO in companies that are trying to create disruption. I did like the Innovator's Solution at times and have no regret reading it. Certain snippets of it were very very insightful which makes the whole book worth reading. Yet at times I felt bored with it and sometimes even strongly that certain examples were simplistic. Also the traditional management and traditional organization assumptions it had made me feel uncomfortable. Due to all of that, I decided on three stars.

Good information, but a little outdated. This is the same as the 2003 edition of the book, just with a new cover.

This book is about what to not do and what makes the difference when innovating. I liked the first 3 chapters and the epilogue (direct and plain). The authors give you a pragmatic view and simple to digest contents. This book helps you to assess and foresee earlier on the way risks in innovation and disruption technologies and when your strategy needs to change to get most value for your business. I strongly recommend this to anyone interested in innovation and to those who like to a better insight of the organisation where they live in

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