**Case study:**

**Gore-Tex®: Innovative organization and contemporary culture**

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| This case study explores the role of organizational management and culture within highly innovative organization W.L.Gore and associates, known for many of its products such as famous Gore-Tex fabrics that makes our clothes dry and lets skin to breathe. The organization values anti-management style with its employees participating in ownership, minimizing of management and emphasizing action and creativity. Company employs over 7000 associates at 45 locations across the world. It is often praised as role model of innovation management.  The company encourages innovation by including those closely involved in project in decision-making. Teams are organized and leaders chosen around opportunities. The organization relies on flat organizational structure without decision making chains or predefined communication channels. Multidisciplinary team members communicate directly and report to their members. New employees are led by sponsors and directed through understanding of opportunities and aims towards projects that match their skills. The path to lead and define project is open to anyone. Associates are assisted by sponsors in efforts to achieve personal fulfilment in making contribution to enterprise. Leaders emerge through demonstration of unique knowledge, skills or experience that contributes to the business goal. Associates are dedicated to four main aims: freedom of encouragement, assistance, growing jointly through knowledge, fairness, responsibility and consultation with other associates.  Organizational culture aims to avoid limiting creativity through conventional hierarchy. Employees are given considerable freedom in following corporate opportunities and each individual has three sponsors: one to ensure that each work effort is acknowledged, another to ensure appropriate compensation and third to introduce individual with organization. All three functions may be performed by a single person. Through flexible program organization maximizes fairness and freedom of its employees. Organization believes that right environment ensures that there are no limits to what individuals can achieve. It gives employees opportunity to rely on own judgment, project selection and direct approach to resources. On the top of that, departments can not exceed size of 200 employees in order to maintain intimacy and ease of communication in small workgroups.  The study shows which characteristics are required for innovation to emerge. Unique organizational model helps to unleash creativity and encourage teamwork in intrapreneurial environment and ensures maximal freedom and support to employees. Many of its organizational characteristics are present also in other firms such as 3M, Hewlett Packard etc.  Several characteristics help this firm to maintain its success. i) Innovation heritage helps to develop superior products. ii) Small teams facilitate communication one-to-one that eases informed decision-making. iii) Communication channels are open as employees from different teams can freely meet and talk about projects, problems and successes. iv) organization believes that co-ownership by employees improves their level of dedication. | |
| **Reference** | Trott, P. (2018). Innovation Management and New Product Development. 6th edition. Pearson |