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15.351 Managing Innovation and Entrepreneurship  
Spring 2008

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## **Final Reflections: Final Individual Papers**

Due two days after the last session.

The final assignment is an individual assignment and will account for **10%** of your grade. This is a **three page paper** in which you will have a chance to individually synthesize the ideas you have learned across the four modules. Your directive is to take the various elements of process, structure and strategy outlined in modules 1-3 and revisited in module 4 and consider how they can most effectively be designed to work to support one another, using a specific example. Alternatively you can document and illustrate how these elements can work in opposition and lead to failure – for example how an appropriate exploitation strategy was undermined by the wrong approach to exploration and execution or some other “disjuncture”. You can draw on your interviews or on other materials.

### **Additional Guidelines for Final Assignment**

- The assignment should be **no more than** 3 pages 1.5 spaced, 11 point font (of your choosing!)
- The assignment is **individual** and is an opportunity to reflect on what you have learned in class and integrate that learning.
- Papers will be graded for the following:
  - a clear statement of what you are trying to accomplish in the paper
  - clear writing style
  - use of specific, detailed examples
  - use of specific points of integration or contradiction.

### **A few (of many possible) suggested topics:**

1. You may reflect on one or two specific and personal experiences with innovation and entrepreneurship during which you and the team either used or failed to use some of the processes, structures, incentives etc. outlined in the class. Be specific, explain the situation, explain what you did and how it was similar or different to what we have learned in class.

2. You may reflect on two or more of the structures or processes outlined in class and discuss how they are similar or different and the conditions under which you would use one or the other or both. For example, you might go into more detail on the comparison that we made between GE IBs and XNE. Similarly, sequential or parallel product development. Or, the process for idea generation used by IDEO compared to the lead-user innovation method. Another pair you could compare is the lablet model to the university grant model. Or, using a software community compared to other distributed communities.

3. You may reflect on the tensions in some of the elements of the system - be specific

with different elements and please give examples as and when you can. For example, the tension between integrating start-up businesses within the parent company and the requirements for autonomy and freedom. Alternatively, consider the tension between wanting to involve a large number of diverse external innovators and needing to have IP protection in order to exploit your innovation - how can this be solved?

4. You may reflect on how organizational choices for innovation - including how you explore and how you execute vary along the technology S-curve, giving examples and being as specific as possible.