

Design of a product development procedure for Goelst NL b.v.

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The goal of this Bachelor thesis is to outline a new product development procedure for the company Goelst NL.

Goelst designs, manufactures, and sells products to serve the high-end window treatment market. However, the organization struggles to innovate in a structured manner. Goelst NL attributed this to the lack of a formalized methodical development process. The company requested to utilize the insights from the book 'Innovatiekompas' in the creation of the procedure.

Therefore, the research question of this thesis is: *“How can the product development process of Goelst be structured and improved?”*

This question is answered by analyzing the “Innovatiekompas” and additional research literature about innovation management and product development.

The “Innovatiekompas” and literature review show that innovation is a continuous and organization wide process, with many aspects contributing to the successful development of new products. The primary one contributor is a strategic focus, which must be utilized to manage the company’s project portfolio [1], [2]. Furthermore, it is essential the company has an in-depth understanding of the market and its target group. This understanding may be acquired through performing market analysis and working together with clients and users.

Internally, effective collaboration and communication are essential. These can be promoted by working in multidisciplinary teams. An organization has to focus externally as well and therefore needs to be open to collaborate with external stakeholders, such as business partners and suppliers.

Additionally, the developmental trajectory benefits from a formalized procedure that facilitates the above-mentioned aspects, but is flexible enough to be customized to the diverse requirements of each project. The recommended model for this is the Stage-Gate process, developed by Dr. Cooper [3], [4].

Following the literature review, an outline of the company was created, and the current situation of product-development and innovation at Goelst was analyzed. This was based on data collected from interviews, project cases and a questionnaire. The results of the analysis were utilized to determine areas of improvement for the company and shape the new procedure.

Subsequently, the new developmental model and procedure was drafted, using the Stage-Gate model as a basis. The model is expanded with three additional aspects, consisting of strategy; idea management; and portfolio management. This new product development model is illustrated in Figure 1.

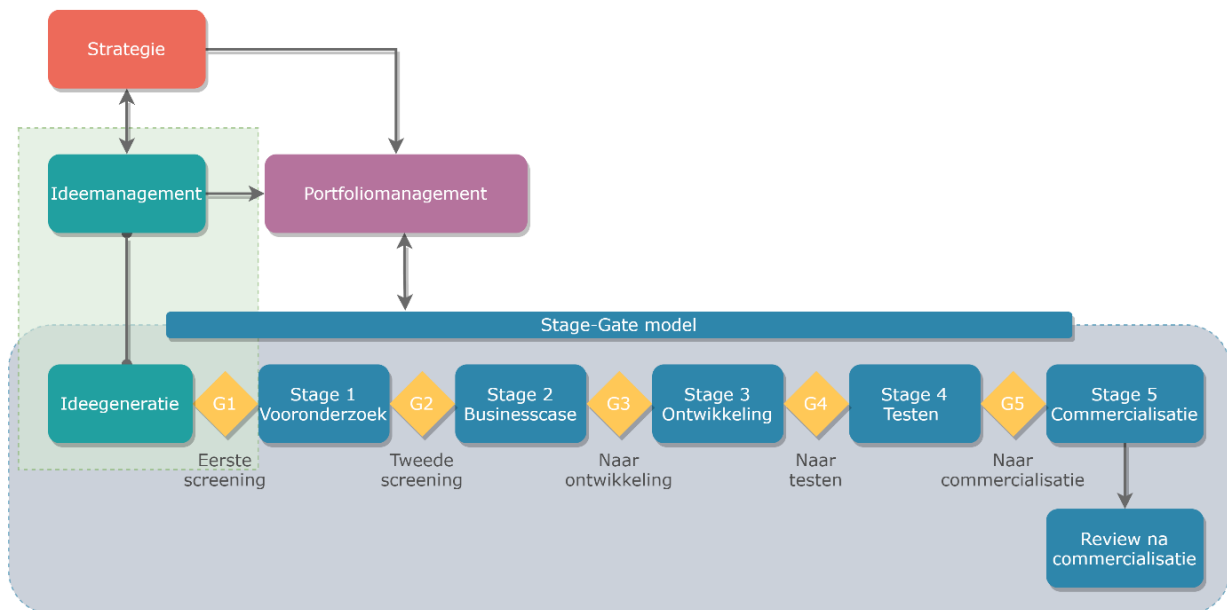


Figure 1 The new product development proces

This model provides structure by dividing the product development process into different stages. Each individual stage consists of pre-specified tasks, objectives and deliverables. During the stages, a variety of tasks are executed in parallel by a multidisciplinary team. These tasks concern the various aspects of product development, from marketing to production.

The procedure outlined in this report describes methods required to carry out these tasks. Additionally, a flowchart, procedure document, templates, criteria lists and tools are provided to implement and execute this process. The process still needs to prove its worth for practical use. Therefore, it's recommended to test the procedure with a test project and fine-tune and improve the procedure further to the needs of the company.

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