The Innovation Process & Technology Transfer

Marcia Rorke

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Marcia L. Rorke

915 Willowleaf Way
Rockville, MD 20854

301-762-3171(P)
301-762-3172(F)

SKILLS

Ms. Rorke has strong organizational and writing skills; she is published regularly. She also maintains extensive contacts within private sector firms and government organizations. Over time she has become skilled at building interdisciplinary teams for developing and executing programs, creating educational materials, and forging new approaches to solve problems. Her broad background in business organizations as well as public sector organizations results in an ability to move easily from one organizational environment to another. Ms. Rorke is an experienced public speaker and traveler (both domestic and international).

In summary, Ms. Rorke's strongest skills include:

- Recruiting, managing, and building teams
- Planning, organizing and implementing complex projects involving diverse personnel; seeking creative solutions to problems
- Identifying reliable, skilled personnel within organizations who can provide information and work on projects
- Identifying and articulating organizational goals and developing strategies as well as executable plans to achieve those goals

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Owner of Mohawk Research Corporation, 915 Willowleaf Way, Rockville, Maryland 20854 from June 1979 to the present.

Ms. Rorke created an organization focused on innovation and commercialization, based on the use of interdisciplinary teams with members drawn from across the United States, which works with Federal, State, and private sector organizations. The firm developed training programs for inventors, researchers, and small as well as medium sized corporations engaged in technology development and commercialization. About 800 project managers have participated in this training; several have seen their products to market through business development or licensing. Several innovators are considerably wealthier today than when they attended the workshop. Some organizations have used this program as an organizational or community development tool.

Examples of recent work include:

- Teams led by Ms. Rorke work in the field of technology transfer assessing partnerships' potential for product development and commercialization.

- Another team conducted a series of bench marking activities in the area of technology management as practiced by firms such as DuPont, Xerox, General Electric, and Dow Chemical. To complete this project, Ms. Rorke identified, contacted and interviewed a series of corporate R&D executives. Based on this information, the team designed a technology management program for a unit of the U. S. Department of Energy.

- In partnership with another firm, Ms. Rorke developed and implemented a corporate culture change program for a $2 billion plus firm interested in growing its businesses through technology and business acquisition. As part of this activity, the desired change was defined in cooperation with the Vice President for Corporate Development who approved the year long program.

- In a workshop setting, a team explored the relationships between five large firms and small firms in the licensing arena and then recommended several activities for a U. S. Department of Energy program to enhance its licensing activity.

- Ms. Rorke conducted an assessment of a $2 billion firm's incentive program for internal technology developers.

- Ms. Rorke led a team which conducted research and wrote materials concerning the availability of risk capital for smaller businesses; this research led to training materials for firms seeking investment capital.

- Ms. Rorke co-authored a primer on licensing for small and medium sized firms; she also co-authored a primer on innovation for the inventor/small business communities.

- On a consulting basis, Ms. Rorke coordinated the assembly and editing of an intellectual property manual for the United National Industrial Development Organization in Vienna, Austria. This project required that she work with chapter authors from several developed and developing countries, edit their work, and provide final draft text to the program manager at UNIDO.

- During another consulting project, Ms. Rorke worked periodically over fifteen years with a Federal program engaged in training at the community level. This work required she participate in planning activities with community volunteers to bring each of about 60 events to fruition.

- Over a period of three years, Mohawk Research teams worked with Federal laboratories to create an improved climate for technology transfer and increase planning skills of program managers. The work focused on developing executable plans and required significant interaction with laboratory senior management.

Prior to the formation of Mohawk Research Corporation, Ms. Rorke's work included developing an innovation center needs assessment for the economic development department in the State of Michigan and working with the States of Texas, Oklahoma, and Alaska to enhance their innovation programs designed to stimulate economic development. She also worked with the World Bank and the U. S. State Department to implement an international conference focused on joint ventures between developed and developing nations. During this project, she traveled extensively overseas to generate participation by public and private development financing institutions; two significant documents resulted from this work: a directory of development banking institutions and a set of small- and medium-scale joint venture case studies. On another project, she worked with community leaders to generate special education legislation by organizing citizen lobby groups, writing a newsletter to keep participants informed, and developing training programs for local groups.

EDUCATION

BA, University of Denver, 1969
MA, University of Denver, 1979
PhD, George Washington University, in progress.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Licensing Executives Society (Trustee 1994 - present, Chair Small Business Committee 1989-1991, Chair WIN/Commercialization Committee 1991-1996)
Product Development Management Association
American Association for the Advancement of Science

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Mohawk Research Corporation
July 20, 1999

Innovation Process

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Innovation Process Basics

- Four stages
- Three activities
- Linked activities completed in parallel

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Innovation Process Basics

- Technology completes innovation process
- Product definition
- Transition decisions

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Innovation Process Basics

- Market =Meeting ground
- ROI justifies development
- Investors don't care

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Options

- Start business
- Expand business
- Sell technology
- Partner

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Technology Transfer Issues

- Product champion
- Organizational scale
- Human barriers

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Partnership Qualifications

- Technical capability
- Marketing capability
- Business management capability

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Other Considerations

- Perceived risk
- Ownership vs. control
- Exogenous factors
- People

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