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### CATCHBALL MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION OF MANUFACTURING FIRM IN BENIN

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#### **Abstract**

This study investigates the influence of the initiation phase in Catchball Management on process innovation within Seven Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant, Edo State. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 133 employees selected through stratified random sampling. A structured questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale was employed to measure employees' perceptions of initiation involvement and its impact on process innovation. The instrument demonstrated strong reliability with a Cronbach alpha of 0.84. Descriptive statistics revealed high levels of employee involvement early in strategic planning (M = 4.21, SD = 0.58), active encouragement of feedback during idea stages (M = 4.10, SD = 0.64), and consideration of suggestions in planning (M = 4.30, SD = 0.52), indicating a robust participatory environment during initiation. Regression analysis confirmed that initiation significantly and positively predicts process innovation ( $\theta = 0.69$ , p < 0.05), with the model explaining 54% of the variance in process innovation outcomes ( $R^2 = 0.54$ , F(1,131) = 58.88, p < 0.001). These results emphasize the critical role of early employee involvement and collaborative dialogue in fostering innovative process improvements that enhance operational efficiency. The study concludes that formalizing the initiation phase within Catchball Management significantly enhances process innovation by fostering employee ownership and creativity. It is recommended that organizations institutionalize participatory planning platforms and train managers in participatory leadership to maximize innovation outcomes and operational efficiency.

Keywords: Catchball Management, Initiation, Organizational Innovation, Process Innovation, Hoshin Kanri, Change Management Theory

#### Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of business operations, innovation is no longer a luxury but a strategic imperative for survival and growth. As global markets demand greater efficiency, speed, and product quality, organizations are compelled to continually adapt and enhance their internal processes to remain competitive (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2020). Among the various frameworks that support this need for agility and innovation, Catchball Management emerges as a participatory and inclusive approach. Originating from the Japanese Hoshin Kanri methodology, Catchball facilitates vertical and horizontal communication across organizational levels, enabling collaborative strategy development and execution (Liker & Convis, 2021). At the heart of Catchball is the initiation process, a phase that involves the early formulation and exchange of ideas between leadership and employees. This process establishes the groundwork for trust, shared responsibility, and mutual understanding. Through initiation, organizational goals are not merely handed down from the top but are co-created and refined with the input of various stakeholders (Tennant & Roberts, 2020). This collaborative approach enhances clarity, aligns expectations, and encourages innovation by leveraging the insights and experiences of employees at all levels. Such early engagement is especially critical to process innovation, a subset of organizational innovation that focuses on introducing new or significantly improved methods of production or service delivery. Process innovation improves operational efficiency, reduces waste, and increases responsiveness to market demands (Baregheh et al., 2009). However, in many traditional organizational settings, process innovation is often dictated by top management, excluding the operational insights of frontline workers who are directly involved in the implementation. This top-down approach can limit the effectiveness and sustainability of innovation efforts. Engaging employees from the outset fosters a sense of ownership and commitment, which are key drivers of innovative behavior (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). It allows organizations to tap into tacit knowledge, improve decision-making, and minimize resistance to change. In this context, the initiation process of Catchball Management serves not only as a communication tool but also as a catalyst for organizational learning and continuous improvement.

This study, therefore, seeks to explore the influence of the initiation phase of Catchball Management on process innovation in Nigerian organizations. By examining this relationship, the research aims to offer insights into how inclusive planning mechanisms can strengthen innovation capacity and operational performance in dynamic business environments. Many Nigerian manufacturing organizations, including Seven-Up Bottling Company, continue to struggle with outdated and inefficient operational procedures due to inadequate employee involvement during the innovation planning process (Adegoke & Chukwu, 2022). Despite the recognition of process innovation as a critical driver of operational performance and competitive advantage, its implementation at Seven-Up often follows a top-down approach, which excludes the operational-level employees who are most familiar with the daily workflow challenges (Okon & Eze, 2023). This lack of bottom-up engagement undermines innovation efforts and often results in poor execution, low employee morale, and resistance to change.

The absence of a participatory mechanism, such as the initiation phase of Catchball Management, further limits the company's ability to harness employee knowledge

for meaningful innovation (Liker & Convis, 2021). Catchball's initiation process facilitates early dialogue and shared decision-making between management and staff, allowing for the co-creation of strategic plans that align with actual operational realities (Tennant & Roberts, 2020). At Seven-Up Bottling Company, introducing such a framework could improve innovation quality by ensuring that new process designs are informed by those who operate machinery, manage production lines, and interact directly with consumers.

This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by investigating whether involving employees during the initiation stage of strategic planning as practiced in Catchball Management—contributes to improved process innovation within Seven-Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant. The outcome of this research may offer valuable insights into how inclusive planning approaches can enhance organizational innovation and long-term performance.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of the study is to examine the relationship between catchbal management and organizational innovation. However, the specific objectives is to examine the effect of initiation in Catchball Management on process innovation in Nigerian organizations.

#### **Research Hypotheses**

**H<sub>0</sub>**: Initiation in Catchball Management does not significantly influence process innovation in organizations.

# Literature Review (Conceptual Framework) Catchball Management

Catchball Management is a structured, participatory decision-making process that facilitates the continuous exchange of ideas across all levels of an organization. Rooted in Japan's Hoshin Kanri methodology, Catchball involves the metaphorical "tossing" of strategic goals, plans, or ideas between managers and employees in a back-and-forth fashion, similar to a game of catch, to refine and align objectives collaboratively (Liker & Convis, 2021). The goal is not only to communicate plans from the top but also to engage those at the lower levels in a way that promotes ownership, understanding, and shared responsibility for outcomes (Tennant & Roberts, 2020).

At its core, Catchball encourages transparency and accountability, reducing the traditional top-down command structure in favor of a more inclusive and democratic form of planning. Managers introduce strategic goals, which are then passed down and discussed with subordinates who provide feedback, insights, and suggestions based on their ground-level experience. These suggestions are "tossed" back to leadership, where plans are adjusted accordingly before final decisions are made (Ogbokor & Olanrewaju, 2023). This iterative process ensures that the strategy is well-understood, feasible, and supported by those who will implement it.

In the Nigerian manufacturing context, particularly in firms like Seven-Up Bottling Company, Catchball Management offers a promising alternative to conventional planning systems that often neglect the voices of frontline employees. Many organizations suffer from strategic misalignment, where top executives set goals without sufficient input from middle and lower-level staff, leading to

implementation gaps and inefficiencies (Adegoke & Chukwu, 2022). Catchball addresses this by creating a two-way communication system that fosters collaboration, improves morale, and enhances organizational agility (Ekanem & Adeyemi, 2023). The strength of Catchball lies in its initiation phase, where ideas are first generated and shared. This phase is vital in setting the tone for engagement, encouraging open communication, and establishing mutual trust between leadership and staff (Musa & Osei, 2024). By integrating feedback from all stakeholders early in the planning cycle, organizations can increase buy-in, reduce resistance to change, and foster innovation that is both practical and sustainable. Ultimately, Catchball Management represents a shift toward inclusive leadership and participatory innovation. It is particularly relevant in dynamic environments where adaptability and employee input are critical to maintaining competitive advantage.

#### **Initiation Process**

The initiation process represents the foundational phase of Catchball Management, where strategic intents are proposed, discussed, and collaboratively refined. This stage is critical to ensuring that innovation and strategic planning are inclusive, transparent, and aligned with organizational realities. In the context of Catchball, initiation goes beyond simply announcing new plans it involves the deliberate engagement of stakeholders in brainstorming, articulating goals, gathering feedback, and shaping a common direction (Liker & Convis, 2021). During initiation, organizational leaders introduce broad strategic objectives or areas of improvement, often framed around key operational challenges or market opportunities. These proposals are not finalized; rather, they are opened for discussion and modification through participatory dialogue with employees at all levels. This creates an open platform where ideas are shared, insights are exchanged, and diverse perspectives are integrated into the strategy development process (Tennant & Roberts, 2020). A well-executed initiation phase encourages early ownership and accountability, especially among frontline workers whose practical insights are invaluable to designing workable solutions (Ekanem & Adeyemi, 2023). For example, in the Nigerian manufacturing sector such as at Seven-Up Bottling Company where centralized decision-making is often the norm, introducing a participatory initiation process can close the gap between planning and execution. This approach ensures that strategies are not only top-down but also bottom-up, drawing from the experiences of those directly involved in production, logistics, and customer engagement (Akinlabi & Olaniyan, 2022).

Moreover, initiation sets the stage for collective innovation by framing shared goals. When team members contribute to defining the direction of the organization, they are more likely to commit to its success. This early engagement also fosters psychological safety, empowering employees to express ideas freely and challenge assumptions without fear of reprimand (Musa & Osei, 2024). Such an environment nurtures creativity and leads to better problem-solving, which is essential for sustained innovation. In essence, the initiation process is not merely procedural it is strategic. It transforms the Catchball technique into a living framework of mutual accountability, enabling organizations like Seven-Up Bottling Company to embed innovation in their culture. Through collaborative initiation, firms can develop more realistic, supported, and actionable strategies that directly feed into performance-enhancing initiatives such as process innovation.

#### **Organizational Innovation**

Organizational innovation is a critical component of modern business strategy, reflecting a firm's ability to adapt, evolve, and respond to dynamic market conditions. It involves the intentional introduction and implementation of new ideas, workflows, structures, or methodologies aimed at enhancing an organization's overall performance, productivity, and market relevance (Baregheh, Rowley & Sambrook, 2009). Unlike traditional innovation concepts focused solely on technological advancement or product development, organizational innovation encompasses a broader scope including innovations in management practices, human resource strategies, internal processes, and even cultural frameworks (Chen et al., 2021).

This form of innovation is typically categorized into four main types: product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, and organizational method innovation. Product innovation refers to the development of new or significantly improved goods or services. Process innovation involves advancements in production or delivery methods. Marketing innovation deals with novel marketing strategies, and organizational method innovation includes changes to business practices, workplace organization, or external relations (OECD/Eurostat, 2018). In the context of Nigerian manufacturing firms, such as Seven-Up Bottling Company, organizational innovation is essential for maintaining competitive advantage amid economic uncertainty and rapid technological change. However, despite its importance, many organizations still face barriers to innovation due to hierarchical cultures, poor communication flow, and limited employee involvement (Okafor & Odii, 2023). These factors inhibit creativity, delay decision-making, and result in a misalignment between strategic objectives and day-to-day operations.

A successful organizational innovation strategy requires a culture of inclusiveness, openness to change, and a willingness to challenge existing assumptions. It also demands that employees at all levels be actively involved in the innovation process—from ideation to execution (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). This is where Catchball Management, and particularly its initiation phase, becomes vital. By fostering open dialogue and structured engagement, Catchball ensures that innovation is not merely a leadership directive but a collective effort.

Furthermore, organizational innovation is not a one-time event but a continuous cycle of learning, adaptation, and improvement. When supported by participatory tools like Catchball, it becomes embedded in the organization's DNA, thereby enhancing agility, responsiveness, and long-term sustainability (Musa & Osei, 2024). Ultimately, organizational innovation enables companies like Seven-Up Bottling Company to rethink existing models, enhance value creation, and position themselves more effectively in both local and global markets.

#### **Process Innovation**

Process innovation refers to the implementation of new or significantly improved production or delivery methods, encompassing changes in techniques, equipment, and digital tools that enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, or flexibility of operations (OECD/Eurostat, 2018). It aims to reduce operational costs, improve product quality, shorten production cycles, and increase customer satisfaction. Process innovation is particularly crucial in manufacturing environments, where

efficiency and consistency directly impact performance outcomes (Kusi-Sarpong et al., 2022). In today's competitive business environment, organizations like Seven-Up Bottling Company must continuously re-evaluate and upgrade their production processes to remain agile and responsive to changing consumer demands. The beverage industry, characterized by high volumes and fast turnaround times, requires innovative processing methods to optimize throughput and reduce waste. Process innovation in this context may involve automating bottling lines, adopting eco-friendly packaging systems, integrating real-time quality control technologies, or reengineering workflow sequences to eliminate bottlenecks (Edeh & Ogbonna, 2023). The successful implementation of process innovation relies not only on technological upgrades but also on strategic planning and inclusive decision-making. When operational-level employees are involved in the planning and design of new processes especially during the initiation phase they are more likely to identify practical solutions, adopt innovations more quickly, and contribute to continuous improvement (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). Unfortunately, in many Nigerian firms, including manufacturing companies like Seven-Up, process innovation is often implemented through top-down directives with minimal input from frontline staff (Okonkwo & Salami, 2022). This limits innovation effectiveness and often leads to resistance or misalignment with actual workflow realities.

Integrating participatory frameworks such as Catchball Management during the early stages of innovation can significantly enhance the outcomes of process innovation initiatives. The Catchball method promotes open communication between departments and facilitates shared understanding of strategic objectives (Liker & Convis, 2021). By enabling employees to contribute to process improvement strategies, organizations ensure that innovations are grounded in operational realities and are more likely to succeed. Ultimately, process innovation is essential for firms aiming to achieve long-term performance, sustainability, and competitiveness. For Seven-Up Bottling Company, investing in both technological upgrades and inclusive innovation practices can help reduce costs, increase operational resilience, and elevate overall customer satisfaction in a rapidly evolving market landscape.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on Kurt Lewin's Change Management Theory (1947), a foundational model for understanding how organizations transition from current states to desired future states through structured change. Lewin conceptualized change as a three-stage process: *unfreezing*, *changing*, and *refreezing*. Each stage represents a critical component in managing organizational transformation effectively (Burnes & Cooke, 2013). The unfreezing stage involves breaking down existing mindsets, norms, and behaviors to prepare the organization for change. This aligns closely with the initiation phase of Catchball Management, where leaders begin by engaging employees, communicating strategic intents, and encouraging participation in the innovation planning process (Liker & Convis, 2021). Through open dialogue and feedback, employees develop awareness and acceptance of the need for change, thereby creating psychological readiness for transformation (Cummings, Bridgman & Brown, 2016). In the changing stage, organizations implement new methods or systems—paralleling process innovation, where new workflows or production techniques are introduced. Employee involvement from the

initiation stage facilitates smoother implementation by reducing resistance and fostering a sense of ownership (Musa & Osei, 2024). The final refreezing stage solidifies new behaviors and systems into organizational culture, ensuring long-term sustainability.

By applying Lewin's theory, this study underscores the importance of early-stage stakeholder engagement in fostering readiness for process innovation. In the context of Nigerian manufacturing firms such as Seven-Up Bottling Company, the structured approach of Catchball Management, particularly its initiation stage, serves as a practical application of Lewin's unfreezing phase to drive lasting organizational innovation.

#### **Empirical Review**

Adekunle (2021) examined "Participatory Management and Process Innovation in Manufacturing Firms in Lagos State, Nigeria." Using a quantitative survey design, the study selected 200 mid-level and operational staff through stratified random sampling. Data were collected via structured questionnaires focusing on employee involvement in decision-making and innovation outcomes. Regression analysis was employed to determine the relationship between participatory management and process innovation. Results indicated a significant positive effect of employee involvement during early planning stages on process efficiency and operational sustainability. The study concluded that participatory frameworks improve innovation success by fostering ownership and practical insights from frontline employees.

Mbatha and Okeke (2022) conducted a study on "Employee Engagement and Organizational Innovation in Kenya's Textile Sector." A mixed-method approach combined quantitative data from 150 employees via Likert-scale questionnaires and qualitative data from 10 semi-structured interviews with managers and supervisors. Descriptive statistics and inferential analyses showed that early and consistent employee engagement significantly contributed to successful process innovation, enhancing operational efficiency and product quality. The interviews revealed that participatory dialogue helped identify bottlenecks and fostered creativity, leading to improved workflows. The study recommended embedding engagement practices in strategic planning to maximize innovation outcomes.

Yusuf (2023) investigated "Hoshin Kanri Implementation and Performance in FMCG Firms in Nigeria." The correlational study surveyed 180 employees from fast-moving consumer goods companies using a validated questionnaire. Data analysis using correlation and multiple regression revealed that firms implementing Catchball Management techniques experienced higher levels of process and organizational innovation. The initiation phase, characterized by inclusive dialogue and shared goal setting, was found essential for driving innovation performance. Yusuf concluded that collaborative strategic planning enhanced adaptability and efficiency in production processes, underlining Catchball's relevance for Nigerian FMCG firms.

Eze and Nwankwo (2022) explored "The Role of Participatory Strategic Planning on Innovation in Nigerian Food Processing Firms." Utilizing a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 150 employees selected through purposive sampling. Structural equation modeling was applied to test hypotheses on participatory planning's impact on both process and product innovation. Findings

showed a strong, positive relationship between employee involvement during strategic initiation and subsequent innovation outcomes. The study highlighted that participatory management mitigated resistance to change and improved the implementation of new production technologies.

Chukwuma (2023) studied "Employee Involvement and Process Innovation in Nigerian Beverage Companies: A Case of Seven-Up Bottling Company." A mixed-methods approach was adopted, surveying 120 production and logistics staff with questionnaires and conducting focus group discussions. Quantitative analysis through multiple regression found employee involvement during the initiation phase significantly predicted successful process innovation initiatives. Qualitative data emphasized that inclusion increased motivation and idea-sharing, resulting in operational improvements such as bottling automation and waste reduction. The study recommended institutionalizing participatory mechanisms for sustained innovation at Seven-Up.

Ogunleye and Bello (2024) examined "Strategic Dialogue and Innovation Outcomes in Nigerian Manufacturing Firms." Using a longitudinal design, the study tracked innovation initiatives over 18 months across three firms, involving 210 employees surveyed at multiple points. Qualitative interviews supplemented quantitative data from structured questionnaires. Findings showed that structured communication tools like Catchball facilitated continuous feedback and iterative refinement of strategies, directly enhancing process innovation success. Early employee engagement was linked to higher adoption rates and smoother change implementation. The authors concluded that Catchball's dialogic approach is vital for embedding innovation in Nigerian manufacturing contexts.

#### Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of the initiation phase of Catchball Management on process innovation at Seven-Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant, Edo State. The population consisted of 200 employees across various departments within the plant. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a representative sample size of 133 respondents was determined. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale, designed to assess employee involvement in the initiation process and its impact on process innovation. To ensure the instrument's validity, it was reviewed and approved by three experts in management studies, while its reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.84, demonstrating strong internal consistency. The data were analyzed using regression analysis via SPSS version 25.0, allowing for the evaluation of the relationship between Catchball Management initiation and process innovation performance within the organization.

#### **Data Analysis**

The study aimed to investigate the impact of the initiation phase of Catchball Management on process innovation at Seven-Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant, Edo State. The analysis began with descriptive statistics to summarize respondents' perceptions of the initiation process, followed by regression analysis to test the relationship between initiation and process innovation.

#### **Descriptive Statistics of Initiation**

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the initiation subvariable of Catchball Management, which measures employee involvement in early strategic planning, encouragement of feedback during idea formulation, and the consideration of employee suggestions.

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
Employees are involved early in strategic planning	4.21	0.58
Feedback is encouraged at the idea stage	4.10	0.64
Suggestions are considered in planning	4.30	0.52

**Source**: Field Survey 2025

The results reveal that respondents generally agree that employees are actively involved early in the strategic planning process, with a mean score of 4.21 out of 5. This indicates strong early engagement, which is vital for fostering a culture of inclusion and innovation. Similarly, the mean score of 4.10 shows that feedback during the idea stage is actively encouraged, supporting an open communication environment where ideas can be freely exchanged and refined. The highest mean score of 4.30 for suggestions being considered in planning highlights that employee input is not only solicited but also meaningfully integrated into decision-making. The relatively low standard deviations (all below 0.65) suggest that responses were consistent among participants, reflecting a shared perception of the initiation process at the Benin plant.

These descriptive statistics confirm the presence of a participatory culture in the early stages of Catchball Management, which is theorized to be essential for driving process innovation.

#### **Regression Analysis**

To further understand the predictive effect of initiation on process innovation, regression analysis was conducted. Table 2 presents the regression coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and significance levels:

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.
Constant	1.47	0.38	3.87	0.000
Initiation	0.69	0.09	7.67	0.000

Source: SPSS vs23

The regression model yielded an  $R^2$  value of 0.54, indicating that approximately 54% of the variance in process innovation is explained by the initiation phase of Catchball Management. The model's overall significance is supported by the F-statistic (F = 58.88, p < 0.001), suggesting that the predictor variable, initiation, is a strong explanatory factor. The coefficient for initiation ( $\beta$  = 0.69) is positive and statistically significant at the 0.05 level (p = 0.000). This means that for every one-unit increase in the effectiveness of the initiation process, there is a corresponding 0.69 increase in the level of process innovation within Seven-Up Bottling Company. The constant term (1.47) signifies the baseline level of process innovation when initiation is zero, though this is largely theoretical as initiation is a continuous process.

#### **Discussion of Findings**

The regression results provide robust evidence that the initiation phase in Catchball Management significantly and positively influences process innovation at Seven-Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant. This supports the research hypothesis that early employee involvement in strategic planning leads to enhanced innovative capabilities within the organization. These findings align well with Lewin's Change Management Theory (1947), which posits that the unfreezing stage analogous to the initiation phase in Catchball is critical for preparing an organization to embrace change. By engaging employees early and encouraging feedback, the organization fosters readiness and openness to innovation. This psychological readiness reduces resistance and increases the likelihood that new operational processes will be successfully implemented. The positive relationship between initiation and process innovation also resonates with prior studies in the Nigerian and broader African context. For instance, Adekunle (2021) reported that participatory management positively affects process innovation in manufacturing firms, emphasizing that involving employees early enhances operational efficiency and sustainability. Similarly, Yusuf (2023) found that FMCG firms employing Catchball techniques experienced higher innovation outcomes due to collaborative strategy formulation, particularly during the initiation phase.

Further, this study's findings corroborate Mbatha and Okeke's (2022) results, which highlighted that employee engagement at early stages led to significant process improvements in Kenya's textile industry. Their mixed-method approach revealed that dialogue during the planning phase helped identify inefficiencies and generated actionable ideas, a dynamic mirrored in Seven-Up Bottling's operational improvements.

Additionally, the results reflect the insights of Chukwuma (2023), whose research at Seven-Up Bottling Company underlined that employee involvement during initiation significantly predicted successful automation and waste reduction initiatives. The current study strengthens this conclusion by quantitatively confirming the impact of initiation on process innovation. The substantial variance explained (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.54) suggests that initiation is a critical factor but not the sole determinant of process innovation, implying that other variables such as organizational culture, leadership style, or resource availability also play significant roles. This opens avenues for further research to explore complementary factors that enhance innovation outcomes.

Overall, the findings reinforce the strategic value of embedding Catchball Management's initiation phase in organizational practices, especially in complex manufacturing environments like bottling plants. By fostering early, inclusive dialogue and feedback mechanisms, organizations can unlock employee creativity, facilitate smoother change adoption, and ultimately improve their competitive edge through enhanced process innovation.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study concludes that the initiation phase of Catchball Management significantly enhances process innovation within organizations. At Seven-Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant, Edo State, involving employees early in strategic planning creates an environment that encourages creativity, collaboration, and continuous improvement. The initiation process allows ideas to be proposed, discussed, and

refined through inclusive dialogue and feedback, fostering a sense of ownership among employees. This involvement motivates them to contribute innovative ideas and support operational changes, which in turn improves efficiency and competitiveness.

The findings support Kurt Lewin's Change Management Theory, particularly the unfreezing stage, which aligns with the initiation phase. Early engagement prepares employees to embrace change, reducing resistance and easing the implementation of innovation. These results are consistent with prior studies emphasizing the importance of participatory management in driving successful process innovation. Given the crucial role of initiation, organizations should formalize this stage within their strategic management systems. Without structured employee involvement early in the innovation process, companies risk missing valuable insights and commitment necessary for effective change.

#### Recommendations

- 1. Organizations should institutionalize the initiation stage of Catchball by creating formal platforms for employee feedback at the planning stage.
- 2. Managers should be trained in participatory leadership to effectively implement Catchball.
- 3. Continuous evaluation of the initiation process should be conducted to ensure alignment with innovation goals.

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