

Twenty-one books on innovation and change including some that deal with innovation in the public sector

Personal Accounts

Many of the most widely read books take the form of biographies, autobiographies, and personal accounts of persons involved in ground breaking innovations. Here are a few of the best.

1. William S. Draper and Eric Schmidt, *The Startup Game: Inside the Partnership between Venture Capitalists and Entrepreneurs*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
2. Walter Isaacson, *Steve Jobs*. Simon & Schuster, 2011.
3. Jessica Livingston, *Founders at Work: Stories of Startups' Early Days*. Springer-Verlag, 2008.
4. Brian Muirhead and William L. Simon, *High Velocity Leadership: The Mars Pathfinder Approach to Faster, Better, Cheaper*. Babbage Press, 2004.
5. Alfred P. Sloan, *My Years With General Motors*. Doubleday, 1963.

Self Help

The most popular books on innovation often fall into the “self help” genre, offering handfuls of lessons for managing change often in bullet form. The worst read like *Who Moved My Cheese?* (1998), the best like well-informed histories. A few of the better ones follow.

1. Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success*. Little, Brown, 2008.
2. Steven Johnson, *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*. Riverhead, 2010.
3. Rod Pyle, *Innovation the NASA Way: Harnessing the Power of Your Organization for Breakthrough Success*. McGraw-Hill, 2014.
4. Eric Ries, *The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses*. Crown Business, 2011.
5. Bill Schley, *The UnStoppables: Tapping Your Entrepreneurial Power*. John Wiley, 2013.

Scholarly Works

A library of important scholarly works on innovation, entrepreneurship, and change would include some of the following texts.

1. Frank M. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. University of Chicago Press, 1993. In this classic work, two American political scientists show how governmental change occurs as precipitating events disturb the equilibrium inherent in policy subsystems.
2. Sandford F. Borins, *The Persistence of Innovation in Government*. Brookings Institution Press, 2014. Although gratingly self-promotional, this Brookings Institution study contains an extensive review of the state of public sector innovation research by one of the contributors to it.
3. Aneesh Chopra, *Innovative State: How New Technologies Can Transform Government*. Atlantic Monthly Press, 2014. A semi-autobiographical statement by President Barack Obama's chief technology officer, this book captures much of the emphasis that writers on public sector innovation place upon improving performance.
4. Clayton M. Christensen, *The Innovator's Dilemma: When New Technologies Cause Great Firms to Fail*. Harvard Business School Press, 1997. Harvard professor Clayton Christensen popularized the concept of disruptive innovation. His book examines how smart decisions by company executives facing new technologies actually cause their corporations to fall.
5. Peter F. Drucker, *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*. First published in 1986, this classic work by consultant and author Peter Drucker established innovation as a business and service sector specialization worthy of study. The book surveys the sources of disruptive change and strategies managers use to deal with it.
6. Terence Kealey, *Sex, Science and Politics: How People Evolved to Make Money*. Random House, 2008. British biochemist Terence Kealey uses history and economic theory to show how technological progress rises from the private and not the public sector. This book is a more popular version of his 1997 work *The Economic Laws of Scientific Research*. Kealey is a leading critic of the practice of funding science with public funds.
7. Paul Light, *Sustaining Innovation: Creating Nonprofit and Government Organizations that Innovate Naturally*. Jossey-Bass, 1998. Based on the experience of twenty-six Minnesota organizations, this book by a leading

government scholar contains general commentary on the factors that allow public service executives to break free of bureaucracy and innovate.

8. Mariana Mazzucato, *The Entrepreneurial State: Debunking Public vs. Private Sector Myths*. Anthem, 2014. Using examples such as the iPhone and the green revolution, an economist from the University of Sussex explains how governments help to create innovative businesses.
9. Mark H. Moore, *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*. Harvard University Press, 1995. Part of the “reinventing government” movement, this book by a Kennedy School of Government professor pioneered the concept of entrepreneurial management in the public sector.
10. Peter H. Schuck, *Why Government Fails So Often and How It Can Do Better*. Princeton University Press, 2014. Another book with a focus on governmental performance, this work by Yale law professor Peter Schuck examines the structural foundations of both innovative and ineffective public institutions.
11. James M. Utterback, *Mastering the Dynamics of Innovation*. Harvard Business School, 1994. Using examples from business history, an MIT professor shows how the success and failure of manufacturing firms depends upon their ability to innovate.

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