

**THE CEO AS CORPORATE CHAMPION OF
TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION:
AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION * 1**

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A b s t r a c t

Research on innovation has engaged the attention of many scientific disciplines over the last few decades. But while some categories of determining factors (mainly organisational and environmental), are at the centre of this research, others such as the role and significance of strategic leadership seem to have received much less empirical attention. Using evidence from a sample of 97 manufacturing enterprises, the present study tests a model of the impact of strategic leadership and corporate context on Technological Innovation (TI). CEO's personality and demographic characteristics are used to measure strategic leadership. A number of environmental and internal organisational variables measure the broader context. Four dimensions of TI are measured.

Results suggest that CEO characteristics significantly influence TI, but the structural and environmental context is on aggregate more influential. Interestingly though, in new product introductions CEO's characteristics outweigh environmental and internal organisational factors.