



Book Review

This is a book that should be on the book shelf of every entrepreneur or engineer who thinks of themselves as an entrepreneur.

The subject of the book is deeply involved in legalisms but the author is true to his word and keeps the "legalese" to an absolute minimum.

As the title implies, the book explores alternative paths toward answering the question of whether or not to file a patent by discussing the following issues:

- Is it better to keep everything a secret and not divulge our company's secret process in a patent application?
- Is it better to file in several countries at the same time?
- How shall we keep records?
- How shall we treat "prior art?"
- What exactly does a patent get us?
- How much will a patent cost? Are there recurring costs?
- Whose names must be on the patent? Should we include the boss as a courtesy?
- What are the most likely causes for a patent to be rejected? Is an appeal possible?
- Is an idea patentable?
- Must the idea be reduced to practice?
- What is the distinction between copyright and patent?
- What is the distinction between invention and discovery?
- Who is the better person to prepare an invention application, the researcher or a patent lawyer (agent)?

Title: Patent Strategy for Researchers and Research Managers
Author: H. Jackson Knight
Publisher: John Wiley and Sons
ISBN: 0471960950
Price: \$49.95
Reviewed by: John Ogren

- Why do researchers file patents (letters of patent)?
- How about computer codes?
- What international agreements exist?

Let me give you answers to some of those questions in the hope that you will go out to buy the book and find your own answers and, of course, your own questions.

A patent, first of all, does not give you the exclusive right to practice your invention. It does, however, exclude others from practicing your invention. This exclusion is given to you by your government and any other governments with which you file a patent (and it is accepted).

A patent attorney (lawyer, agent, etc.) is better. The researcher should resist the temptation to "go it alone." The government forms and paperwork are sufficient to distract the researcher from the job the researcher does best.

Discovery occurs when we find something that has been in existence all along, but we have just now found it. Perhaps it is just an idea or it can be a substance or material. Invention occurs when something new and useful is conceived and reduced to practice.

The book does, indeed, avoid "legalese" and is easy and enjoyable reading. Terms are defined and clarified.

One sour note needs to be sounded: the index is brief and quite inadequate in this reviewer's opinion.