6.2.8 DOE Funds Available for Technology Transfer

DOE's technology transfer funds are typically very limited, as is true for most of the innovations studied here. Trade and professional associations have existing networks that can be leveraged when funds are limited. Licensing is also a low-cost approach when the DOE laboratory or univerisity with title to a patent has the legal, marketing, and other resources available to support the effort. Industry consortia are also appropriate with limited funds, but only if they are pre-existing and do not need to be established. Influencing key decision-makers has been used in cases of software with limited resources (e.g., CIRA).

Occasionally DOE's technology transfer resources are considerable, as when a particular commercialization process is of extremely high priority. Multiple strategies may then be most appropriate (Fig. 6.10). Multi-pronged approaches were characteristic of the OBCS case study innovations that were commercialized in the 1970's, when technology transfer funds were more abundant.

Irrespective of the availability of funds, there is always a case for efficient utilization of resources.

6.3 FOOTNOTES TO SECTION 6

[1]The distinction between process and product innovations is essential for setting government R&D and technology transfer policy since these innovations may have different effects on market structure (see Lunn, 1986).