# Creativity And Innovation: Your Keys To A Successful Organisation

The companies that have thrived over the long haul are those who are the most creative and innovative. These organisations don’t copy what others do; instead, they may use innovative ideas from others as a springboard to come up with a unique application, product, or service for themselves.

They tend to differentiate themselves from the competition. If they see another company copying what they do, they create something newer and better.

In other words, they are able to leverage their creativity and their innovative capabilities to attain long-term success.

Would you like to be one of those organisations? You can be.

In fact, all companies can be more creative and innovative regardless of their expertise, product, or service.

When you apply creativity and innovation to every aspect of your business, you are able to stay ahead of a changing marketplace.

**What is creativity?**

Creativity is a function of knowledge, curiosity, imagination and evaluation.

The greater your knowledge base and level of curiosity, the more ideas, patterns, and combinations you can achieve, which then correlates to creating new and innovative products and services.

But merely having the knowledge does not guarantee the formation of new patterns.

The bits and pieces must be shaken up and iterated in new ways. Then the ideas must be evaluated and developed into usable ideas. In other words, there really is a process.

***To help you master that process, you must first understand three important levels of creativity:***

1. **Discovery**

As the name implies, it’s when you become aware of (or stumble upon) something – you discover it.

For example, there is art called “discovered art”. It might be a rock with a unique shape or a piece of wood with an interesting pattern.

If you have ever purchased a piece of natural stone or wood art, that art was discovered art. Many inventions start with a discovery.

1. **Invention**

Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone. But you have to ask yourself, “Would the telephone have been invented without Bell?”

The answer is yes. Eventually the telephone would have been invented because the science was there.

It might have taken longer, but it would have happened. So, while invention is higher than discovery, it’s something that is going to happen. If you don’t invent it, someone else will.

1. **Creation**

This is the highest level of creativity.

For example, the stage play, Othello, is genuinely a creation. Elizabethan drama would have gone on without Shakespeare, but no one else would have written Othello.

Similarly, there are things that only your organisation can create! The key is tapping in to what those things are.

Here’s an example of how this could play out in your company. While at a conference, you might discover a tool, a technology, or a process that you didn’t know before.

You purchase the tool

for your staff, and that discovery helps everyone work better. After some time, that discovery may also spur an innovative idea of how to apply the discovery differently.

You may then use that innovative idea as an inspiration that yields something never seen before, something created by your company that helps you and your customers. That’s how the three levels of creativity can work together.

Realise that creativity and innovation are different.

**Creativity refers to generating new and novel ideas. Innovation refers to the application of an idea and, in many cases, is a collaborative enterprise. Innovation is applied creativity**.

**10 strategies to increase your creativity and innovation**

Now that you understand the various levels of creativity, you can implement some strategies that will boost your company’s ability to create and innovate.

1. Truly creative people have developed their ability to observe and use all of their senses, something which can get dull over time. Take time to “sharpen the blade” and take everything in.
2. Innovation is based on knowledge. Therefore, you need to continually expand your knowledge base. Read things you don’t normally read.
3. Your perceptions may limit your reasoning. Be careful about how you’re perceiving things. Defer judgment.
4. Practise guided imagery so you can “see” a concept come to life.
5. Let your ideas “incubate” by taking a break from them. For example, when I’m working on a big business project, one of the best things I can do to take a break from it is play my guitar or take a ride on my motorcycle. It shifts my brain into another place and helps me be more innovative and creative.
6. Experience as much as you can. Exposure puts more ideas into your subconscious. Actively seek out new experiences to broaden your experience portfolio.
7. Treat patterns as part of the problem. Recognising a new pattern is very useful but be careful not to become part of it.
8. Redefine the problem completely. One of the lines I’ve been sharing is: “Your problem is not the problem; there is another problem. When you define the real problem, you can solve it and move on.” If you had correctly defined the real problem, you would have solved it long ago because all problems have solutions.
9. Look where others aren’t looking to see what others aren’t seeing.
10. Come up with ideas at the beginning of the innovation process… and then stop. Many times, we come up with several ideas and start innovating. Then we come up with more ideas and never get a single idea done. At some point, you have to turn off the idea generation part of the process and really work on the innovation and execution part to bring a project to life.

**Create your own success**

The more creative and innovative you and your team members are, the more long-term success you’ll achieve.

So, rather than constantly chasing **“the next big idea” in your industry, bring creativity and innovation into what you’re currently doing.**

**When you do, you’ll be regarded as an industry innovator – the one your competitors are trying to copy.**

**Factors that contribute to organizational effectiveness**

**Organizational Culture**: basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared among organization members, or common meanings and concepts among staff members, which include the following:

An atmosphere filled with trust

This is necessary for maintaining the organization because staff members need to communicate openly and honestly with one another. Organizational departments require cooperation between the units. Employees should trust one another to be able to cooperate and solve problems.

Increasing production through workers means that all must participate. The employees must be a source of quality and productivity. Individuals should be encouraged and given the necessary powers in an organization.

The next issue is the importance of a long-time view of the organization. Successful companies invest in training their employees to empower them. Career paths should be designed in such a way that the employees adhere to the organization for long periods of time and gain an extensive career background.

**Organizational design**

Successful and effective organizations have three characteristics in terms of organizational design.

A simple form with a few staff members: the shape or system of the organization is simple and elegant, while the number of staff members in administrative posts is few.

Large corporations are made into smaller units to be simple and flexible. Organizational structure is decentralized so as to strengthen innovation and change. In small organizational units, individuals feel a sense of belonging and help each other for problem solving.

**Entrepreneurship**

Organizations have found that success is something other than pure profit. Success depends on a set of values and competencies. Maintaining a balance between financial and non-financial resources provides a better picture of the company and its performance, while helping the managers to lead staff members and the organization toward strategic goals.

**Simultaneous Structure and Negligence**

Researches show that successful organizations in the long term are those which use appropriate competency on the one hand and appropriate measures of financial performance and operational efficiency on the other.

Top management

Another dimension of the effective organization lies in management processes and methods. Three factors are important among these criteria:

Vision of leadership: for guidance and leadership, the organization requires a special vision of leadership. The leader has to provide a vision or perspective for the employees and inspire a sense of leadership, common purpose and destination into them.

Action fanaticism: managers and employees pay special attention to work and practice for a successful organization. Successful companies have a slogan, **“Try it, do it, do it right”.**

Focusing on core values: Ethics is important in organizations. The company’s management should focus on the main objectives and strategies and appreciate the decisions that stimulate, strengthen, and sustain the company.

**Strategic Orientation**

**Three Features of Strategic Orientation Are**

Customer Contact: paying attention to the customer should be the focus of the company. The customer is considered the most important and beneficial factor in an organization. In such organizations, success depends on meeting more needs of the organization.

Rapid response: successful organizations try to quickly react to problems, issues and opportunities that come forward. Such organizations have a progressive perspective and take advantage of every opportunity.

The focus and purposes of commercial methods: Effective organizations have a very clear and definite focus. Such companies are well aware whether they are prospective or defensive. They also know well how to act and succeed: They know what the best practice is (Nokar; 2008).

The relationship between creativity and organizational effectiveness in the ministry of education:

Major decisions of the ministry of education are usually made in administrative establishments of the ministry. Administrative decision-makers have acknowledged that, in the process of pursuing objectives and policies, regional offices of the ministry can demonstrate their effectiveness so as to transform structures, facilities and policies. This becomes possible by making operational and reasonable decisions that are effective in the achievement of educational goals. If these processes are associated with creativity by the employee of the ministry of education, the schools will be an appropriate scene for training providence to the next generation and preparing them in the face of future.

Thus, if we want to consider future developments and the many problems associated with it, we need to innovate and create using our knowledge. We also need to consider that training an active, dynamic, innovative and creative generation demands the establishment of schools with particular characteristics and appropriate management methods. But there is still the question whether the creativity of employees in these organizations will lead to their effectiveness. Research has shown that, in other organizations - for example, educational organizations, creativity provides a good platform for organizational effectiveness. The researcher chose the Talcott Parsons model of organizational effectiveness as the model that can be prescribed for organizational effectiveness of these agencies. This model divides effectiveness into four dimensions each of which has four indices, hence sixteen all in all:

A) Compatibility: including indices of adaptability, growth, innovation and development. B) Goal achievement: including indices of success, quality, resource acquisition and efficiency. C) Integrity and cohesion: including indices of satisfaction, atmosphere, communication, and conflict. D) Continuity: including indices of loyalty, main interests in life, motivation and identity (Harris; 2006).

Pandey (2009) conducted a research on organizational factors that influence employee creativity and concluded that creativity is highly affected by organizational structure, leadership style and reward system in an organization. Decentralized structure, transformational leadership style, participation of staff members in activities and granting rewards that could satisfy internal needs are among factors that affect the creativity of subordinates. (Pandey and Sharadindu and Sharma; 2009).

Thompson (2000), in his research, believes that open and free communication crushes hierarchical structures that, in its own turn, leads to more risk-taking capacity in the organization, and ultimately results in increased organizational creativity, effectiveness and efficiency. (Thomson; 2000).

Vaezi et al. (2009) examined the relationship between behavioral components of educational leaders and organizational effectiveness. Their findings indicate a correlation between supportive, participatory and success-oriented behavioral components on the one hand and organizational effectiveness on the other, while designating no significant relationship between prescriptive and situation-oriented behavioral components on the one hand and organizational effectiveness on the other. There was a significant relationship between participatory behaviors of the manager and components of compliance, consistency, unity and organizational integrity. In addition, there was no significant relationship between the gender of educational leaders and organizational effectiveness. (Vaezi et al; 2009).

Sadeghi MalAmiri (2007) investigated factors affecting the creativity of employees of Iranian research institutes and concluded that individual factors including capability, personality traits, cognitive styles, intelligence, flexibility and challenges contribute directly to creativity, whereas organizational factors including leadership styles, organizational structure, organizational reward systems, atmosphere, and resources contribute indirectly to creativity. (Sadeghi Mal Amiri; 2007).