

Chapter 1

The Case for Creativity and Innovation

ABSTRACT

The world has moved on and away from the traditional work environment. The workforce characteristics have changed, as have expectations of the working population and the workplace. Jobs that did not exist ten years ago, are accepted and new positions continue to develop globally as science and communication systems change. Changes in expectations for a global workforce continue to gain support across disciplines as skills needed to solve problems creatively become necessary to react and develop solutions to unpredictable and inherent risks. Today's society demands creative and novel resolutions, valuable ideas, as well as adaptation and vision to bring about change. Inspiring, sustaining and applying creativity is necessary to compete in today's breathlessly evolving marketplace. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a case for the importance of creativity in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION: TO CREATE OR NOT TO CREATE

Some would argue that creativity has become a buzzword, implying that it is fashionable at this time in context- simply a passing phase or trend. Runco and Jaeger (2012) write that creativity has value depending on the current market; however, the authors believe that creativity is essential for the *future* of business, health services, general education and the global workforce. Rather than thinking of creativity as the outcome of a series of processes,

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the adaptation of “older” ideas to generate applications to the new world of technology and global systems is, in itself, a creative thinking process. The authors propose that creativity and innovation in this era should be valued more as a worldview, or a critical thinking process, rather than just an end product. This view suggests that creativity is particularly important to problem solving- as leaders, managers and workers alike further develop their abilities to switch strategies if they find that a solution is not forthcoming. The new world of workers must constantly evaluate information, including the discrimination of relevant from irrelevant information, which influence successful choices for and approaches to managing issues across various domains (Johnston & Bate, 2013). From these important thinking processes, innovation grows through application. Limiting thinking concerning the importance of creativity to *all* aspects of professional endeavors is, in itself, inhibiting the development and support of this critical attribute.

Objectives

In this chapter the authors will explore the changes in the global workforce and how the expectations for the new work skills support creativity and innovation. The chapter includes summary information across disciplines to include research reports, CEO blog sites, and recommendations from agencies like the National Academies of Science and The Partnership for 21st Century Skills. The scope of identified need for both creativity and innovation indicate this is not the “pet rock” of our era, but necessary to transcend political borders and improve the quality of life as well as economic success from a global perspective.

After reading this chapter one should be able to identify the support for creativity as a constant and necessary component of the changing expectations for the workforce and workplace. The reader should develop a better understanding of the shift in the working population and, therefore, the demand for creativity across multiple industries.

BACKGROUND: THE CHANGING WORKFORCE

If you're gonna make connections which are innovative ... you have to not have the same bag of experiences as everyone else does. - Steve Jobs (1982)

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