

Chapter 11

Four Constituents of an Entrepreneurial Culture Within Business Organizations: A Reflective Analysis

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ABSTRACT

A culture of fear, control, and meaninglessness can effectively kill the entrepreneurial spirit within an organization. This chapter will explore why such a culture typically takes root and how it is deadly for the organization's entrepreneurial orientation. The chapter is based on an interdisciplinary reflective analysis done by exploring disciplines including depth psychology, neuroscience, positive psychology, and organizational behavior. The chapter argues from the perspectives of these disciplines that it is perhaps the factor of safety, risk-taking, collaboration, and meaningfulness if present in organizational culture that will eventually cultivate the spirit of entrepreneurship in an organization. While discussing these factors, the chapter also explains how seemingly irrational forces of the unconscious mind keep the leadership from adopting a behavior which is fundamentally important in fostering a culture where entrepreneurial behavior takes root. The chapter also explains how these psychic forces can be turned around to cultivate an entrepreneurial culture in an organization.

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INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, employees who join a company are often enthusiastic, excited, and forward-looking, however, their zeal may die off over time. If their enthusiasm is too hard to kill, they gradually spend their energy not on bringing new ideas rather on following the old norms already prevalent within the organization. Even if they remain successful in bringing new ideas, their implementation is often hijacked by the prevalent organizational culture. No matter how resilient humans are, their energies, imaginations, and aspirations can fade away likewise. If new employees can retain their drive to take initiatives, the organizational culture and its bureaucratic system can use their drive to feed the status quo instead (Campagnolo & Vivel, 2012; Hardy & Thomas, 2014).

This chapter argues through a reflective analysis of relevant literature that it is primarily the top positions of power in an organization that can create, influence, or destroy a culture of initiative, innovation, creativity, collaboration, and entrepreneurship. The top leadership sets the precedence, which is then trickled down typically by the subsequent layers of managers and supervisors to the very bottom. The choice of the type of organizational management systems also affect the entrepreneurial orientation of employees, and this choice is perhaps also dependent on the preferences of the top leadership during organizational evolution, particularly in the earlier years (Semler, 2007).

The extant literature extensively discusses the types of leadership, their impact on organizational culture, and employee creativity, however, a deeper psychological analysis which (a) looks at the unconscious and neurological reasons behind leadership behavior toward their employees, particularly when the employees commit mistakes, and (b) analyse the neurological effect of their reaction on the employees, is seldom found in the extant literature. If the source of a behavior is unconscious for example, then many of the contemporary methods to change behavior which do not address the contents of the unconscious mind, will not be sufficient, and at best will superficially address the problem. If this is true then a more informed approach will be needed, and appropriate therapeutic interventions may be necessary to address the unconscious cause of leadership behavior unconducive to foster an entrepreneurial culture in an organization.

This article therefore uses the perspectives from depth psychology, positive psychology, and to an extent from neuroscience, to explore the unconscious causes behind unconducive leadership's behavior which kills the entrepreneurial spirit, and what can be done to address the unconscious causes. The author's personal experience of working in several organizations in the corporate, non-profit, and educational sectors, also influences the outcomes of the reflective analysis present in this chapter. Evaluation of the author's experience in the light of the perspectives

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