

CREATIVITY AS MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE

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Abstract:

The problem for developing creativity in the science, education and business, especially on the working place is result from the modern social and cultural situation (Kamenova& Dencheva, 2016). The situation nowadays is characterized by the fast change of the traditional means of acquiring knowledge and by the transformation of the society. The new paradigm is characterized with human related approach. The main focus of this new approach is to develop creativity in people and manage effectively creative people (Dencheva&Kamenova, 2016). Nowadays in the business, more than ever is important to look for the social creativity of the personality at all levels. In the last decade, the need of creative people is wanted more than ever. In this regard, the goal of the paper is to present essence and characteristics of creativity, its importance for managers. In the first part of the paper is presented what is creativity and how it can help managers in the effective management of their staff and companies. Creativity will be viewed as one of the most important skills needed by managers. The focus of the paper is not only to present and discuss the theoretical concept of creativity but most of all how it can be applied by managers.

Key words: creativity, managerial creativity, creative thinking

1. Introduction

The situation nowadays is characterized by the fast change of the traditional means of acquiring knowledge and by the transformation of the society. Due to this uniqueness, the leadership is based on a newer humanitarian oriented paradigm. The new paradigm is characterized with human related approach. The main focus of this new approach is to develop creativity in people and manage effectively by creative people.

Creativity is a thinking and responding process that involves connecting with our previous experience, responding to stimuli (objects, symbols, ideas, people, situations), and generating at least one unique combination (Parnes 1963, stated in Isenberg & Jalongo, 1997) as cited by Aktamis et al. (Dencheva&Kamenova, 2016).

Our main research thesis is that creative managers are bringing the change in the organizations.

Creativity can be perceived in two types of thinking, according to Patmore, Whittaker, Watkins & Hessey (2009):

- **Visual thinking:** the intellectual ability to visualise a totally new situation. It is connected with the managerial ability to create of concept of the whole situation.

Problem Solving: when solving a problem, we are striving for a goal but have no ready means of obtaining it. The problem solving thinking is the main attribute of managers, as managers are people who make decision all the time in their work.

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2. Importance of Creativity for Managers and Organizations

According to Armstrong &Page (2015) creativity is important as it helps the management in deciding:

- How to make more effective use of a manager's time; The manager should be creative in disseminating his time between different activities in order to be effective.
- How to improve a product's appeal to customers; If the company wants to be competitive, they can achieve this by offering new products to the markets or modifying the old ones.
- How to improve motivation amongst staff. If the managers can understand the needs of their staff, they can motivate them in the best possible way;
- How to appeal to customers' wants and needs. The customers' needs might not be satisfied by the products of the competitors. If the company can offer something new, that the competitors do not provide, then creativity is needed. By offering new products, the customer needs are addressed.
- How to identify new and profitable product-market opportunities;

The main difference between managerial and non-managerial work is in the ability to make decisions. Creativity is the production of novel and useful ideas, and innovation is the successful implementation of creative ideas within an organization (Gumusoglu&Ilsev, 2007).

As the organization constantly adapts to the environment, creativity in people is a prerequisite for its successful adaptation and work. In order to be successful, the organizations need creative managers. These are the managers that can help the company to adapt easy to the sudden changes in the environment. The link between creativity and innovation has been studied by Gumusoglu&Ilsev (2007). According to the authors, organizations, especially technologically driven ones, need to be more creative and innovative than before to survive, to compete, to grow, and to lead (Gumusoglu&Ilsev, 2007). Creativity of managers can help the organization not only to survive, but to compete successfully. It can be performed by presenting something new, unique to the customers or satisfying the need that has not been foreseen by competitors. We share the opinion of Gumusoglu&Ilsev (2007) that creativity and innovation are interrelated. If the manager can not foresee and find new opportunities for future development of the company, then how can be creative? In this regard, being creative is a part of the managerial competencies.

3. Creativity as a Managerial Competency

In this regard, some of the competencies required of a manager to introduce change are the ability to be creative and innovative (Turkson&Appiah, 2015). In other words, the managers are supposed to have these creative skills as personalities and having the ability to implement these skills. If organizations want to be innovative, creative solutions should be explored to solve problems. It refers to the problem solving thinking that the manager must possess. These skills can help the managers to find solution to unexpected problems. Thus, the company can adapt easily to the sudden changes in the environment. If managers can find solutions and innovate products, then they are very creative. So

Turkson& Appiah (2015) say, there cannot be change without creativity and innovation. It has already been noted that both creativity and innovation lead to the creation and introduction of new ideas. In other words, creativity of managers is connected to the change process. Being creative is bringing the change for the organization. By change, Turskon&Appiah (2015) mean simply making things different through some form of modification. If a manager does not create or innovate, there is now way he can effect a change by making things better than they are. This will depend on the creative and innovative ideas of the manager effecting the change. Change should not be effected for its own sake. It should be effected with the intention of making things better than they were some time ago. Innovation is a more specialized kind of change. Innovation is a new idea applied to improving a product, product or service (Turkson&Appiah, 2015). A manager's ability to apply creative and innovative ideas depends on his theoretical appreciation of what constitutes creativity and innovation (Turkson&Appiah, 2015).

Being creative concerns not only the managers but also people, applying the change. In order to be a successful as manager, he needs followers. These are the people, having the needed knowledge, being able not only to apply the change in the company, but also to find new opportunities. Nowadays, the need of creative people is more than ever. Creative employees are those who tend to identify opportunities for new products. They may find new uses for existing methods or equipments, or generate novel but operable work-related ideas.

Creativity as managerial competence is connected to performing the following functions, according to Seidel& Roisenmann, 2008:

- **Allocating resources (task-level, process level):**

On this level, the authors speak of two types of tasks- creative and non-creative tasks; e.g. the development of an animation sequence. As the particular creative tasks are resource and time-intensive. Rosenmann&Seidel (2008) explain that the manager needs to decide what resources (budget, equipment, creative individuals) have to be allocated to what task. In other words, the manager must decide which tasks involve creativity and how they integrate into the process. Second, the process owner needs a good understanding of how the task is characterized. Third, the process owner has to estimate the impact of the task on the overall process performance considering what can be referred to as the task's creative impact. To sum up, according to Seidel&Rosenmann (2008), creativity is connected with making decisions who is going to be involved in certain task, choice of communication flows, how this tasks affect the whole performance of the worker.

- **Enhancing creativity (task-level):**

After identifying the tasks that needs to be done, the manager decides how creativity of people is involved. It is connected, according to Seidel & Rosenmann (2008) with developing strategies to support it in the best possible way. Creativity could relate to the generation of a new idea, the evaluation of alternative proposals, or a selection process.

- **Managing creative risks (task-level, process-level):**

The last level of creativity concerns the possible outcomes of application of new approaches to solving problems.

4. Results

The manager as a creative thinker must possess the following qualities, according to Armstrong &Page (2015) :

- challenge the *status quo*
- confront assumptions
- exhibit curiosity
- like to investigate new possibilities
- tend to take the initiative in most matters
- are highly imaginative
- are future-orientated
- tend to think visually
- see possibilities within the seemingly impossible
- are not afraid of taking risks
- are prepared to make mistakes
- are adaptable to different work environments
- are adaptable to changing circumstances
- see relationships between seemingly disconnected elements
- distil unusual ideas down to their underlying principles
- synthesise diverse elements
- strong achievement role;
- high levels of self-confidence;
- a tolerance for ambiguity;
- a strong interest in learning;
- openness and flexibility;
- curiosity.
- self-discipline.

Creativity is closely linked to the leadership style. Creativity may be destroyed by close monitoring and require a degree of autonomy and experimentation; or there may be too much creativity and insufficient discipline (Armstrong &Page, 2015). The leadership styles affect creativity in different aspects. For example, authoritarian leadership does not involve any creativity in its followers. The leader in this case is closely supervising his followers. He instructs them what exactly to do and no new ideas are tolerated. The followers are supposed only to obey the authoritarian leader.

On the other hand, the democratic leader is appealing for the creativity in his followers. By giving freedom, the leader demonstrates that his followers are mature enough and can make decisions on their own as well take responsibility for them.

If the leader wants to be successful, he needs followers. These are the people that accept his authority and are ready to follow his example. Creativity is being innovative as manager or having creative followers. Along with the relationship between transformational leadership and followers' individual-level creativity and the underlying potential mediating processes, Gumusoglu&Ilsev (2007) also investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation at the organizational level. We agree with Gumusoglu& Ilsev (2007) that the transformational leadership positively relates to

followers' creativity. Followers' intrinsic motivation, psychological empowerment, and perception of support for innovation mediate this effect. At the organizational level, transformational leadership positively relates to organizational innovation. Furthermore, individual-level creativity influences innovation at the organizational level.

In this regard, creativity in the people is connected with their ability to learn. We think that it is the most important skill for the creative manager, being not only different, applying different solutions to problems, but sharing his expertise and knowledge to others. In this regard Armstrong & Page, 2015 speak of several learning styles:

- Activist;
- Pragmatist;
- Reflector;
- Theorist.

According to the study of Armstrong & Page (2015), the most favoured of these styles amongst creative sector professionals was 'Pragmatist' (with 41% of respondents expressing it as a preference). This is a style in which individuals seek to practically apply the theoretical concepts learned to their job, and when there is a clear link between what they are learning and their professional role. The pragmatist not only applies his knowledge but also seeks for new opportunities in solving problems. In the same research, 'Theorist' was the least favoured option, with only 2% of creative sector professionals expressing this preference. If the person chooses this learning style, it means that he is not apt to being creative.

Mainstream' methods of learning (e.g. higher education degrees) have not been found to be particularly effective for honing artistic and business skills in combination, as students may not realise that they have a need for business skills until after they have left formal education and attempted to establish themselves as entrepreneurs (Armstrong & Page, 2015).

Creativity can be applied by managers in most of industries. It is especially crucial for high-tech industry. In a study conducted by Borovskaya & Dedova (2014), creativity includes not only approaches to space organization, but managerial activities in building interactions in marketing environment as well. The authors pay attention to the employee creativity. It is important that employees are creative in hospitality, as the tourism creates experience. In other words, people working with customers should be innovative, experience-oriented. In their study, the authors identified four main managerial activities as key directions for creativity in hostels. They are: targeted recruitment, segmentation of customers, organization of space, and organization of communications both with internal and external stakeholders. Based on results of the study the hostels are perceived as a significant component of creative industries providing necessary infrastructure for stakeholders' engagement (Borovskaya & Dedova (2014).

5. Conclusion

Creativity is very important managerial competence. In the paper is presented the link between creativity and innovation. Creativity is affected also by leadership style. In order to be creative, the leader needs creative followers.

Creativity of hospitality industry on the example of hostels is being presented too.

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