



Future Trends

Creativity and Innovation

Creativity is having ideas, any new ideas, and innovation is successfully implementing useful new ideas.

By Roger Gudobba

Creativity is a crucial part of the innovation equation. Creativity is characterized by the ability to perceive the world in new ways, to find hidden patterns, to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to generate solutions. Generating fresh solutions to problems, and the ability to create new products, processes or services for a changing market, are part of the intellectual capital that give a company its competitive edge.

To put it another way: “A product is creative when it is (a) novel and (b) appropriate. A novel product is original not predictable. The bigger the concept and the more the product stimulates further work and ideas, the more the product is creative.” —Sternberg & Lubart, *Defying the Crowd*

Creativity requires whole-brain thinking; right-brain imagination, artistry and intuition, plus left-brain logic and planning.

Creativity and Economic Development. Daniel Pink expanding on this idea in *A Whole New Mind* (2005), which defines Economic Development as:

1. Agriculture Age (farmers)
2. Industrial Age (factory workers)
3. Information Age (knowledge workers)
4. Conceptual Age (creators and empathizers)

Pink argues that left-brain linear, analytical computer-like thinking are being replaced by right-brain empathy, inventiveness, and understanding as skills most needed by business. He points to Asia, automation, and abundance as the reasons behind the shift. Pink says “Logical and precise, left-brain thinking gave us the Information Age. Now the Conceptual Age – ruled by artistry, empathy, and emotion. What does this mean for future jobs? Winners are designers, inventors, counselors, ethnographers, social psychologists, and other right-brain folks, while lawyers, engineers, accountants,

and other left-brainers will see their jobs migrate to Asia.”

For innovation to flourish, organizations must create an environment that fosters creativity; bringing together multi-talented groups of people who work in close collaboration together- exchanging knowledge, ideas and shaping the direction of the future.

Creativity is thinking up new things. **Innovation** is doing new things, according to Thomas Levitt.

What do I mean by creativity? According to Linda Naiman, founder of Creativity at Work, “Creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing. Innovation is the production or implementation of an idea. If you have ideas, but don’t act on them, you are imaginative but not creative.”

Developing Your Innovative Thinking Skills. Ever wonder how “they” thought of that idea or what it takes to be more innovative? Before you begin, it is essential to shift to “right brain” thinking. The right side of our brain is where we do our imaginative, emotional and visual thinking.

Here are some thoughts from an article by Barry Roberts detailing how to be truly innovative:

“First of all believe that you are innovative! Let me assure you that whether you believe that you are or, that you are not, you’re probably right. To help establish a real belief in your ability, think back on some of the innovative things you have done, said or created during your career. Next, understand that when our thinking takes on a definite form and structure it becomes more effective. While I am suggest-

