

BARRIERS TO INNOVATIONS AND CREATIVITY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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ABSTRACT

India has made tremendous growth in the industrial and services sectors during the last twenty years, yet we need to do a lot for scientific and technological advancement of India. The pace of progress is very slow. The pace at which things move these days means that, to ensure that our organizations stay ahead of the pack, the leaders need to embrace and encourage creativity. Sadly in some organizations there are real barriers to creativity about which we need to be alert. The tendency to focus on the negative aspects of problems and expend energy on worry, fear of looking foolish or being laughed at, executives tress, a tendency to conform to accepted patterns of belief or thought, investing all the intellectual capital into logical or analytical thinking are some major factors responsible for the dearth of creativity and innovation. The lack of encouragement for innovation starts with primary education when rote learning and memorization is encouraged to pass the examination. Excessive importance is given to theory over practical knowledge. Creative work find no recognition in our system. "the smart ass who beats the system" is given more importance than the one who struggles to solve difficult problems. Dozens of barriers to innovation remain, and many of these are outside the immediate control of firms. Many of these barriers are complex and a risk of broader societal norms and attitudes. But it is very much possible to overcome these barriers through the encouragement and motivation on the part of individuals, society, professional bodies, educational institutions, standard organizations, and through governments' will power if they start addressing these issues.

The purpose behind writing this paper is to identify and analyze the various factors responsible for the dearth of creativity and innovation and to discuss the ways and means of overcoming these barriers.

INTRODUCTION

Creativity is the ability to think and act in ways that are new and novel. In our minds, there are two kinds of creativity- innovation and invention. Innovation is thinking creatively about something that already exists (e.g.,

the tape recorder, Walkman, and CD player are all innovations on the phonograph). Most organizations have barriers to creativity, ideas, and innovation. Some are obvious while some are more subtle. Some barriers emerge from attitudes and perceptions of organizational leadership while others come from organizational structure or even from the employees themselves. Since these barriers have a tendency to eliminate creative possibilities from the organization, identifying and removing barriers to creativity and innovation is crucial. By pinpointing, recognizing, and acknowledging that barriers exist, an organization can bypass many common obstacles and become more idea-oriented by employing simple strategies.

CREATIVITY + INNOVATION = ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The result of a disciplined, systematic process of applying creativity and innovation to needs and opportunities in the marketplace. Entrepreneurship involves applying focused strategies to new ideas and new insights to create a product/ service that satisfies customers' needs or solves their problems.

There are number of barriers to creativity and innovations in an Entrepreneurship –

- **Not tuned into the markets or not getting their messages.**

Companies understand that they have to keep up with the markets, but the complication of this as everything slides across the oceans, both ways, toward a global market is increasing, and often corporate executives are older and unable to think globally. Being turned into these global markets is essential. Not only must a company stay tuned in but they have to understand how to process that information.

For those who grew up without technology like we have today, there is a continual fight to get up the hill and stay on top of a constant barrage of technical changes and innovations. Knowing what is happening around the world and understanding it are two separate issues. Reading the markets appropriately takes people who understand global cultures, political issues, and how the worth of a country's money changes with activities happening in countries other than their own.

- **Company Leaders Think They Know It All**

When a person has his head in the ground, he sees nothing else. Many company leaders are so busy keeping the status quo, working and meeting with like mannered people, actually has a negative effect on a business. Your vision of yourself and your company will be skewed if you never get another perspective. There are several ways

to overcome this barrier including promoting those whose ideas are dynamic as opposed to static, who are driven to create, and who connects with the global workplace.

- **Poor Communication between Company Divisions**

A large company with several divisions often finds that over time each division becomes a company in itself. They fall into patterns of behaviors that become complacent and fail to maintain communication with the others. When a company tries to make changes they tend to start in one area and the others get no communication about what is happening.

In order to break down the old rules and policies, everyone has to be involved no matter how big the business is. Everyone has to grasp the vision, be part of the discussion and others who will listen to them. There are people across the boundaries of the cubicles and other internal areas who will be excited and help the move toward innovation. It will take the whole family to make the move.

- **Change is Uncomfortable**

Changing the methods of how a business is run, the way your staff functions and the physical set up disrupts those who find change uncomfortable. It is uncomfortable because a leader can no longer lean on his experience to predict outcomes, it is not business as usual and fitting in is more difficult. For a seasoned employee who has developed with the business, working in a more innovative setting may feel wrong. The environment is different, the movement between areas isn't the same and the relationships between levels are more open. People in the old habits will fight the change, make the change, or move on.

- **Fear of Failure or Being Wrong**

One of the greatest barriers to those who work in an innovative company is an inability to accept failure. From the time we are very little, we are taught to do things right the first time. Innovative thinkers don't worry about being right. They concentrate on the idea, the impractical, and making connections between things that don't make sense.

Innovation failure is the key to success. When you find out what is not going to work, you will understand what it will take to make something work. Without being able to be foolish, quirky, different, you will never know success. It takes a lot of ideas that don't work to find the one that does. Coming up with suggestions that are

crazy may not work but may lead someone else to think about an idea that is great. Doing things in different ways, in ways that are "wrong" can open the mind to look at the world in another way.

- **The Power Struggle**

Power is at the top in the old way of building companies. In innovative companies, the power happens in the innovative teams. The power comes from working together and from play and from doing things in unusual ways. If leaders want to take a company to another level, to prepare for future markets, and compete within the global economy, power struggles have to go away.

In an innovative company, the big guys at the top have to learn to crack open the walls, to smash the levels and to listen to the very employees who know the products. The people who work with the product every day and understand the basis of what makes the company do not need to be ignored. It is about being respectful. It is about all people in an industry giving all others credit to think. There is more power in sharing the decisions and involving more minds.

- **Not Understanding That Innovative Work Can Look Like Play**

Industries that lean toward being more formal, rigid, rule run, will find that allowing innovative thinking inside their walls will require a change in thinking for everyone. Innovative thinking comes from have freedom to play, to explore and to invent. In an atmosphere that encourages these things, people must be give the time, space and financial backing to create. Creation of products that find success will demand all of these things.

- **Old Habits are hard to Break**

An industry that is working to move into the arena of innovation will be up against the habits of those who work there. If the move is led from the top, it will be essential they model the new way the company will work. It cannot just be said or posted, or given through e-mail. New ways of doing things requires stopping the old ways.

The only way to break old habits is to change the thinking. When a group or a company instills a new mindset, new attitudes, and the function of the company works within that mindset, the old habits will be more easily broken. The problem is that the work must continue for years. Giving up ways that were learned in academia, practiced and lived for years, will take years to break and remold. The people who stay to carry this out will have to perpetually think creatively.

- **Innovative Thinking is Conceptual and Not Concrete**

One of the most difficult parts of innovative thinking is that it happens inside of people's minds. It forms and changes and is reconstructed over and over. When there is discussion about innovative ideas, they continue to form and reform before anything gets to the concrete. This is a problem for some bosses and for some employees who are not directly related to the innovative team.

- **Logical Mindsets**

Creative minds are more likely to break the rules that bind them. They do not run after practical ideas. They do not work in a boardroom. Creative minds do not think alike. Innovative thoughts chafe against each other. Innovation can get very messy and that doesn't set well with logical minds. Innovative people make connections where none really seem to be. It does not make any sense. Those with logical mindsets will find it difficult or improbable to be innovative.

- **Money**

To fund a group such as an innovative team, a company has to understand how it works. They have to understand how a creative team behaves, how a creative mind processes, and be able to stand behind it financially. If the team is constrained by money, it will fail. If a company does its research, it will know that the risk they take financially will be worth it. Any company, who spends time pulling together a diverse group of creative individuals into a team for the purpose of innovation and not fund it fully, is simply making a false show of innovation.

- **A Sense of Urgency**

Innovation can be a long process. It requires a depth of thinking that is often difficult for an organization to allow. Because creativity has its own time schedule, in the beginning of the formation of an innovative team and the changes that go with it, a final outcome may be some time. Once a team is working together, there may be many productive ideas that come out of their sessions, but initially probably not.

- **A Lack of Creativity**

Learning to drop the practicality of forcing ideas and pushing through the production that is safe, does not come quickly or easily. Creativity that has been shuttered over the years or packed away in a box because of a need to

be serious and formal has to be dug back out, opened back up. It is unfortunate that so many of our leaders are unwilling to drop the façade of importance for what they see as the sake of driving the company, when in the end it is the opposite which can bring success.

If a company is willing to bring out the creativity of its leaders and all employees, the flow of innovative ideas might fill the world.

- **Lack of Vision**

Creativity, design, and production all call for vision, but in reality so do management, finances, and book keeping. Vision is the ability to see what is yet to come. It is what keeps us going forward and staying positive. Those who have vision will find it freeing to move into an atmosphere where work is done more innovatively. For those who merely work hard at connecting the dots each day, who put out fires and are so busy keeping up with what they feel is expected have little vision. Vision requires a person or company to stop and think about what they are doing. Unfortunately for many, if they stopped to think about what is in their future, they might see how what they currently spend time on is a waste.

- **Risk**

Risk is the cost of true innovation. It can stop many people in their tracks. The truth is that life is a risk. No one knows when they will be stricken with illness, accident or a great new job. Risk is the price we all pay for stepping outside of the house each day. Those who think they can lessen the risk of negative consequences, do so at the expense of a boring life.

Without risk a company will miss out on the best of life. Yes a company will see failure in many ideas and in the beginning it might feel like a slow start, but given time, an innovative movement will cause a company to break out of the pack and lead the way. If a company is willing to step out of the door and bring the company along, life will only get more interesting.

CONCLUSION

Impediments to innovative thinking and innovative moves in companies are many and varied. Companies that stay within the walls of little risk cannot enjoy the excitement of new creations. Business leaders who support a lack of vision and won't step out into the future is not much of a leader. Thinking about those many innovators

who risked their ego, money, time, and so much more to bring the world into this technological age is empowering. Humans, who fail to create, fail to live. Companies, who fail to innovate, fail to thrive.

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