

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY FOR ROMANIAN ENTREPRENEURS.

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Abstract: Today's competitive world and climate, requires entrepreneurs to transform their businesses and to introduce a lot of new products or services, in order to maintain the market position. The most important aspect for a successful entrepreneur is and will be always creativity. In this paper we present the results of the questionnaire that we applied on a number of 50 Romanian entrepreneurs in order to find out if they consider that creativity is an important factor for the organizational growth and what methods they use for encouraging creativity within their organization.

1. WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

Creativity generally refers to the originality of thinking and the richness of ideas. It can be defined as the ability of bringing something new into existence, often through imaginative skills, inventing a new solution to a problem or applying a new method.

According to Barbara Bird's classification, there are three specific types of creativity involved in entrepreneurial ventures: discovery, invention and innovation. [1]

- ✓ *Discovery* represent the process of finding something that already exists but is not yet perceived. It is based on the previously ignored facts, opportunities or elements.
- ✓ *Invention* represents the act of producing something based on an imagination exercise. When inventing something, the inventor uses the already discovered things. The most important help when inventing something can be considered technology.
- ✓ *Innovation* is sometimes confused with invention, although there are a lot of differences between them. Innovations imply commercialization of ideas and the implementation and change of existing systems, products or resources.

For the entrepreneurs, creativity can be defined as the process of finding and exploiting opportunities.

2. THE CREATIVITY PROCESS

A psychologist of Harvard Business School, Teresa Amabile identified four stages of the creative process: [4]

1. Preparation – This is an informational collector stage and when the effort is collective, it involves the forming of roles, areas of special individual interest and the coordination of tasks.
2. Incubation – Although in this stage the idea seems to be forgotten or abandoned, the human brain is still at work.
3. Illumination – This is the stage where can appear suddenly a better idea of any problem. When this happens it is recommended that all the team members get together and note the idea.
4. Execution – This is the stage where action is required in order to apply the new idea for achieving the organizational goals in the best manner.

In Barbara Bird's book "Entrepreneurial behavior", the process of creativity is graphically represented like this: [2]

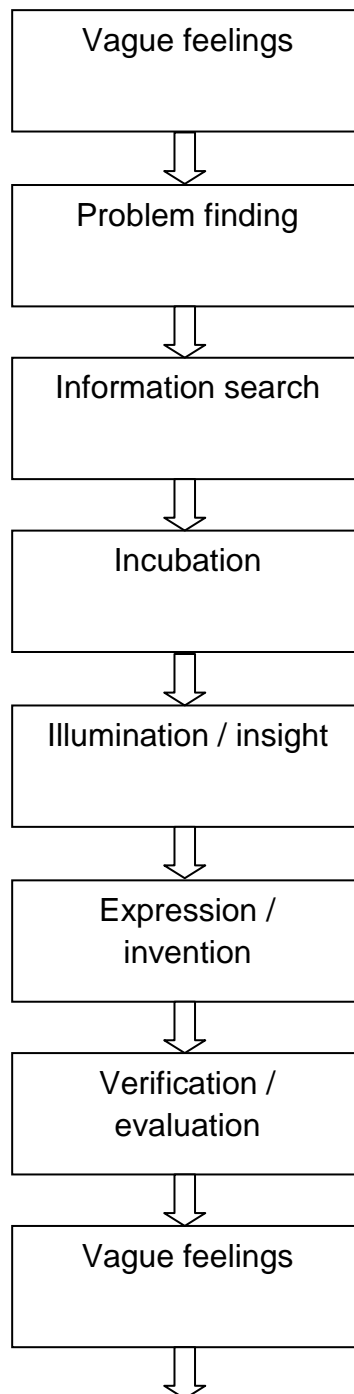


Figure 1. The process of creativity

3. THE BARRIERS OF CREATIVITY

In the first part of our questionnaire, the 50 respondents had to choose from a set of potential barriers of creativity the ones that best fit with their case.

Nr.	Barriers of creativity	Number of entrepreneurs that had chosen the barrier
1.	The wish of judging ideas instead of generating them.	23
2.	Fear of failing.	50
3.	Reluctant to ambiguity.	18
4.	The motivation to succeed quickly.	50
5.	Poor imagination.	9
6.	Incapability of innovating.	2
7.	Incapability of inventing.	0
8.	Reluctant to changes.	22
9.	Inability to distinguish reality from fantasy.	0
10.	Inability to focus on one idea.	0
11.	Pessimistic attitude.	45
12.	Fear of risk-taking.	41
13.	Fear of new responsibilities.	32
14.	Excessive zeal.	1
15.	Fear of challenges.	12

As we can see Romanian entrepreneurs although they want to succeed quickly, that are afraid of failing, they have a pessimistic attitude and they don't like to take risks.

4. ROMANIAN ENTREPRENEURS AND CREATIVITY

In the second part of our questionnaire, the respondents had to choose the YES or NO answer to a set of questions. The results are the following:

No.	Question	Number of respondents that had chosen "YES"	Number of respondents that had chosen "NO"
1.	Do you think that creativity is an important part of business success?	50	0
2.	Do you consider that creativity builds trust?	50	0
3.	Is creativity something that only a few lucky people are born with?	20	30
4.	Do you think that creativity can be learned?	30	20
5.	Do you promote creativity within your organization?	50	0
6.	Do you reward your creative employees?	50	0
7.	Do you provide the right environment for creativity?	46	4
8.	Can you distinguish creativity from other human qualities?	35	15

9.	Is creativity an important aspect when hiring people?	34	16
10.	Do you think that you are a creative person?	41	9
11.	Can you identify the factors that inhibit creativity?	48	2
12.	Are creative people optimistic?	50	0
13.	Do you sell products that are a result of your creativity?	12	38
14.	Can you apply creativity in problem solving?	39	11
15.	Do you agree with the following sentence: "creativity is putting old ideas together in new ways"?	50	0

By analyzing Romanian entrepreneurs' answers we can conclude the following aspects: all of them consider that creativity had an important role for the organizational growth, they try to promote creativity within the organization and the most important thing is that they can recognize creativity and they reward the creative employees.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As a conclusion, we want to give some advice for Romanian entrepreneurs in order to encourage creativity in their enterprises: [3]

- reinforce attitudes that promote creativity
- Recognize that everyone is creative
- Provide the right environment for creativity
- Recognize creativity when it happens

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