

CONDITIONS FOR CREATIVITY IN AN ORGANIZATION

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Abstract

Development and functioning of contemporary organizations takes place under conditions of complexity and unpredictability of environmental changes, as well as competitive pressure, exerted by market participants. The ability to predict directions of changes, to anticipate future and distinguish themselves from other offerors constitutes an essential competence of efficient organizations. It is above all determined by creativity and innovativeness of all participants of the organization. Creativity as creative, unconventional thinking precedes innovativeness and frequently constitutes its causative factor. Together, these two values characterize entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours. Creative thinking derives the matter out of vacuum and order out of chaos (Berleant, 2007). Therefore, this study is descriptive, not normative.

The aim of the study is thus identification of a prerequisites shaping the organizational conditions and the style of leadership to stimulate creative thinking and unconventional problem solving. In order to achieve this goal, theoretical aspects of creativity and conditions for an increase in its significance in the process of organization's development and functioning were discussed. Next, selected aspects of shaping conditions conducive to creativity in an organizations were indicated. Particularly, challenges facing the role of management board, through the evolution from a manager to the leader were highlighted. As a result, a change from the traditional role of a manager to a leader entails the empowerment of workers and enhancing cooperation and teamwork as important motivators for creativity.

Keywords: creativity, entrepreneurship, leadership, empowerment, cooperation

Paper type: Conceptual paper

1. Introduction

The ability to be distinct in the market constitutes a desirable competence of contemporary organizations. It is above all determined by creativity and innovativeness, both of management board and employees. Organizations are increasingly seeking to foster creativity, because it is an important source of organizational innovation as well as competitive advantage (Beheshtifar and Kamani-Fard, 2013). Creativity as creative thinking, unconventionally precedes innovativeness and frequently constitutes its causative factor. Nowadays, these

two values characterise entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours. As organizations become more complex and are confronted with increasingly difficult challenges associated with globalization, technology, risk management, and driving innovation, the entrepreneurial role emphasized by Schumpeter becomes more important than ever (Handfield et al., 2009). As postulated by J. Schumpeter, an entrepreneur is an innovator who implements new combination of manufacturing factors and who has never been required to be an inventor. Entrepreneurship, however, is directly associated with an entrepreneur – a man of action who makes something happen (Jaremczuk, 2004), whilst a feature constituting an entrepreneurial attitude and behaviour is different thinking, which promotes unconventional, innovative solutions of creative thinking. A talented Schumpeterian entrepreneur presented different way of thinking exactly when he introduced new combinations of production factors, using a constantly new offer of innovative solutions [1] that were appearing in the market thanks to creators. J. Schumpeter while interpreting entrepreneurship as “an entrepreneur’s peculiar state of mind, which releases the power within to overcome all obstacles, their own prejudices and reluctance, and enables the entrepreneur to go against the tide in unknown circumstances” (Mikosik, 1993), simultaneously points out to the need to reveal creative abilities. Nowadays, creative abilities are expected from all participants of an organization. However, as postulated by J. Lipowska, they are frequently expressed in a formal way in competitive systems or systems of assessing employees (Lipowska, 2013). But, it is not enough to formulate expectations towards employees, since T. Amabile’s research proves that just telling people that they should be creative does not lead to an increase in their creativeness (Amabile, 1979). One should shape certain organizational conditions and a style of management, so that creative thinking and unconventional problem-solving are stimulated.

In the light of the aforementioned conditions, the aim of this paper is to identify key factors of shaping conditions conducive to creativity in organizations. According to the authors, essential prerequisites were workers’ subjectivity, which determines the sense of leadership, participatory management style and organizational climate shaping the conditions for teamwork. The present paper draws attention to the process of empowerment of employees as a baseline determinant of organizational creativity. This thesis builds up on the research presented by K. Jaremczuk in the work entitled “Subjectivity of an Employee in the Organization (2012).

2. Theoretical aspects of creativeness and conditions for an increase in its significance in the process of organization’s development and functioning

The ability to think creatively constitutes the basis for an innovative change that implies development. Joy Paul Guilford (1950), who pointed out to an divergent thinking ability, disparate as a condition for finding new solutions, is considered

the forerunner of the creative thinking theory. Guilford, while describing the difference between divergent and convergent abilities, states that it is pertinent to a way of thinking between two categories: necessity and choice. Convergent thinking consists in looking for one, appropriate way of problem-solving. Divergent thinking category, however, refers to the following situation: “I can solve this problem one way or another (I don’t know how yet)” – such an approach allows other, yet unknown problem-solving possibilities. As argued by Guilford, divergent abilities may be determined by means of tests, in which indicators such as fluency, flexibility and originality of thinking are taken into account.

Second key notion needed for the purpose of this paper is associated with the notion of “creative attitude”. It was developed on the basis of humanistic theories and is associated with self-fulfilment, self-actualization and auto-creation. Human’s creative freedom in a work process is, in particular, a problem of a person who is truly independent in their decisions, has the ability to act consciously and deliberately and to decide on their own. Such a person constantly endeavours to exceed their prior achievements and accomplishments (Sikora, 1999), i.e. to auto-creation viewed as a result of freedom. From a human standpoint, to be means to choose one’s own self, as postulated by F. Copleston, who also adds that an individual’s freedom is oriented at other people (Copleston, 1981). Choosing one’s own self, self-fulfilment – as explained by S. Kowalczyk – belongs to somebody who is ontologically gifted and falls within the competence of the person thanks to the power of will, which being interiorized is rooted in values. Creativeness is therefore deeply rooted in human nature and everybody [2] is entitled to it regardless of what they preoccupy themselves with (Maslow, 1990). Furthermore – in compliance with the standpoint taken by M. Bierdiajew – creativeness is a mystery, which is inseparably associated with freedom and which cannot be elucidated, since it is not determined by anything that precedes it. Creativeness is what comes from the inside, from unexplained depths, not from the outside or from the world’s determinism. Just the very willingness to make a creative act comprehensible or to find grounds for it is already – as concluded by M. Bierdiajew – incomprehension of the very act (Bierdiajew, 2001).

One may assume that a creative attitude is comprised of two areas of personality: cognitive and characterological. The cognitive area is associated with intellectual abilities and is connected with high sensitivity and an aptitude for perceiving, remembering, processing and creating new information by dint of imagination, intuition and divergent thinking, defined as heuristic behaviour. Heuristic behaviour is opposite to algorithmic behaviour. Conformism and non-conformism constitute other personality traits, being of great importance as regards components of the creative attitude (Jaremczuk and Jędralska, 1992).

Given the important role of employee creativity in the organization, researchers have become increasingly interested in identifying the conditions that

predict creativity of individual employees, including personal characteristics and contextual factors (Oldham and Cummings, 1996).

T. Amabile's output considerably contributes to the research pertinent to determinants of behaviour of a creative person. She is an author of a multifactorial creativity concept (Amabile, 1983). As postulated by her, an employee's creativity is determined by: knowledge encompassing a particular area, overall creative capabilities and a motivation to perform work. As one may notice, an employer can endeavour to employ workers with special skills in a particular area and with general creative abilities at the same time. However, competence in a particular area do not automatically determine the presence of motivation to apply the skills in a specific area of activity. Influencing employees in order to release creative behaviour is becoming an important factor (Jaremczuk, 2012). The following "management practices" are enumerated in this case: allowing freedom of action and employees' autonomy as regards the way their work is performed, setting clear goals, creating and managing a team skilfully.

The need for innovativeness – which is an immanent differentiator of economy based on knowledge – constitutes a condition for creativity. Employees' creativity – as pointed out by Cz. Sikorski – is contemporarily considered an important feature of their abilities. This ability consists in dealing with unusual and unique situations. Considerable self-reliance is required from workers, who have to be able to frequently modify the goals and methods of tasks organization and fulfilment. It requires permanent analysis of chances and threats which appear not only in an area of the entire enterprise, but in one's workplace as well (Sikorski, 2002).

In currently functioning organizations, as observed by M. Brzeziński (2009), one may too rarely encounter both creative looking for unconventional solutions and atmosphere conducive to individual, team and entire company's creativity. Assuming the function of an entrepreneur by rationalized bureaucratic organizations was already defined by J. Schumpeter in the mid-twentieth century. He claimed that individual actions are replaced with the work of offices and committees. Innovation becomes thus reduced to an routinized executive activity by groups of qualified experts who create on request and implement their ideas in an programmed way (Schumpeter, 1942), and a role of an actual entrepreneur – as a "creator of destruction" loses its significance. The "race to the bottom" is therefore shaped, i.e. instead of creative attitude there are passivity, dependence and subordination towards a bureaucratic organ that being the only "disposer" and "decision maker", not to say the "owner" of manufacturing goods, makes everybody more or less dependent (Pope John Paul II [3]). There is therefore a need to shape a new organization form, where creativity will become one of the key paradigms (Brzeziński, 2009).

3. Challenges for management board–evolution from manager to leader

T. Amabile (1997) has demonstrated the relationship between individual creativity and organizational innovation, while R.W. Woodman, J.E. Sawyer and R.W. Griffin (1993) have demonstrated the relationship between individual, team and organizational aspects of creativity. C. Andriopoulos (2001) contends that it may be helpful to explore the concept of organizational creativity by reviewing five major organizational factors: 1) Organizational climate, 2) Leadership style, 3) Organizational culture, 4) Resources and skills, 5) Structure and system of an organization.

Nowadays, top-level management's task is to shape an organization that is able to generate innovative ideas of running a business at any time. The task results from the overrating of an enterprise's success factors, where perceiving radical innovativeness as a crucial imperative – in terms of functioning and competing in a market – is becoming essential (Wojtysiak-Kotlarski, 2004). In other words – as postulated by K. Krzakiewicz and Sz. Cyfert (2013) – in order to survive, organizations need to learn how to effectively use intellectual and emotional abilities of various “experts” and teams, balancing on the verge of chaos. So far, most of endeavours targeted at teams creation and collective learning, do not have positive effects.

Creativity which precedes innovativeness; is a process of development and implementation of innovative ideas in order to solve problems or fulfil needs (Luecke, 2005). In this sense, it is not a talent itself, but a deliberate process of producing innovativeness. Shaping conditions conducive to creativity and innovativeness in management practices – as postulated by P. Sloane – poses certain challenges for contemporary managers. One should know how to focus on effectiveness and results and when on an idea, training and inspiration. The focus on analysis, results, ruling and control which is frequently rooted, constitutes an opposing image of innovativeness culture. Flexibility in terms of changes and openness to new experiences and ideas should be the main theme, which is above all shown in inspiring a team to look for innovative methods to implement organization's ideas (Sloane, 2005).

Therefore, managers' role is to create an environment where creative behaviour may be released and developed. These tasks pose a new challenge – contemporary manager's work under conditions of permanent change cannot be based upon schematism, control or individual unit actions. It requires flexibility, rapid reactions, and above all creating conditions of involvement, cooperation [4] and appropriate way of motivation.

These new quality challenges distinctly distinguish managers' role from leaders' role. It is considered that managers order company's functioning but without leadership organizations are destined to mediocrity. Therefore, the leaders are contemporarily an essential asset of an enterprise, and it is

particularly interesting to identify their attitudes and actions they undertake, in terms of sufficient motivating of subordinates for extraordinary achievements and entrepreneurial behaviour that go beyond standards procedures and routine (Kaliszczak, 2012).

Research results presented in literature prove that signals sent by management board to employees constitute one of the most effective mechanisms in terms of creating pro-innovative atmosphere in an enterprise. Employees are aware of management board's priorities, since they observe what is considered essential by management board. In other words, "setting a good example is (...) the only way to influence other people", while beliefs, values and requirements may be passed on not only by a consciously built example of one's own behaviour, but also signals sent unconsciously (Bailom et al., 2009). Simultaneously, management board's priorities resulting from personal values and attitudes cannot be divergent from the goals of an enterprise. It is the scope of manager's activity – in terms of making an employee both identify themselves with the manager and share manager's values-being of great importance. Therefore, the most essential tasks rest on the top-level management in the field of defining key values, which will constitute the basis for an enterprise's functioning and all stakeholders. Key values should also be presented in one's own behaviour, which may require certain changes of internal nature – one should entirely reject what by D. McGregor was defined as "theory X" (it focuses on gaining results by dint of orders and discipline), so that they adopt the "theory Y" which states that work and results are something as natural as fun (Heller, 2007). By means of the "theory Y" it is much easier to manage a change which results from perceiving employees as people who can both independently coordinate and control results of actions to which they have been obliged as well as are able to release creative abilities and use them effectively under certain conditions. Most certainly there is a need to manage a group of employees. Manager's role is even greater in the "theory Y" than in the "theory X". However it is not only management, but better leading that is the most important, so that one can manage a change, making the most of the team and using its best qualities. Leadership, according to H. Hinterhuber (2004, cited in Bailom et al., 2009), constitutes an ability both to influence employees positively, inspire them so that they can work independently and solve problems creatively as well as to arouse enthusiasm and involvement. Ideals and values constitute the essence of leadership, while enterprises leaders' authority and credibility are dependable on whether their idea, strategy and attitude gain recognition amid employees. Leadership is therefore much more difficult than management by dint of orders and control. Change of behaviour – which contributes to the change of organizational culture-constitutes the aim. In order to change the behaviour of other people, a leader firstly has to change their own behaviour, since it is a decisive factor which enables achieving the goal. The process takes place

through the evolution of behaviour – from identified order and control to shape creative freedom. In other words – as postulated by K. Krzakiewicz and Sz. Cyfert – leaders' basic task is to integrate chaos and order – to stimulate employees to give up routine and destroy acting schemes that currently bring profits, and then to create new action patterns (Krzakiewicz and Cyfert, 2013). However one should put attention to an extremely complex and difficult problem of giving up routine and destroying action schemes, since already between the fourth and third century B.C, the Legalist school and classical Confucians constituted contrasting normative alternatives. The Legalist school stated that people have to make obedient by dint of rewards and severe punishment, whilst classical Confucians postulated that people should be encouraged to do good by means of education and chaste example (Dror, 2006).

4. Empowerment of employees as a condition for creativity

Contemporary leaders notice therefore a key role of people in an organization. Empowerment standpoint is also highlighted by T. Peters (1997), who analyses an enterprise's innovativeness by dint of taking employees' empowerment into account. It is therefore advised to strive for a change in an employee's consciousness, i.e. turning a person that holds particular position into a person who is entirely involved in an enterprise's activity. Changes in empowerment would be associated with new managerial roles in the field of preparing employees for constant changes and increasing organization's flexibility. In management practices is means that an imperative of innovativeness results in certain organizational connotations. One should shape favourable organizational conditions, so that a team is willing to look for innovative solutions (Kaliszczak, 2011). In this respect, autonomy is needed – freedom is a factor constituting empowerment. Maintaining empowerment is justified by the standpoint of E. Schumacher's (1981). He postulates that only a change made under conditions of freedom, not control and orders, determines further "existence" of an organization. Freedom expressed through involvement constitutes a condition for responsibility, as well as internal motivation.

The fulfilment of assumptions pertinent to creative organization is utterly possible only in structures where an employee's empowerment is petrified. G. Hamel and C. Prahalad in the presented concept of organizational changes – which generate an enterprise competitive advantage – confront bureaucratization of work environment with entire empowerment of employees (Hamel and Prahalad, 1999). They assume the existence of two parallel and complementary areas of managerial tasks in the field of work resources management: the necessity to target employees' tasks at achieving an enterprise's goal and the necessity for possibly the biggest freedom and empowerment of an employee in the field of fulfilling the assigned tasks. As postulated by researchers, the phenomenon of

bureaucratization in an organization and treating an organizational hierarchy too rigidly is “destroying” creativity.

Low degree of task formalisation constitutes an organizational condition for creativity and innovativeness. In traditional structures, being observant of numerous and detailed regulations is a main criterion as regards assessing employees’ work. Employees’ entrepreneurship and their unconventional behaviour are not desired in a management system based on centralization and specialization, since they may destabilise such a system. Under conditions of environment’s volatility, a requirement for innovativeness results in a fact that people have to have freedom of direct communication as well as of dividing work and entitlements, depending on how the situation evolves. The rule of formal control of work should be replaced – by the management board – with the rule of trust in employees who are properly educated and motivated (Sikorski, 2002).

Research results of T. Peters and R. Waterman’s who on the basis of prosperous American companies prove the role of empowerment attitude in management and organization culture as conditions for success. The companies reached a high level of perfection by dint of treating people with dignity, both employees and clients and creating (a change of) organization culture. T Peters and R. Waterman distinguished seven features of perfection (success) which characterised most of the companies (as cited in Sikorski, 2004):

- 1) Focus on action – it is not endless analysis and consideration of ideas that is preferred, but acting.
- 2) Staying in close contact with a client – learning and getting to know clients’ preferences and needs.
- 3) Productivity through people – shaping awareness in employees that their efforts and work are the most important to achieve success.
- 4) That staff stays in closely associated with activities conducted by the company and consequently contributes to the reinforcement of its organization culture.
- 5) Reminding that conducted activity is the most important for the company.
- 6) Applying simple forms of organizational structure – a few administration employees, a few people occupying top positions, whilst the rest are staff.
- 7) Creating a tolerance atmosphere for every employee who accepts company’s most important values.
- 8) In management practices, one may base on certain indications on how management board can support creativity in an organization (Stoner et al., 2011):
- 9) Endeavour to accept changes (members of an organization have to believe that a change will be beneficial; joint decision making is a condition for success).

- 10) Encourage to new ideas – managers have to show with words and gestures that they treat novelties favourably.
- 11) Organize frequent contacts – a possibility to contact with members of one's own and other working groups is conducive to creative atmosphere; such contacts encourage to share useful information.
- 12) Show tolerance of failures – numerous new ideas turn out unfeasible or useless.
- 13) Determine clear goals and provide freedom in achieving them.
- 14) Contentment – creative entities have strong motivation to work on what they are interested in, but a reward will prove that creative actions are valued in an organization.

5. Teamwork and creativity

In comparison with individual work, contemporary development implications determined by creativity promote teamwork to a greater extent, assigning it certain values. Various people and their reactions to presented ideas have strong influence on cognitive processes of particular group members, as far as tasks associated with solving problems in an unconventional way are concerned. Leadership style, based on cooperation is crucial. R. Likert's concept is one of management concepts which affirms cooperation relations. The basis for his concept stems from McGregor's theory, where the stereotype of a man, who fulfils themselves under conditions of obeying a rule of supportive relationships is the most important. In compliance with this rule, leadership and other processes in an organization should be based upon relations and interactions in an organization, so that every participant – in terms of their values, endeavours, demands and expectations – can not only consider them helpful but also build and maintain the sense of personal values.

The rule of supportive relationships results from a belief that – next to the factors like: economic motives, motives associated with ego (which encompass craving for personal development and attainments compliant with one's own assessment of values and goals, as well as a desire to gain a status and recognition etc.), curiosity, creativeness and a desire to experience more – there is a need to provide effective interaction i.e. a system of reciprocal influence which enables functioning of a mechanism that integrates and coordinates an organization (Likert, 1965).

The mechanism of effective interaction enables therefore to obtain a desired level of compliance between employees' values and attitudes and organization's goals. R. Likert's concept constitutes an essential indicator in the process of creating cooperation relations in an organization, since relationships occurring in it are of functional nature and are shaped by the management board. Differently, in congruence with what is postulated by B. Haus, teamwork – at its highest

level – arises along with the growth of subjective conditions, willingness to cooperate, and then the task of management board comes down to shaping objective conditions in terms of formal establishment of such a team (Haus, 1964). B. Haus identifies therefore the role and significance of subjective and objective conditions in the process of shaping teamwork, which is viable thanks to cooperation aimed at certain employees' values and attitudes and organization's goals.

Subjective conditions presented by B. Haus are conditions that so to speak determine the significance of teamwork, its content i.e. community's internal experience. Objective conditions determine the form of teamwork. B. Haus clearly highlights the supremacy of content over form, thus the supremacy of subjective conditions over the objective ones in the process of shaping teamwork which – at its highest level – arises along with the growth of subjective conditions.

Teamwork has its origin in a personal entity, which provides resources with new possibilities of wealth creation. It supervises reality in a cognitive and causative way, making certain changes in it. Therefore this personal entity is convinced that it is a subject in a relations with a team. Every human being, thus every team participant is naturally able to decide, since they feel and think, and are capable of setting goals and formulating means – which constitute an expression of an employee's will – to achieve them. Freedom constitutes therefore a power to change the reality, identify its diversity, and consequently limit it [5].

It results from hitherto considerations that there are certain indications which determine functioning of the team in the process of creative problem-solving. Maintaining employees' autonomy is therefore one of the essential problems. Autonomy means, *inter alia*, the freedom of performing work and feeling control over one's own work. The possibility to choose a way of fulfilling tasks affirms conditions conducive to creativity.

6. Conclusion

The conducted synthesis of standpoints presented in references proves that shaping the atmosphere which promotes creativeness and innovativeness – therefore entrepreneurial behaviour – constitutes an essential challenge for contemporary managers who should master leadership skills, in order to shape appropriate attitudes and behaviour of the employees. The climate in organization is created by such as elements: participation, freedom of expression, quality standards, the freedom to experiment (Abdolmajid et al., 2013). Relationship between autonomy, self-reliance and responsibility will indicate employees' sense of empowerment, constituting at the same time a source of creative activity.

The basis for the success should also be cohesion of recognized values such as commitment, knowledge, responsibility, teamwork, respect and trust in the workplace. The organization conducive to creativity must be flexible while controlling risks, but at the same time provides the freedom to seek “new” through

science and experiments, that is, to realize the postulate of science in action. The organization fosters creativity, when employees receive the maximum flexibility in how they organize their work and have a strong sense of self-efficacy.

The concept of management should ensure the conditions in which the employee will be able to develop creativity, a sense of shared responsibility for the organization. Rounding out of such favorable conditions involved should be flat, open management structure, which allows the employee to present their skills in finding new non-schematic ideas. Not only great flexibility is essential, but above all a sense of community.

Each employee, as a different thinking entity guided not only by reason but also by feeling and will, which is often manifested in action, should feel an equal participant in a specific formal structure. Moreover, it should be noted that employee's personal success, as well as the success of a particular formal structure, are not only the result of a reasonable calculation, but the result of volitional-emotional processes. Hence, care should be taken of both parts of specific, purposeful action. The employee becomes, therefore, responsible for the development of their creativity, but the organization provides them with the conditions to manage their self-development independently, and creates the organizational conditions for personal improvement.

Notes

[1] What needs underlining is that J. Schumpeter considers somebody an entrepreneur only when they actually implement new combinations of production factors. They cease being one when what was created by them starts functioning in economy (Schumpeter, 1960).

[2] According to A. Strzałeczki, many theoretical and empirical data were gathered, which show that personal, cognitive and axiological mechanisms determining creativeness in the field of entrepreneurship, do not differ much from the mechanisms of human's creative attitude in other fields, for instance taking scientific and artistic activity into account. One may assume that this thought refers also to an entrepreneur – a creator who involuntarily knows what is good and what is not, and will act properly, implementing new combination of production factors. In other words, an entrepreneur – while externalizing their will in responsible actions – sees a change sort of for the first time and therefore sees it more distinctly; precisely, clearly – i.e. more adequately than others. One may therefore assume that a new undertaking is the best verifier of an entrepreneur's undertaking, a change of the current state of affairs (Strzałeczki, 2001).

[3] Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, p. 15.

[4] Cooperation is mostly based on values, which people want to fulfil through joint actions. Community of values is an integrating factor which through a meeting and empowerment nature leads to internalization of values and cooperation, which – while trying to achieve a particular goal – are characterised by mutual understanding, dialog and willingness to share ideas.

[5] Freedom is a positive creative power, not negative wilfulness. Negative freedom, freedom as wilfulness is an empty contentless freedom. Negative, formal, empty, contentless freedom turns into necessity, where existence degenerates. Freedom indicates a barrier which cannot be overcome intellectually, is undefined. M. Bierdiajew postulates that science is not creativeness but obedience, and it is not the freedom being its element, but the determinism (Bierdiajew, 2001).

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CONDITIONS
FOR
CREATIVITY

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