

PREFACE

I'm not particularly interested in the growth of productivity, except as a measure of the rate of innovation. My fundamental interest lies rather in what's happening to the experience of work and opportunities to exercise creativity.—Edmund Phelps, Nobel Prize-winner on the importance of creativity and innovation (FT, 14th June 2014)

APPLICATION OF CREATIVITY IN BUSINESS

The International Conference on Knowledge, Innovation and Enterprise is delighted to publish this book as part of the 2014 KIE Conference book series. We are equally delighted to have a wide range of subject experts and practitioners to contribute to the book, led of course by Dr Fredricka K. Reisman, President of the American Creativity Association and Director of the Drexel Torrance Center for Creativity and Innovation at the Drexel University, PA, USA.

Although studies on creativity predate Joy Paul Guilford's parting address as president of the American Psychology Association in 1950, many subject experts agree that it was Guilford's keynote speech that literally lit up the bonfire of contemporary studies on creativity.

So, no matter how we conceptualise creativity—be it as a product (Pfeiffer, 1989), as a process (Wallas, 1926), as a personality (Wason, 1968), as a condition of environment (Cheyette, 1977) or as a linchpin of technology (Mishra and Henriksen, 2013), creativity is evergreen, applicable in a variety of contexts, to a variety of situations, familiar or unfamiliar situations. We can attribute the latter development to the nature of the subject: creativity is not a single variable, but a complex multifaceted and multidimensional process. As Guilford (1970) and Feildman (1999) demonstrate, creativity is also a construct that might not be easily straitjacketed in its definition and application.

And nowhere is the application of creativity more pronounced than in business. We know that creativity is an important ingredient in the 'solution mix' for business growth and competitiveness, but many business leaders won't admit or recognise the critical role that creativity plays in that mix, but would rather talk-up innovation instead.

At the KIE Conference, while we recognise that innovation is absolutely critical to enterprise success, we also believe that there is a strong relationship between creativity and innovation—so strong that we think that relationship is made and seal heaven!

Not to put too fine a point on it, creativity and innovation are tied, umbilically tied. Novelty is central to creativity as it does to innovation. Creativity is about generating novel ideas and innovation concerns harnessing those ideas. This 'idea' does not have to be new to make it creative or innovative. It is possible that we just want to transform an old or existing idea/concept into an up-to-date concept. It is also possible that we simply want to improve an existing idea or concept or, as Osborne (1984), Deroche (1968) and (Cox, 2005) explain, just to effect an improvement to an existing discovery or a rediscovery of an existing product or simply 'seeing' new opportunities. Viewed in this context, therefore, creativity can be conceptualised as both a feedstock and by-product for innovation (see Ogunleye and Tankeh, 2006; Tankeh and Ogunleye, 2007). There is more. Creativity, like innovation, involves a process.

In 1926, Graham Wallas, a British social psychologist, outlines four stages involved in the creative process—preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. And more recently, another British outfit, Centre for Process Innovation¹, outlines five stages involved in the innovation process—identifying the goals or problems to be solved, analysis, development and design, conversion, and commercialisation. Although, creating or generating new ideas does not necessarily have to precede the innovation process, what is absolutely clear is that once a business has identified the goals or problems to be solved, and analysed what the issues are, the creative process kicks in there from. And we can only imagine the criticality of that creative process to the subsequent stages involved in the innovation process—such as idea finding, idea-recognition and the application of kno-

1. <http://www.uk-cpi.com/>

wledge (Reese *et al*, 1976), problem solving (Mayer, 1989) and even thinking in ‘new’ creativity ‘boxes’ (Brabandere and Iny, 2013). We also need not go far to read from chapter one in this book Dr Reisman’s tips on how businesses might apply creativity to boost innovation—something that should enable business to raise efficiency and productivity, sustain competitiveness and growth. Besides Dr Reisman’s contribution, every chapter in this book adds to our understanding of the application of creativity in business.

So, on behalf of the KIE international advisory board, I say thank you to Dr Reisman and to all authors and co-authors that have made this book a reality.

James Ogunleye, PhD, FRSA
Chairman, 2014 KIE Conference

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