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DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE THINKING IN THE CONTEXT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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Creative thinking has become a central competency for organizations operating in conditions of uncertainty, rapid technological change, and increasing global competition. Modern companies recognize creativity not merely as an individual talent, but as a collective capability shaped by the organizational environment, leadership style, communication patterns, and shared values. Organizational culture serves as the underlying system that either enables or restricts creative expression, shaping how employees generate, share, and implement new ideas.

A culture that stimulates creative thinking is built upon principles such as openness, experimentation, trust, and continuous learning. According to Edmondson [1], psychological safety is a foundational element of such a culture. When employees feel safe to take interpersonal risks and openly express ideas without fear of judgment, they become more willing to propose unconventional solutions and challenge existing assumptions. This openness to divergence is essential for innovation-oriented behavior.

Moreover, organizations increasingly adopt agile management practices that emphasize flexibility, iterative development, and collaborative decision-making. Deloitte's research [2] highlights that agile-oriented companies demonstrate higher levels of adaptability and innovative performance, as these management frameworks reduce hierarchical constraints and empower employees to take initiative. Autonomy within teams allows individuals to think beyond predefined structures, fostering an environment where creative contributions are both encouraged and valued.

Cross-functional collaboration is another critical factor in the development of creative thinking. Amabile and Pratt [3] emphasize that diversity of expertise within teams significantly enhances the quality and originality of generated ideas. When employees with different professional backgrounds interact, their distinct cognitive frameworks combine to produce more innovative, multidimensional solutions. Such diversity also improves organizational resilience by enabling teams to approach challenges from multiple perspectives.

In addition, organizations are adopting systems of knowledge sharing and corporate learning to sustain creativity as an ongoing process. IBM's global CEO study [4] identifies creativity as the most important leadership quality of the future,

directly linked to environments that prioritize learning and skills development. Internal training, mentorship programs, innovation labs, and digital collaboration tools create ecosystems in which new ideas are continuously generated, refined, and implemented.

A crucial aspect of developing creative thinking is the shift from control-based management models to cultures that tolerate risk and accept failure as part of learning. Companies that treat mistakes as learning opportunities encourage employees to experiment with new methods. This tolerance for calculated risk-taking broadens the range of possible solutions and enhances creative problem-solving capabilities.

Another important factor is building a communication culture based on transparency and accessibility of information. When employees have timely access to relevant knowledge, they can better connect ideas, identify patterns, and propose improvements. Transparent communication strengthens collective creativity by enabling shared understanding and faster implementation of innovative initiatives.

Digital transformation also plays an increasingly important role. Modern organizations use online brainstorming platforms, virtual collaboration spaces, and idea management systems to expand participation in innovation processes. These technologies allow organizations to gather ideas not only from their internal teams but also from global partners, customers, and stakeholders.

Overall, creative thinking becomes sustainable only when organizational culture consistently reinforces it through norms, processes, and leadership behaviors. Investing in creativity is no longer optional—it is a strategic necessity for long-term competitiveness, adaptability, and growth. Organizations that cultivate a creative culture are better positioned to turn uncertainty into opportunity and to shape new markets rather than simply react to them.

In table 1 mentioned key elements of organizational culture and their influence on the development of creative thinking.

Table 1.

Key elements of organizational culture and their influence on the development of creative thinking

Element of Organizational Culture	Characteristic	Influence on Creative Thinking
Psychological safety	Absence of fear of mistakes; support for open communication	Encourages bold expression of unconventional ideas and active participation in creative discussions
Flexible management practices (Agile)	Decentralized decision-making, team autonomy	Increases innovation speed; strengthens responsibility and initiative
Cross-functional collaboration	Teams with diverse professional backgrounds	Creates synergy of ideas and multidimensional problem understanding

Tolerance for risk and experimentation	Acceptance of trial-and-error learning	Expands the range of potential approaches, stimulates innovative solutions
Culture of continuous learning	Training, professional development, knowledge exchange	Shapes flexible, proactive thinking ready for creative challenges
Open communication and transparency	Access to information, horizontal communication	Enhances collective idea generation and speeds up implementation

The elements summarized in the table clearly demonstrate that the development of creative thinking requires a holistic cultural framework. Psychological safety inspires employees to voice ideas freely; cross-functional diversity enriches the creative process; tolerance for risk promotes experimentation; and continuous learning ensures sustainability of innovation. When these cultural components are integrated, they create a self-reinforcing system in which creativity becomes both a natural and strategically essential part of organizational functioning.

References:

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