COURSE FOCUS

This course addresses selected challenges and opportunities related to managing creativity and innovation. We will move from an overview of the role of creativity and innovation to the managerial strategies and tactics for fostering creativity and innovation in organizations. To do this, the course is divided into three particular areas:

Understanding creativity and innovation: What makes you creative? What makes for a creative workplace? What can you do to increase your problem-solving abilities?

The network dynamics of creativity and innovation: How do innovations—new products, processes, even social movements—emerge and diffuse in populations? What are the social dynamics that shape innovation? How can managers and organizations exploit these dynamics?

Strategies for managing creativity and innovation: Where and when are the opportunities for innovation greatest? How do some companies innovate routinely while others cannot? What are successful ways to manage the innovation process in organizations? How can managers structure their organizations or groups to improve their innovative capabilities?

READING MATERIALS

- Creativity Workbook (purchased with Reader, available first day of class)
- MGT/MGP 251 — Managing Creativity and Innovation (Reader)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course is concerned with understanding real-world phenomena. We will use cases, videos, and exercises to provide common experiences to discuss and interpret together. You are expected to take a high level of responsibility for your own learning and that of your peers. Reading assignments should be read in advance of class, and everyone is expected to participate in discussions. Lectures and exercises will build on the readings rather than review them, and you are ultimately responsible for topics covered in both the readings and the course lectures. In addition, you are expected to be ready for participation in class discussion every day and encouraged to draw on your own experiences and on newspapers and other business readings to add to or test the applicability of the topics being discussed. This is a challenging class with a significant reading load, case presentations, and a written assignment due most weeks, as well as a final group presentation.

Written Assignments (300 points)
There will be assignments due almost weekly throughout the quarter: the first two are pass/fail, the remaining 4 (out of 5) are short papers, each worth 50 points. Choose only 4 of the 5 to submit. Your papers will answer a set of questions about that week's readings. The assignments provide you the opportunity to think about and respond to the ideas of the readings. Do not simply repeat facts from the readings, but do not ignore the readings altogether. Take a clear stand on the question and provide ideas or facts from the readings in support of that stand, or tell me why the readings fall short and provide an alternative explanation using ideas and facts from elsewhere (using appropriate citations). These papers must your original work, and must recognize all quoted materials and cite all sources used in their preparation.

Class Discussion (100 points)
All classes will entail discussion of the reading and materials presented in class, and many classes will also use cases and films to trigger and guide discussion. Because much of the learning will result from these
discussions, you are expected to be an informed, active, and civil participant in them. If you are absent, you cannot make up that participation on another day. Missing more than one class will likely hurt your grade.

**Final Presentation (100 points)**
The final project is to be done in teams of three and will involve a formal presentation of approx. 10-15 minutes to the class (depending on the number of teams). The project is to INNOVATE. Come up with a novel application for an existing technology, and develop a plan to ensure your success in this hypothetical (or actual) venture. You will turn in your final project topic and outline on Day 7 to make sure you’re on the right track.

**GRADING AND LOGISTICS**

**Paper Formats**
The written assignments are intended to sharpen your ability to communicate in a very limited space (750 words, roughly equal to the attention span of a manager). Do not exceed the word limit. Any exhibits (graphs, tables, figures, etc…) are not counted against the length of the paper. Use a 12 point font, double spaced 1” margins all around. Use page numbers. Staple pages together (no paper clips, folders, etc…). Always put your name on the front page. Reference all quotes, ideas, and data. All exhibits should also have a clear title explaining the exhibit, and footnotes stating clearly any assumptions or additional data created for the exhibit. Please include your email address so that I can return comments directly.

**Policy on Late Assignments**
I grade down 5 points for any assignment turned in late. No excuses will be accepted; it will simply be marked down. If you cannot attend class, send me the written assignment by email before class begins. If you are not consistently late, this will not affect your grade.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS**

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Day 1: October 1

**Introduction to Creativity and innovation in organizations**

No readings for first class.

**PART I: Understanding Creativity**

Day 2: October 8

**Creative problem-solving**

**Readings:**
- “Creativity as Heroic: Risk, Success, Failure, and Acclaim” Dean Simonton
- “Effects of Group Pressure upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgments” Asch
- “Hot Groups” Leavitt and Lipman-Blumen

*Read/Complete Part 1 of the Creativity Workbook*

Prepare the following questions for class discussion:
1. Are you more or less creative than most people?
2. What makes you creative? What hurts your creativity?

**Assignment (hand in before class begins)**

*Design and build a hat that reflects the many different versions of who you are. Wear it to class for all to see. Be creative*

Day 3: October 15

**Creativity and Innovation in organizations**

**Readings:**
- “How to Kill Creativity,” Teresa Amabile.
- “Managing Innovation: When Less is More,” Charlan Nemeth
- “The Business of Innovation,” Chapter 1, *How Breakthroughs Happen*

*Read/Complete Part 2 of Creativity Workbook*

**Assignment (hand in before class begins)**

*Submit Creativity Workbook*

**PART II: Strategies for Managing Innovation**

Day 4: October 22

**The recombinant nature of creativity and innovation**

**Readings**
- “Recombinant Innovation and the Sources of Invention” Chapter 2, *How Breakthroughs Happen*
- “The History of the Zipper,” Robert Freidel
- “On Patents,” (Reader)

Prepare the following questions for class discussion:
1. How would you describe the revolution in Mass Production that Henry Ford brought. What was revolutionary about innovation at Ford Motor Company from 1907-1914?
2. What did Henry Ford (the man) do to create such a revolution--as an inventor, as an entrepreneur, and as a manager?
3. If some innovations existed before, what makes them innovative again? Do the best ideas win?
Assignment (hand in before class begins)
If you agree with Basalla's main point about the continuity of innovation, identify a recent innovation (other than those he talks about) and describe how it came about: what were the preceding ideas and artifacts, how did they come together, and what was the impact? If you disagree, identify an innovation that was an invention: describe the history of that invention, its inventor(s), and its impact on the market. Then argue why it represents a discontinuous leap from previous technologies.

Day 5: October 29
Bridging old worlds: The pre-conditions for creativity and innovation

Readings
“The Social Side of Innovation,” Chapter 3, How Breakthroughs Happen
“Bridging Small Worlds,” Chapter 4, How Breakthroughs Happen
“Managing through Cycles of Technological Change,” Research/Technology Management (1991), Philip Anderson and Michael Tushman (Reader)
“Ford Motor Company, B Case,” Hargadon and Hounshell (Reader)

Prepare the following questions for class discussion:
1. What happened to Ford Motor Company in the 1920's? How did Henry Ford’s management style influence the change process from 1921-1927? How did the technology at Ford Motor Company influence the change process?
2. Are small worlds the ultimate fate of all successful innovations? Is this bad? Why and why not?
3. What are the downsides associated with strategies of bridging small worlds—at the level of individuals and of organizations?

Assignment (hand in before class begins)
Conduct a personal audit of your “worldliness.” Using the handout (to be distributed), list the different roles you have lived in. Generate three creative opportunities based on mixing the problems and solutions of different roles.

Day 6: November 5
Collectives and communities: Building new worlds

Readings:
“Building New Worlds,” Chapter 5, How Breakthroughs Happen
“Televisionary” Wired (2002), Evan Schwartz

Prepare the following questions for class discussion:
1. Is there a wrong time to be innovative? Can you be too early? What can you do to be sure you’re on time?
2. What do the readings and case say about the roles that competitors, suppliers, and customers play in the innovation process?

Assignment (hand in before class begins)
What was a great innovation that failed to catch on? Describe it and explain, using the readings, how it failed to become “revolutionary.” How might you have managed the process differently. Extra points if the innovation you chose was an idea that you saw emerge and fade away inside your own firm.

PART III: Organizing for Innovation

Day 7: November 12
Technology Brokering and the firm

Readings:
“Technology Brokering in Practice,” Chapter 6, How Breakthroughs Happen
“Technology Brokering as a Firm,” Chapter 7, How Breakthroughs Happen
Prepare the following questions for class discussion:
1. In what ways does your current (or previous) firm sit between small worlds? To what extent are they bridging these worlds and building new relations?
2. Is IDEO creative because they occupy a brokerage position or can they occupy such a position because they are creative?

Assignment (hand in before class begins)
Devote the first half of the paper to describing which aspects of IDEO Product Development’s innovation strategy, work practices, and culture could be adapted to work in your current (or previous) company? Devote the second half to describing which aspects would not be work?

Day 8: November 19
Technology Brokering within Firms

GUEST SPEAKER: Scott Lenet, Startup Venture Capital, DFJ Frontier

Readings:
“Technology Brokering within the firm,” Chapter 8, How Breakthroughs Happen
“3M Fights Back,” Fortune (1996), Thomas A. Stewart

Prepare the following questions for class discussion:
1. What turns organizations into networks of loosely-coupled worlds? What is the alternative?
2. How do existing products (and processes) contribute to the difficulties organizations have in generating and adopting innovations?

Assignment (hand in before class begins)
Describe the small worlds within your current (or previous) company. What barriers make it difficult to move people, ideas, or objects from easily across parts of the organization? Are there parts of the organization that you know (knew) nothing about but suspect could learn from or help? Describe these small worlds and how you might bridge them.

Day 9: November 26
Carpe Diem: Exploiting Emergent Opportunities for Technology Brokering

Readings:
“Exploiting Opportunities for Technology Brokering,” Chapter 9, How Breakthroughs Happen

Prepare the following questions for class discussion:
1. Thinking back to the Ford B case, is there a necessary trade-off between the ability to exploit old competencies and to rapidly pursue new opportunities?
2. What does a strategy of technology brokering have to offer large firms who are focused on succeeding in a single market?
3. How might organizations prepare themselves to overcome these difficulties?

Writing Assignment (hand in before class begins)
Pick an innovation that you have seen firsthand or read about recently that would benefit your current (or previous) company. In one paragraph, describe the innovation. In the remaining paper, develop a strategy for introducing that innovation and building support for it. What are the major obstacles to change and how will you overcome them?

Day 10: December 3
Presentations