

**Conundrums on Linkage between Learning Organisation and Creativity-
Revisiting Stress Management in Different Dimension**

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ABSTRACT

Creativity is not possible unless or otherwise organisation strengthen its knowledge base. This again is difficult to materialize if the organisation is not emerging as a Learning Organisation. The Learning Organisation is a concept that is becoming an increasingly widespread philosophy in modern companies, from the largest multinationals to the smallest ventures. What is achieved by this philosophy depends considerably on one's interpretation of it and commitment to it. As highlighted in literature and in practices, a Learning Organization is seen as a response to an increasingly unpredictable and dynamic business environment which now International corporations and National corporations are witnessing. This requires enormous wherewithal not in terms of money capital but in terms of Skilled and Trained HR which is not possible unless organizations have right ambience to create the same.

1. INTRODUCTION

This requires enormous wherewithal not in terms of money capital but in terms of Skilled and Trained HR which is not possible unless organizations have right ambience to create the same. Organisations must be aware that learning is necessary before they can develop into a Learning Organisation. Centralised, mechanistic structures do not create a good environment. Individuals do not have a comprehensive picture of the whole organisation and its goals. They need to find out what failure is like so that they can learn from their mistakes in the future. Therefore "Learning Organizations are those that have in place systems, mechanisms and processes, that are used to continually enhance their capabilities and those who work with it or for it, to achieve sustainable objectives – for themselves and the communities in which they participate".

LEARNING ORGANISATION AND DISTRESS ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

THE BUILDING BLOCKS

Before a Learning Organisations can be implemented and attempt to distress organizational environment, a solid foundation can be made by taking into account the following:

- Awareness
- Environment
- Leadership

- Empowerment
- Learning

AWARENESS

Organisations must be aware that learning is necessary before they can develop into a Learning Organisation. This may seem to be a strange statement but this learning must take place at all levels; not just the Management level. Once the company has accepted the need for change, it is then responsible for creating the appropriate environment for this change to occur in.

ENVIRONMENT

Centralised, mechanistic structures do not create a good environment. Individuals do not have a comprehensive picture of the whole organisation and its goals. This causes political and parochial systems to be set up which stifle the learning process. Therefore a more flexible, organic structure must be formed. By organic, we mean a flatter structure which encourages innovations. The flatter structure also promotes passing of information between workers and so creating a more informed work force. It is necessary for management to take on a new philosophy; to encourage openness, reflectivity and accept error and uncertainty. Members need to be able to question decisions without the fear of reprimand. This questioning can often highlight problems at an early stage and reduce time consuming errors. One way of over-coming this fear is to introduce anonymity so that questions can be asked or suggestions made but the source is not necessarily known.

LEADERSHIP

Leaders should foster the Systems Thinking concept and encourage learning to help both the individual and organisation in learning. It is the leader's responsibility to help restructure the individual views of team members. For example, they need to help the teams understand that competition is a form of learning; not a hostile act. Management must provide commitment for long-term learning in the form of resources. The amount of resources available (money, personnel and time) determines the quantity and quality of learning. This means that the organisation must be prepared to support this.

EMPOWERMENT

The locus of control shifts from managers to workers. This is where the term Empowerment is introduced. The workers become responsible for their actions; but the managers do not lose their involvement. They still need to encourage, enthuse and co-ordinate the workers. Equal participation must be allowed at all levels so that members can learn from each other simultaneously. This is unlike traditionally learning that involves a top-down structure (classroom-type example) which is time consuming.

LEARNING

Companies can learn to achieve these aims in Learning Labs. These are small-scale models of real-life settings where management teams learn how to learn together through simulation games. They need to find out what failure is like so that they can learn from their mistakes in the future. These managers are then responsible for setting up an open, flexible atmosphere in their organisations to encourage their workers to follow their learning example. Anonymity has already been mentioned and can be achieved through electronic conferencing. This type of conferencing can also encourage different sites to communicate and share knowledge, thus making a company truly a Learning Organisation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Any organisation that wants to implement a learning organisation philosophy requires an overall strategy with clear, well defined goals. Once these have been established, the tools needed to facilitate the strategy must be identified. It is clear that everyone has their own interpretation of the "Learning Organisation" idea, so to produce an action plan that will transform groups into Learning Organisations might seem impossible. However, it is possible to identify **three generic strategies** that highlight possible routes to developing Learning Organisations. The specific tools required to implement any of these depends on the strategy adopted, but the initiatives that they represent are generic throughout. These initiatives are ably described using Peter Senge's **Five Disciplines of Learning Organisations** (Senge, 1990). The three strategies are:

ACCIDENTAL

For many companies, adopting a learning organisation philosophy is the second step to achieving this Holy Grail. They may already be taking steps to achieve their business goals that, in hindsight, fit the framework for implementing a Learning Organisation. This is the accidental approach in that it was not initiated through awareness of the Learning Organisation concept.

SUBVERSIVE

Once an organisation has discovered the Learning Organisation philosophy, they must make a decision as to how they want to proceed. This is a choice between a subversive and a declared strategy. The subversive strategy differs from an accidental one in the level of awareness; but it is not secretive! Thus, while not openly endorsing the Learning Organisation ideal, they are able to exploit the ideas and techniques.

DECLARED

The other option is the declared approach. This is self explanatory. The principles of Learning Organisations are adopted as part of the company ethos, become company "speak" and are manifest openly in all company initiatives.

2. THE FUTURE

INVESTMENT IN LEARNING

There will be more emphasis on learning and hence more investment in improving individuals, teams and the organisation. There will be more emphasis on the ability to learn and take on board new ideas and methods. Training will be provided by people within the company who actually do the work. Training will no longer be a separate activity but an integral part of the teams in the company.

TECHNOLOGY

The price per performance ratio of technology will increase greatly. The value of technology compared to labour will improve by an even greater amount. Technology will become more cross functional and transparent.

KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY

In the future, organization will be based on knowledge and not just physical assets such as land or products. The most important employee will be a '**knowledge worker**' and employees will be judged on their ability to learn.

3. REFERENCE

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