THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES IN MANAGEMENT

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WORKSHOP ON THE HIDDEN SIDES OF CREATIVITY IN ORGANIZATIONAL SETTINGS

ESSEC BUSINESS SCHOOL, FRANCE, MAY 20-21, 2011

- BACKGROUND
- CALL FOR PAPERS
- CHAIRPERSONS
- REFERENCES
- PRACTICALITIES

BACKGROUND

The concept of creativity has today an invariably positive connotation. We are collectively and individually confronted with a "creativity" imperative. Creativity is praised, encouraged and promoted in manifold ways as a personal and organizational objective. It is seen as a catalyst of technical innovation, an engine of economic growth and productivity, and even a factor of social and human progress. Creativity is portrayed alternatively as a source of knowledge, prosperity and individual self-fulfillment. If the repetitiveness and rigidity of Taylorism marked the early 20th century, nothing probably characterizes the early 21st century better than the desire to reinvent and create – products, organizational processes, strategic visions, norms and rules, professional claims and personal identities.

For many decades now, the role of creativity in the complex world of organizations has intrigued organizational scholars. We have learnt a lot about organizational conditions of and constraints on creativity (Amabile 1996, March 2008). More recently, research on creativity has taken a decidedly structural turn, with increasing interest in the interface between creativity and social networks and in particular the exploration of how networks frame and sustain the creativity process (Perry-Smith and Shelley 2003, Cattani and Ferriani 2008, etc...) Creativity is increasingly being studied across organizational boundaries and across analytical levels, leading to fruitful combinations of research methods and perspectives that capture more accurately the complexity of creative activities (Kaufman and Sternberg 2010, Bechky and Okhuysen 2010).

Back to Top

CALL FOR PAPERS

In this workshop, we would like to shift the focus of attention in a way that sheds light on some of the remaining blind spots in organizational research on creativity. While we do not contest the well-established positive consequences of creativity, we believe it is time to take a more balanced view. The articulation of creativity with organizing processes generates contradictions and complex trade-offs that we need to understand and explore. These contradictions and trade-offs are potentially the source of costs and waste, of conflicts and resistance, stress and even despair. The psychological literature has already explored the two-sided nature of creativity at the individual level, highlighting the psychological costs incurred by those involved (Rushton 1990; Blumer 2002; Bartlett 2008). We believe it is imperative upon organizational scholars to pry open the black box of creativity, bringing to light its hidden sides in a manner that leads to more robust accounts of the organizational conditions and implications of creativity. This is the principal goal of this workshop. The following list is a sample of the types of contradictions that emerge when organizing combines with creativity:

• Audit versus Trust
• Prudence versus Risk
• Homogeneity versus Diversity
• Centralization versus de-centralization

• Rules versus Improvisation
• Short term financial objectives versus Long term investment
• Control versus Empowerment
• Equal opportunity versus Exceptionality
• Anxiety versus Serenity
• Group versus Individual
• Organizational closure versus Open networks

We encourage submissions that address these and other issues related to the hidden sides of creativity in organizations.

We would welcome abstracts (no more than 1000 words.

PLEASE CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT

Submission deadline : **December 10th, 2010**

Back to Top

CHAIRPERSONS

Marie-Laure **DJELIC**
Marie-Léandre **GOMEZ**
and
Stoyan **SGOUREV**

Back to Top

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Back to Top

PRACTICALITIES

More details will be available soon.

Back to Top