

MODULE TWO: ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CREATIVITY

Entrepreneurship is a process of identifying viable business opportunities and implementing them through creativity and innovativeness.

An entrepreneur is someone who identifies a viable business opportunity and undertakes the risks of investing time and resources to make sure that the idea succeeds.

Creativity is the concept of generating ideas as well as discovering the existing opportunities that can be developed into successful marketable business ventures in terms of goods and services.

Innovation is a process that involves idea selection and development through harnessing creative energy in order to convert ideas into more efficient products, services and process.

CREATIVITY PROCESS

The creativity process involves the following stages;

New idea recognition/germination;

Most creative ideas can be traced on an individual interest or curiosity about specific problems. In other words ideas come up as people think about how to solve the existing problems.

Preparation;

Once interest and curiosity have taken place as a focused idea, creative people embark on a search for answers. For example if it is a problem at this stage entrepreneurs are trying to solve it. If it is a new idea for product or service, the entrepreneur or business will carry out research.

Incubation;

This involves intensive concentration on the idea to have it grow. At this stage entrepreneurs simply let the idea time to grow. Incubation is a stage of thinking it over while entrepreneurs assume control over the creative process.

Illumination;

This is synonymous to light and therefore this is where an idea resurfaces as a realistic reaction or solution to the problem at hand. This is a moment of time when an entrepreneur says "OH I SEE".

Verification;

This is the development stage of refining knowledge into application. Once the idea is illuminated, in the minds of an entrepreneur it still has little meaning until when it is verified as a realistic and useful solution to the problem at hand. Entrepreneurial effort is essential at this stage to translate an illuminated idea into verification, realistic and useful application. It is even at this stage where ideas are proved possible or impossible.

CREATIVITY TYPES OR METHODS

Evolution;

This refers to incremental improvements in a situation, product or service. That is it takes any form. E.g. you add on the product features like functions, colour, shape and size. (This is common in mobile phones and computers)

Revolution;

Coming up with new ideas to replace the old ways of doing things; e.g. the music industry it has developed or changed from storing music on tapes to CDs to flash discs, to memory cards etc.

Synthesis;

Bringing together more than one idea from different areas to come up with new ideas to generate a new product or service; for example like in computers the soft ware and hard ware are produced by different people which are brought together to form the same product.

CREATIVE THINKING;

This is a thinking approach of entrepreneurs which goes beyond what the ordinary people imagine to happen. In other words it is the use of the sixth sense and the third eye while analyzing situations and problems at hand.

TECHNIQUES OF CREATIVE THINKING;

1. Brain storming;

This is where everybody in a group is free to generate or give in ideas from which to choose the best for implementation.

Rules of brain storming

- Ideas are not judged because it discourages members from generating more ideas
- Keep the group to a small number of five 5-8 people to keep them focused.
- There should be an atmosphere to think freely
- Keep brain storming to the lowest time possible (30 minutes)
- Add on ideas given but do not dismiss them
- The leader should keep order so that people do not discourage other from giving in ideas
- Have a defined problem for the group to address but do not reveal it in advance.

2. Assumption smashing;

This is when we do things based on fundamental assumptions called facts. For example a business is assumed to make profits/money however a lot of facts are not facts but just assumptions.

3. Problem reversal;

This when a problem keeps on occurring and there develops a standard solution for it; However such problems can be reversed which gives room for generating new ideas to solve the problem.

4. Forced analogy

This is concerned with forcing a similarity between two things that are seemingly different. Here the brain is trained to look for a similarity between two scenarios.

5. Trigger concept

Here we force the brain to think in a certain way by giving it a trigger point or word. That is the brain starts to think in line with the trigger point.

6. Attribute analysis

Here you look at the problem and break it into its attributes or its causes. For example if a problem is poverty, for you to creatively look for or find a solution for it, you have to first find a solution to its causes.

ATTRIBUTES OF CREATIVE PEOPLE

Curiosity;

Asking into why things happen the way they do. The aim here is to come up with new ways of doing the same things differently from the existing ones.

Challenging situations;

Creative people always look forward to challenge what other people see as facts or the best way of doing things. In other words to entrepreneurs or creative people there is nothing that is good enough.

Constructive discontent;

Searching for the best because every time creative people are not satisfied with what is existing i.e. Goods, services or ways of doing things;

Testing limits;

Creative people are always looking beyond the limits that everything is possible. That is what other people see as being impossible creative people look at it as an opportunity for possible exploitation.

Flexible imagination;

Creative people keep imagining and dreaming of new ways of doing things better than how they are done at present. They are always searching for change and exploit it as an opportunity to come up with new goods, services or ways of doing things;

Welcoming mistakes;

Creative people welcome and learn from mistakes because they enhance their creativity as they think and work hard to overcome or correct such mistakes.

Perseverance;

This is the unflinching courage of entrepreneurs. Amidst failure and mistakes, creative people still go on until they succeed. Perseverance, hard work and determination lead to success.

Self belief;

Creative people believe in themselves without depending on others. It is this belief that drives them until their dreams come true. When you believe in yourself, you believe in whatever you are doing and this will always force to work hard to achieve your ambitions and goals.

ATTITUDES THAT DISCOURAGE OR HINDER CREATIVITY

Rigidity/conservatism;

This is mainly a negative attitude to change. Thus people who are not willing to change cannot be creative and think of how to improve what is existing.

Fear of failure;

People who fear failure cannot be creative because they do not want to try and failure which is the basis for creativity.

Lack of self confidence;

People of this nature do not believe in themselves or what they are doing. In other words if you do not believe in yourself or what you are doing, you cannot even stand for it or invest in it to develop it further

Complacency;

People of this nature do not mind the way things happen. In other words they believe everything is ok and do not see any need for change which limits their creativity. They celebrate their successes prematurely.

Reactions to problems faced;

The way we react to the problems faced during the creativity process usually becomes a barrier to our achievements in most cases. For example if we react to our problems with fear we cannot try anymore.

Beliefs that it cannot be done;

Such beliefs that it is impossible, or cannot believe in doing anything new discourages creativity.

There is nothing I can do;

This makes some people to leave certain activities to be done by others because of fear of making mistakes yet mistakes are recipes for creativity.

Lack of self awareness;

Some people are not aware of their ability in life. Such people only think and believe that success can be achieved through working for others.

Fear for the future/ the unknown;

Majority of the people are hopeless about the future and therefore see no better thing or success in the future.

Absolute thinking;

There are people who think absolutely that everything is good and in its best form or no bad about it. However everything good has a bad side of it.

Hopelessness;

Some people cannot initiate anything on their own without external help.

Prejudice/wrong judgment;

This hinders creativity because most of the ideas that come from people are prejudiced and wrongly judged to the extent that they are not implemented yet they could develop into important or profitable business ventures.

Creative answers are complex;

In most cases ordinary entrepreneurs leave some with skill due to their complexity. They fear to try and fail.

People think that ideas come on their own.

In reality sitting and wishing does not make a man and therefore creative ideas do not come on their own but they are seriously searched for.

HOW TO ENHANCE CREATIVITY

➤ **Include creativity as a core company value;**

Entrepreneurs have the responsibility of establishing an innovative culture in their companies and setting a creative tone in an organization begins with understanding the company mission. Therefore entrepreneurs should incorporate creativity and innovation into their company mission statements and affirm their commitment to them in internal communication.

➤ **Embracing diversity;**

To cultivate a culture of creativity organizations must hire diverse workforce. When people solve problems or come up with ideas, they do so in their own experience. Thus hiring different people with different backgrounds provide a company with a rich base for creativity. In most cases smart entrepreneurs enhance organizational creativity by hiring beyond their comfort zones.

➤ **Expecting creativity;**

Employees tend to rise or fall to the level of expectations entrepreneurs have of them. The only way to communicate the expectation of creativity is to give employees permission to be creative.

➤ **Expecting and tolerating failure;**

Creative ideas will always produce failures and successes. People who never fail are not being creative. Thus creativity requires taking chances and managers remove employees' fear of failure.

➤ **Encouraging curiosity;**

Entrepreneurs and their employees constantly should ask the 'what if' question and take a 'May be we could' attitude. Doing all this allows employees in an organization to break out of assumptions that limit creativity.

➤ **Creating a chance of scenery periodically;**

The physical environments in which people work have an impact on their level of creativity. Entrepreneurs can stimulate their level of creativity by starting meetings with some type of short, fun exercise designed to encourage participants to think creatively.

➤ **Viewing problems as challenges;**

Every problem offers an opportunity for innovations. Entrepreneurs who allow employees to dump all their problems on their desks to be fixed do nothing to develop creativity within those employees.

➤ **Providing creative training;**

Almost everyone has a capacity to be creative. But developing that capacity requires training accomplished. According to Richard Branson what separates an average person from an entrepreneur is not creative capacity but the ability to tap the capacity by encouraging creative impulses acting upon them. Training can help anyone to tap their own capacity.

➤ **Providing support;**

Entrepreneurs must give employees tools and resources they need to be creative. For example employees should be given enough time to be creative because creativity often requires non work phases and allowing employees time to day dream in an important aspect of the creative process.

➤ **Developing a procedure of capturing ideas;**

Workers in every organization come with creative ideas. However not organization is prepared to capture those ideas. The unfortunate situation is that ideas that might have moved the company ahead or made people's live better simply evaporate. A business that does not have a structured approach to collecting ideas has little prospective for developing through creativity.