



# **How Can Embedded Creatives and Their Work Be Managed in a Marketing Organization?**

*A Literature Review on Creativity Management*

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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>Economic growth is fuelled by creativity. The 21st century has brought many advancements due to accelerating technological development. Along with these changes, the number of embedded creatives (creative workers working outside the traditional creative industries) has increased, and many of them work in the marketing function.</p> <p>Although the need for creativity is more recognized than ever, its management practices in modern marketing organizations are insufficient. The purpose of this study is to find out whether implementing creativity management practices and frameworks in the everyday processes of a marketing organization would help in the management of embedded creatives and their work, ultimately leading to more commercial success, economic development, and customer satisfaction.</p> <p>This thesis is conducted as a semi-systematic or narrative literature review, providing an overview of studies and frameworks of creativity, creativity management, and their notions of marketing as a function. This thesis attempts to provide an understanding of how to add value to a marketing organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace and how contemporary research on creativity management can help marketing organizations and practitioners manage creativity more efficiently.</p> <p>This thesis concludes that practical frameworks on creativity management can provide managers of creative staff with much needed tools to manage creativity in the marketing environment. Creativity adds value to a marketing organization on different levels: providing more possibilities in innovation, product development, and developing marketing activities, and providing creative staff with the freedom to carry out their creative ambitions. This leads to raising individuals' and teams' creative capabilities and, ultimately, raising the organization's overall ability to adapt and respond to challenging situations and crises.</p>	
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Richard Florida, an urbanist studying the changing class structure of post-industrial capitalism, states that creativity is the driving force of economic growth (Florida, 2019). As we have moved towards and become knowledge- and information-based societies, creativity has become a “source of strategic advantage for contemporary managerial and political lexicon” (Defillippi et al., 2007, p. 511). Mumford et al. (2011, p. 4) state that “- - creativity and innovation are critical to the growth and performance of organizations - -”. Dubina (2005) concludes that “creativity represents a key factor for economic success of organizations interested in long-term competitive development” (p. 335). Organizations that take advantage of employee creativity benefit from it compared to those that are not trying to make use of it.

Besides other fields such as technology and arts, creativity has always played a leading role in the marketing practice. Marketing scholarship also identifies the need for creativity in the modern marketing industry (e.g. Titus, 2007; Rucker, 2017). Titus (2007) argues that the progressive strategic emphasis on creativity and innovation likely increases pressure and directs attention towards the marketing function. He also adds that marketing professionals are “likely to find themselves under greater scrutiny to identify and produce breakthrough products, services, and marketing campaigns” (Titus, 2007, p. 262). On the contrary to product or technological innovations, where an idea is backed up by successfully implementing production into the equation, media and marketing creativity is needed constantly. Pieces of content, brand marketing campaigns, market research, demand generation activities, sales materials, or brand development projects, only to name a few, are continually produced somewhere in a contemporary marketing organization. In most cases, creative outcomes are in production around the clock.

For as long as I can remember, creativity has intrigued me. After participating in creative efforts and failures, first in school and free time and later in different marketing organizations, I felt stranded and lost in the quality of my creative outcomes and endeavors. I found myself questioning whether my creativity has reached a standstill (I especially remember asking myself, “Is this all I have to offer?”), or whether there was something that could help me evolve, find a new spark in my creative efforts – especially in how to

cultivate all of this into actionable results at work. After extensive searches, I came across creativity management. I started to wonder whether implementing creativity management practices and frameworks in the operations of the marketing organization I am working in would help manage embedded creatives and their (our) work. Studies implicated that implementing these practices into everyday marketing would likely conclude commercial success, economic development, and customer satisfaction.

The concept of an embedded creative describes a creative worker working outside the traditional creative industries, such as advertising, architecture, arts, design, fashion, software, games, music, publishing, and television. Marketing practitioners fall under creative workers based on a classification system used in Hearn and Bridgstock's (2014) study. In fact, "advertising and marketing" and "digital content and software" are the two categories containing the highest number of creative workers (p. 41).

While the importance of creativity for marketing and a marketing organization is evident, there seems to be an enormous gap between the theoretical importance and what is happening in practice. Sternberg (2006) acknowledges this phenomenon in his five generalizations on creativity, presented in Chapter 1 (Creativity). Supportively, Pitta et al. (2008, p. 137) claim that "the majority of marketing organizations enjoy neither creativity nor innovation". This is due to these organizations failing to build a culture valuing creative and innovative ideas and neglecting management of the creative process. If the management is arranged effectively, it can lead to higher sales and profit, lower costs and higher overall success and customer satisfaction (Pitta et al., 2008). When asked about companies harnessing employee creativity, marketing managers brought up problems such as insufficient incentives and encouragement, poor systems of eliciting employee ideas, and a lack of clear policies to motivate and reward creativity (Jerzyk, 2014, p. 103). The same study indicated that managers are not necessarily equipped with clear criteria for assessing creativity in marketing beyond measurable results such as sales figures or customer acquisition. At the same time, assessment should consider the subject (creative person), what happens during the creative process, and the creative product itself – not to mention the differences and characteristics of different types of creative end products (p. 104). Civelek et al. (2021) also found an interesting note on the usage of marketing communication tools: marketing creativity and innovation are positively influenced by using these tools in the everyday work of the marketing organization.

## 1.1 Purpose and Aim of the Study

The rapid changes of the 21st century have increased the number of embedded creatives in all industries, primarily due to technological advancements and artificial intelligence (Florida, 2019; Hearn & Bridgstock, 2014). Creativity from an organizational perspective is nurtured among innovation and R&D activities, but not so much in the marketing function. Managers of embedded creatives in marketing organizations do not possess enough tools for managing creative teams and individuals. The experiences of marketing practitioners as embedded creatives indicate that organizations fail in building cultures that value creative and innovative ideas but succeed in neglecting the management of creative processes and overall harnessing of employee creativity (Jerzyk, 2014). This thesis proposes that implementing creativity management practices and frameworks in the everyday processes of a marketing organization will help in the management of embedded creatives and their work, thus concluding to commercial success, economic development, and customer satisfaction.

This thesis aims to provide an overview of studies and frameworks of creativity management. The frameworks of creativity management and their notions on marketing are also investigated to gain a better understanding and to answer the following questions:

- 1) how to add value to a marketing organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace, and
- 2) how can contemporary research on creativity management help marketing organizations and practitioners manage creativity more efficiently in a marketing organization?

The first question is inspired by a Masters' Thesis conducted in the Luleå University of Technology by Thomas Forsgren, Martin Tregert and Fredrik Westerlund (Forsgren et al., 2004).

## 1.2 Methodology

The very purpose of a literature review is to provide a basis for accepting a conclusion without taking someone's word for it. (Baumeister & Leary, 1997, p. 317)

This thesis is conducted as a literature review. Literature reviews are helpful when an overview of a topic is pursued and fit exceptionally well to identify gaps in previous research. (Snyder, 2019).

There are three types of literature reviews: systematic, semi-systematic and integrative reviews. Systematic reviews aim to minimize bias by identifying all literature on a topic that fits the inclusion criteria. Semi-systematic or narrative reviews are suitable when it is impossible to review every single research on the topic, and the topic is looked at through the interest of many different disciplines. Integrative reviews aim to form a basis for new theoretical frameworks and perspectives. (Snyder, 2019).

As creativity and innovation management are in the interests of many disciplines, not to mention creativity in general, a systematic approach was rejected early in writing this thesis. Baumeister and Leary (1997) view the narrative approach as suitable for situations where the thesis attempts to link studies on different topics into one for either reinterpretation or interconnection (p. 312). Therefore, a semi-systematic or narrative approach was chosen for this work. It is typical for a semi-systematic approach to look at how a topic has developed across research traditions and attempts to identify all traditions that have implications for the topic. (Snyder, 2019, p. 335).

There are five stages in conducting a literature review, as Wolfswinkel et al. (2011) presented. This approach is called the Grounded Theory Literature Review Method, and the stages are 1) Define, 2) Search, 3) Select, 4) Analyze, and 5) Present. These stages are presented in Figure 1 below. To ensure accuracy and trustworthiness, a process of certain stages needs to be followed (Snyder, 2019).



**Table 1 Five-stage grounded-theory method for reviewing the literature in an area: to be used in an iterative fashion**

<i>Number</i>	<i>Task</i>
1. DEFINE	
1.1	Define the criteria for inclusion/exclusion
1.2	Identify the fields of research
1.3	Determine the appropriate sources
1.4	Decide on the specific search terms
2. SEARCH	
2.1	Search
3. SELECT	
3.1	Refine the sample
4. ANALYZE	
4.1	Open coding
4.2	Axial coding
4.3	Selective coding
5. PRESENT	
5.1	Represent and structure the content
5.2	Structure the article

*Figure 1. Five-stage grounded-theory method for reviewing the literature in an area: to be used in an iterative fashion (Wolfswinkel et al., 2011).*

The first stage (Define) consists of defining the most suitable set of data used for conducting the literature review, including criteria for inclusion and exclusion of data, identifying the research fields, and determining which sources and search terms to use. In the second stage (Search), the actual search of the literature is conducted based on the grounds set in the previous stage. In the third stage (Select) the texts are reviewed, and their suitability is evaluated. All selected literature should fit into the boundaries of the topic and shape its niche (p. 5). In the fourth stage (Analyze), the literature is classified based on basic and advanced concepts and associated insights using open, axial, and/or selective coding (p. 6). The chosen papers should represent the best available knowledge of the research area. The final stage (Present) describes the phase of thesis writing, where the content and structure of the data are complemented and put into a logical order, beginning from an introductory part, and resulting in conclusions.

This method is encouraged to be used in an iterative fashion, which happened during this thesis process. In Figure 2, the five stages are displayed in a circular form, and the arrows represent changes between stages throughout the process of this thesis. For example, from the Define stage, the process continued to either the Search or Select stages, whereas the Define stage was entered from Search, Select, Analyze and Present stages.

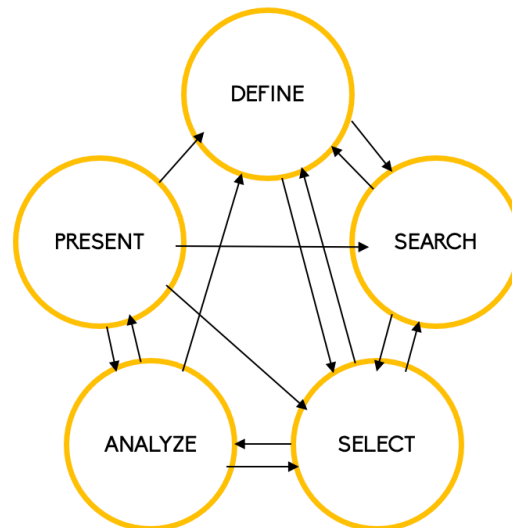


Figure 2. Thesis process viewed through the five stages grounded theory model.

After first defining the search terms as exclusively “creativity management” and “marketing” in the fields of marketing, business, and creativity research and using all the databases available on Arcada LibGuide for Media Management as well as the databases of the University of Helsinki and Aalto University, the search resulted in only a few articles. The first iteration was made when the search terms were expanded to “marketing” and “creativity”, resulting in articles related to creativity marketing, some loosely connecting dots to more general aspects of management and leadership. Then, “marketing leadership” was searched to find references to creativity management among such literature and whether leadership frameworks comment on managing creativity. As the practical aspects of marketing have evolved due to digitalization, the results of this inquiry were limited to literature published between 2010 and 2022. What it comes to theories and frameworks of creativity, with the help of previous knowledge and the book by Jane Piirto (2004), the field of studies and frameworks of creativity were identified as the most suitable for the topic. They (Consensual Definition of Creativity, Conceptual Definition of Creativity, Components of Creative Performance, Componential Framework of Creativity, 4-Ps of Creativity, 7 C’s of Creative Thought) were also mentioned at least once in the papers concerning creativity.

All of the above searches were conducted multiple times to minimize the mistakes of excluding relevant articles. It is important to note that this review is subject to human error in that matter. Texts related to creativity and marketing from before 1990 have been left out to keep the data more manageable and relevant for marketing. There is always an

exception to the rule, and Vedin's study on creativity management and corporate culture was included, as it was one of the first results found on the topic of creativity management. It also included aspects specific to the media industry and early stages of the thought on embedded creatives. Altogether 40 articles or publications were used to form the theoretical framework of this thesis. These articles were categorized in one of the following categories: creativity, creativity management, marketing or other based on the main viewpoint they carried. Of these 40 publications, 15 related to creativity. Of these articles, three articles discussed creativity in marketing. Creativity management was in the center of 18 articles, of which in three both creativity management and marketing were discussed. Marketing was discussed in six publications and one publication was categorized as other (relating to organizational culture).

### **1.3 Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of an introductory section, a theoretical section, and a conclusive section. The work begins with an Introduction (Chapter 1), laying the foundation of the thesis. The purpose and aim of the study are presented in Chapter 1.1., followed by a description of the methodology (Chapter 1.2) and structure of the thesis (1.3). These chapters form the introductory section.

The second (theoretical) section consists of five main topics: Creativity, Creativity Management, Marketing Organization, Creativity in Context and Creativity Management in Marketing. This section is a presentation of the literature reviewed in this work. Following the theoretical framework, the conclusive section sums up this thesis's findings, limitations, and conclusion in Chapter 7 (Discussion) and Chapter 8 (Conclusions).

## **2 CREATIVITY**

This interest in creativity is a truly postmodern perplexity, for little is tangible, all is one, one is many, everything is true, and nothing is true. However, few can get an authoritative and comprehensive handle on creativity. The terms *chaos*, *fracture*, and *split* fit the creativity enterprise well. (Piiro, 2004, p. 5)

In this chapter an overview of creativity is provided, following with a more detailed presentation of the elements and frameworks of creativity focusing on such that have

practical notions towards understanding the management of creativity. Organizational creativity is introduced.

As this thesis focuses on creativity management, a broad and comprehensive definition of creativity is not of use. However, understanding the diversity and multidisciplinary of creativity helps in understanding the versatility and complexity of creativity management from practical and theoretical viewpoints. For the reader interested in creativity more broadly, Özgür Ak's thesis *Creativity – A Multidisciplinary Systematic Literature Review* (2020) is recommended.

However, writing a brief definition is no easier than writing a long one, as the definitions of creativity come in as many as there are researchers in the field and artists currently working on their art. One thing seems to be in common: most scholars in different fields acknowledge the importance of context in which creativity is discussed. The most radical view on creativity claims that only true artistic creativity is, in fact, creativity. In contrast, the humanistic view is that creativity exists everywhere, and everyone is creative (Piiro, 2004). Csikszentmihalyi (2009) goes as far as crediting creativity as the factor differentiating humans from apes, while Simonton (2006) credits creativity for the contemporary world we are living in.

The interest in research on creativity as a measurable phenomenon has to some extent began in 1950. Then, American psychologist Joy Paul Guilford used the word creativity in his speech for the American Psychological Association, calling for more research on creative personality development and finding creativity in children. Guilford claimed throughout his career that the study of creativity for a psychologist is studying the creative personality. He was focused on types of intellects called convergent and divergent intellect, describing different ways of thinking. The former describes a more linear, expected way of thinking, whereas the latter describes a more risk-taking way of thinking that builds new information. (Piiro, 2004)

Since then, the interest in the creative personality and studying the skills and development of a creative person have, in one way or another, dominated the research field, recently including, for example, the research on differences in personality between creative and 'non-creative' people (Amabile, 2018). Much of the research on creativity has focused on

intelligence and creativity and their possible correlations, as well as creativity training in educational environments, focusing on the development of divergent thinking skills.

Creativity research, in general, is dominated by psychology, mainly through six different approaches: psychometric, developmental, social, cognitive, educational, humanistic, and positive. Psychometric psychology attempts to quantify creativity and its aspects through different evaluation methods and tests. Developmental psychology is interested in the stages of development of a creative person. Social psychology studies environmental influences on a creative person. What happens in a creative person's mind when creating is of interest in cognitive psychology, and educational psychology focuses on learning and the development of learning and creativity-enhancing methods. Humanistic psychology views that everyone is creative, and from the viewpoint of positive psychology, creativity could be a conclusion of a spiritual crisis in the creator's mind. (Piirto, 2004, p. 9-26).

Most of the viewpoints and frameworks presented in this thesis fall under the social psychology of creativity, which, as previously mentioned, focuses on identifying social and environmental conditions that influence creativity. Since this thesis focuses on creativity in business and work-related settings (where environmental conditions, such as workload or financial resources, are part of everyday struggles), observing them through processes from cognitive psychology (what happens in the mind of a creator) or psychometric perspectives (quantifying creativity) would not as such provide beneficial enough insight to draw on conclusions useful for the everyday creativity management.

R. J. Sternberg (2006, p. 2), a professor of psychology and the inventor of the Investment Theory of Creativity and the Propulsion Theory of Creative Contributions, draws on five generalizations on creativity:

1. Creativity involves thinking that is aimed at producing ideas or products that are relatively novel and that are, in some respect, compelling.
2. Creativity is not solely domain-specific or solely domain-general but contains elements from both. The potential to be creative may have some domain-general elements, but to gain the knowledge one needs to make creative contributions, one must develop knowledge and skills within a particular domain in which one is to make one's creative contribution.
3. Creativity can be measured to some degree.
4. Creativity can also be developed to some degree.
5. Creativity is not as highly rewarded in practice as it is supposed to be in theory.

More recent views conclude that in Scandinavia, creativity is broadly understood and considered as an attitude to life in general, and a way to perceive the problems of existence. Luckily to many, the perception in Scandinavia is that focusing only on creative products may leave many creative individuals unnoted, as many of them do not prioritize being in the limelight. (Smith & Carlsson, 2006, p. 202).

## 2.1 Defining Creativity through Components

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, professor of psychology and management, one of the flag-bearers of creativity literature, and the father of "small c" and "big C" creativity<sup>1</sup>, describes creativity as consisting of three main elements in his System Model of Creativity. All three systems are necessary for any creative idea or product to occur. The following elements lay a foundation for understanding the frameworks to come:

- 1) A domain is a culture that contains symbolic rules, like mathematics, business, music etc. or any other symbolic knowledge shared by a particular society.
- 2) A person brings novelty into the domain by using the symbols of a given domain.
- 3) A field consists of experts who recognize and validate innovation. These individuals act as gatekeepers of the domain and select what deserves to be recognized as creative. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009)

Due to the equal importance of these three elements, Csikszentmihalyi views that a person cannot be creative in a domain if they are not or have not been exposed to it and that achieving creativity in a domain requires the availability of extra attention. He also views that true creativity changes the symbolic domain or transforms it into a new one. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009)

Following the previous three elements (domain, person, field) comes a product<sup>2</sup>. A creative product can be any product, response, idea or result of the creative process. Although

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<sup>1</sup> These are the two types of creativity Csikszentmihalyi divides creativity into. They are widely used in both the academic and ordinary world. Small c creativity is helpful for everyone in their every day, solving mundane problems at home, at work and so on. Big C Creativity is the type of creativity that changes the domain. (Piiro, 2004, p. 17; Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Although a widely recognized way of describing creativity, these types are not of interest to this thesis. I believe workplace creativity can represent both, or they can be thought of as a scale, in which small c represents the other and big C the other end.

<sup>2</sup> There is a debate on whether a creative person needs to create something or whether creative potential is enough to result in creativity. From some perspectives, the life of a "true creative person" can be seen as a creative product. (Piiro, 2004, p. 33) This debate is out of the range of this thesis, but mentioned here as an interesting side note, since stating that a creative product or an idea is needed is not necessarily valid from all possible viewpoints.

Teresa Amabile (2018) critiques defining creativity solely based on the creativity of a product, she does agree that in this day and age, it is impossible to list objective criteria for identifying whether products are creative or not. Therefore, we still need to observe creativity subjectively based on the final products instead of processes. Her studies first suggest a Consensual Definition of Creativity that consists of the following subjective criteria (Chapter 2, p. 10/25):

- 1) The product can be rated as creative if suitable observers independently agree it is creative. The evaluation requires some (but not thorough) knowledge on the domain in question.
- 2) Criteria for creativity requires a historically bound social context.
- 3) Creativity is the same regardless of field. There is one basic form of creativity and one basic quality of creative products, which is present in all fields and domains.
- 4) There are degrees of creativity: some products are more creative or less creative than others.

To fulfil the deficiency of this subjective view, Amabile provides a Conceptual Definition of Creativity. This view identifies a product or a response as creative if 1) it is both a novel and appropriate, useful, correct, or valuable response to the task at hand, and 2) the task is heuristic rather than algorithmic. Heuristic tasks are tasks without a defined solution, whereas algorithmic tasks include a clear path to the solution. In creating creative products or results, discovering the problem in question is key. (Amabile, 2018).

Amabile presents three factors essential to producing creative products or responses called Components of Creative Performance. They are 1) Domain-relevant skills, 2) Creativity-relevant skills, and 3) Task motivation. Domain-relevant skills consist of all the knowledge and information the person has regarding the domain, including factual knowledge, principles, criteria for aesthetics, and so on. Creativity-relevant skills translate to skills that eventually determine the evaluation of their final product as creative or not creative, including breaking out of what is expected and keeping the options open for as long as possible. Task motivation consists of intrinsic motivation, the individual's attitude towards the task and their view on the reasons for undertaking the task. While task motivation can be altered in a shorter time period by social-psychological factors, influencing domain-relevant and creativity-relevant skills is more difficult. That is because they can consist of multiple aspects, from technical capabilities and cognitive styles to

domain knowledge and personality traits. They typically require intrinsic motivation throughout the process of gaining said knowledge. (Amabile, 2018).

Based on the previous definitions of creativity and the components of Creative Performance, Amabile suggests a Componential Framework of Creativity to illustrate the creative process (Figure 3). It presents a scenario for how information might be used throughout the process and what are the relationships between the different stages and components of creative performance. Each component is needed for creativity to occur, and the process is proposed to be more or less identical to all levels of creativity. (Amabile, 2018; Higgins, 1999).

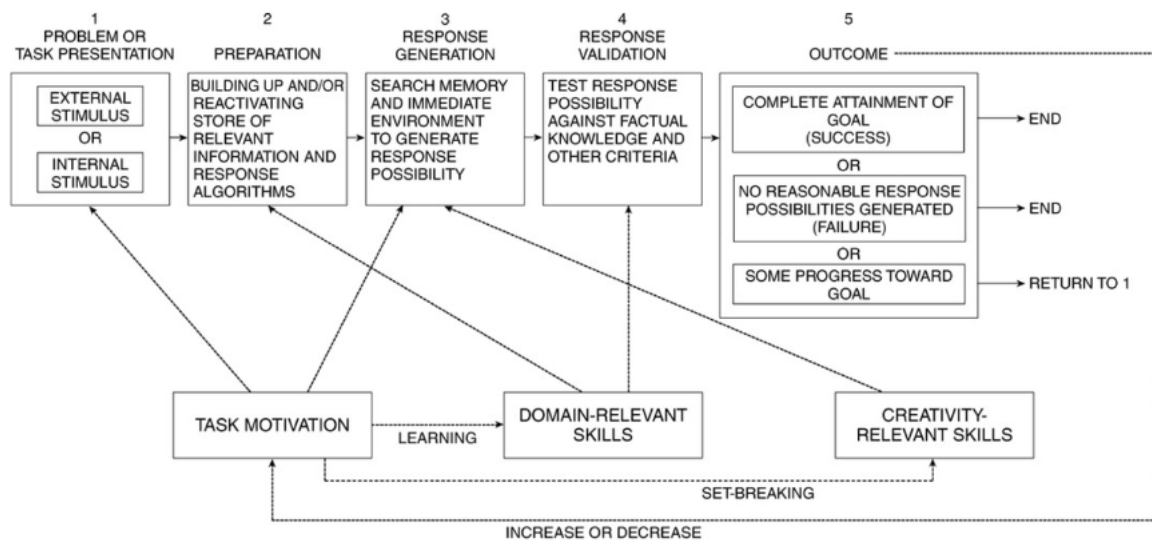


Figure 3. Componential Framework of Creativity by Teresa Amabile (2018).

In extension to the Componential Framework of creativity, Higgins (1999) suggests that the 4-Ps of Creativity model is accurate and suitable for observing creativity in a marketing environment, as it adds the effects of the working environment to the equation. The four Ps of creativity are:

- **Person:** the creative person, who acts by creativity
- **Process:** the creative process, that leads to the end product
- **Product:** the creative product, which is in many creativity frameworks the one that is observed and valued the most
- **Press:** the working environment (p. 307-308)



## 2.2 Creativity Framework

To illustrate the complexity of creativity and to form a base for this thesis, a figure has been drawn (Figure 4). This figure combines the frameworks and ideas mentioned in the previous chapter and visualizes how complex creativity can be, even in its simplest form.

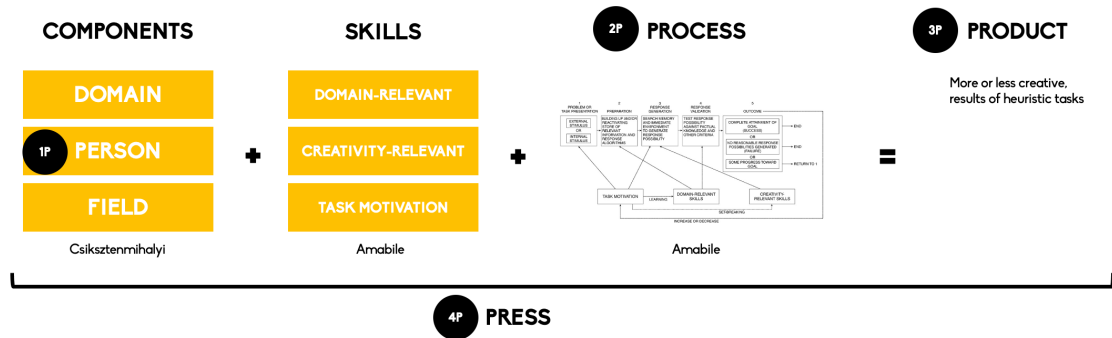


Figure 4. Defining creativity as viewed by Csikszentmihalyi (2009), Amabile (2018), and Higgins (1999).

The 7 C's of Creative Thought (Lubart & Thornhill-Miller, 2019) comes of use in bringing this definition closer to practice. Many of these factors act as "Press" factors in the big picture. As the name suggests, there are seven C's explaining the components of creativity:

- **Creators** refer to people, who are creative in the context of their job.
- **Creating** means the process or sequence of different acts, that results in the production of an idea. The process consists of four stages: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification.
- **Collaboration** describes the process in which two or more people collaborate and create something together.
- **Contexts** refer to the environment and its multiple layers, which affect all aspects of the process of creating, the choices made, the resources etc. from both physical and social perspectives.
- **Creations** refer to a new result of creative efforts that did not exist before.
- **Consumption** is the goal of a creative effort in a workplace environment: that the product of creativity is consumed in their social contexts.
- **Curricula** means all the educational or developmental activities towards creativity.

It is safe to say that an answer to the question “What is creativity?” is complex and consists of many aspects, depending on the viewpoint it is looked at. On the other hand, creativity is viewed as highly personal and in the hands of the individual. On the other hand, creativity can be viewed as a social process in which the creator is dependent on others and their active domain.

What is common to many views is that there usually is a product which can be evaluated on some criteria. From a marketing perspective, these products can be anything the marketing organization produces, such as brand campaigns, marketing communications messages and visual entities, only to name a few.

To further conclude, from an organizational perspective, creativity consists of four factors, the 4P’s of Creativity: the person, process, product and press of the environment. It requires domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills, and task motivation (Components of Creative Performance) from the person creating. In order for creativity to occur, the process (Componential Framework of Creativity) consists of 1) problem or a task, 2) preparation, 3) generating a response to the problem, 4) validating the response, and 5) one of the following outcomes: success, failure or partial success. Whichever the outcome is, it either increases or decreases task motivation when the next process begins. To sum up, the aspects that affect creativity and the creative process in the workplace, the 7C’s of Creativity are of use: creators, creating, collaboration, contexts, creations, consumption, and curricula.

This rather straightforward explanation of creativity is a mere attempt to understand what creativity is. As Palo sums it up, if creativity were simply a process, there would be a step-by-step guide to achieving it (2003). If all that is needed for creativity to occur were the four P’s, there would be a patented method on how to get there. Creativity is viewed from different perspectives by people with different purposes and background information, making it simultaneously endlessly interesting and devastating to our curious nature as human beings.

## **2.3 Organizational Creativity**

What really drives a company is not its fancy methodologies and complicated technologies but an underlying "cult of innovation". (Palo, 2003, p. 127)

Now that the different components of creativity have been introduced and the creative process explained, a brief look at creativity in an organizational setting is due. In academic literature it is addressed using two different terms, corporate and organizational creativity. There appears to be no significant differences between these two terms, so it is assumed in this thesis that these terms overlap and carry the same meaning. For clarity, the term organizational creativity is used in this thesis to describe creativity occurring in an organizational (or corporate) environment<sup>3</sup>.

Another term spicing up the topic of creativity in an organizational setting is innovation. Although innovation is not of interest to the subject of this thesis, it would be a mistake not to mention how innovation and creativity relate to each other. Jelinek & Schoonhoven (1990) and Nyström (1979), as referred by Mumford et al. (2012), describe innovation being the process of crafting creative problem solutions into new products, processes and services in an organization. If creativity is the starting point in providing the solution to a problem, innovation is what can be described as the production of said products, processes, and services. This thesis focuses on creativity, the starting point of innovation, although these two terms do go hand in hand. Kačerauskas (2016b) suggests that innovation has a better position in an organization as creativity, as it can be more easily combined with different management practices due to its process-related nature.

To put it lightly, an organization is an endlessly exciting environment for creativity. On the one hand, organizations seek success and are constantly attempting to improve the current situation, whether financially by increasing profit or operationally by streamlining production streams. On the other hand, stability, especially financially, is highly valued. These factors make creativity such a flammable topic: stability is not typically considered a creativity-enhancing circumstance due to its disruptive nature and disregard for routine and repetition (Dubina, 2005, p. 336).

Mumford et al. (2011) present four variables under which creativity (and innovation) seem critical for an organization's economic success. These variables are:

- 1) turbulence (instability or changes in the operational environment),
- 2) pull forces (market demand),

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<sup>3</sup> One exception is presented in Palo's Model of Corporate Creativity later in this chapter (p. 21), where the term "corporate creativity" describes the fusion of individual, group, and organizational creativity. In this model, the naming is purely a semantic choice as it combines the three elements into one.

- 3) exploitation potential (the possibility to respond to demand with technical capabilities), and
- 4) competitive pressure.

Also, e.g., the organization's ability to respond to crises and improvement of organizational planning processes are partly due to creativity and innovation. (Chapter 1, Section "Impacts", paragraphs 4-11).

To introduce the model of organizational creativity, Palo introduces three types of creativity: individual, organizational and group creativity. Each of these has its characteristics. By nurturing these factors, it is possible to influence organizational creativity, as creativity in the organizational environment results from these factors and their compatibility with each other. (Palo, 2003).

The below figure (Figure 5<sup>4</sup>) shows how organizational creativity is influenced by the different forms of creativity and their characteristics. For example, individual creativity is fueled by the creative people themselves, who typically invest their time and energy into gaining expertise and knowledge in their field (Palo, 2003, p. 126). Diversity plays a crucial role in making creative decisions and developing creative ideas in group creativity. Both individual and group creativity are influenced by organizational creativity or its characteristics, and as Palo describes it, it is the "heartbeat of the process of creativity" (p. 127). Since individual creativity is affected by group and organizational creativity, group creativity is affected by individual and organizational creativity, and organizational creativity is affected by individual and group creativity, there would be no organizational creativity without one of the elements. The individual characteristics are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.2 (Individual Factors Affecting Creativity in the Workplace).

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<sup>4</sup> In this figure, the previously mentioned exception to the use of "corporate creativity" instead of "organizational" exists.

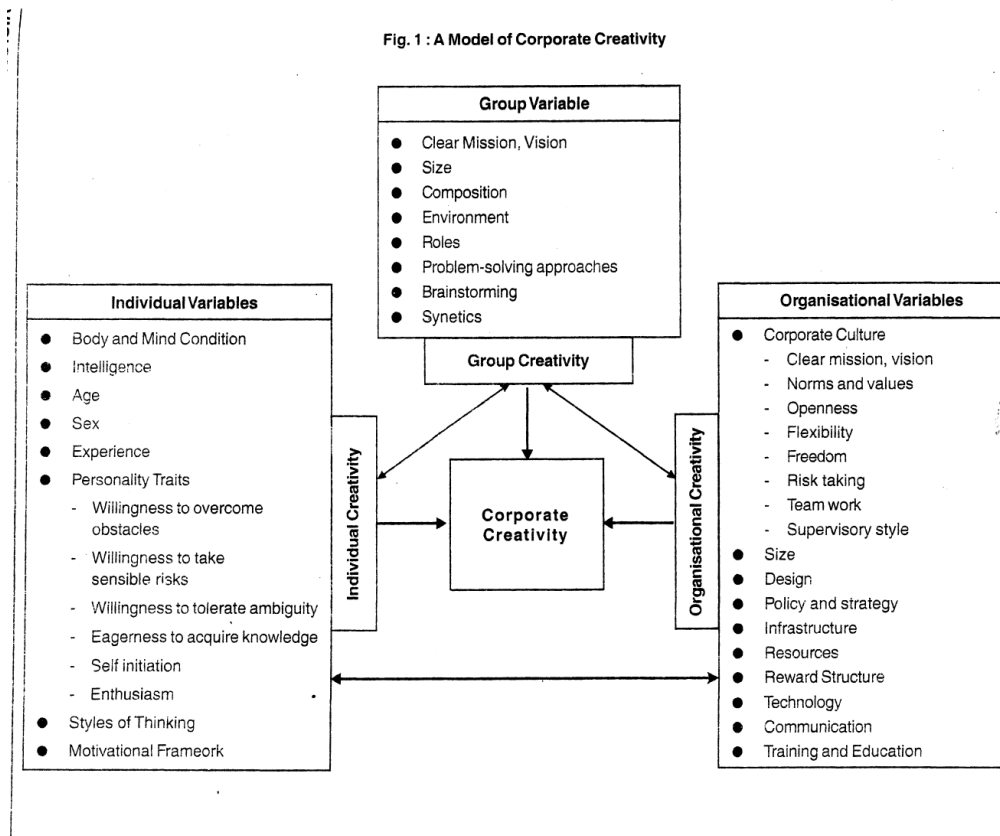


Figure 5. A Model of Corporate Creativity (Palo, 2003).

If creativity requires a creative outcome, the Model of Corporate Creativity should result in any outcome the organization, team or workgroup is working towards. Dubina (2007) presents that an idea, as a product of creativity, is valuable when it is both original and useful for businesses and organizations. Palo's view adds to this as she states that ideas in an organizational setting need to be both original and useful and appropriate and practical. "Thus, corporate creativity is novelty that is useful, appropriate and can be put into action. It must somehow influence the way the business gets done - by improving a product, or by opening up a new way to approach a problem." (Palo, 2003, p. 124).

To conclude, organizational creativity consists of three types of creativity (individual, group and organizational creativity), all affected by their unique variables. External factors also affect organizational creativity (turbulence, pull forces, exploitation potential, and competitive pressure). It is safe to say that these factors affect the other three types of creativity as well, as individuals and teams are not operating separated from their environments. Considering the beforementioned factors and outcomes that are associated with creativity and innovation, "- - it seems clear that they have real value in

organizations.” (Mumford et al., 2011, Chapter 1, Section “Impacts”, paragraph 11). To leverage creativity and innovation, Mumford et al. present a list of three things to keep in mind when attempting to encourage creativity and innovation:

- 1) Both creativity and innovation are extremely complex phenomena
- 2) Multiple phenomena exist simultaneously, on both individual, group and organizational levels
- 3) Phenomena on certain levels might not be consistent with phenomena on other levels, which e.g. means that encouraging creativity and innovation on another level might have an opposite effect on the other level. (Mumford et. al. 2012, Chapter 1, Section “Conclusions”, paragraph 3).

Now that the different factors of creativity and its diversity have been introduced, the next chapter will provide an overview of creativity management, introduce its components and present individual factors affecting creativity in the workplace, important from a managerial perspective.

### **3 CREATIVITY MANAGEMENT**

As we have seen so far, creativity is viewed as a process as visualized in Figure 4 (p. 17). Creativity in an organizational setting is defined by the three types of creativity (individual, group, organizational creativity), all affected by their variables and external factors. Creativity requires a creative outcome which is assessed based on its originality, usefulness, practicality, and appropriateness. Creativity management, then, attempts to provide theoretical and practical tools for managing these factors and requirements.

As presented in the previous chapters, general writings on creativity are multidimensional and offer somewhat controversial notions depending on the literature's context, viewpoint, and intention. It is not surprising that this has also led to arguments on whether the general literature on creativity even is valid when observing it in an organizational setting, especially when the research on management itself is not a mature field (Powell, 2008). According to Powell, this “- - has led to an increasing focus, both theoretically as well as empirically, on the contextual or organizational factors that facilitate employee creative performance” (p. 159). As previously mentioned in chapter 3 (Creativity), this thesis argues that understanding the diversity of creativity can help managers understand the complexity of creativity management practices.

If creativity itself is one of the greatest assets for an organization in tackling competition and added value creation, managing it should be considered equally vital. It might even be critical to the organization's success (Bowman & Swart, 2020).

According to Dubina (2005), creativity management, as a theoretical and practical discipline, began from an interest in business creativity. It uses the groundwork of, e.g., creative psychology, research and development management, innovation management and creative psychology. The concept of creativity management in academic literature is often looked at through elements impacting upon creativity and enhancing the conditions, physical or social or otherwise, that affect the creative process. From the perspective of management studies, creativity management studies the management practices of creative processes on individual, group, organizational and cultural levels (Janáková, 2012).

In the 1980's Vedin (1985) studied the differences between creativity in the media industry and creativity in a manufacturing environment, and whether creativity management among the first would provide useful insight into the latter. Based on this study, he describes the characteristics of successful creativity management as follows:

- The notion of creativity as a production (the main production factor) is central: company climate is conducive to the creative act, and to the creative individual;
- The creative individual is in focus: freedom and resources are supplied, not reluctantly, but purposely;
- Ad hoc teams, tailored to the specific project task, are easily established and disbanded; not least psychological traits are accounted for in establishing the team;
- Top management is keen both on project content and management;
- Decision making is centralized, autocratic and authoritative;
- Intuition is acknowledged as being the last resort in decision making: it is pointless to analyze high risk ventures to the last decimal (or even to put into figures);
- Methods for idea generation are powerful tools in generating successful businesses: these methods have been tried and refined. (p. 138)

These characteristics are one of the first characterizations of creativity management. Bearing in mind they were written almost 40 years ago, they seem to contain many useful arguments for creativity management of today. First, Vedin presents how the interest in management must come from top management, who typically act as representatives of the work culture in the organization and can therefore either increase or decrease the execution of said practices. Second, highlighting the importance of ad hoc teams and the possibility of establishing and disbanding them in an easy matter seems appropriate to today's working culture as well. What strikes as controversial is the notion of

authoritative management practices: many studies presented later in this chapter suggest that they might affect creativity negatively (Kačerauskas, 2016b, 2016a; Higgins, 1999). Also, focusing on creative individuals does not seem relevant anymore. Although individual aspects are important for managerial practices, it is more important to acknowledge it as a social process inside an organization.

Some decades later after Vedin, Dubina (2013, p. 456) describes creativity management as “- -a system of principles, methods, techniques, practices, and instruments for managing employee creativity in order to get the maximum effect for the organization according to its goals, objectives, employee contingent, and available resources”. Bilton and Cummings (2014) suggest that creativity management should integrate innovation, entrepreneurship, leadership, and organization for it to be effective (p. 7). These, and other relevant factors will be observed in the next chapters.

### **3.1 Components of Creativity Management in an Organizational Environment**

One of the best strategies to foster creativity is to nurture the creative mind of the people who work for and within the organisation, as the best ideas always come from within. (Palo, 2003, p. 123)

Much literature on managing creativity in an organizational environment addresses the difficulty of balancing between providing enough space for creativity to occur and controlling it. It is a constant act between enabling creativity-enhancing factors and removing factors that extinguish it (Palo, 2003). Florida (2019) states that the best kind of environment for creativity is a social environment, which is both “- - stable enough to allow for continuity of effort, yet diverse and broad-minded enough to nourish creativity in all its subversive forms” (p. 22).

Keeping in mind, that creative organizations or cultures inside an organization most likely need different forms of management and leadership than environments that values cohesion, Powell (2008) lists factors affecting creativity in an organizational setting. These factors are<sup>5</sup>:

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<sup>5</sup> From this list two factors have been left out, as they provide more insight for organizational settings, where creative projects are done in co-operation with an organization and a creative service provider and not inside the organization. These two factors are Consumer/Client Role Ambiguity and Creative Boundary Structures.



**Creative Leadership:** since creative work is typically risky and not straightforward, leaders cannot “- - rely on normative management styles that embrace positional power, conformity pressure and organizational commitment, as ways of orientating people to their work” (p. 159). This means, that leaders themselves need to possess creative problem-solving skills, besides being extremely aware of the organization’s structure, capabilities, and the market it is operating in.

**Creative motivation:** Amabile (1998) has introduced the idea of extrinsic (external) and intrinsic (internal) motivation as the different aspects of motivating creative work. Intrinsic motivation seems to be more crucial to creativity than extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is when the creator is internally motivated to do something. Typically, creators tend to be more creative when motivated internally than by an external motivator, such as a monetary reward.

**Creative evaluation and feedback:** “An important aspect of a creative leader’s job is therefore evaluating employees’ work and providing positively reinforcing feedback.” (p. 160) This is due to recognition, and social support, acknowledgment among other supportive factors playing a key role in enhancing individual’s creativity. Motivation can be affected negatively, if feedback is not given at all or if it is untimely and irrelevant, or if the creative work is intensely controlled.

**Creative risk and trust:** creativity requires risk. In creative projects the outcomes are typically not known until the project is near its launch. This is of course highly risky for any organization, especially if the creative idea requires financial investments. This requires trust from various stakeholders of the organization.

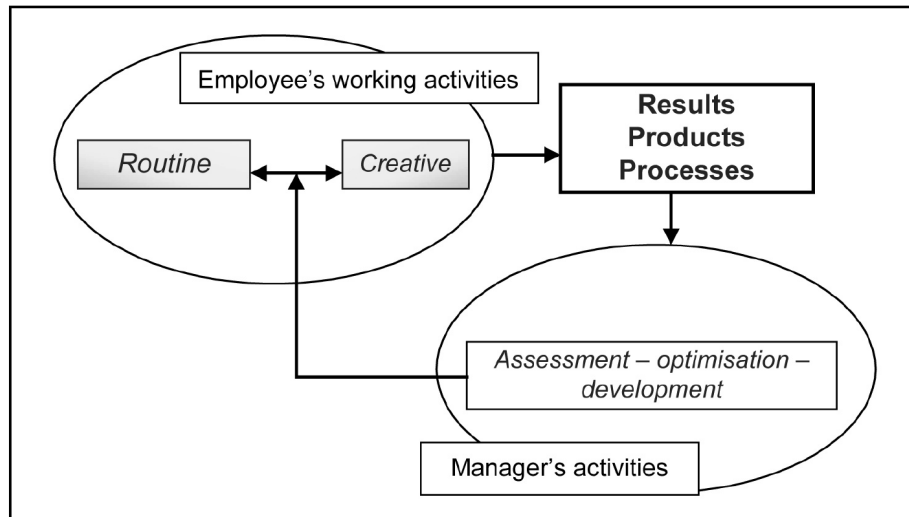
Tanner (2003) suggests the following principles for building more creative organizations:

- 1) Creative thinking is a teachable, learnable skill that helps solve difficult problems and identify new innovation opportunities.
- 2) For a creativity and innovation program to succeed it is essential to provide a supportive environment that motivates people to learn and apply creative thinking tools in their work.
- 3) Systems and structures are necessary to maintain program momentum.

Dubina (2013) also presents a **conception of optimally managing creativity**. It's main principle is formulated as follows:

Even if it is not possible to predict exact results from interventions for facilitating and fostering creativity, it is possible to select and implement the interventions which provide the best results for a given company in a present situation. (p. 458-459)

**Figure 1** Basic model of an employee's creativity regulation



*Figure 6. Basic model of an employee's creativity regulation. (Dubina, 2005, p. 335)*

Next, individual factors affecting creativity in the workplace are presented, as creativity in the workplace does not exist without individuals experiencing it.

### 3.2 Individual Factors Affecting Creativity in the Workplace

In this chapter, a brief overview of individual factors affecting creativity is presented. While it is not necessary to understand all possible aspects in-depth, it is important to note that besides organizational factors, there are individual factors that play an important role in creativity in the workplace. The factors listed in this chapter are not the only possible factors affecting creativity on an individual level, but for this thesis, a sufficient enough overview of them. Creativity in a workplace without individual aspects affecting it does not exist.

As Palo joint together in Figure 1, individual factors affecting creativity in an organizational setting consist of body and mind condition, intelligence, age, sex, experience, styles

of thinking, motivational framework, and personality traits. Personality traits are divided into sub-variables: willingness to overcome obstacles, willingness to take sensible risks, willingness to tolerate ambiguity, eagerness to acquire knowledge, self-initiation, and enthusiasm.

Body and mind condition as Palo (2003, p. 125) describes it, “a relaxed frame of body and mind”, is essential for creativity. Intelligence is meaningful only to an extent, and creativity does not deteriorate as the person gets older, although age has the capability of bringing along the experience of the domain and field, as well as enhanced skills on tools needed for the creative medium. There does not seem to be a difference in sex or gender in realizing creativity.

How the creative person thinks affects their creative pursuits and their embodiment in the workplace. Social mindsets compared to, for example, individual thinking style, most likely forms a different type of path to a creative outcome. Motivation plays a vital role, and creative individuals are typically driven by intrinsic aspects of motivation rather than extrinsic ones. Creative individuals are more interested in challenge, motivation, satisfaction, and personal interest than external rewards. (Palo, 2003). Motivation was shortly introduced previously in chapter 3.2.

Some personality traits typically come to mind when we think of a creative person. They might possess artistic characteristics, be a bit chaotic, drawn to complexity, confident, open to taking risks, perfectionists, and somewhat arrogant, to name a few. The personality traits that are typically linked to creativity might stem from the effects of the domain. (Baer & Kaufman, 2006). This means that the traits of, for example, an economist can in principle differ from the ones of a videographer. Csikszentmihalyi (2009) explains that arrogance and selfish characterizations might be due to a creative person's persistence and absolute dedication to their creative efforts, which might seem rude and intimidating to outsiders. They are typically keen on learning the skills needed for their chosen domain and gaining expertise in their field and tend to be somewhat willing to take risks. They are enthusiastic, curious, and "dissatisfied with the status quo". (p. 126).

These definitions of individual characteristics offer an exciting starting point in managing creative people. They seem somewhat aware of their importance when coming up with new ideas and pushing the organization forward. Their open and curious mindsets and

problem-solving nature need nurturing and consideration, a firm touch with enough freedom in creating.

## 4 MARKETING ORGANIZATION

Finance, operations, accounting, and other business functions won't really matter without sufficient demand for products and services so the firm can make a profit. In other words, there must be a top line for there to be a bottom line. Thus, financial success often depends on marketing ability. (Baumeister & Leary, 1997, p. 317)

This chapter will explain the purpose, structure, and operations of a marketing function in an organization. This chapter aims to provide an overview of the marketing environment and its characteristics before looking deeper into the work of embedded creatives in chapter 5.

Oxford Reference (n.d.) defines marketing organization as a function that is "focused on marketing functions, products and services, geographical territories, and customer groupings or a combination of all four". The American Marketing Association (n.d.) defines marketing as "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large". In more simple terms, the purpose of marketing is to create value for the customer, employees and business partners, by offering products and brand positioning, only to name a few of the possible factors.

According to Jasha Kaykas-Wolff (2013, November 13, slide 4), the role of marketing in the organization has four goals. They are:

- 1) To align product and marketing to develop and maintain a consistent go-to-market programme
- 2) Create sales and marketing alignment against pipeline, bookings, and revenue contribution
- 3) Develop and maintain a best-in-class relationship with technology and delivery
  - a. Be the first and best customer
- 4) Build an industry and discipline thought leadership practice
  - a. Be a best-in-class example content marketing organization (owned, earned, paid)
  - b. Develop and maintain strategic go-to-market partnerships

When it comes to marketing as a function, creative intervention is needed to attract new customers, offer unique products and services, or in other ways, carry out effective marketing communication (Jerzyk, 2014, p. 105). The combination of creativity and

marketing encourages new idea development, new market acknowledgement, and the creation of new commercial opportunities. It enables creative ideas to reach commercial success. Commercial success, then, leads to economic development, not only for the organization itself but also on a societal level. (Pitta et al., 2008). The continuous collection of information present in every day of marketing requires intense innovative and creative thinking (Higgins, 1999, p. 306).

McKinsey&Company (2017) suggest that marketing organizations need to shift from structured and hierarchical models to “marketing ecosystems”, which not only look at the organization itself but see the role of marketing as an interconnected structure consisting of the organization itself and both internal and external partners, from sales to procurement and creative agencies to digital service providers (Figure 5).

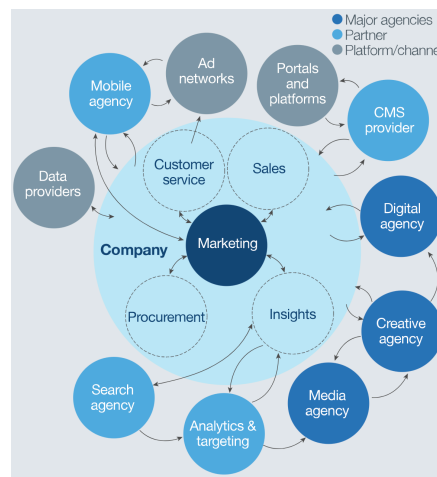


Figure 7. Marketing ecosystem (McKinsey&Company, 2017).

Moorman & Rust (1999) presented two different types of marketing organization structures. These are a functional marketing organization and a process marketing organization. The first describes an organization where a group of specialists is responsible for marketing activities and the latter where the activities are divided across so-called “non-specialists” (p. 181). According to Moorman & Rust (1999), marketing can be viewed as the function that connects the organization and the customer. The management of these connections contributes to financial performance, customer relationship performance, and new product performance. (p. 195)

Depending on the structure of a marketing organization, the roles inside the function do vary. If an organization is operating in a way that many of the different needs are

outsourced, the organization might mainly consist of generalists operating and managing the different projects. Therefore, the structure can also be flatter. If talent is gathered inside the organization instead of outsourcing, there might be more layers of hierarchy, more complex team structures, more varied sets of skills, and more overall diversity among the team members.

Figure 8 provides an overview and a more generalized example of an operational marketing organization model. It presents the complexity of different aspects of a marketing function and roles inside different teams.



Figure 8. Marketing organization structure (Kaykas-Wolff (2013, November 13)).

It is important to note that while the structure comprises five different categories, they present a theoretical view of the tasks of a marketing organization. Especially if the marketing organization is small, the many tasks and ownerships listed can overlap and be combined, and sometimes some of the aspects are outsourced. In larger organizations, there might be several separate teams under one category. Although there is a category of tasks called "Creative", this is not to be confused with the idea of an "embedded creative". Many of the other roles in other categories can also be creative. The definition of an embedded creative will be provided in more detail in Chapter 5.1 (Embedded Creatives and Creative Work).

The demand for new and even faster go-to-market processes is not the only factor challenging the marketing organization. Recent global events, movements, and climate crises

are putting enormous pressure on a marketing function, “requiring that it becomes more agile, interdependent and accountable for driving company growth” (Rodríguez-Vilá et al., November-December 2020).

Why is it precisely that the marketing organization is accountable for driving company growth? One way to view marketing is that it is, in addition to creating value, the one operation generating demand for the products or services the company is providing. Although this is a unique and vital role in an organization, Skålen (2011) emphasizes that consumption and consumer behavior are equally important (p. 190). Without consumer needs and consumption, the efforts of a marketing function are pointless and a waste of resources.

The next chapter will look at the embedded creatives, creative work, managers of creative staff and challenges on creativity management in practice.

## **5 CREATIVITY IN CONTEXT**

Practice without process becomes unmanageable, but process without practice damps out the creativity required for innovation; the two sides exist in perpetual tension. Only the most sophisticated and aware organizations are able to balance these countervailing forces in ways that lead to sustained creativity and long-run growth. (Florida, 2019, p. 27)

This chapter will explain critical elements to the topic of this thesis. The elements are embedded creatives and creative work (Chapter 5.2) and managers of creative staff (Chapter 5.3). The last subchapter will present challenges of creativity management in practice (Chapter 5.4). Before diving into the subchapters, this chapter will provide a quick overview of the importance of industry on creativity and creativity management.

The creative class concept was introduced in Chapter 1, explaining how a shift has occurred from repetitive productional labor to specialists, whose main tasks include “creating new ideas, new technology, and new creative content” (Florida, 2019, p. 8). Much of this creative work is happening outside the so-called creative industries, meaning industries in which creativity is not the dominant task of the organization. Creative industries have creativity as their core activity, such as film, arts, or architecture. (Bowman & Swart, 2020).

The term “creative industries” has gained critique for being of capitalist creation in pursuit of economizing creativity (Gerard, 2019). However, the description is helpful for contextual purposes. Although creativity does not change, the environment in which it occurs does. The critical variables for economic success might be the same in both (pull forces, turbulence, exploitation potential, competition), but the factors related to those variables differ. A chocolate manufacturer has a different earnings model than a film studio. They compete in different types of markets and have different market demands for their products, but both most likely consist of many creative teams and individuals. The creative climate of an embedded creative team inside an organization operating in the non-creative industry can experience the same creativity-related challenges as an organization in the creative industry. What separates creative environments from non-creative ones is openness and generosity, and a sense of belonging to the group (Smith & Carlsson, 2006, p. 205).

## **5.1 Embedded Creatives and Creative Work**

As was introduced in chapter 1, a new section of the workforce called the creative class has formed in the last couple of decades. The creative class is defined by what their jobs consist of (“create new ideas, new technology, and new creative content”) and what they are paid to do (“use their minds—the full scope of their cognitive and social skills”) (Florida, 2019, p. 8-9). As mentioned in the same chapter, marketers fall under the category of these creative workers. In addition to the creative class, the term “embedded creative” was introduced in the chapter, describing a creative person working outside the creative industries. In this chapter, the term will be defined in more detail.

What is a creative? According to Pitta et al. (2008), anyone can do creative work regardless of gender or color, location, or personal preference. A creative is an individual “whose viewpoint, skill, motivation and need to succeed allows them to develop innovations of value” (p. 138). Creatives value environments “that will allow them to be creative—that value their input, challenge them, have mechanisms for mobilizing resources around ideas, and are receptive to both small changes and the occasional game change” (Florida, 2019, p. 26). Embedded creative is a term describing creative workers working in non-creative industries. According to a self-reporting study, the work of an embedded creative does not differ from the work of a creative specialist. (Hearn & Bridgstock,



2014). According to Cunningham (2008) and Potts et al. (2008), as referred by Hearn & Bridgstock (2014), creative workers should be seen as embedded creatives across all industries, including both the creative and non-creative industries, because of the creative economy is “a set of economic processes across the economy as a whole” (p. 46). For example, in New Zealand there are more creative workers working outside the creative industries than in them: 36 000 vs. 43 000 to be exact (Hearn & Bridgstock, 2014, p. 40). In the classification system used in the study, ‘advertising and marketing’ as well as ‘digital content and software’ are classified under different categories of creative occupations. Another study conducted in the city of Auckland showed, that these are the two categories that contained the highest number of creatives (p. 41).

What is creative work? Powell (2008) states that creative work is typically considered to be “- - complex, less well defined, risky, and demanding.” (p. 159). Smith and Carlsson (2006) call for the meaning of trust and tolerance in a creative environment. Bowman & Swart (2020) have listed some common attributes of creative work. For coherency, factors 4 and 6 have been removed from this list by the author of this thesis. These factors are not relevant for organizational creativity management, as they deal with ranking performers, their reputation, and royalty payments of one-off creative products. From a practical point of view, the embedded creative in a marketing organization is typically not a performer. The creative product is not entitled to royalty payments (there are, of course, exceptions). Therefore, factor 4 is factor 5 in the original article. The attributes of creative work are:

1. Creative workers tend to care about the product they create.
2. Whilst some outputs can be produced by a single person, many require diverse skilled and specialized workers interacting in loose teams that are formed to produce a specific one-off product and these teams disband when the project is complete.
3. Creative products are one-offs that are evaluated by consumers against other similar but differentiated products.
4. Time is of the essence in many creative processes: the film has to be shot in these weeks or the concert takes place on this date. Coordination of those creatives and other complementary and essential supporting activities is a critical quality of most creative endeavours. (Bowman & Swart, 2020, p. 189-190).

These factors seem to apply to creative work in marketing as well. Besides the creative workers caring about the product they create, interacting in loose teams to produce one-off products, which consumers then evaluate against other similar but differentiated products, time plays an essential role in producing marketing products. In practice, it tends to

be the one single most crucial factor. As Rucker (2017) concludes, “- - creative thinking influences marketing creativity holistically by creating experiences, forming relationships, and addressing large audiences in a cost-efficient way.” (p. 10)

Although there is no difference in creative work between the embedded creatives and creative specialists, Hearn and Bridgstock (2014) present some critical differences between the working environment of the two types of creative professionals. First, the organizational cultures differ between non-creative and creative industries, and embedded creatives might need to create a free, non-restricted subculture inside the more bureaucratic organization. Second, they operate in different kinds of social networks. Embedded creatives create connections externally to creative service providers and internally to different functions. In contrast, creative specialists’ internal networks consist of mainly other creatives, and externally they network with clients and potential clients. Third, resources are allocated from different places: embedded creatives get their budgets from yearly budget negotiations inside the organization, whereas creative specialists can typically be funded or gain a budget based on the amount and quality of client projects. Fourth, embedded creatives might see aspects like brand, designs, patents, and so on, as opportunities, whereas creative specialists may consider them a constraint. Fifth, both may struggle with developmental difficulties in their organization: embedded creatives may lack creative resources that lead to skill development, and creative specialists might not be able to consult a human resources department in planning their career. Sixth, embedded creatives are more likely to get a job through standardized application processes, and creative specialists might be employed in informal ways and constantly prove their worth by putting the quality of their work into evaluation. Seventh, embedded creatives do not carry the risk of success on their shoulders, unlike creative specialists. And finally, the organizational setting of an embedded creative might be stiffer and more inflexible, which reduces the possibility of radical innovation compared to the more flexible and flat creative organizations. (p. 52-54).

Now that the characteristics of embedded creatives and the challenges of embedded creative work are presented, it is time to inspect what unique aspects are related to the work of a manager of creative staff.

## 5.2 Managers of Creative Staff

The role of a manager is vital, as they typically are responsible for a specific function, department, or team of specialists in the organization. Their tasks include but are not limited to training employees, setting, and translating corporate goals into executable individual ones, planning and tracking activities, monitoring performance, controlling expenses, and supporting decision-making (Reh, 2020). Creativity creates some unique circumstances when it comes to the work of a manager. These are discussed next in this chapter.

From a practical perspective, a manager of creative staff in a marketing organization can be anything from a Marketing Director to a Field Marketing Manager or any other kind of an expert or team leader role with the responsibilities of a manager. In smaller organizations, it can even be a person outside the direct marketing organization, such as a Managing Director. Managers can come in as many as any other role in an organization. Some may have previous managerial backgrounds, and some not. Some may have been exposed to creative activities before, and some not. If managers are aware of their role as creative managers, it is safe to say that creativity is of interest to them from either an organizational or personal perspective.

While creativity is an essential topic in this kind of role where many activities involve creativity, it often gets undermined in everyday work environments due to the pressure of maximizing business-related goals, such as productivity and control. Managers might unintentionally create working environments that neglect creativity by not giving enough space to creativity. Therefore, understanding managerial practices that nurture creativity is of high importance. (Amabile, 1998).

While creativity may be an important topic for managers, many decisions relating to creativity and creative activity are still based on intuition and individual experience (Vedin, 1985; Dubina, 2005). In some instances, managers might even be hesitant about creativity. They believe employees, no matter whether creative or not, must follow instructions and work on time and within the given budget (Dubina, 2005).

Dubina (2013, p. 457) presents five types of managers with different approaches to creativity management, which have been named by the author of this thesis to emphasize the differences between these groups further:

1. **Rejecters** consider creativity a useless factor in business and require employees to follow instructions in order for them to complete their work on time and within budget.
2. **Leave-it-be's** consider creativity as something that cannot be managed, so they leave it unnurtured and without special attention. These managers consider creativity to be somewhat important but not crucial when it comes to the primary determinant of competitive advantages.
3. **Facilitators** provide appropriate workplace conditions and highlight the importance of facilitating creativity.
4. **Fosterers** are focused on fostering and developing creative skills.
5. **Intense supervisors** highlight the need to control and direct creativity among employees. They are not taking overall control but use "soft" organizing and consider creativity to be monitored and controlled to ensure the company's objectives are realized.

Much of the literature on leading creative people deals with motivating, supporting, directing, and creating optimal conditions for creativity (Marion, 2011, p. 459) and creativity training and creative problem-solving. Focusing on creativity as a tool for problem-solving and creativity training leaves out other important aspects of creativity management, such as assessing the suitability of the work environment for creativity, creative evaluation, or creativity outcome control. (Dubina, 2013). Many methods (such as brainstorming and Creative Problem Solving) have been created to enhance creativity. However, they mainly focus on idea generation and evaluation instead of methods to bring the idea further into practice.

However, there is a method or a training programme called a creativity-enhancing communication pattern that could benefit creative managers in managing teams and their creative output. The programme guides managers into non-authoritative communication styles. Friendliness and coalition-building as communications styles are more likely to enhance creativity than the opposite (Thacker, 1997).

Bilton and Cummings (2014) suggest that what resonates with management is the contradictory nature of creativity. These ideals are presented below:

Product-led innovation	—————	market-led innovation
Entrepreneurial opportunism	—————	strategic purpose
Leading an organization from the top	—————	encouraging initiative and engagement from below
Providing coherent and consistent organizational structure (p. 5)	—————	squeezing out organizational diversity and individualism

They further conclude that promoting these contradictory perspectives and processes successfully in a managerial position also makes the manager creative (p. 11). Kačerauskas (2016b) agrees and states that creativity management should also be creative, meaning that it should hold unexpected elements while having a clear strategy and direction.

As creative managers are typically in charge of recruiting creative personnel, identifying the candidate's ability to embrace goal-oriented processes would help them in their attempt to manage creativity. (Harvard Business Essentials, 2003) Unfortunately, the embodiment of such qualities is not evident, making the manager's job particularly difficult.

To present some best practices for creative managers in how to influence the three components of creativity (domain-specific skills, creativity-specific skills, and task motivation), there are three guidelines:

1. **Getting the right match:** the right people matched with the right assignments enhances individual creativity and makes most of their skills and motivation.
2. **Giving freedom:** instead of telling the creative employees how to do something, provide them with a goal and leave the execution to be explored.
3. **Providing sufficient time and resources:** not too much or too little of either. (Harvard Business Essentials, 2003)

Palo (2003, p. 130-132) provides an extensive list of strategies for managers to enhance and foster creativity in the workplace. These strategies are:

- 1) **Understand yourself:** start the creativity management process with yourself. Understand your behavior. Identify your style and gain insight into how your preferences and choices unconsciously shape your leadership style and communication patterns. Remember that your style can stifle the very creativity you seek from your employees.

- 2) **Improve yourself:** If managers want to make their employees creative, they must also be creative. They must serve as a role model for their people. Think about people. Learn by watching others. Therefore, by demonstrating their willingness to try new things and being flexible, they may encourage others to take creative risks that may well take the organization to the top.
- 3) **Understand your role, responsibilities, and Challenges:** Creative and participative leadership should not be in a boutique form but with the backbone of strategy.
- 4) **Stimulate the factors that bolster creativity,** that are:
  - a. *Work environment:* create an open and supportive environment, where employees can have fun. Provide freedom and autonomy, avoid excessive discipline and controlling employee behavior.
  - b. *Alignment:* align employees' interests and actions to support the organization's key goals. Misalignment reduces creativity.
  - c. *Organic Organizational Design:* organizational creative performance can be enhanced by organic organizational designs.
  - d. *Resources:* substantial financial, technological, and human resources have greater probability of enhancing creativity than limited resources.
  - e. *Encourage diversity:* diversity is an opportunity for creativity.
  - f. *Encourage ideation:* recognize ideas generously, and do not criticize mistakes as errors, as they are opportunities for learning.
  - g. *Information sharing:* information should flow freely into and within an organization.
  - h. *Continuous learning:* cultivate creativity through training, and support employees in their learning journeys.
  - i. *Reward:* while keeping in mind that intrinsic motivation is greater than extrinsic, reward valuable and actionable ideas.
  - j. *Communication:* promote good and open communication in the organization and facilitate communication between employees who normally are not interacting.
  - k. *Handling factors that kill creativity:* Amabile (1988) has listed six managerial practices that kill creativity. As referenced by Palo, these are the factors which should be continuously attempted to be eradicated: expected

evaluation (in fear of evaluation, creativity might be discouraged), surveillance, reward (sometimes rewarding is not necessary, as highly creative people might be satisfied with self-recognition), restricted choice (in the way of work, how to solve problems or handle situations), and extrinsic motivation (to some extent, providing extrinsic motivation can be beneficial).

The next chapter will discuss these challenges to further explain their effects on everyday creativity management.

### 5.3 Challenges of Creativity Management in Practice

Management of creativity is a complex matter, so there are multiple challenges when it comes to practicing it. Looking at creativity management via paradoxes is an effective way to observe these challenges. Kačerauskas (2016b, p. 36-38) observes these paradoxes via the challenges creativity holds:

**The great paradox of creativity management:** managers risk provoking disobedience while stimulating creativity. Disobedience may be essential to creativity, but it might not be sought after in an organizational setting.

**The paradox of crisis:** creativity is most present during a period of crisis, conflict, and uncertainty, simultaneously while organizations as wholes seek balance and harmony.

**The paradox of innovation:** if creativity is managed in a step-by-step manner, the elements of crisis and conflicts are lost, but if it is managed radically, the identity of an organization is threatened (“the biggest obstacles towards the innovations are the good results of the organization” (p. 37)).

**The paradox of conflict:** by increasing creativity in an organization, the probability of conflict, disorder and disharmony is increased.

**The paradox of individual vs social:** creativity happens in both an individual and social sense: individuals create, but they also work in social environments

from which their ideas emerge, and the products of creativity are measured in a social environment (market) and field (of experts).

**The paradox of hard/soft management:** creativity does not flourish under hard control, but soft control does not enable creativity due to its indecisive nature.

**The paradox of creative decision-making:** the worse the results in an organization, the more creative the decisions have been.

**The paradox of quantity/quality:** quantity is needed for creative efforts to develop, but it can also negate creativity, especially if it is the only factor pursued.

**The paradox of knowledge/ignorance:** Knowledge (of the domain and domain-specific skills) are vital for creativity, but knowledge of history does not guarantee successful creative outputs for the future.

Andriopoulos (2003, p. 386) lists six other paradoxes, that complement the previous paradoxes and offers insights into how to solve them in practice.

**Paradox 1:** Support employees' passions, but achieve financial goals (consistently involve employees in a more complex and diverse range of projects)

**Paradox 2:** Challenge employees, but build their confidence (strive to drive out the fear of insecurity)

**Paradox 3:** Encourage personal initiative, but maintain a shared vision (create a sense of ownership)

**Paradox 4:** Encourage diversity, but build cohesive work teams (create a community of trust and openness)

**Paradox 5:** Learn from the past, but seek new areas of knowledge (reorganize previous knowledge into new forms, shapes, and processes)

**Paradox 6:** Take incremental risks, but break new grounds (promote a culture that accommodates both incremental and ground-breaking creative thinking)

Andriopoulos's study among three creative organizations suggests three ways of managing paradoxes: acceptance (" - - learning to live with them."), confrontation (" - -



discussing their tensions in an attempt to construct a more accommodating understanding or practice”) and transcendence (“- - adopt new logic and behaviours - -“). (Andriopoulos, 2003, p. 385)

Andersen and Kragh (2014) describe managing creative teams as a boundary-spanning activity. That is due to creative teams typically being constructed of separate communities. Hence, these communities have time-related, geographical, cultural, and ownership-related boundaries. These boundaries can be internal, e.g., departments or functions of an organization, or external, e.g. between entirely different organizations. One of the biggest challenges of boundary-spanning activities and creative processes is identifying motivated individuals from other functions and organizations, especially when managerial authority is no longer involved. Another challenge is having enough resources and a space that supports the development of creative input, all while adjusting to other organizational priorities. (2014, p. 787).

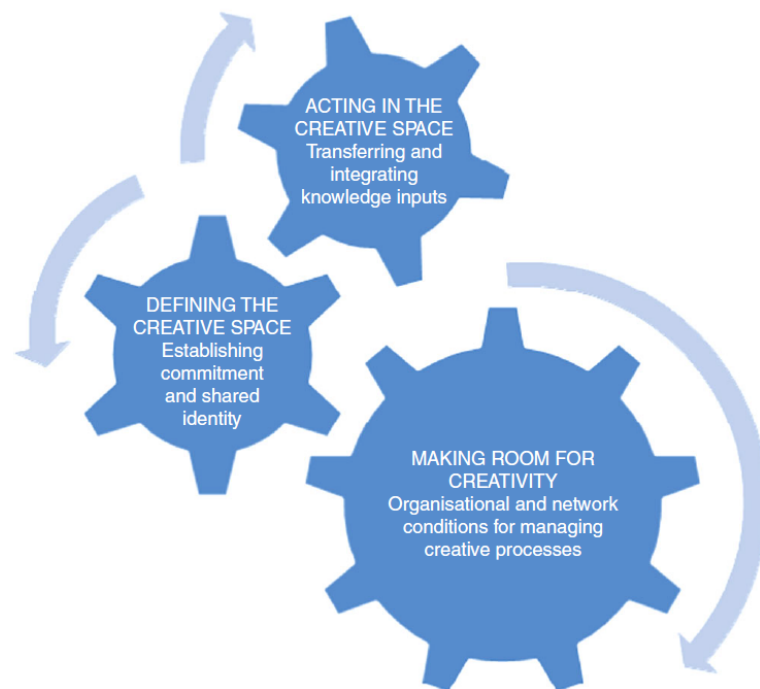


Figure 9. Meta practices in managing creative processes across boundaries. (Andersen & Kragh, 2014, p. 792)

Figure 9 visualizes the different activities and practices in managing creative processes across boundaries, as Andersen & Kragh (2014) presented. The activities are:

**Making room for creativity:** The creative manager's task is to continuously work towards normalizing creativity by shaping the creative process and aligning all activities to other activities in the organization. Typically, larger creative productions include non-negotiable aspects, which means creativity has to be kept in check and on time. Managers have to push the team to come up with "workable solutions to problems within short time frames", "maintain a balance between providing sufficient room for creative ideas and people to flourish while achieving the compromises that are part of organizational reality", and "establishing norms that allow for mistakes and support experimental thinking and behaviour" (p. 797).

**Defining the creative space:** this activity is about balancing playfulness, focus, and collaboration. Typically, in the physical environment, this means staging and actual space supporting the rite of transition to creative work from the creative's comfortable spaces and contexts. This also includes choosing the right mix of individual creative workers from diverse backgrounds and with diverse skill sets.

**Acting in the creative space:** managers have many roles in managing the creative process. They need to encourage outside-the-box thinking while keeping in mind the direction of the creative activity. They need to be mindful of the different skills the team members have and introduce members to each other's skills and the value they bring to the situation. They need to monitor the creative member's activities and simultaneously give them freedom during the process. Their job is to encourage the members in social activities and enhance their sense of belonging.

Causal ambiguity is a challenge, especially in organizations where creativity is not the core of their operations but acts as a supporting role in a function like marketing. Causal ambiguity describes a situation where management lacks the understanding of how things work in practice, what actions lead to what outcomes, and how the actions and activities affect the organization's overall performance. The challenges of causal ambiguity can be decreased by reducing tacitness, distance, complexity, and time lag. (Bowman & Swart, 2020)

The next chapter presents literature on creativity management specifically in the marketing environment.

## 6 CREATIVITY MANAGEMENT IN MARKETING

However, it is not all about searching for absolutely original ideas. It can also mean recycling existing knowledge and ideas and finding new applications. The catch, however, lies in identifying an idea that has never been applied before. (Palo, 2003, p. 124)

If the available literature on creativity management is fragmented, the available literature on creativity management in marketing is a simple dot among those fragmented pieces. More research has been executed in advertising, especially among advertising agencies which work closely with marketing. The creative culture nurtured by advertising agencies is something that could, with caution, be replicated in other business areas (Granot, 2011). Since culture can be described as the whole of commonly held unconscious assumptions inside an organization and is “the accumulated learning shared by a group that has been acquired as it deals with its external environment and internal growth” (Küng, 2017, p. 133), the culture could very likely be replicated to a marketing organization with the right kind of people and proper tools of creativity management. Although complete replication of an ad agency culture might not be necessary per se (each industry has its pitfalls), bringing a good portion of the creativity management culture into play might offer an enormous competitive advantage for the organization.

Vedin (1985) presents some ideas to describe aspects of creativity management in media and marketing. He suggests that these fields have recognized the importance of individual creativity and take good care in recognizing each individual as a contributor in the creative output. He states, “Individuals who are courted and comforted grow in self-esteem and confidence. This furthers their creativity and job performance.” (p. 91).

When looking at creativity management via the 4P’s of creativity model, Higgins (1999, p. 308-309), referring to Geis (1998), presents a list of crucial factors for management in a creative marketing environment. These factors are:

1. A secure environment with minimal administrative or financial interference.
2. An organizational culture that makes it attractive and easy for people to discover and solve problems independently.
3. Rewards for employee performance structured to minimize the chances that intrinsic motivation will be contaminated.
4. Managerial willingness to take risks in the targeted areas for creativity and innovation.

5. Providing people with formal and informal training to enhance creativity.

Higgins (1999) states that creativity management could contribute to areas of marketing management, as gaining extensive knowledge of customer orientation and the whole value chain (which is crucial to the marketing practice) requires high levels of creativity within the organization (p. 315). Managing creativity in the best way possible can only help teams develop their creative thinking skills and therefore, better understand the full value chain.

## **7 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

Uncontrolled creativity of employees may be detrimental for a company, if employee creativity is not adequately engaged in the organizational context. (Dubina 2013, p. 457)

This conclusive chapter first presents observations regarding the limitations and challenges of a literature review as a research method. Next, conclusions will be discussed concerning this thesis's aim and research questions. Some critiques of the conclusions are presented. Finally, further research is suggested.

This thesis attempted to cover all relevant literature on creativity management in marketing. However, as it turned out during this thesis, the amount of literature is limited, has limited access, or relevant topics were difficult to find due to varying terms. This literature review has been conducted with as much literature as possible, but some relevant papers might have been unintentionally left out. Organizational creativity, addressed in Chapter 2.3, answers many of the questions discussed in this thesis but leaves out the specific nature of marketing and its effects on the methods and ways of managing creativity.

It is important to note that most of the theories and ideas presented in this thesis tightly connect to creativity studied in English-speaking countries or the West. As described in Chapter 2, as creativity is seen as domain-specific and needs peer evaluation, it is evident that the managerial processes of creativity in, for example, Asia or Africa are different.

This thesis neglects mentions of gender differences in creativity, as there seem to be no solid results on gender having any significant effects on creative thinking, products, or personalities. What is important to note is that diversity and inclusion matters are of high importance from a managerial perspective, and I regret not having the resources to include such pondering in this thesis.

Literature reviews can be more inclined to confirm bias than other methods (Baumeister & Leary, 1997). While this thesis attempts to approach the available literature systematically and in a coherent matter, some of the views may be based on inaccurate assumptions. Grounded Theory is a suitable method for data collection to avoid being selective of evidence. As a result of the materials gathered for the theoretical framework of this thesis, it became evident that there is a lack of research on creativity management in marketing, which was not taken into consideration at the beginning of this writing process. This finding might indicate either of the following or, on some levels, both.

First, as creativity management is a relatively new research area, it has not yet been studied thoroughly, let alone in specialized functions in an organization. Therefore, resulting in identifying a gap in research would be a successful conclusion.

Second, the general frameworks of creativity management might be as relevant for a marketing organization as they are relevant to any other function. The needs and characteristics of a marketing organization might not differ from more general needs. Many studies on creativity management fail to mention whether they are suitable to be viewed universally or if they only fit certain functions.

It has been previously argued that creativity is crucial to any organization, and concurrently to creativity, managing it can be considered a competitive advantage. Any function inside an organization benefit from creativity. If creativity were at the core of marketing, a marketing function would significantly benefit from creativity management since many things happening in the marketing organization are due to creative efforts and achievements.

Based on these observations, the quest to find an answer to the first question, "How to add value to a marketing organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace?" is a complex one, just like many concepts of this thesis have been. First, defining "value-adding" aspects is tricky: on the other hand, creativity adds value to a marketing organization by providing more possibilities in innovation, product development and market research, to name a few. On the other hand, providing creative staff with the freedom to carry out their creative ambitions in the context of their work enhances personal creativity, boosts the overall creativity of the creative team, and raises the organization's overall creative capabilities. The ability to respond to crises is nowadays a value. Since creativity

enhances the possibility of responding to crises by experimenting and constant innovation, creativity can raise the organization's overall ability to adapt and respond to challenging situations. Therefore, enhancing creativity can add value to a marketing organization on an individual, group, and organizational level. Unfortunately, there is no such thing as "adding creativity" that leads to wonders. As we have learned throughout this thesis, enhancing creativity is a complex task that includes both managerial and individual aspects. As Dubina phrases in the quote at the beginning of this chapter, uncontrolled creativity can be detrimental in an organizational setting. Therefore, the short answer to the first question is that creativity enhancement can lead to added value if the principles of creativity management are implemented into practice in the workplace, beginning from top management and not only the creative teams themselves.

The second research question of this thesis is "How can contemporary research on creativity management help marketing organizations and practitioners manage creativity more efficiently inside a marketing organization?". The answer to this question is more straightforward: by providing practical frameworks and an understanding of the complex phenomena and by explaining that behind all the unexplainable aspects of creativity lies something more significant than just the creative person, creative work, or creative environment. The frameworks and guidelines are:

- **Dubina's** five types of managers, page 36: can help managers understand their bias and current attitude towards creativity. Depending on what the current state is, there could always be room for improvement and taking examples from other types than the one identified with.
- **Palo's** list of strategies for managers attempting to enhance and foster creativity in the workplace, pages 37-38: an extensive list of practical guidelines for a creative manager.
- **Kačerauskas's** paradoxes of creativity management, pages 38-39: provides insight and understanding into the challenges creativity brings for management.
- **Andriopoulos's** paradoxes, pages 39-40: extends Kačerauskas's paradoxes by providing practical guidelines to solving them.
- **Andersen & Kragh's** activities in managing creative processes across boundaries, pages 41-42: as managing creativity can be seen as a boundary-spanning activity, Andersen & Kragh provide a framework into those boundaries, which provides insight into how realizing the existence of these boundaries can help in managing a creative team.
- **Higgins's** list of key factors for management in a creative marketing environment, pages 43-44: these five factors provide managers a checklist for managing creative teams in a marketing environment.

The practical approaches of these frameworks give embedded creatives like myself, as well as future managers of creative marketing practitioners, much joy and a glimpse of hope. As has been previously mentioned, creativity is highly important for marketing. Not acknowledging its existence, let alone neglecting to manage it, is a loss no modern marketing organization should willingly take. While creativity might not be at the core of the organizations we work for, it can still flourish and be nurtured. For example, recognizing personal bias toward creativity can act as an enabler to even greater creative efforts, not only for managers but for creatives themselves. Risk-taking seems like something a creative team would want to do for the sake of it, but there is also proof that it can indeed result in something great. Creating a secure environment is not only the job of a manager: safe spaces and trustworthiness among peers and creative teams can enable a fruitful environment for even more creative efforts. Valuing creativity results in many benefits, of which keeping a creative team happy and motivated is not the most insignificant one.

This thesis raises at least three topics for further research. First, the state of creativity management should be investigated among marketing organizations to understand whether marketing provides specific circumstances for creativity management or whether the principles of creativity management are more of universal nature.

Second, creativity management itself needs to be studied more. Based on observations of the available literature, the frameworks provided by Higgins, Andersen & Kragh, Andriopoulos, Kačerauskas and Palo have not been thoroughly tested in practice. Comparing the results between different organizational functions would also be helpful in gaining insight into creativity management and whether practicing it has different outcomes or not.

Third, the challenges of post-COVID-era and balancing between remote, office, and hybrid work have established interesting challenges for creativity management: how can creativity be enhanced remotely, or can it be enhanced? How do multiple working habits, individual preferences, and travelling between home and the office affect creativity management? How did creative organizations overcome the most critical stages of COVID restrictions, and were there differences between creative and non-creative organizations? Were there some aspects of creativity that were forgotten and some that were reiterated during COVID? How did managers handle the rapid shift from the office to remote work?

This thesis proposed that implementing creativity management practices and frameworks in a marketing organization will help manage embedded creatives and their work, thus concluding to commercial success, economic development, and customer satisfaction. This seems to be an accurate statement based on the theoretical findings and their implementations into practical frameworks.

There is, however, a very practical side to this claim: implementing frameworks into practice is not in itself sufficient. They need constant evaluation, restructuring, and adjusting to keep up with the changes and development of the organization's technology and human resource aspects. What has worked in a previous setting might not work as well in a later one. People resign, and new hires come in, each possessing different skills, characteristics, and demographical and motivational factors. The environmental factors of an organization (turbulence, pull forces, exploitation potential and competitive pressure) constantly change, arousing new challenges and crises to be tackled.



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