

**International Journal of Innovative Research in Science,
Engineering and Technology**

(An ISO 3297: 2007 Certified Organization)

Vol. 3, Issue 1, January 2014

Enhancing the Corporate Creativity of Technologists

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Abstract: India produces more number of technologists than any other country in the world. Though the institutions try to produce employable graduates, the creative quotient of Indian technologists takes a back seat once it comes to problem-solving. The thing is that Indian technologists lack creative traits unlike their foreign counterparts. The creative quotient of a prospective employee determines a lot to the collective corporate creativity. And in one way or other, it indirectly helps in reinvigorating the problem solving ability of technologists. An unflinching passion for the underlying task, together with an intrinsic motivation to top the list is the hallmark of a truly creative technologist. The creative quotient of technologists can be immensely enriched by certain strategies that foster creativity. This paper attempts to give some self-help techniques to enhance the creative problem-solving ability of technologists. The creative techniques listed here immensely provoke divergent thinking, variegated viewpoints and different possibilities. Such strategies help to hone the creative quotient of technologists at any cost. And practicing the techniques then and there will boost the creative intelligence of individual technologists and it will collectively enhance the collective corporate creativity which is the need of the hour

Keywords: creative technologist, corporate creativity, creative quotient

I. INTRODUCTION

India produces more number of technologists than any other country in the world. Are all the graduates who leave the portals of the engineering institutions of this country industry ready and employable? That is a million dollar question. Though the institutions try to produce employable graduates, the creative quotient of Indian technologists takes a back seat once it comes to problem-solving. The thing is that Indian technologists lack creative traits unlike their foreign counterparts. Anyhow, the creative quotient of technologists can be immensely enriched by certain strategies that foster creativity. Of course, the corporate conducts umpteen workshops to boost the creative quotient of their employees that in turn enhances corporate creativity. This paper attempts to give some self-help techniques to enhance the creative problem-solving ability of technologists.

II. DEFINITION OF CREATIVE QUOTIENT (C.Q)

There was a time when Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.) ruled the roost. A very high I.Q. was a passport to achieve a lucrative career in the past. Then it was the turn of Emotional Quotient (E.Q.). The way by which technologists moved with people in a corporate was a measure of quantifying their E.Q and this was very detrimental for them to achieve sublime heights in their career. Now it is the turn of Creative Quotient (C.Q). The creative quotient of a prospective

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employee determines a lot to the collective corporate creativity. And in one way or other, it indirectly helps in reinvigorating the problem solving ability of technologists.

III.CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATIVE TECHNOLOGISTS

Creative people are different in many ways from their less creative counter-parts. Teresa Amabile says in How to kill creativity, “the specific characteristics of creative people can be grouped into four areas namely knowledge, intellectual abilities, personality, passion for the task, and the experience of the flow.”(78) A highly knowledgeable person in his area of expertise will be definitely creative, for a thorough knowledge of a particular domain inevitably leads to a fountain of ideas. Such an exudation of novel ideas resulting from the imbue ment of a thorough knowledge and a complete technical- know-how will definitely boost the C.Q of technologists. A creative technologist will open his mind to new ideas. He will aim to be a smart worker rather than a hard worker. He has the habit of asking why questions. He is more inquisitive by nature and he can step out of the line to emerge as an out –of –the box thinker. Highly creative people exhibit a relaxed attitude and outlook when confronting a complicated situation. They are highly flexible in their thinking. They also exhibit a fluency in their thinking pattern that can be categorized into word fluency, associational fluency, expressional fluency and ideational fluency.General intelligence and abstract reasoning capacity form the core of one’s intellectual abilities. Such people are more flexible and they receive feedback with an open mind. They are conducive to change and they employ vertical and divergent thinking in their mode of approach. Andrew.J. Dubrin says “Extra ordinary high intelligence is not required in order to be creative, yet creative people are facile at generating creative solutions to problems in a short period of time”. (p.328)T

IV.STEPS IN THE CREATIVE PROCESS

One who has a passion for whatever he does never fails is an oft-repeated saying. An unflinching passion for the underlying task, together with an intrinsic motivation to top the list is the hallmarks of a truly creative technologist. Twenty years of vigorous research in industries has made Teresa M.Amabile to write in How to kill creativity: “ People will be at their creative best when they feel motivated primarily by the interest, satisfaction, and challenge of work itself – and not by external pressures”. (p.79)Creative problem solving is very often influenced by the non cognitive aspects of a person. They usually have a self-positive image and they are often found to be mavericks not conforming to the age –old tradition and the well trodden path. The componential theory of individual creativity developed by Amabile in her book, Creativity in Context considers “expertise, creative thinking and task motivation as essential features that foster creativity”. (p.33)

V.SELF-HELP TECHNIQUES

Technologists may be insisted to engage themselves in practicing creativity enhancing exercises. Activities that enhance the flexible thinking of technologists such as crossword puzzles, Sudoku, Mischmach and doublets enhance the creative thinking of technologists. A general theme may be given and the technologists may be asked to take and compile photographs around that particular theme. Joke –writing exercise may also be given on some contemporary societal problems. Likewise, painting related to a particular issue can be given as an exercise. Such self-help techniques really help a lot in boosting the collective creative quotient of technologists.If a technologist wants to use the multiple sense technique, then he must visualize how a solution to a problem might look, sound, taste, feel and smell and how they will retain their posture when carrying out the solution. In a book entitled Think out of the box, by Mike Vance and Diane Deacon say, “Think in terms of the five basic senses. –sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell and any combination of the five. If possible, add the kinesthetic sense, which allows us to be aware of the movement and

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position of the different parts of the body.” (p.45) Suppose they want to find a theme for a smart phone introduced by their company, then they have to ask the following questions.

1. How should the item look like?
2. What sounds should the item emit?
3. What type of taste will suit the dealers to have a good show?
4. What kind of smell will make the unveiling ceremony pleasant?
5. What type of feeling can be entrusted upon?
6. Should you encourage the dealers to engage in kinesthetic sensation?

VI. MAINTAINING AN IDEAS/E-IDEAS NOTE

Technologists have to carefully maintain an idea note book to note down whatever novel idea springs up in their mind randomly. Valuable ideas that flash like lightning may go with the wind if they are not properly taken down in the ideas note book. Two copies of the ideas note may be kept by less forgetful persons, one at home and one at office. The main reason for maintaining an ideas note is that the Eureka factor may dawn at any time in the mind of a creative technologist. Maintaining an e-ideas note will be very helpful to creative technologists who are wedded to the net.

VII. AMALGAMATION OF THE ROLES OF EXPLORER, ARTIST, JUDGE AND LAWYER

In an editorial entitled “Be a creative problem solver” in Executives strategies, it is suggested that the concerned persons seeking creative solutions to problems must play the roles of explorer, artist, judge and lawyer. First be an explorer. Speak to people in your related fields. Register ideas that can bring about innovations in your group. Secondly be an artist. Try to ask as many as -What if -Questions as possible for 5% of your day by presuming the role of an artist. Thirdly, act as a judge after you have got a store of imaginative ideas. The last role you have to play is the role of a lawyer to implement the results of your creative thinking. If the above strategy is adopted by technologists by perceiving the above roles, then they can soar high in achieving their target.

VIII. FORCED ASSOCIATION TECHNIQUE

Creativity can be enhanced by forced association technique in which technologists should make associations between the properties of two objects. An individual has to select a random word from the dictionary. Next, the group has to list all the attributes of this particular word. Fresh ideas must be created then and there. Motivation and dedication go a long way in honing a technologist’s creative quotient. Richard Lally says, “Thomas Edison, the man whose name is almost synonymous with creativity, set idea quotas, for his workers. He established a personal quota of a minor invention every ten days and a major one every six months which helped him to achieve 1093 patents during his career”. (p 6)

IX. CONCLUSION

Enhancing the creative acumen of Indian technologists is quite feasible. The self-belief of technologists needs to be changed and the creative attitude and mental state to facilitate their spontaneity and originality lends a helping hand to enrich the Creative Quotient of technologists. If technologists have both knowledge and technical know-how in their corresponding domains, they can apply the same to actual creative assignments, tasks and situations. The creative

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techniques listed above immensely provoke divergent thinking, variegated viewpoints and different possibilities. Such strategies help to hone the creative quotient of technologists at any cost. As the aforesaid techniques involve a little bit of skill, it works better in the long run. And practicing the techniques then and there will boost the creative intelligence of individual technologists and it will collectively enhance the collective corporate creativity which is the need of the hour.

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