

HOW TO UTILIZE CULTURE TO PROMOTE INNOVATION

Organizational cultures that are strategically relevant, strong, and emphasize innovation & change are most effective. Innovation is universally applicable as an organizational norm regardless of an organization's size, industry, or age.

Cultural norms must support risk-taking and change

"Creativity and wisdom are inversely related in people's minds."¹

Employees may refrain from sharing creative ideas because they perceive a potential risk in looking unintelligent.

Developing a culture that encourages employees to express creative or "weird" ideas may lead to good ideas coming from unexpected sources

Walt Disney Company holds an annual event called the Gong Show where all staff (including secretaries, janitors, and mailroom staff) get to pitch movie ideas to top executives.²

Leaders must move quickly to implement promising, creative ideas

Once managers spot a good idea, norms that emphasize urgency and speed will ensure its implementation.

1 R.J. Sternberg, L.A. O'Hara, and T.I. Lubart, "Creativity as Investment," *California Management Review*, 40/1 (Fall 1997): 8-21.

2 S. Wetlaufer, "Common Sense and Conflict: An Interview with Disney's Michael Eisner," *Harvard Business Review*, 78/1 (January/February 2000): 114.