

3 Tips to Help You Boost Creativity in Your Team

Guest post by Ashley Wilson

Leaders have a penchant for inspiring their team members to do their best and achieve great outcomes.

Can they inspire creativity too?



source: [pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)

Yes, leaders *can* make team members more creative—and the biggest companies today are already echoing this statement.

Google encourages its employees to spend 20% of their work time on creative projects, one of which leads to Google News.

Twitter's open workspaces are designed to get its people's brain juices flowing.

Apple built a worldwide following with its "Think Different" slogan.

Why is creativity important for organizations anyway? Isn't it reserved for more artistic, expressive ventures rather than B2B deals?

It turns out creativity is one of the most important soft skills to have in building successful businesses.

According to a study by Adobe, businesses that invest in creativity training see improvements of over 80% in vital areas like productivity and customer happiness.

In fact, the most in-demand trait that employers look for in 2019 *is* creativity.

While some are more imaginative than others, creativity can be taught and improved. As a leader, it is your responsibility to help your team members be more innovative in their work.

The question is:
what can you do to boost creativity in your team?

Champion Creativity and Cultivate an Open Environment

The best thing you can do to foster creativity is to create an environment that allows it to happen.

This is why the workspaces of many leading companies feel more like an adult playground rather than an office; it gives team members freedom and with it comes creativity.

Be lenient (but reasonable) in giving your employees breaks. A snack or smoke break is all it takes for a fatigued team member to bounce back and get creative.

This can also be supplemented by **doing fun activities from time to time**. Board games, team retreats, and office sports are some events you can consider to break the monotony of work.

The most important factor in boosting creativity, however, is **open communication**.

When people are allowed to discuss freely with each other, a creative environment is established where ideas and opinions are exchanged, eventually resulting in droves of innovative solutions.

Some moderation is needed to stop discussions from going haywire but for the most

part, it's best
to give your team members the freedom they need.

How do you establish
an open environment in your organization?

Let your team members know it's OK to voice out their thoughts even if the opinion is not favorable for your company.

A lot of employees
are *still* afraid of speaking out as
they're worried about the consequences.

If your organization
is practicing this, understand that businesses lose \$7,500 on
average to employees
who don't speak up about a concerning project or situation.

Abolishing penalties
is not limited to opinions as well.

Give your employees permission to try out their ideas and more
importantly, allow them to fail.

It might cost your
organization in the short-term but in the long run, consistent
experimentation
will improve your business' innovation efforts a lot more than
not thinking out of the box.

Don't Limit Your Team Internally, Mix Things Up

Collaboration can
boost innovation but there is a point where groupthink kills
creativity

instead.

When the same individuals work with each other for extended periods, it's hard to maintain inventiveness as each person can only come up with so many new ideas at one time.

To avoid this issue, practice diversity.

One way to do so is by **bringing in people outside of the company to give your team members fresh perspectives on their tasks.**

For example, bringing in a loyal customer or an influencer in the industry to work with your employees can help them discover avenues they might have missed—or are not even aware of—which leads to increased creativity.

Consider mixing up teams and departments to overcome creative block. The marketing team can take a day or two to work with the accounting team to uncover useful insights, for instance.

If you have a hand in the hiring process, you can also **prioritize candidates with varying backgrounds and skills to further improve diversity** in the company.

Multicultural offices are excellent creativity boosters as well.

Another area where

variance makes sense is in **distributing employee tasks**. We are not designed to work on the same thing every day like robots. Variety is the spice of life and that applies to task delegation.

If your developers have been coding every day for the past year, spruce things up by letting them work with customer-facing departments for several days.

Working on different tasks can give your team members a different outlook on their jobs which again, brings tons of benefits to your organization's creativity.

Invest in the Right Tools and Resources

Aside from empowering your team members, **providing the right tools and resources** is another integral part of enhancing creativity.

Businesses of the past had to rely on pen and paper to collaborate. Technology, however, has changed that for the better.

Collaborative tools like Trello and Jira are now staples in organizations as they are an effective outlet for team members to store and share their creative work.

For example, you can **use an online drag-and-drop prototyping**

tool to assist your organization's marketing department.

Not only does the tool make it easy for team members to visualize their designs, but staff from other departments can also use it to share ideas even if they have zero experience in the field.

Think of these tools as the engine for your organization's creative vehicle. The vehicle is the final product but without the engine, it won't be able to get to its destination—your organization's creative outcome.

Even prominent companies are using creativity tools to help them with innovation.

Google champions the Design Sprint ideology to power their creative processes while IDEO practices its famous 7 Rules for Brainstorming to empower its employees.

All of this is only possible thanks to technology, with one of it being **cloud computing**.

Collaborating with teams inside and outside of the office all over the world, generating key insights, bringing productivity levels to all-time highs—these are just some benefits your organization stands to gain from using the cloud.

Training must also be included as part of your investment.

While cloud-based tools are designed to be user-friendly, you should still educate your team members to minimize errors and ensure they use the tools as efficiently as possible.

Your Role as a Leader in Boosting Your Team's Creativity

Boosting creativity among your team members is just a matter of establishing the right company culture and providing the necessary tools and resources.

When done right, you will **skyrocket your team's innovation levels** beyond your expectations—and that spells nothing but good news for your organization.

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