



From good to great: How to inspire teams to drive innovation

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Leadership has nothing to do with 'rank'

“We call someone a leader because they took the risk to express uncertainty, ask for help or head towards danger before anyone else!”
-Simon Sinek



Creativity, innovation and leadership

- › Creativity is the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities
- › Innovation is creating values from ideas and the process of turning ideas into reality to help achieve commercial or social goals
- › Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal
- › Usually, when people speak of innovators, what they really mean are “Creative Leaders”, in other words, people who can generate or recognize creative ideas that become the basis of innovations



Creative leaders drive company's success

- As companies grow and processes change over time, lower-level staff can often feel ostracized or forgotten
- Creative leaders implementing non-traditional techniques and ideas to include people and teams into the company's success
- Leaders typically apply a combination of the following activities to help drive innovation-
 - Generate/recognize great ideas
 - Form a vision
 - Set up a conducive environment
 - Get the right minds together
 - Measure and Celebrate



Generate/recognize great ideas

In 1994 Jeff Bezos started with an idea of online book selling and his start-up has grown into a trillion-dollar company today.



- One-person can't generate all ideas
- A Creative leader seek ways to motivate employees in order to generate ideas and help choose the right way to apply these ideas
- No idea is 'stupid'
- A few creative ways of generating ideas:
 - Innovation portal for collecting Ideas
 - Explore replication and re-usability of ideas for similar problems
 - Define roles for Idea Generator and an Idea Implementor
 - Ideation events like 'Innovation Week'

Form a vision around the idea

- › A vision defines the optimal desired future state
- › Creative leaders excel at painting a clear picture of the destination
- › Focus on the BIG picture
- › Creative leadership can improve innovation by communicating the vision conducive to it,
- › Creative leaders can generate enthusiasm within their teams by using their powerful Imagination and excellent communication
- › Creative ways of forming a vision are:
 - › Engage your teams to help form the vision jointly
 - › Be Customer focused
 - › Clearly identify the business problem
 - › Articulate the targeted business outcomes

Creating an innovation friendly environment

- › Companies strive to hire the best people and invest in their training and development. It should be okay for employees to fail, if they're capable and can recognize their mistake for innovation to flourish
- › Make it safe to explore
- › Trust
- › Provide time & resources
- › Lay the foundation and path to collaborate and discover
- › Dish out recognition
- › Few creative ways of creating an innovation friendly environment are-
 - › Role model
 - › Always search for the second right answer
 - › Get industry experts to talk about their innovation journey

Getting the *right minds* together

› Knowledge is a key input to innovation

- › The first priority of leadership is to engage the right people, at the right times, to the right degree in creative work.
- › Sustaining innovation and replicating it across a company's breath of operation cannot solely be the job of the leader, but rather a collective effort.
- › Managers can also enhance diversity by looking outside the organization for sources of creativity.
- › Some creative ideas to help get the right minds together -
 - › Open-source innovation
 - › Hackathon
 - › Upstream and downstream process maps to understand areas that can be improved
 - › Activities that Intellectually challenge cross-functional teams and drive collaboration

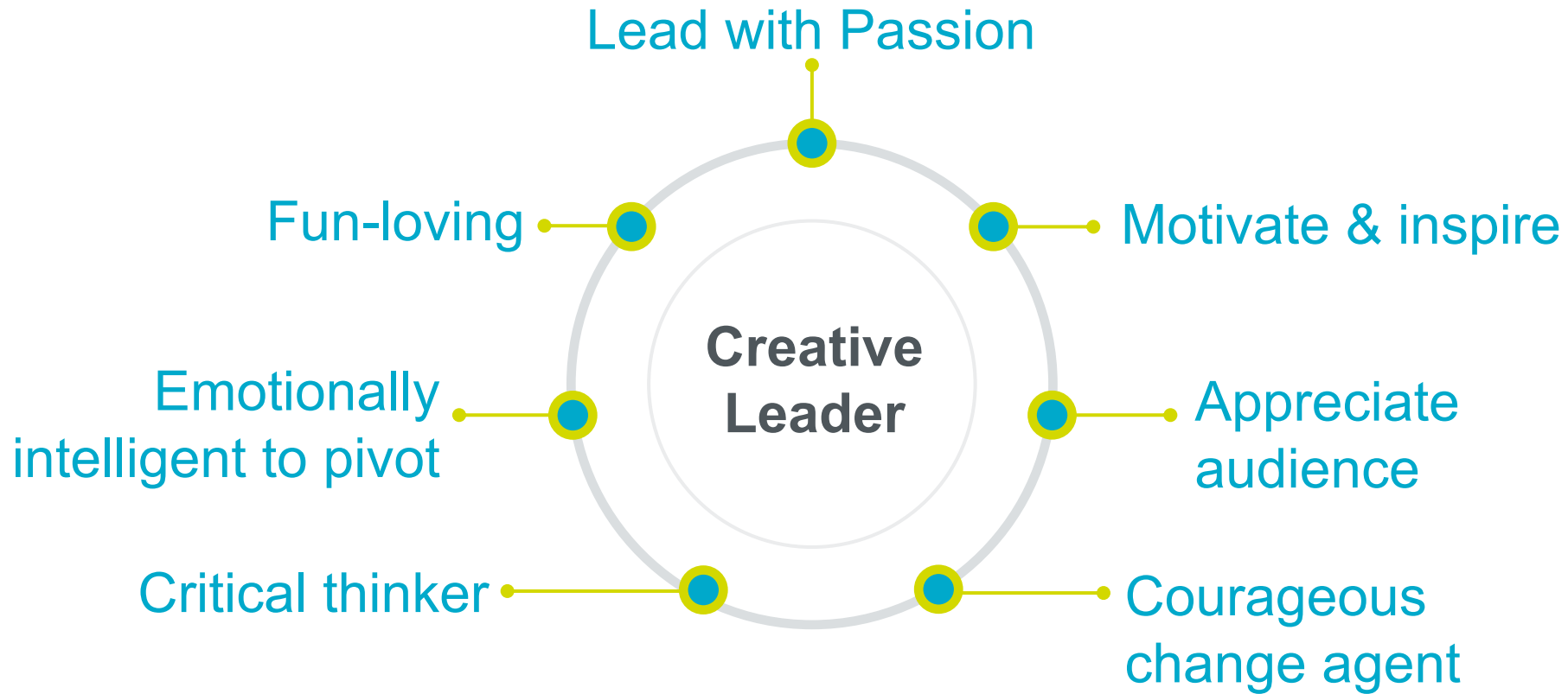
Measure and Celebrate

- Most leaders downplay the role of deliberate creativity and structured effort in driving innovation.
- Measuring innovation has a huge benefit for employee work culture and efficiency
- Some key metrics that can help track innovation are-
 - No. Of ideas generated
 - No. Of ideas implemented
 - Improvement in turn around time/ quality
 - Process improvements
 - Client satisfaction
 - Tangible \$ value



One risk to watch out for with metrics to track innovation - If you focus too much on metrics, you risk encouraging your employees to hit good numbers, rather than being truly innovative.

Creative Leadership Behaviors



How can leaders sustain creativity?

- Creativity creates many enticing opportunities for both the leader and team in the workplace.
- As a company expands, leaders spend more time on managing the business and can miss out on chances to be a creative leader to their team.
- Use the following advice in your efforts to become a more creative leader in a busy, thriving workplace.
 - Continue to educate yourself
 - Attend industry events
 - Rely on the team and allow them to grow
 - Develop thought leadership
 - Take scheduled time to be creative
 - Have fun



Innovation doesn't just happen

Organizations need to foster Innovation

Encourage creative leadership



Build a culture of innovation



Open organization to diverse perspectives



Invest in understanding the customer challenges and partner with them to find a solution



Support innovation via a defined framework (both client and vendor) that motivates employees to contribute creative ideas for solving business problems



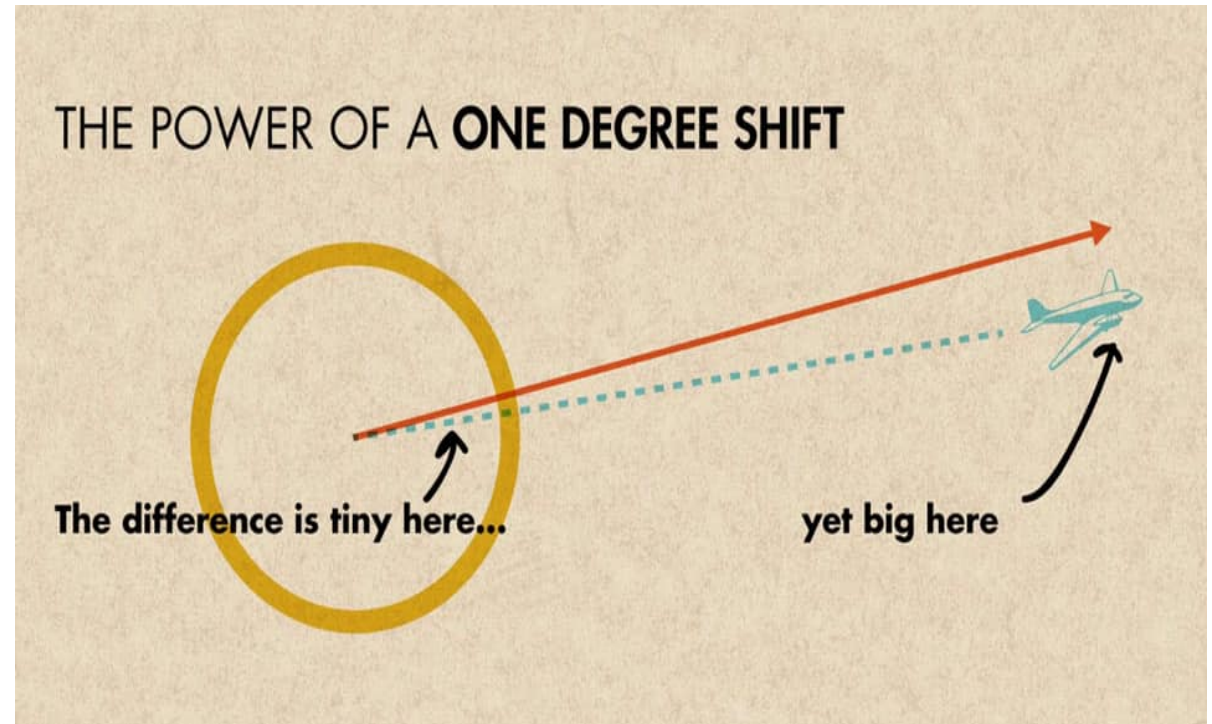
Invest in building team skills that will enable innovation



Recognize and reward innovation

Conclusion

- › Innovation is a journey towards value creation
- › Every single degree of shift in Innovative thinking within the organization matters
- › Creative leadership will enable organizations to facilitate these small shifts



For any further queries please feel free to reach out to the presenter at Bhavesh.patkar@parexel.com



Thank you

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