

# MASTER'S THESIS

# Creativity Management

*From the ad agency perspective*

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## **Abstract**

The world of business is today moving towards an increasingly open and globally competitive market, which leads to enormous pressure on all companies to enhance their competitive advantages. The aim of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of how an organization adds value through enhancing creativity in the workplace. Our research explores, describes and tries to explain the factors influencing creativity, how the creativity process can be described and finally how a creativity manager can be described. We have conducted case studies within the advertising industry and data was primarily collected through personal interviews.

Our findings show that the main factors influencing creativity in the workplace are related to participation, trust, freedom and personality. On the subject of the creativity process, six steps are considered, which initiate from a situation analysis of the client or the customer. Furthermore, we have found that it is important for creativity managers to discourage status quo, create a vision, support the employees and develop flexibility of the structure. Furthermore, this thesis reveals that internal communication is the most crucial underlying cause for a high level of creativity in the workplace. Finally, implications for managers, theory and future research are provided.

## **Sammanfattning**

Dagens hårda affärsklimat är på väg mot en allt mer öppen marknad där den globala konkurrensen hårdnar, vilket leder till ett enormt tryck på alla företag att öka sina konkurrensfördelar. Målet med denna uppsats är att få en bättre förståelse för hur en organisation ökar sitt värde genom att öka kreativiteten på arbetsplatsen. Vår forskning undersöker, beskriver och försöker förklara faktorerna som påverkar kreativiteten, hur en kreativitets process kan beskrivas och slutligen hur en kreativitets ledare kan beskrivas. Vi har genomfört fallstudier inom reklambranschen och våra data samlades primärt genom personliga intervjuer.

Våra data visar att de huvudsakliga faktorerna som påverkar kreativiteten på arbetsplatsen är relaterade till delaktighet, förtroende, frihet och personlighet. Angående ämnet kreativitets process, är sex steg inkluderade, vilka har sin grund i en situationsanalys av klienten eller kunden. Vidare, har vi funnit att det är viktigt för kreativitets ledare att utmana den nuvarande situationen, skapa en vision, stötta de anställda och skapa en flexibel struktur. Vidare visar denna uppsats att intern kommunikation är viktigaste bakomliggande orsaken till en hög nivå av kreativitet på arbetsplatsen. Slutligen är rekommendationer för ledare, teori och framtida forskning inkluderade i vår uppsats.

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## **1 Introduction**

*This chapter first provides the reader with a background to the problem area of this thesis. It is followed by a thorough problem discussion and an overall purpose. From the purpose a set of specific research questions are posed for this thesis. Finally, an outline of the thesis is given and presented visually.*

### **1.1 Background**

The world of business is today moving towards an increasingly open and globally competitive market, which leads to enormous pressure on all companies to enhance their competitive advantages. Business development is a major key to competitiveness and is therefore an important issue when managing an organization for market growth and profitability. Yet, to compete in a global market an organization must develop ways of implementing innovative efforts that enhances corporative performance. (Kondo, 2000) What has been the solution in the past is no longer the key to this objective. Real competitive advantage to this challenge is developing strategies, which will differentiate the organization from its competitors. (Feurer, Chaharbaghi & Wargin, 1996)

As the business environment matures and the competition becomes more and more intense, successful organizations are the ones that will succeed to find an effective and creative method of differentiating its own business operations. Finding new and meaningful ways of differentiating its own business operations is crucial for the future success of the organization. (Andrews, 1996) There is now a general knowledge that creativity is the key to this escalating challenge (Feurer *et al*, 1996). As a result, companies must be creative in their way of thinking and when solving problems (Kondo, 2000). Organizations have to change and adapt in order to remain competitive. New ideas rather than conventional wisdom are preferred to re-structure the organization. These new ideas are the result of creative thinking and are of vital importance in order to gain flexibility and competitive advantage. (McFadzean, 1998) Previous research has presented many views and definitions of creativity. However, some general guidelines for creativity have been developed and can be perceived as a progression where ideas are frequently generated for developing opportunities or addressing issues without constraining the organization to one single solution. (Feurer *et al*, 1996) This is how creativity will be referred to in this thesis.

Today however, many companies are treating their employees as substitutes for machines or robots, telling them only how to carry out the work but not the aim of the work. But, even if this type of work standardization sometimes could be effective, it seldom leads to improvement of an organization. Companies should instead give employees more freedom and responsibility in their workplace, which would increase motivation, innovation and creativity. (Kondo, 2000) Therefore, modern organizations of today are knowledge-based and their success is depending on creativity, innovation, discovery and inventiveness. If organizations react effectively on these demands it not only leads to change in individuals and their behavior, but it also leads to innovative changes in the organization to insure their existence. (Martins & Terblanche 2003)

Creativity has an important role in the change process for survival. The organizational culture is important to consider and a company must form the organization in a manner where efforts

are focused towards the positive aspects of the job and allowing employees to be creative. A mentality that acts to traverse this mentality would pervade organizations and creates artificial barriers to organizational understanding and effectiveness. (Lloyd, 1996) Organizational culture is defined as “the way we do things around here” and involves the deeply seated values and beliefs shared by personnel in an organization. Organizational culture also involves the components of routine behavior, norms, values, philosophy, rules of the game and feelings. Managers within organizations try to create an institutional framework in which creativity will be accepted as a basic cultural norm. The importance of organizational culture has been highlighted in this perspective. The culture of an organization may be a contributing factor to what degree creativity occurs in an organization. A strong organizational culture provides shared values and ensures that everyone in the organization is kept on the same track. (Martins & Terblanche, 2003)

Managers must successfully communicate a vision to contribute to creativity through any available formal and informal channel of communication and constantly encourage employees to think and act beyond current wisdom (Andriopoulos, 2001). To be a successful manager today involves making the most of its resources and therefore it is important to think creatively to maximize the brainpower in a workplace. Creating new ideas and resolving intelligent solutions makes an employee an after-sought resource. Moreover, managers who recognize that training employees to solve problems creatively can affect the future of a company. (Smolensky & Kleiner, 1995) Creativity is a resource that has the potential to provide a company with a competitive advantage. Furthermore, a company that establishes an effective creativity and innovation process is also likely to realize the social benefits that arise from teamwork and employee motivation. (McAdam & McClelland, 2002)

During the past few years, research suggests a number of elements that managers must hold to develop the conditions upon which organizational creativity can flourish (Andriopoulos, 2001). Managers should possess the ability to represent effective work groups. Work groups should reflect a diversity of different skills and consist of individuals who trust and communicate well with each other, challenge each other’s ideas in constructive ways and are mutually encouraging. Managers are also responsible to be in a position to balance employees’ freedom and responsibility, without domination and control. This has to be considered while at the same time they have to show concern for employees’ feelings and needs, generously recognize creative work and support employees to voice their own concerns and provide feedback. Managers should also facilitate skills to be an important factor when managing creativity. (Amabile & Grysiewicz, 1989)

## **1.2 Problem discussion**

The pressure on organizations is not just to solve arising problems; the organizations need to solve them creatively. Adaptation to new technologies and external threats are exposing even more pressure on organizations in order to operate in the market successfully. (Williams, 2001) Moreover, creative employees tend to be more productive and perceive a greater job satisfaction (Walton, 2003). Creativity remains the element that is in short supply in today’s organizations. The vulnerability of organizations is greater than ever due to an increasing competition and rapidly changing business environment. (Jalan & Kleiner, 1995)

The importance of business creativity is increasing due to the fact that business is moving towards being more focused on imagination, inspiration, originality and initiative. Creativity adds more value to the knowledge of an organization. (Kippenberger, 1997) Creativity is

increasing an organization's competitiveness and is positively related to physiological wellbeing. Another essential issue to physiological wellbeing is the importance to have access to information and having the ability and motivation to process all information. (Walton 2003) An organizational culture that supports creativity and innovation creates and maintains a learning culture. This is accomplished by focusing on being curious, encourage employees to communicate with each other, keeping knowledge and skills up to date and learning creative thinking skills. Taking risks and experimenting are connected with creativity and innovations. A culture in which too many management controls are applied will hold back risk taking and as a result, creativity and innovation will decrease. (Martins & Terblanche, 2003)

However, many companies may be frightened of this, since innovation might be linked to risk-taking and therefore creativity is often only talked about, but never acted upon seriously. A great barrier for implementation of creativity on a workplace is that the organizational culture does not guide the organizational members to strive for innovation and that there is a lack of climate that is encouraging creativity. (Ahmed, 1998) Employees need to be treated with respect that they rightfully deserve and they will react in a positive way instead of damaging the organization (Lloyd, 1996).

Creativity is nowadays a must for business survival and a need for staying ahead of competitors. Success in product and service innovation depends on creativity as a key input. Furthermore, creativity is a base of structural flexibility and innovative power. Employees must have the ability to think and act differently, but in a way that make sense to current and future customers. Therefore, Managers must have the ability to set a direction that excites employees and make them open-minded for new ideas. The leadership style of a creative manager can vary from being a counselor or a coach, to being a comedian. (Cook, 1998)

Managing creativity effectively involves being skilled team builders and outstanding leaders. Managers must also encourage team unity while fostering individuals. Furthermore, leadership must create a balance between freedom and responsibility and not dominate or control members. Creating an environment in which employees can grow and continue to be innovative makes people more flexible and less fearful of taking risks. (King, 1995)

Therefore, to manage an organization creatively, an important challenge is to create an organizational culture, which provides innovative ways of addressing problems and finding solutions to the problems. Organizational culture involves the deepest level of basic values, assumptions and beliefs, which are shared by the organization's members and are conducted by actions especially from leaders and managers. In other words, organizational culture is perceived as a set of collective norms, which influences the behavior of members within the organization. (Andriopoulos, 2001)

In addition, motivation is often mentioned as an essential precondition for creativity accomplishment. However, it is significant to keep in mind that all creative acts are not motivated in an identical manner. Another aspect is to realize that contributing to creativity may be as much to do with eliminating sources of demotivation, as it is to do with actively supporting creativity. (Lloyd, 1996)

Managing the creativity process often requires leading employees to integrate left brain (logic) and right brain (imagination) when solving problems or producing something new. By doing so, an organization can maximize the outcome of its efforts and improve its future

development. (Smolinsky & Kleiner, 1995) Furthermore, the creativity process involves generating ideas, develop and transform them into reality and focus is concentrated on innovation and entrepreneurship (Kippenberger, 1997).

Managers consider the goal of designing and creating a working environment that contributes to creativity to be of great importance. However, in real life very few managers take steps to make this a reality. (Walton, 2003) Even if companies often discuss the issue of building a creative climate and the importance of enhancing creativity and innovation, few efforts have been made on management processes to imply it. (King, 1995) Managers seem to rate creativity as the most important issue to create successful organizations, yet there are only approximately five percent of the organizations that actually emphasize this issue. This fact shows the lack of understanding managers tend to have when trying to implement changes for enhancing creativity. (Walton 2003)

Nevertheless, in recent years, business people around the world have begun to realize the importance of managing creativity effectively. Workplace creativity is crucial for organizations' ability to compete in the international marketplace. (Cooper, Clasen, Silva-Jalonon & Butler, 1999) All this information points out that the management of creativity is an important issue for organizations that aims to expand its competitiveness in the international marketplace. This leads to the purpose of this thesis and its research questions.

### **1.3 Purpose and research questions**

Based on the discussion above, the purpose of this study is *to gain a better understanding of how to add value to the organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace*. Research questions have been developed in order to reach an understanding of this overall problem.

*RQ1. How can the factors influencing creativity in the workplace be described?*

*RQ2. How can the creativity process be described?*

*RQ3. How can a creativity manager be described?*

### **1.4 Limitations**

Managing creativity is a very interesting subject and there are many perspectives that would be appealing to investigate more in depth. However, it is beyond the scope of our study to cover all aspects of our research purpose and the thesis is based on a corporate perspective. Furthermore, we have also focused our research on corporations located in Sweden in the ad agency industry.

### **1.5 Thesis outline**

This thesis is divided into seven different chapters: *Introduction, Literature review, Conceptualization, Methodology, Data collection, Analysis and Conclusions & Implications*. Below, the outline of this thesis will be illustrated in Figure 1.1.

In this **first chapter**, the research area relevant to the thesis is presented. A background about the topic is introduced including previous research within the area of creativity. This chapter ends up with the purpose, its specific research questions and limitations.

**Chapter two** involves previous research and theories regarding the research area of this thesis. From the three research questions, literature regarding how to add value to the organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace, have been selected.

**Chapter three** handles the issue of conceptualization. This chapter includes the conceptual framework where the most relevant literature is presented. The chapter ends with the emerged frame of reference.

**Chapter four** includes the methodology and the research procedure of this study. We have in our methodology chapter included research purpose, research approach, research strategy, data collection method, sample selection, analysis of the data and a discussion of the quality standards of the study.

**Chapter five** includes the data that has been collected in the research. Short introductions of the cases are opening the sections and thereafter the collected data from the interviews are presented.

**Chapter six** contains the analysis of the data collection. The chapter begins with two within-case analyses of the two cases; the chapter ends with a cross-case analysis where the data from each case is compared to each other and the conceptualization.

The final chapter of the thesis is **chapter seven**, where the findings, conclusions and implications from the analysis are stated. This chapter goes back to chapter one and ties the thesis together. It includes the overall conclusions of the study that can be drawn from the research. Conclusions will also be given in relation to the three research questions that have been stated in chapter one. The chapter ends with a discussion about implications for management, theory and future research. The outline of the thesis is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

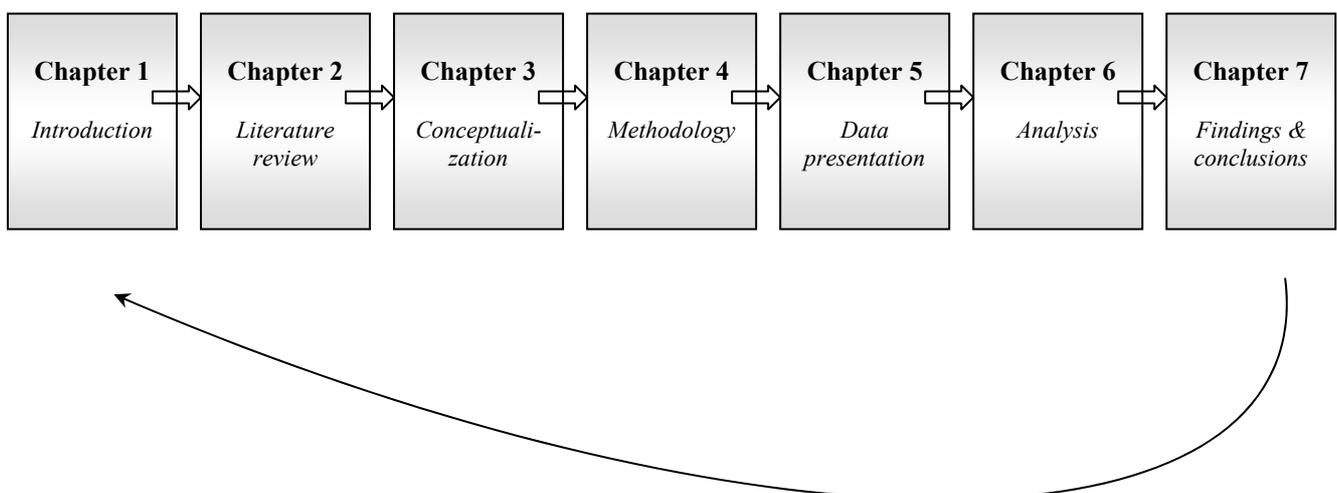


Figure 1.1 Outline of the thesis

## 2 Literature review

*The previous chapter presented background and purpose of this thesis. This chapter is going to present theories and previous studies regarding the research questions stated in chapter one. It will begin by describing different factors influencing creativity in the workplace. The next section will present theories of how the creativity process can be described. Finally, the third section will present how creativity managers can be described.*

### 2.1 Factors influencing creativity

An organization must understand and implement specific key factors that influence creativity in a workplace to enhance the creativity among its employees. As a result, organizations need to answer the questions “how can organizations encourage creativity in their working environments?” and “what are the key factors that influence organizational creativity?”. (Andriopoulos, 2001) After studying previous research it can be stated that these factors can be categorized into individual and organizational factors that influence creativity in a workplace.

#### 2.1.1 Individual factors

Amabile (1998) suggests that creativity is a function of three components – expertise, creative-thinking skills and motivation. Especially motivation seems to be an essential factor for creativity. However, not all creative acts are motivated in the same way and therefore is motivation divided into two categories – intrinsic (ego-involved) and extrinsic (task-involved) motivation. (Walton, 2003) Intrinsic motivation involves an “inner passion” to solve a problem while extrinsic motivation comes from outside a person (Amabile, 1998 and Andriopoulos, 2001). Intrinsic motivation often leads to solutions far more creative than receiving external rewards, such as money, which is extrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1998). Financial rewards can often have a negative effect on creativity, especially when employees perceive the financial incentive as a means of being bribed or controlled. Moreover, money do not necessarily make employees passionate about their work and is therefore hindering creativity in the long run. Intrinsic motivation on the other hand, involves that a person have the internal desire to do something. The employee has a deep interest and involvement in the work. Curiosity, enjoyment or a personal sense of challenge can drive a motivation leading to increased creativity. (Andriopoulos, 2001)

An ideal organizational climate would provide opportunities for independence, recognition and responsibilities. However, some employees’ performance might still be motivated during an organizational change environment due to extrinsic job satisfaction factors such as pay, job security, generous benefits, working conditions and clear working rules. Individuals need control over the job attributes (intrinsic or extrinsic) that will determine how successful they are at reaching their performance objectives. (Martins, Terblanche 2003)

McFadzean (1998) states that to enhance creative thinking within organizations, the climate and culture within the organization must encourage innovation and creative thinking by stressing the factors listed below:

- *Willing to take risks* - Employees can be encouraged to think creatively if they are not afraid of criticism or punishment. For example, if a project fails and the one responsible for the project is in fear of losing his or her job then he or she will never take the risk of thinking creatively again.
- *Challenges* - Creativity is enhanced if employees are being encouraged to challenge their assumptions and perceptions regarding procedures, products, services and processes. Organizations should especially stop employees from thinking that “it has always been done that way”.
- *Visions* - Employees with visions are more capable to think creatively than those without. Organizations should therefore encourage visioning by making the employees look into the future and visualize where they would like to be in five or ten years time.
- *Goal-setting* - Striving for specific goals or objectives strengthens the creativity among individuals. As a result, organizations may establish a climate of excellence where managers ensure that employees are committed to achieving a first-rate performance. This can be achieved by developing achievable objectives (both on organizational and individual level), followed by creating a strategy for fulfilling these.
- *Do something unexpected* - Employ people who do not seem to fit in the organization. This upsets the status quo and encourages people to look at situations from different perspectives, which can help the employees to produce innovative ideas.
- *Pet projects* - People appreciate having time for other projects. Let people spend time on their pet projects so they can be researched and developed. This leads to unique innovations and strengthens the creativity among the employees.
- *Support from management* - Support from senior management provides creativity and innovation to a workplace. Management must provide sufficient resources and training, encouragement for developing new ideas and/or financial support.
- *Have fun* - People want to have fun. A climate on the workplace of enjoyment and fun enhance creativity. Reducing distractions and enhancing relaxation can accomplish this.
- *Teams and trust* - Common goals increase the work spirit and thereby the creativity. Working in creative problem solving teams that can work together and develop trust for one another, is a way of developing trust among employees.

Furthermore, Martins and Terblanche (2003) suggest that the ability of an organization to motivate individuals, whether they have an external or internal focus of control, is closely related to reward system. Therefore, planned organizational change efforts must make sure that different types of rewards are offered to employees who might have quite a different attitude set toward organizational change. Moreover, the need for group membership or sense of belongingness has proved to have a great impact on creativity (Walton 2003).

### **2.1.2 Organizational factors**

Andriopoulos (2001) highlights five major organizational factors that enhance creativity in a workplace. These factors are relevant when deciding on how an organization can encourage creativity in their working environment and involves the key factors that influence organizational creativity. These factors are illustrated in Figure 2.1 and are described below.

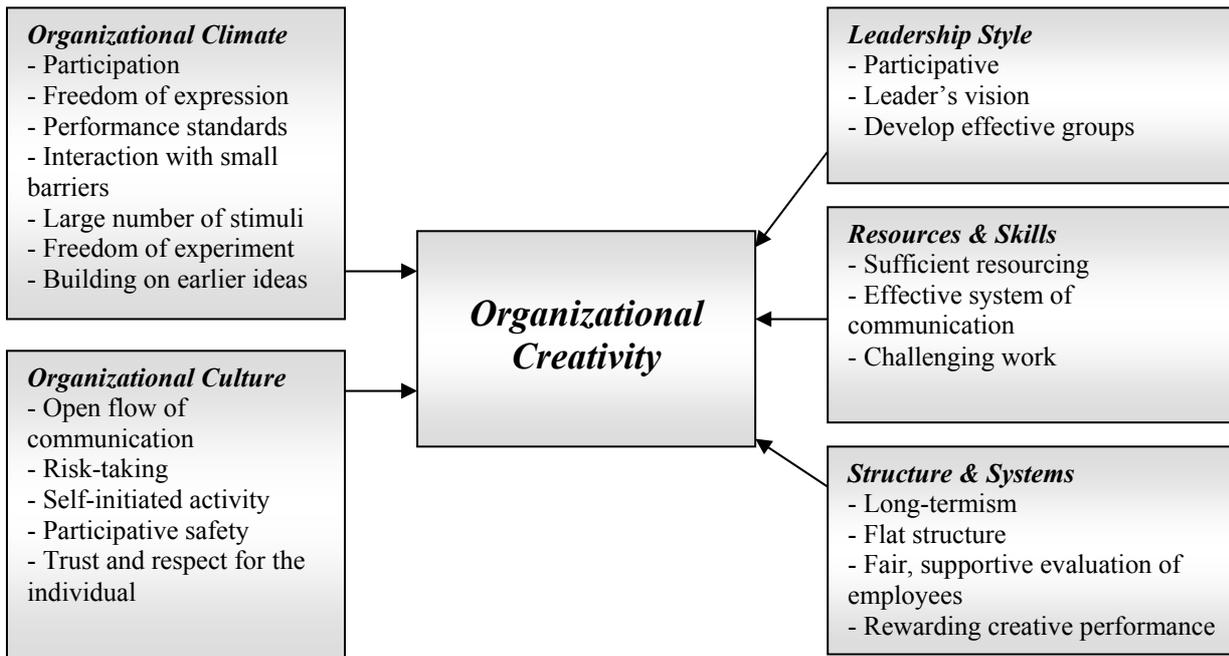


Figure 2.1 Factors affecting organizational creativity  
 Source: Adapted from Andriopoulos (2001), p. 835

The factors provided above creates conditions that enhance creativity both at the team and individual levels. The five determinants will now be described and explained.

*Organizational Climate* – An organization must develop and maintain an internal climate that involves a working atmosphere that stresses the need of participation and freedom of expression among employees, but also a demand of performance standards. This is done by those organizations that favor creativity and innovation in their workplace. Furthermore, it is suggested that the best way to achieve creativity is to imply an open work climate that is aiming to interaction with small barriers, a large number of stimuli, freedom to experiment and the possibility of building on earlier ideas.

*Leadership Style* – Managers affect its employees to a great extent and their way of managing is therefore an important factor on creativity. Leadership style is further discussed in section 2.3.

*Organizational culture* – Organizations must support an organizational culture that stresses on innovative ways of addressing problems and finding solutions. The culture involves basic values, assumptions and beliefs and is mostly manifested from leaders and managers. The norms that are created on a workplace influence the behavior of employees and thereby their creativity. To encourage creativity within their working environments, organizations need to develop an innovative (divergent and learning) and supportive (empowering and caring) culture. The opposite is a culture that involves controlling (convergent and efficiency conscious) and directive (profit before people), which hinders creativity in the workplace. Furthermore, every employee needs to understand and accept the core principles and values of an organization. According to Andriopoulos (2001), organizations must implement the factors listed below in their organizational culture to enhance creativity:

- Open flow of communication
- Risk-taking

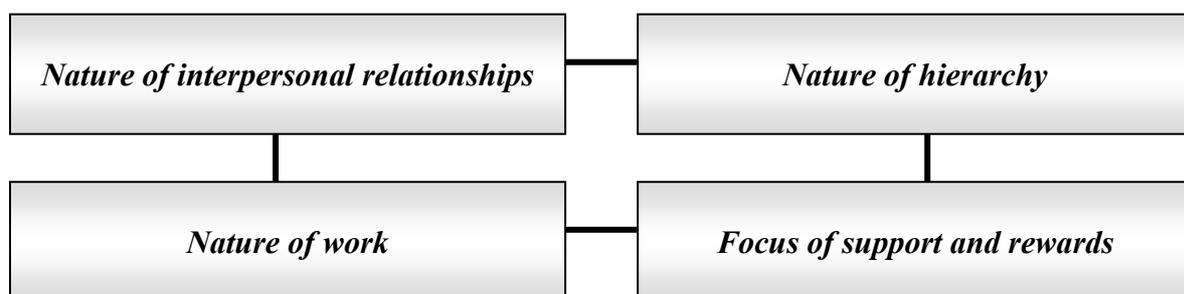
- Encourage self-initiated activity → intrinsic motivation
- High autonomy
- Stimulating and ensuring participative safety
- Convince employees not to be afraid of criticism and punishment

*Resources and skills* – To encourage creativity within an organization companies must make strategic choices with their human resources. An organization should always strive towards the attraction, development and retention of creative talent, to enhance competitiveness. Organizations need to provide sufficient resources, training and encouragement for developing new ideas. Two important factors when encouraging creativity regarding resources and skills are time and money. For example, if managers do not allow time for experimentation, they are standing in the way of the creativity process. Furthermore, lack of project resources can also hinder employees’ creativity. Some degree of pressure within the work place can also have a positive influence on creativity as it can be perceived as a challenge for the employees. Another important factor is matching individuals to work assignments, since employees are more likely to be creative in pursuits they enjoy. Therefore, people should be matched with jobs that reflect their expertise and their skills in creative thinking.

*Structure and systems* – Organizations must implement appropriate systems and procedures, which emphasize that creative effort is a top priority within an organization. The systems include rewards, recognition and career systems. Management must also have a long-term commitment with regard to their employees’ careers. It is also suggested that a flat structure enhances creativity, as it will allow for important decisions to be made at all levels. Another important factor for organizational encouragement is to provide employees with a fair, supportive evaluation on their individual contribution to the organization. Furthermore, organizations should reward creativity. However, they should avoid using money to “bribe” people to come up with innovative ideas. Organizations can instead support creativity by encouraging information exchange, collaboration and by minimizing politics within the organization.

### **2.1.3 Organizational climate, culture and structure**

Ahmed (1998) suggests three major factors that are the base for developing creativity in a workplace, which include organizational climate, culture and structure. The first one is the *organizational climate*, which involves four dimensions. These four dimensions are presented in Figure 2.2 and described below.



*Figure 2.2 Four dimensions of innovation climates*  
 Source: Adapted from Ahmed (1998), p. 31

For each dimension, parameters have been developed in order to evaluate the degree of innovation and creativity on a workplace. These parameters are presented in Table 2.1 and are described below.

Table 2.1 Parameters of organizational climate

<p><b>Nature of interpersonal relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there trust or mistrust?</li> <li>- Are relationships reciprocal and based on collaboration, or are they competitive?</li> <li>- Does the organization socialize newcomers and support them to perform, or does it allow them to achieve and assimilate simply by independent effort?</li> <li>- Do the individuals feel valued by the company?</li> </ul> <p><b>Nature of hierarchy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Are decisions made centrally or through consensus and participation?</li> <li>- Is there a spirit of teamwork or is work more or less individualistic?</li> <li>- Are there any special privileges accorded to certain individuals, such as management staff?</li> </ul> <p><b>Nature of work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is work challenging or boring?</li> <li>- Are jobs tightly defined and produce routines or do they provide flexibility?</li> <li>- Are sufficient resources provided to undertake the tasks for which individuals are given responsibility?</li> </ul> <p><b>Focus of support and rewards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What aspects of performance are appraised and rewarded?</li> <li>- What projects and actions/behaviors get supported?</li> <li>- Is getting the work done (quantity) or getting the work right (quality) rewarded?</li> <li>- On what basis are people hired?</li> </ul>
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Source: Adapted from Ahmed (1998), p. 31

The questions presented below each dimension in Table 2.1, help to evaluate the work environment within an organization. They can be seen as important issues for enhancing the creativity in the workplace. Furthermore, from these questions, employees draw inferences about the organizational environment in which they reside and understand the priorities accorded to certain goals that the organization espouses.

The second major factor for developing creativity in the workplace is, according to Ahmed (1998), *organizational culture*. As each employee of an organization plays an important role, organizations need to consider the type of employees that can most effectively drive innovation and creativity. A list of factors has been developed, which shows what characterize creative individuals. The list is presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Personality traits for innovation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- High valuation of aesthetic qualities in experience</li><li>- Broad interests</li><li>- Attraction to complexity</li><li>- High energy</li><li>- Independence of judgment</li><li>- Intuition</li><li>- Self-confidence</li><li>- Ability to accommodate opposites</li><li>- Firm sense of self as creative</li><li>- Persistence</li><li>- Curiosity</li><li>- Energy</li><li>- Intellectual honesty</li><li>- Internal locus of control (reflective or introspective)</li></ul>
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Source: Adapted from Ahmed (1998), p. 35

The personality traits presented in Table 2.2 is needed for developing creativity in the workplace. However, there are also a number of personal motivational factors that affect the innovation and creativity. Those factors are presented in Table 2.3 and described below.

Table 2.3 Personal motivational factors affecting innovation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation</li><li>- Challenging individuals</li><li>- Skills and knowledge</li></ul>
--

Source: Adapted from Ahmed (1998), p. 35-36

*Intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation* – As mentioned earlier in this thesis, intrinsic motivation is a key driver of creativity. Furthermore, extrinsic interventions such as rewards and evaluations affect innovation and creativity motivation negatively as they seem to move the attention from “experimenting” to following rules or technicalities of performing a specific task. Contrarily, to be creative, individuals need freedom to take risks and play with new ideas.

*Challenging individuals* – Open ended, non-structured work stimulate higher creativity than constricted jobs. This is a result of the fact that employees respond positively when they are challenged and provided enough possibilities to generate new solutions. It is stated that there is no lack of creativity among individuals, but organizational expectations have a great affect on the individuals’ ability to innovate.

*Skills and knowledge* – Expertise, technical skills and talent can have both positive and negative consequences on creativity. Positively, skills and knowledge enhance the possibility

of creating new understanding. Negatively, skills and knowledge may narrow individuals to work in routines and thereby hinder new perspectives.

Finally, Ahmed (1998) also concludes that the *organizational structure* have a great impact on the ability to think creatively. An organic structure promotes creativity while a mechanistic structure hinders creativity. The characteristics of the different organizational structures are listed in Table 2.4.

*Table 2.4 Organic versus mechanistic structure*

<b><i>Organic structure</i></b>	<b><i>Mechanistic structure</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freedom of rules</li> <li>- Participative and informal</li> <li>- Many views aired and considered</li> <li>- Face to face communication</li> <li>- Inter-disciplinary teams; breaking down departmental barriers</li> <li>- Emphasis on creative interaction and aims</li> <li>- Willingness to take on external ideas</li> <li>- Flexibility with respect to changing needs</li> <li>- Non-hierarchical</li> <li>- Information flow downward as well as upward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rigid departmental separation and functional specialization</li> <li>- Bureaucratic</li> <li>- Formal reporting</li> <li>- Many rules and set procedures</li> <li>- Long decision chains and slow decision-making</li> <li>- Little individual freedom of action</li> <li>- Communication via the written word</li> <li>- Hierarchical</li> <li>- Much information flow upwards; directives flow downwards</li> </ul>

*Source: Adapted from Ahmed (1998), p. 36*

As Table 2.4 shows, creativity is increased by the use of highly participative structures and cultures. In the organic structure, individuals feel involvement in the process and thereby the commitment to the organization increases. Moreover, employees in organic structures have a strong will to lead projects from the beginning to the end, which in turn enhances the creativity and ability to innovate.

## **2.2 Creativity process**

To develop more innovative products, processes and services, organizations must encourage their employees to think more creatively. Therefore, the process that describes how to solve this issue within companies is important to discover. As a result, there are many theories that suggest solutions to these problems. (McFadzean 1999)

### ***2.2.1 Group creativity process***

At group levels, access to information equates to communication between individuals as well as individual access to information. Therefore, an activity such as group creativity is useful and valuable in the creativity process and need to be organized with creative flare, which is called think tank. (Walton 2003) The steps included in the group creativity process are listed and described below.

- First develop a rotational think tank. Choose the initial group members for their potential creativity and then replace one or two members with new ones at each new session. This helps prevent the same ideational pathways being repeated at each development of a problem solution, and introduces new sources of information.
- One should be creative with the think tank setting. The corporate conference room is unlikely to be the most motivating of venues. Different environments may stimulate the recall and application of different information (and therefore, problem solutions). An interesting environment will help to develop a positive attitude and expectation towards the think tank meeting and the potential outcomes.
- Keep the think tank sessions positive. A positive mood maximizes creative potential; therefore the group should deal with anything that is negative quickly and then move on to things more positive.
- Incorporate some light physical exercise. It is thought that communication between the hemispheres of the brain is important for creative thought. These neural pathways have been found to be more beneficial to information transfer while something undemanding and repetitive is done, such as walking.
- Support the views of dissenting minorities or individuals in order to increase different thought-processing tendencies. Emphasize that expressing an opinion different from other group members is a positive contribution, even if it is counter-normative and goes against the majority view. This helps to avoid "group think" and strengthen the self-esteem of more creative team members.
- Highlight the benefits to the whole team from each member's contribution, even if it is not in agreement with the majority view.
- Circulate an agenda to members before a meeting to allow individual solutions or suggestions to be presented before the development of group ones.

### 2.2.2 Four rules to facilitate creativity

Hughes (2003) states four critical rules that must be applied in the creativity process. These rules are presented in Table 2.5 and described below.

Table 2.5 Four rules to facilitate creativity

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Withholding judgment</li><li>- Freewheeling</li><li>- Generating a quantity of ideas</li><li>- Hitchhiking on the ideas of others</li></ul> |
|---|

Source: Adapted from Hughes (2003)

*Withholding judgment* - Withholding judgment means that judgment is a threat to the creativity process. The creative problem solving process needs lots of creative ideas. Judging during different activities must be avoided at all cost. However, positive feedback has shown that it increases the combination of different stimuli to new ways of thinking. Criticism at the outset would have turned off the group process that could lead to a practical solution.

*Freewheeling* - Freewheeling is a concept which means that it is acceptable to break the common pattern of working. Even the craziest idea should not be criticized due to the "no

judgment” rule. This leads to the fact that everyone can feel that they are not blocked by anyone and therefore feels free to express them. By doing so, many new ideas will arise.

*Generating a quantity of ideas* - Generating a quantity of ideas is very important. It is like mining for gold; “you need to dig a lot of dirt to find a nugget”. Instead of criticizing people who comes up with crazy ideas, they should be encouraged and praised for those ideas. Because of those crazy ideas, others may turn those ideas into something very practical. Experiments have shown that the last ideas, beyond the mental blocks are the highest quality ideas. Forcing participant to create more and more ideas in less time is a stretching process that takes them outside their comfort zone. This physiological stretching helps the employees to be more creative in the future.

*Hitchhiking* - Combining the best of ideas that the team has come up with is called hitchhiking. During the process, it could benefit if all members of the team can see that they are a part of the final solution. Participation and involvement encourage the level of creativity in the workplace.

### 2.2.3 The principle of creative thinking

The principle of creative thinking can help practitioners and researchers in organizations and management to explain, understand and enhance their creative work (Evans, 1997<sup>1,2</sup>). Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) states that the creative problem solving process involves six steps. These are presented in Figure 2.3.



Figure 2.3 The principle of creative thinking  
Source: Adapted from Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>)

*Mess finding* - The first stage, which is mess finding, explains that to solve a problem, the organization must first identify it. To find the mess, the organization must become aware of challenges, concerns and opportunities. A mess often begins with an observation of an unexpected event or signal of a potential problem, such as poor quality, low profits and loss of market share or high employee turnover. People often recognize the mess by an “Aha!” experience. An “Aha!” experience can arise from individual and organizational activities in the form of performance reviews. Such an experience can also come from an angry customer that tells the company what they are doing wrong. Mess can be found through creative-thinking principles and involves creating goals and limitation in the system. Two questions is suggested to be used in this stage: “Wouldn’t it be nice if?” and “Wouldn’t it be awful if?”. Furthermore, the organization assesses ownership of the mess, familiarity with it, its importance and its urgency.

*Fact finding* - The second stage in the process is fact finding. This stage is an information-gathering task and it is intended to increase the group’s understanding of the mess. The more information a group gathers, the better it can consider different problem perspectives during the problem finding stage and begin to find potential solutions during the idea-finding stage. A creative idea often comes from careful observation of unusual occurrences. Fact finding

also help the group to avoid doing rash evaluations of a specific problem entwined in the mess and instead focuses on the mess rather than the solution. During the fact finding stage, the group tries to separate relevant data from irrelevant. To implement this, it is important to highlight all the relevant and interesting facts. From this selection, the group should try to identify facts that have something in common and then decide which are the most critical to the mess. From this list, the group should be able to write down a problem definition and proceed to the problem finding stage.

*Problem finding* - The mess finding and fact finding stage create the way to problem finding, by developing a statement of the real problem. To find the problem, it is important to focus on developing and processing statements that will address the mess. Problem finding is an activity in which the group generates different statements and thereafter evaluates these in order to identify the real problem. It begins by reviewing the data generated during fact finding. Then a list of possible ownership and action elements is developed, striving for quantity. The next step will consider different combinations from each list and examine the problem statement that is suggested. Techniques such as repeatedly asking why, will often suggest a new and more basic statement of the problem. A problem well defined is half solved.

*Idea finding* - In the idea finding stage, the group generates as many ideas or potential solutions as possible. A technique that is commonly used is brainstorming. To use a wide range of techniques stimulates the amount of ideas generated positively. The process of idea finding is guided by the rules of brainstorming – Do not criticize, strive for quantity, encourage freewheeling and combine and recombine.

*Solution finding* - In the solution finding stage, the group evaluates, judges and selects potential solutions. The purpose of this phase is to evaluate potential solutions and develop these solutions into useful actions in order to solve the problem. Solution finding is a two-part process. In the first part, the organization converges to screen and select the criteria, then join to select a solution. Criteria are objective standards that measure the value of potential solutions. Examples of different criteria are time, cost acceptance, practicality and performance. The more criteria the group has to guide its judgment upon, the better off when evaluating the ideas.

*Acceptance finding* - In the acceptance findings phase, the focus is on overcoming barriers to implementation. Individuals must gain acceptance from themselves as well as from the group. Solutions often need to be modified in order to address implementation problems. Good preparation has to be made for problems that might arise when implementing the ideas. It is suggested that a group should create a list of assisters and resisters, which are the factors that can gain acceptance of the solution or hinder its acceptance.

#### **2.2.4 The PISCES process**

The PISCES process involves six steps. It is common to use a variety of creative techniques across the steps, which breaks down the thinking barriers and are fun. During these six steps there is a facilitator that keeps the process on track, introduces the activities and moving the process along to prevent losing energy. (Vardis & Vasa-Sideris, 2000) The six steps are presented in Figure 2.4 and described below.

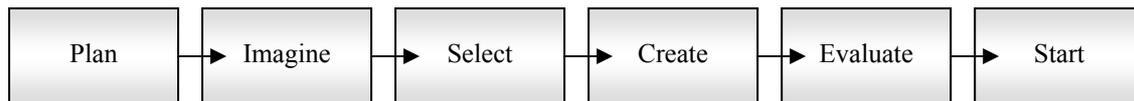


Figure 2.4 The PISCES process

Source: Adapted from Vardis & Vasa-Sideris (2000)

*Plan* - The first step, which is planning, is designed to establish commitment to breakthrough ideas. The client and the key people identify important elements of the problem, they define the various perspectives in which the product or service may be viewed, objectives for session and criteria for selecting ideas. In this step, it is also decided who the participants will be.

*Imagine* - In the imagine step, creative exercises are used in order to generate and build on ideas of what defines the product, who the target audience is, what the attributes or benefits of the products are, where the product or service is offered and who the key competitors are. Lastly, the imagine step involves what critical points that creates a difference between the product or service compared to the competition. To gain the answers to these questions techniques such as brainstorming are used to generate ideas that will solve the answers to the questions.

*Select* - In the select step, the participant use different techniques to group and select ideas that have been generated in the imagine step. Visual methods are used such as dot voting with multi-color dots. Other approaches that may be used are developing matrices or clustering ideas.

*Create* - The create step involves strategies that are developed to differentiate the product or service by using the outcome of the select step. A matrix is created with dimensions such as target audience, competitors, benefits and attributes of the product or services, which are all used to generate a positioning statement.

*Evaluate* - In the evaluate step, members of the target audience are selected to participate in focus groups. To meet the objective of the study, a custom guide for the focus groups is developed. The participants in the focus groups define the criteria that make them want that specific product or service and the attractive attributes of that product or service in a playful open environment.

*Start* - In the start step, an action plan is developed that defines what is to be done, who will do it, how will it be done and when. The action plan incorporates the creative inputs of the process.

### 2.2.5 Techniques to enhance creativity

According to McFadzean (2000), creativity can be encouraged by changing a person's mindset or paradigm. A paradigm is defined as a shared set of assumptions, a way people perceived the world and a way of explaining what is going on around them. If people are in the middle of a paradigm, it is difficult for them to perceive the situation in any other way. However, creative problem solving can help people to modify or even change their paradigm. McFadzean (2000) suggests that using three different strategies can enhance creativity in a workplace. Those are illustrated in Table 2.6 and discussed below.

Table 2.6 Techniques to enhance creativity

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Paradigm preserving techniques</li><li>- Paradigm stretching techniques</li><li>- Paradigm breaking techniques</li></ul> |
|--|

Source: Adapted from McFadzean (1999)

In the first part, *paradigm preserving techniques*, there are many different types of techniques to be used, such as brainstorming. Another method is called the word diamond. With this model the problem statement is firstly written down. Then four words are written down from the statement. The words are then combined with each other to produce ideas until all possibilities have been exhausted. The ideas generated from the word diamond can then be analyzed and developed into practical solutions. Free association is used to develop ideas for each combination. This technique is simple to use and can therefore be used by less experienced groups and facilitators. (McFadzean, 2000)

In *paradigm stretching techniques*, one uses forced association and unrelated stimuli to encourage participants to develop creative ideas. These techniques include object stimulation, metaphors, role storming, heuristic ideation technique and assumption reversals. Paradigm stretching techniques have several strengths and weaknesses. The main advantage is that this technique generally encourages the participants to develop more creative ideas compared to the paradigm preserving technique. However, there is a need to be aware of the safety and physiological security of the participants. If the facilitator ignores the discomfort that may be created by using these techniques, the group might show negative emotions such as aggression or frustration. (Ibid)

The result of *paradigm breaking techniques* can be very powerful. The ideas developed tend to be much more novel and creative than those developed using paradigm preserving and stretching techniques. Physiological safety is however very important. It is therefore necessary that paradigm breaking should occur under appropriate conditions. Participant who does not agree to the process are unlikely to take part effectively. One of the reasons to failure when using this technique is that group members are there only to work, not to have fun. But creativity is greatly enhanced by encouraging the use of fun and playfulness. Humor is also related with creativity and companies have found out that their meetings are more effective if they start with an icebreaker. (Ibid)

### 2.3 Creativity managers

A vast majority of organizations operating in the harsh business environment are continuously seeking a steady stream of new products and services; old products and services should be marketed and sold in new ways in new places to achieve more earnings. Organizations and its managers can pull off these objectives, but not with a uniformed solution. Creativity is a crucial factor for managers that are seeking these objectives. To reach the desired state of creative performance, managers must find ways of releasing and allocating a creative spirit. (Pinchot & Pellman, 1999)

### 2.3.1 Managerial practices that enhance subordinates' creativity

Williams (2001) states that there are ranges of approaches in which managers are able to affect its subordinates' degree of creativity. The all-embracing approaches include creating a work context and evaluating creative performance. The issue of creating a work context that is supportive of creativity includes an extensive range of concerns and evaluating creative performance is equally important for fostering subordinates' creativity. All managerial practices that enhance subordinates' creativity according to Williams (2001) are listed in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7 Managerial practices that enhance subordinates' creativity

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture</li> <li>- Structure</li> <li>- Allocating resources</li> <li>- Designing work groups</li> <li>- Job design</li> <li>- Social support</li> <li>- Encouragement</li> <li>- Evaluation</li> </ul>
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Source: Adapted from Williams (2001)

To begin with, the organizational *culture* is the shared beliefs and assumptions within the organization. Organizational culture can motivate creativity by recognizing and rewarding creative performance. Managers have to keep a long-term perspective when changing the organizational culture. Managers are not likely to change the culture in the short-term; therefore, organizational culture change should not be targeted as a short-term objective.

Furthermore, organizational *structures* are related to organizations' ability to keep a high degree of creativity within the organization and adapting to the environment. Organizational structures can provide an instrument for developing and allocating new ideas that facilitate creativity within the organization. Managers should keep a long-term perspective on organizational structures, for the same reasons as for the organizational culture.

Another method for managers to affect its subordinates' creativity is the allocation of *resources*. A constrained budget decreases the creativity, while permitting adequate loose budget for experimentation can assist creativity. The most valuable resource managers may allocate to encourage creativity in the workplace is time. In addition, access to monetary resources, important information, facilities and materials foster creativity. On the other hand, productivity goals tend to constrain creativity.

The method, by which managers choose to *design* work groups, influences creativity in the workplace. A manager should compile each work group in a manner that includes a diverse pool of skilled members, an openness to new ideas, high levels of interpersonal trust, commitment to the work and communication flows where each member actively challenge each other's ideas in a constructively manner. Managers are often responsible of forming work teams and careful consideration is required if the work team is supposed to keep a high degree of creativity.

The design of a work can be incredibly crucial for creativity in the workplace and managers need to take this into consideration when job *designs* are outlined. Job characteristics that are positively related to creativity are complexity, autonomy, variety and feedback. Furthermore, challenging and important work tasks, free of distractions and supervision that is non-controlling, are also crucial for creativity. Participative decision-making is stimulating creativity as well. Finally, intrinsically rewarding and motivation is supportive for creative performance.

The leader style of managers that want to encourage creativity should be *supportive*, supportive supervision is positively connected to creativity in the workplace. Social support is often mentioned as a crucial factor for developing creativity, as managers need to show empathy and attempt to understand each employee's individual situation and feelings.

In addition, managers need to *encourage* the current creativity within the organization in order to increase it even more. Managers provide encouragement of creativity by stressing the value of individuals' contribution and demonstrating confidence in all members of the group. Employees that feel trust and appreciation are often showing a great degree of creativity.

*Evaluation* is another effective measure that managers can implement to increase creativity in the workplace. Evaluation that managers pass on to the employees should be fair, supportive and mainly informational. This type of feedback provides an opportunity to revise one's creative ideas and innovations without expressing negative criticism or make the employee look bad.

To sum up, Williams (2001) states that some of the practices that managers can undertake to stimulate creativity are the development of an appropriate organizational culture and structure, the allocation of resources, the job and work design, the level of encouragement they provide and the manner in which they evaluate creative performances.

Thacker (1997) states that the manager of a workplace is an exceedingly important element for providing a working atmosphere in which employees can feel motivated to be creative. The workplace should be an open field in which all members feel free to share their own ideas and suggestions. The leader style that is supportive is more likely to contribute to creativity, compared to a controlling leadership style. A controlling leadership style is more likely to decrease individual motivation since it does not allow creativity ideas to flow throughout the entire organization.

### ***2.3.2 Managerial efforts that will open the doors of creativity***

Pinchot & Pellman (1999) stress some simple steps that will open the doors of creativity and innovation. These methods are appropriate when releasing and directing a wave of creativity spirit. The steps are presented in Table 2.8 and discussed below.

Table 2.8 Managerial efforts that will open the doors of creativity

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage status quo</li> <li>- Create a vision</li> <li>- Bet on people</li> <li>- Ask for help</li> <li>- Find creativity barriers</li> <li>- Search for and reward sponsors</li> <li>- Value improvements</li> <li>- Create a mutable organization</li> <li>- Community building</li> <li>- Evaluation</li> </ul>
--

Source: Adapted from Pinchot & Pellman (1999)

*Discourage status quo* - Managers must discourage the current situation and make sure that the employees do not feel satisfied regarding the current situation and with things as they are. People in highly structured and bureaucratic environments tend to be complacent about the overall performance, focus most of their energy at fighting for internal position and a share of the rewards rather than on expanding the entire organization. Managers should turn the focus on challenges as achieving the mission and dissatisfaction with the status quo. Managers should strive for continuous improvements for the organization.

*Create a vision* - A vision can be a powerful tool for managers that want to increase the degree of creativity among its employees. The vision should stretch beyond the day-to-day business and align employees towards creative performance. The need for change and new ideas become apparent and freedom for creativity is at hand. Creating a vision is also calling for new responsibilities because it requires the creative energy of all employees.

*Bet on people* - Pinchot & Pellman (1999) further states that managers should bet on people, not just ideas. The people that bring new ideas forward should be closely looked at. A topnotch creative employee with a less innovative idea is to prefer rather than a satisfied employee dealing with a topnotch idea. If employees are resourceful and committed; they can continually adapt the idea until they succeed. Differences between creative employees' characteristics and satisfied employees' characteristics are highlighted in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9 Differences between creative and satisfied employees' characteristics

Creative employees	Satisfied employees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Driven by a vision of a better way and the need to make it happen</li> <li>- Moderate risk takers</li> <li>- Persistent</li> <li>- Honest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Driven by a desire for power and position</li> <li>- High risk takers</li> <li>- Changes ideas when the going gets rough</li> <li>- Dishonest</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Pinchot & Pellman (1999).

*Ask for help* - It is important for managers to realize that they cannot take absolute control and dictate the employees. Managers should lower their status and become a natural part of the team. It is possible to get close to new ideas without taking over; treated more like a peer than a boss. If managers do not lower their status, the employees lose control, discontinue thinking for it and cease to take responsibility for decisions. This will harm the creativity in the workplace and the desired creative outcome will be lost. Managers should instead lower the status and treat every employee with respect and even spend some casual time with them. Taking an active interest in the progress and assure everyone that they are on the same team as the managers will increase the level of creativity in the workplace.

Moreover, if managers always have the right answers and knowledge, the creativity of the audience is not evoked. Instead, the employees listen to the boss and wait to hear the right answer and how to solve the problem. This will naturally disturb the creativity among employees. Effective managers admit mistakes and acknowledge that they do not hold all knowledge there is. The employees hold valuable resources and the most straightforward and effective method is simply to ask them.

*Find creativity barriers and search for and reward sponsors* - Creativity and innovation can often be counteracted without anyone knowing it. Managers need to examine the situation on a regular basis in order to sort out and eliminate the current barriers that offsets creativity in the workplace. It is significant for managers to create an environment in which people at all levels can get on with the work of turning the vision into a reality. On the other hand, employees that work actively for creativity are being called sponsors. They select, fund, nurture, guide, educate, question and redirect the creative people in the organization. Effective sponsors recognize a promising idea before it is obvious and brings out the best from it. Managers need to search for and reward these sponsors.

*Value improvements and create a mutable organization* - Pinchot & Pellman (1999) further state that it is crucial for the development of creativity to value every progress that is being made. Some results are not holding the characteristics of a breakthrough and are not gaining any attention. However, every positive progress should be valued and recognized. The creativity might decline and the creative spirit among employees might diminish otherwise. Organizations that are striving to increase the degree of creativity within its organization should be flexible; the essence is elasticity. The creativity organization is going through constant changes and network of relationships across the formal boundaries are generated. Managers should provide a mutable architecture where employees will be able to do their best work and share their ideas.

*Community building and evaluation* - Inside the mutable organization, managers should encourage a community where employees' values and opinions are addressed. The community should stand for something the employees can be proud of; something that makes it meaningful to rise above self-centered issues and work for the entire organization. At the core of the community is voluntarily input to the organization, above and beyond the call of duty. This action expands the feeling of freedom and creativity is nurtured. Finally, managers need to evaluate the work on a regular basis to be aware of the problems that exist. Dealing with problems in time tends to be positively related to creativity.

### ***2.3.3 Supportive versus controlling leadership style***

Cummings & Oldham (1996) argue that a relationship between the supervisory style of managers and the creativity of employees has been developed. Managers that are embracing a supportive supervisory style is more likely to enhance achievement, while managers that are controlling regarding their supervisory style is more likely to reduce creative performance.

Moreover, when managers are supportive, feelings and needs of employees are recognized and they are encouraged to state their right to be heard. Feedback is provided, which is facilitating employees' skills development. A supportive manager provides opportunities to promote employees' feelings of self-determination and personal initiative at work, which then increase levels of interest in workplace activities and boost creative achievement. (Ibid)

On the other hand, controlling managers tend to hold the creative performance back. Controlling managers monitor the employees' behavior closely and generally pressure them to think. Employee involvement is rather fictional and controlling managers makes all important decisions without any input from the colleagues. This supervisory style is leading the employees to satisfy the boss rather than finding new ideas; tasks are solved in a manner that the controlling manager has delivered. Motivation is focused on external issues instead of solving tasks with an innovative approach. Furthermore, attention is drawn away from work activities and external sources are emphasized; this behavior is expected to lower creative performance. (Ibid)

To sum up, managers who seeks to stimulate and boost the level of creativity in organizations should keep informed about how employees think and feel regarding various subjects, also allowing employees to make decisions concerning their work on their own. It is also significant to encourage employees to actively participate in important decisions, to speak up when they disagree and also explain their actions to colleagues. Managers should keep a supportive supervisory style; help employees to solve work-related problems and encourage them to develop new skills. Good efforts and performance should be rewarded and recognized, but managers should keep away from constantly checking on employees' work. (Cummings & Oldham, 1997)

### ***2.3.4 The role of leaders' emotional intelligence***

Creativity is most often not an official and explicit part of employees' job. Due to this fact, employees are not likely to automatically engage in creative ideas. As an alternative, employees often need to be prompted to overcome the initial barriers and have their potential creativity stimulated. Research demonstrates that managers with high levels of emotional intelligence will stand out at stimulating and encouraging employees to identify and act on opportunities for creativity. (Zhou & George, 2003)

Emotional intelligence is an indication of how an individual perceives, understands and regulates emotions. Emotional intelligence is a form of intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to differentiate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. (Lam & Kirby, 2002)

Managers that hold a high degree of emotional intelligence are able to perceive, assess and express emotions of its subordinates. These managers are likely to be aware of employees'

emotions and are able to act upon this knowledge in an appropriate manner. It is common knowledge that problems are most effectively taken care of from the start - the sooner the better. Moreover, high level of emotional intelligence among managers will enable them to recognize and solve problem in a timely fashion. The ability to identify problems at an early stage facilitates improvement of the organization and amplifies employee concern. (Zhou & George, 2003)

### 3 Conceptualization

*In this chapter the conceptualization will be presented. The purpose of this chapter is to lift out and present the main things to be studied, both graphically and narrative (Miles & Hubermann, 1994). After having reviewed the literature within the field of study, we have conceptualized the theory to explain the main dimensions, factors or variables of our research questions that will be studied.*

We have chosen to use the following studies due to the fact that they all bring up important concerns that we find relevant for the data collection. Furthermore, these studies allow us to gain applicable information regarding the research purpose and the specific research questions.

#### 3.1 Factors influencing creativity

In order to describe what factors that are influencing creativity in a workplace, we will rely on a study by Ahmed (1998). The reason for choosing to use this particular study is that it is the best suited, since it is the most extensive that we have found and it will bring a greater perspective to our study. Furthermore, it involves the most common factors that generally are included in studies regarding this issue. Moreover, it will be of great help when analyzing our research questions.

Ahmed (1998) suggests that the three major factors influencing creativity are organizational climate, organizational culture and organizational structure. The factors are illustrated in Figure 3.1 and summarized below.

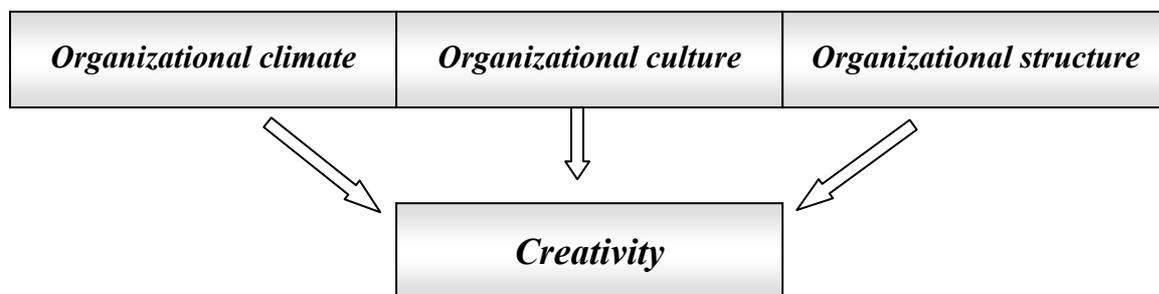


Figure 3.1 Factors that influence creativity in the workplace  
Source: Adapted from Ahmed (1998)

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Organizational climate</i> | Nature of interpersonal relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Trust/mistrust</li> <li>○ Reciprocal/competitive</li> <li>○ Treatment of new employees</li> <li>○ Valuation within the organization</li> </ul> Nature of hierarchy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Central/participative decision-making</li> <li>○ Teamwork/individualistic</li> <li>○ Special privileges</li> </ul> Nature of work |
|-------------------------------|--|

- Challenging/boring
- Routines/flexibility
- Resources
- Focus of support and rewards
  - Aspects of performance that are appraised and rewarded
  - Support
  - Quantity/quality
  - Basis for employment

*Organizational culture*

- Personality traits
- High valuation of aesthetic qualities in experience
  - Broad interests
  - Attraction to complexity
  - High energy
  - Independence of judgment
  - Intuition
  - Self-confidence
  - Ability to accommodate opposites
  - Firm sense of self as creative
  - Persistence
  - Curiosity
  - Energy
  - Intellectual honesty
  - Internal locus of control (reflective/introspective)

- Personal motivational factors affecting innovation
- Intrinsic/extrinsic motivation
  - Challenging individuals
  - Skills and knowledge

*Organizational structure*

- Organic
- Mechanistic

### 3.2 Creativity process

To investigate how the creativity process can be described we choose to rely on the principles of creative thinking by Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>). This study is the most extensive study we have found regarding this subject. The principles included in this process are illustrated in Figure 3.2.

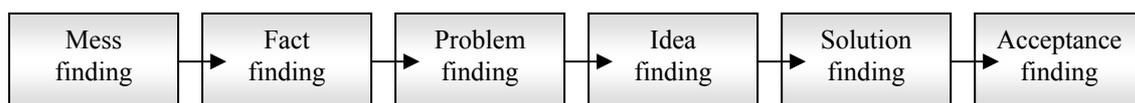


Figure 3.2 The principles of creative thinking  
 Source: Adapted from Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>)

### 3.3 Creativity managers

Regarding research question three, we have chosen to rely on a study made by Pinchot & Pellman (1999), since it provides us with an extensive view of managerial efforts that will

open the doors of creativity. This is relevant and appropriate for the purpose of this thesis, which is to gain a better understanding of how to add value to the organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace. Pinchot & Pellman (1999) present ten guidelines that are appropriate when releasing and directing a wave of creativity spirit. These guidelines should be followed in order to boost the level of creativity in the workplace. The guidelines are demonstrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Guidelines for increasing the level of creativity

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discourage status quo</li> <li>- Create a vision</li> <li>- Bet on people</li> <li>- Ask for help</li> <li>- Find creativity barriers</li> <li>- Search for and reward sponsors</li> <li>- Value improvements</li> <li>- Create a mutable organization</li> <li>- Community building</li> <li>- Evaluation</li> </ul>
--

Source: Adapted from Pinchot & Pellman (1999)

### 3.4 Frame of reference

We will present our frame of reference in this section, which has emerged from the conceptualization and the three research questions. In order to show how our research questions fit together, a frame of reference will be provided. The following figure aims to give an overview of how our research questions relate to each other and all supply as a stand to arrive at our research purpose. The frame of reference is presented in Figure 3.3.

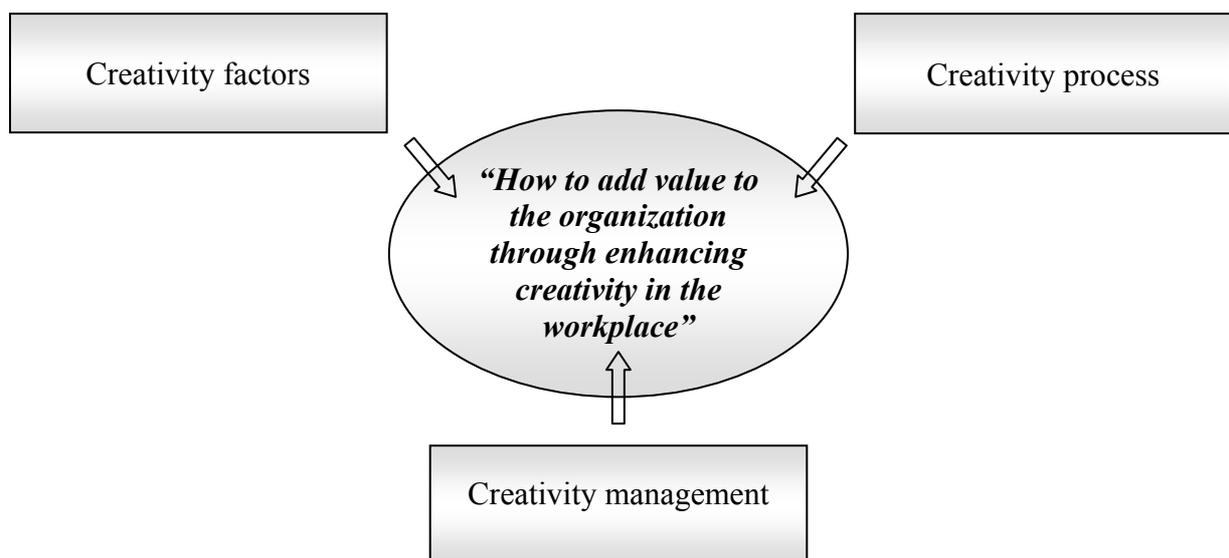


Figure 3.3 Frame of reference

While the conceptualization above provides the main areas to be studied, we now turn to how we went about collecting the data via the methodology chapter.

## 4 Methodology

*Following the conceptualization and the frame of reference, this chapter will provide a description of the methodology used. The chapter will work as a guideline, so the reader can follow how the research problem has been treated (See Figure 4.1). First the research purpose is described, as well as the approach of the research followed by the research strategy and how the data was collected. The sample selection is explained and so is the analysis strategy. Finally, issues concerning the validity and the reliability of this thesis are discussed.*



Figure.4.1 Methodology elements

### 4.1 Purpose of the research

The purpose of a thesis can be diverse, based on ambitions and knowledge within the research area. Basically, the purpose can be structured as exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001)

Exploratory studies aim for basic knowledge within the problem area (Wallén, 1996). They are also suitable when a relevant theory is unclear and when important characteristics and relations are hard to determine (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001). Descriptive studies mainly determine the research objective's characteristics and its relevant surroundings (Wallén, 1996). They are usable when the problem is relatively clear and structured, but the intentions are not to investigate causal relations. Explanatory studies involve analyzing causes and relationships. This includes not only traditional causal explanations but also explanations of a certain purpose, when investigating if one specific factor affects another. (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001)

The primary purpose of this thesis is to describe, due to the fact that this thesis aims not only to gain a deeper understanding within the research area, but also to describe how an organization adds value through enhancing creativity in the workplace. The study does not intend to suggest any norms or action taking. The thesis aims to determine characteristics of the fairly clear and structured research area. However, the study is also exploratory, since no other researcher has made an identical research approach before. Furthermore, the thesis must also be considered somewhat explanatory, since it aims to answer the research questions. Therefore, this thesis is mainly descriptive, but also exploratory and explanatory.

### 4.2 Research approach

There are two main research approaches within social sciences. One is the quantitative and the other is the qualitative method. A quantitative method is controlled and structured. It intends to make generalizations, based on the results of the research. The quantitative method studies few variables on a large number of entities. This approach is suitable for statistical research.

On the other hand, the purpose of a qualitative method is not to make generalizations, but to describe a situation as a whole, in which the research problem exists. The qualitative method provides the possibility to collect abundant information and to investigate several variables from a few numbers of entities. Most commonly, case studies and interviews are used in the qualitative method where no set alternatives of answers are being offered. (Holme & Solvang, 1991) The focus in this thesis has been placed on a qualitative method where a more detailed investigation is carried out to gain a deeper understanding. The thesis is also based on company beliefs and convictions, which best can be presented in words. The results of this study are not measurable in how much and how many, hence is a qualitative approach found to be most suitable for this study. We did not aim to make generalizations. Instead, by studying a relatively small sample, we could investigate several variables in depth and we were better able to reach desired understanding. As we now are focused on a qualitative research approach, the research strategy will be presented in the next section.

### 4.3 Research strategy

According to Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul (2001), there are three major research strategies: experiments, surveys and case studies. This is agreed upon by Yin (1994), but he also complements these strategies with archival analysis and history. What strategy to use in the research according to Yin (1994), will be determined by looking at three different conditions. The three conditions are: the type of research question posed, the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioral events and the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events (Ibid). Figure 4.2 shows how Yin (1994) relates each condition to the five alternative research strategies.

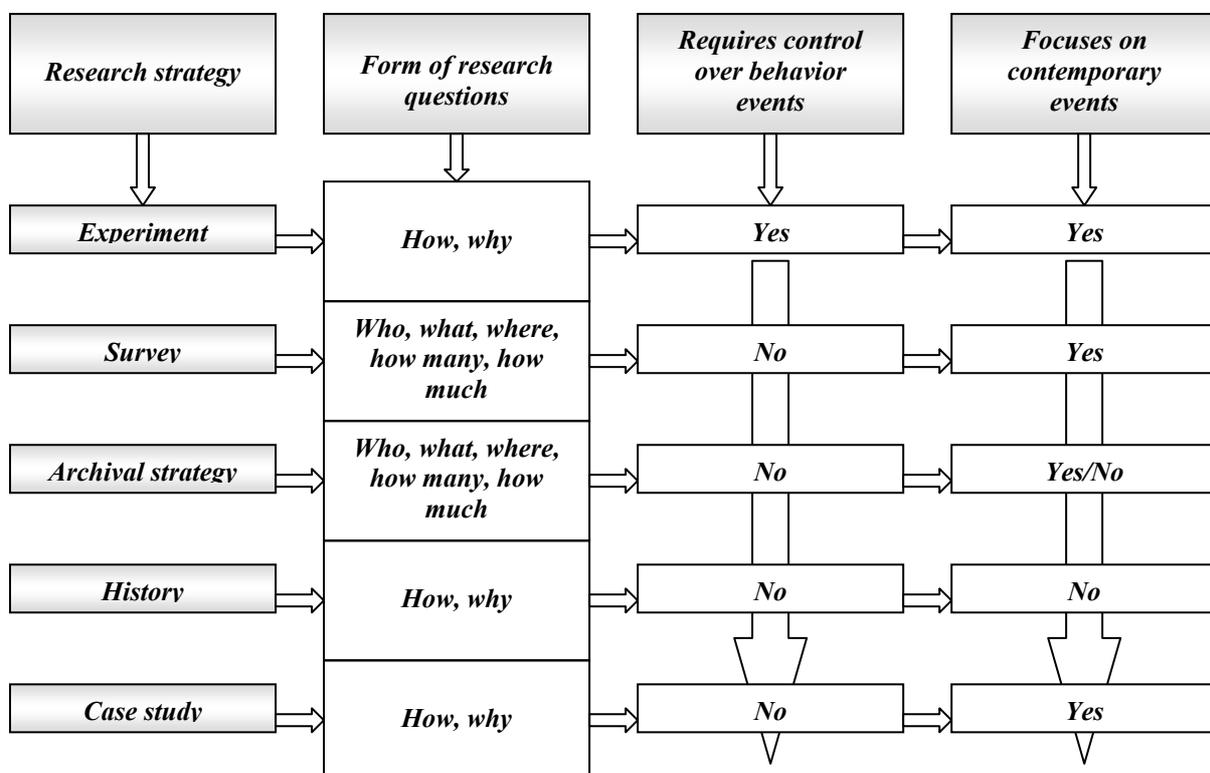


Figure 4.2 Relevant strategies for different research strategies  
 Source: Adapted from Yin (1994), p. 6

Yin (1994) further states that when assembling a single case study, the investigators have no possibilities to compare or generalize. On the other hand, multiple case studies provide the researchers the opportunity to compare. However, less time can be spent on each case. To receive a deeper understanding about this research strategy, a clarification of the chosen strategy is provided below.

A case study involves investigating few entities but many variables, in order to get an in depth situational picture. This can be done by questionnaires or interviews and is especially appropriate in the case of describing or explaining a problem area. (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001) According to Yin (1994), a case study can involve a single and a multiple case study. The single case study investigates one entity (a company, a decision, a region, etc.) in depth. In a multiple case study, two or more entities are studied which gives the opportunity of comparisons. On the other hand, each entity will then be less in depth investigated. (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001)

Furthermore, case studies can be done by interviews (Yin, 1994), which is the tool used in this thesis. The case studies in this thesis are a multiple case study where two entities are studied, using four different interviews. We wanted to investigate a limited number of companies, in order to receive as exhaustive information as possible from each case regarding our area of research. This also contributed to our choice of using multiple case studies. Using multiple case sampling will add to the confidence of the findings. How the case study is used, is presented in the next section on data collection.

#### **4.4 Data collection**

The data collection can be grouped in primary data and secondary data. Primary data consists of data collected by the researcher and is collected especially to address the specific research objective. Secondary data is already available since someone else collected it for another purpose than the current problem. (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1992) Statistics and reports issued by governments and documentation are some sources of secondary data. The annual report and the enterprises' homepage are other sources of secondary data. (Saunders, 2000) In this research, we have collected primary data through interviews and secondary data in terms of documentation.

Furthermore, according to Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul (1991), there are three ways of collecting data for case studies: through documents, through observations and through interviews and/or questionnaires. Yin (1994) adds archival records and physical artifacts as sources when accomplishing case studies. The strengths and weaknesses of each data collecting methods are presented in Figure 4.3.

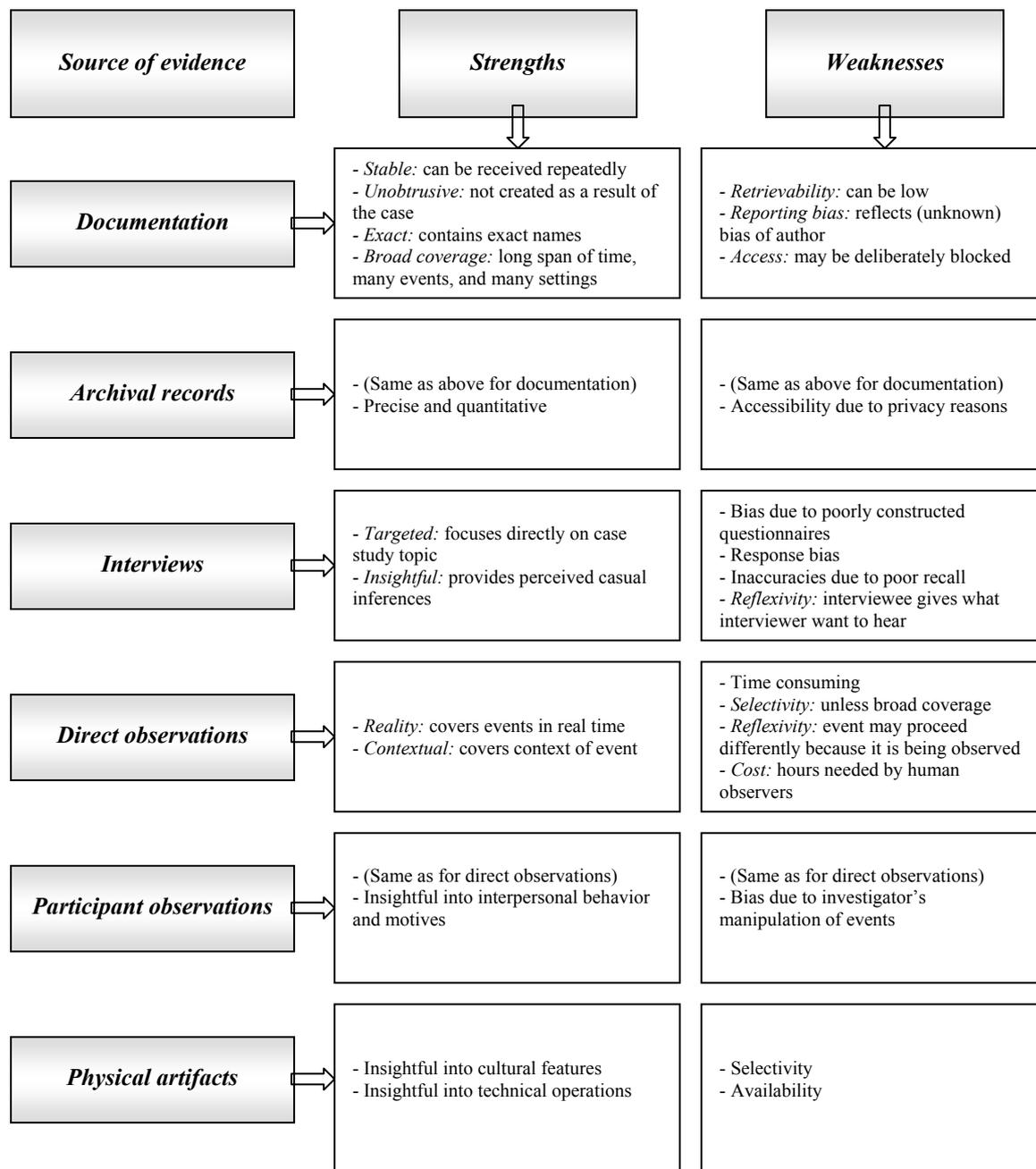


Figure 4.3 Six sources of evidence: strengths and weaknesses  
 Source: Adapted from Yin (1994), p.8

Documents include letters, articles and formal studies for example (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001 and Yin, 1994). According to Yin (1994), documentary information is likely to be relevant in every case study. Moreover, it is stated that documents can take many forms, such as administrative documents involving for example progress reports and other internal documents. Further, archival records as sources can generate both quantitative and qualitative information. Examples of archival records are organizational records showing organizational charts or personal records such as calendars and telephone listings. (Ibid)

To continue, interviews are the most important source of case studies according to Yin (1994) and focuses directly on the case study topic. In an interview, there is an interaction between the interviewer and the respondent. The interaction is either face to face or by telephone. (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001)

Moreover, in an observation, the observer records a process or situation, without disturbing or interfering the process. The reason is to sort out what people actually do, not only what they intend to do. An observation is a time consuming method of collecting data. (Winter, 1992) According to Yin (1994), there is a distinction between direct observation and participant observation. Direct observation involves observations of meetings, sidewalk activities and factory work, which implies that the researcher has a possibility to observe certain type of events during limited time duration. Participant observation enables the researcher to participate and take an active role in the events studied. (Ibid)

A final source of evidence is physical artifact. Such artifacts may be observed and collected as a part of a field visit and have been used extensively in anthropological research. This type of data collection method has less potential relevance in a typical case study. However, the artifacts can be an important component in the overall case. (Ibid)

For this thesis, interviews have been used as a source when collecting data. Interviews were in this case an appropriate data collection method. First of all, interviews are suitable when in-depth information is desired, which was the main purpose of this research. Second, interviews allow flexibility and closeness to the respondents, which is important in qualitative studies. (Holme & Solvang, 1991) Furthermore, interviews allow the researcher to focus directly on the case study topic, which is how an organization adds value through enhancing creativity in the workplace. Interviews can take three different forms: Open-ended interviews, focused interviews and structured interviews. An open-ended interview means that the respondents are not bound to any specific questions, so the interview is therefore regarded as more open and free, where the views of the respondents are freely discussed. A focused interview follows a prearranged structure where the topic of discussion is already set. Structured interviews are more of a mixture of an interview and a survey where the interview is based on prearranged questions. (Yin, 1994)

For this thesis, focused interviews were the most appropriate choice to gain the data needed, since the respondent can use his/her own words and communicates more accurate answers. However, the interviews were still somewhat structured as the interview was accomplished with a prearranged interview guide. This allowed us to lead the conversation based on prearranged subjects. Face to face interviews were conducted. The interviews were conducted in Swedish, which is the mother tongue for the respondents as well as for the researchers. According to recommendations by Yin (1994), a tape recorder was used throughout the interviews in order to accurately register the empirical data. The respondents were aware of the use of tape recorder and had no objections. In addition to the tape recorder, the researchers that were not conducting the interview took notes. In the end of the interviews, it was made sure that no questions accordingly to the interview guide were forgotten. Two interviews were conducted within each entity. An interview guide was constructed and it was based on the conceptualization and the research questions this study intends to answer (See Appendix I & II).

Furthermore, documentation was utilized as a source of gathering data in this thesis. Documentation, in the form of homepages and brochures were used. It enabled us to gain general information about the companies investigated in this research as well as more specific information regarding the research questions.

#### **4.5 Sample selection**

After having determined to conduct case studies, it was determined which characteristics the responding entity should have. We have chosen the Swedish advertising industry, as it includes creativity as a natural part of its business and therefore an advertising agency needs to develop and manage the creativity in the workplace, which makes it interesting. Moreover, advertising agencies is a part of the creative industry and they need to develop an organization that allows creativity to flourish within their working environments. (Andriopoulos & Gotsi, 2000)

Tull and Hawkins (1990) claim that the sample selection can be either probability or non-probability sampling. Probability indicates that every case has equal chance of being part of the sampling, while non-probability includes that every case do not have equal chance of being a part of the sampling. More specifically, non-probability sampling can be conducted through quota, judgment, convenience and purposive sampling. A quota sample includes chosen characteristics are selected purposively and then represented in the same proportion as they are in the population. Judgment sampling occurs when the researcher draws a representative sample of the population by using judgmental selection procedures. In convenience sampling the only criteria for the selection is by what is convenient for the researcher. Finally, a purposive sample is purposefully selected to achieve some specific objective(s). (Tull & Hawkins, 1990) In this thesis, sampling has been conducted through the purposive sampling method, which has allowed us to use our judgment to choose cases that best allowed us to answer our research questions, and to meet the objectives of our study.

The selection of entities was made after having listed a few companies with a desired image. The case studies in this thesis will be anonymous, due to the fact that the involved companies expressed a confidential request. The reason for this request is the risk of exposing its creativity strategy to competitors. The companies chosen for this case study were Ad agency I (A1) and Ad agency II (A2), as they are not of exaggerated size, which makes it easier to make contact with the “right” person to interview. The choice of companies was based on the likelihood of a closer and facilitated relation to such a company. Another reason for choosing these specific companies is that we have access to both agencies through an acquaintance (Gummesson, 2000).

According to Holme and Solvang (1991), selecting respondents holding relevant knowledge about the research area is important for qualitative research. Interviews have been conducted with two persons within each entity. From each entity, one person holding a top management position and one employee has been interviewed. In other words, in A1, we have interviewed M1 (Manager at A1) and E1 (Employee at A1). At A2 we have interviewed M2 (Manager at A2) and E2 (Employee at A2). We have chosen to interview both managers and employees, since we aim to gain an extensive view of creativity in the workplace. Furthermore, it provides this thesis with a wider perspective of the topic. The people chosen were the most suitable choices for this study, due to their knowledge and information provided. This fact was given to us upon our first contact with the companies as we stated our purpose. As we

now have clarified how the sample of this study was selected, we will in the next section discuss the data analysis.

#### **4.6 Data analysis**

When analyzing the data collected from the interview, the intentions were to find answers on the earlier stated research questions. Miles and Huberman (1994) explain the analysis to include three parallel flows of activity:

- *Data reduction*: The process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data. The purpose is to organize the data so that final conclusions can be drawn and verified.
- *Data display*: Taking the reduced data and displaying it in an organized, compressed way so that conclusions can be more easily drawn.
- *Conclusion drawing/verification*: Deciding what things mean – noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows and propositions.

When analyzing the data in this thesis, the plan of Miles & Huberman (1994) has been followed. This research presents a multiple-case study and therefore, the comparisons will be conducted within the different cases as well as between the cases. The within-case analyses were conducted by comparing the data from the cases to existent theories brought up in the conceptualization in a data display. We consider each company as one case whenever manager and employee have a similar/shared view. When differences exist between manager and employee we find it important to discuss and highlight the differences as it may provide this thesis with important findings and conclusions. Thereafter, we displayed the reduced data in a cross-case analysis, also following each research question. The cross-case analysis evaluates the companies in our sample to each other in an organized and compressed way, as well as it discusses existing dissimilarities and resemblances. Finally, after having completed the within-case and cross-case analyses, the conclusions of the research were drawn. Each research questions was re-stated and answered based on the findings of our study. As we now have described how the data was analyzed, the following section will present the quality standards of this study.

#### **4.7 Quality standards**

The methodology problems that arise from a study like this are the problems of validity and reliability. When writing a research paper, it is important to judge the quality of the research. (Yin, 1994) Yin (1994) further means that the case study researcher must maximize four aspects of quality of the design, specifically construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability. These four tests have been frequently used to establish the quality of case studies as well as an empirical social research (Ibid). Table 4.1 displays the four tests, the recommended case study tactic and a cross-reference to the phase of research when the tactic is to be used.

*Table 4.1 Case study tactics for four design tests*

<b>Test</b>	<b>Case Study Tactic</b>	<b>Phase of research in which tactic occurs</b>
<b>Construct validity</b>	➤ Use multiple sources of evidence	Data collection
	➤ Establish chain of evidence	Data collection
	➤ Have key information review draft case study report	Composition
<b>Internal validity</b>	➤ Do pattern-matching	Data analysis
	➤ Do explanation-building	Data analysis
	➤ Do time-series analysis	Data analysis
<b>External validity</b>	➤ Use replication logic in multiple case studies	Research design
<b>Reliability</b>	➤ Use case study protocol	Data collection
	➤ Develop case study database	Data collection

*Source: Adapted from Yin (2003) p. 34 and Yin (1994) p.33*

#### **4.7.1 Construct validity**

According to Yin (1994), construct validity means that correct operational measures are established for the concepts being studied. It deals with how/if the researcher has succeeded to develop operational set of measures and if subjective judgments have been used in the gathering of data. To increase construct validity, three tactics are available. The researcher can use multiple sources of evidence and/or establish a chain of evidence during the data collection. The third tactic is to let the key informants review a draft of the case study report. (Ibid) A tape-recorder was used during the interview that enabled us to double check that the respondent had relevant answers in regard to the actual question. As the interview was conducted in Swedish, which is the mother tongue for the respondent as well as for the researchers and it further strengthened the validity of the study. In addition to the tape recorder, note taking during the interview took place to a certain amount, which also contributed to the validity. Furthermore, the respondent received a revised copy of the interview guide to increase the validity. As described in sample selection, we have chosen to interview both managers and employees, since we aim to gain an extensive view of creativity in the workplace. Furthermore, it provides this thesis with a wider perspective of the topic. However, it is also a measure to increase the validity of the collected data. This is due to the fact that multiple answers from management and employee can increase the trustworthiness as they may support or oppose to each other, which will be valuable for our thesis.

#### **4.7.2 Internal validity**

To establish internal validity, Yin (1994) suggests three factors. First, comparing an empirically based pattern with a predicted pattern is called pattern matching. If the patterns match, the outcome can help a case study to strengthen its internal validity. Second, explanation building, which involves analyzing the case study data by building an explanation about the case. The last and third suggestion is time-series analysis where measures of the dependent variable are made in order to look at changes over time. (Ibid) It is our intention to use pattern matching where empirical data is compared to previous research and we are thereby trying to increase internal validity.

### **4.7.3 External validity**

External validity establishes the area of which the findings of a study can be generalized. It deals with the problem of knowing whether a study's results are able to generalize beyond the current case study. External validity problems have been a great barrier in conducting case studies. A single case study is typically a poor base for generalizations. The findings often have to be simulated if a generalization is wanted. (Yin, 1994) Moreover, it should be noted that Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul (2001) state that validity is defined as a measurement device's ability to determine what it is intended to measure. This thesis is not generalized and therefore it may affect the external validity.

### **4.7.4 Reliability**

According to Yin (1994), reliability reveals that the process of a study can be repeated, with identical outcome. Reliability strives to minimize errors and biases in a study. (Ibid) One possible factor affecting reliability is the risk of the respondent's lack of sufficient knowledge. Other factors which may affect the reliability of the study is if the respondent at the moment is tired or stressed, or have negative attitudes towards the interview. (Eriksson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 2001) For this thesis, efforts were made to make sure that the most proper respondent was identified, which is the person that were the most knowledgeable in the area of study. The respondents' attitudes towards the area of study were that they found it very interesting and wanted to give as much contribution to this thesis as they could. Moreover, we avoided affecting the answers of the respondents by steering away from leading questions. An issue that maybe affected the reliability negatively though, was the fact that personal interpretation is difficult to avoid.

## **4.8 Visualization of the methodology**

Visualization in form of a figure has been developed. The figure will hopefully provide the reader with a facilitated understanding and overview of the methodology chapter. Furthermore, Figure 4.4 will smooth the progress of following the structure of this chapter and gain the large picture and perceive the red thread of the methodology chapter.

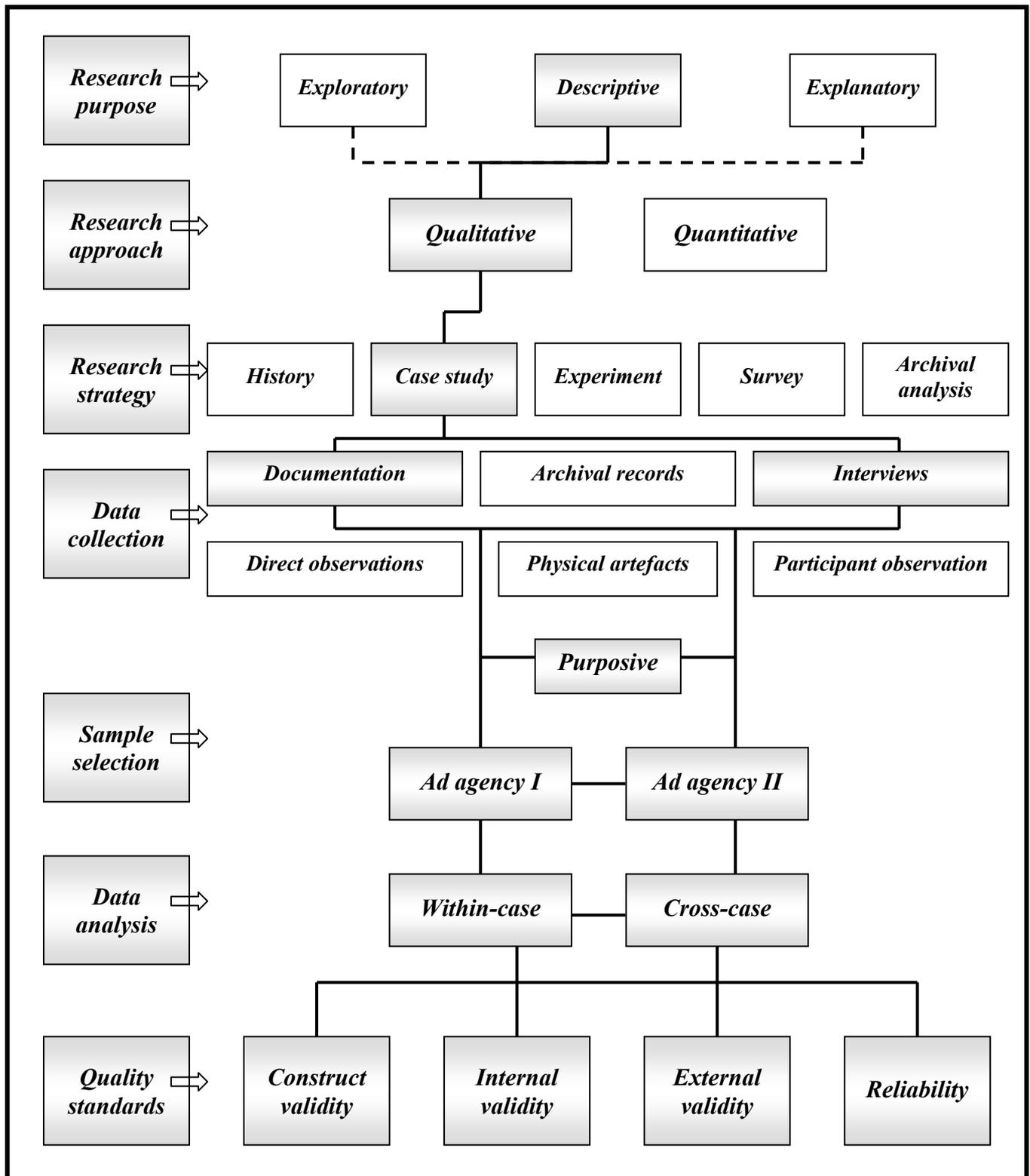


Figure 4.4 Visualization of the methodology

## **5 Data collection**

*After having discussed how the data has been collected in the previous chapter, this chapter gives a presentation of the collected data. The data is gathered from conducted interviews and documentation. No specific information about each company is provided due to the confidential request, which was expressed by the interviewed companies. The following two sections present the data regarding our conceptualization.*

As described in methodology chapter, we have chosen to interview both managers and employees, since we aim to gain an extensive view of creativity in the workplace. Furthermore, it provides this thesis with a wider perspective of the topic.

### **5.1 Advertising Agency 1**

We will use coding in order to keep the involved companies anonymous. The first company will be referred to as A1 (Ad Agency 1) and the persons interviewed, will be referred to as M1 (Manager 1) and E1 (Employee 1). A1 was established back in 1993 and today are nine persons are working within the organization of A1. The business has been growing at a slow but steady pace through the years; A1 is currently one of the leading ad agencies in the northern part of Sweden. Moreover, the company further claims that they are one of the most creative ad agencies in the northern part of Sweden. The company has the ability to supply its customers with all forms of communication that is required to reach the business objectives.

#### ***5.1.1 Factors influencing creativity according to M1***

M1 states that it is important to think beyond the box in order to stimulate and encourage creativity. New ideas and controversial solutions counteract the risk of developing standardized answers. Furthermore, the respondent claims that every member of the organization must be able to speak up and share its ideas at any time without risking criticism.

New ideas should have the ability to turn things upside down and to break the common pattern of the everyday life. By doing so, the organization gains more creative solutions and the results become more unique in its nature. Another way to increase the level of creativity is to work in various environments. Ideas are often developed outside the office environment, for instance at the movie or in the shower. As a result, desirable ideas are often generated outside regular office hours. However, freedom of work needs to be related to responsibility, which means that every employee must strive for a general goal.

Another important factor that influences creativity in the workplace is the social competence among co-workers. This involves that the employees are able to share opinions and ideas. Moreover, people that hold a well-developed social competence are able to provide feedback to colleagues, which push the creativity forward in a desirable direction. Openness and curiosity are exceedingly important factors for creativity; people working with creativity should also have the ability of thinking beyond the box and think backwards. As a result, M1 states that creative employees should be somewhat uncomfortable to the company. According to M1, this statement contradicts the normal view where employees are supposed to act in an expected behavior while the employees at A1 are encouraged to go beyond the comfort zone.

Furthermore, a pleasant working environment is significant for the creativity process. A1 has invested in descent premises and attractive facilities. This is a deliberate decision to enhance the level of creativity in the workplace as it inspires the employees to think creatively. Good composition of employees is also an important factor as men and women bring different perspectives to the workplace. Moreover, women are often interpreted as creating a more engaging atmosphere where creativity is stimulated.

The possibility of questioning the co-workers is crucial for the creativity level in the workplace. Employees must have the opportunity to be straightforward and speak up when disagreeing and freely share ideas and opinions. Trust needs to be developed in the workplace and an open dialogue between co-workers must be established. This will lead to new ideas and enhances the creativity. Trust is gained instinctively and comes naturally to the organization.

The respondent further states that there are different personality traits, which influences creativity in its own way. Some people are more talkative by nature than others; ideas and opinions are more likely to originate from these people. Since these people share their ideas on a more regular basis, they are more likely to generate a greater amount of solutions.

In addition, teamwork is emphasized within A1 and every member of the organization is participative to contribute with the individual knowledge. However, decisions are often made centrally with little involvement from the rest of the organization. There is a clear hierarchical structure where managers make all the key decisions. M1 states that this is due to the aspect of time; there is no time for democracy where everyone could be involved in the decision-making.

The managers at A1 have some special privileges and they have more freedom. However, this is due to the fact that the managers are owners of the company at the same time. The employees are aware of these privileges and are not keeping a feeling of inequitable towards the managers. These privileges are not influencing the creativity level at A1, according to M1.

Furthermore, rewards are stimulating the creativity level at A1. Rewards bring motivation to the scene and creativity is encouraged and stimulated. The rewards often take the shape of social events, such as journeys and parties. As A1 is a small company, rewards are somewhat limited and individual rewards are non-existent. M1 states that the benefit of social events exceeds the benefits of an individual reward system.

Moreover, quality rather than quantity is preferred and A1 is seeking to always perform high quality jobs. However, quantity is important as it is connected to making money. A large number of projects will generate more money, which will bring greater resources to future projects. Greater resources will bring an increased level of creativity to future projects.

It is also important to match newly employed persons to the rest of the organization. Moreover, it is highly important that the recently employed people are dedicated to the work. The employees should breathe and live with the company, which will enhance the creativity spirit. It is crucial that the project leader sets a good example due to the fact that the project leader always holds the utmost responsibility towards the customers.

The work situation is preferably of a challenging nature in order to stimulate creativity and it should not include a lot of routine work. Instead, flexibility should be emphasized to inspire creativity in the workplace. M1 states that time and money are important factors that act as barriers towards creativity. Personnel should have an attraction towards complexity. The management could for example implement test projects where the employees will be tested. M1 states that these fake projects will enhance the creativity among its personnel and provide the management with an opportunity to investigate if new employees fit in the organization.

The organizational structure of A1 is divided into two different units - the administrative organization and the creativity organization. The administrative organization includes few members and does only involve management. The structure of this organization is hierarchical where few people make all the decisions without involvement from other parts of the company. M1 states that this does not influence the creativity since the administrative decisions do not involve creativity decisions. The project leaders and the market manager make up the administrative organization. The creativity organization on the other hand is rather flat, where everyone can influence and participate in the decision-making. The organizational structure is a deliberate strategy to enhance the creativity in the organization, according to M1. Every member of the company is involved in the creativity structure.

### ***5.1.2 Creativity process according to M1***

The creativity process of A1 begins by an analysis of the customer and its situation. A trial project is developed for the customer to examine the situation and is then being commented on. The company then collects most information by a traditional medium, such as the library and the Internet. Market researches are also often used to increase the credibility to the project as it includes up to date information from the current industry. However, much information can be pulled out from the customer, since it holds specific expertise. After all, the customer is the most knowledgeable regarding the current situation. Nevertheless, the employees of the company are often a great source of information; former experiences and practices provide the employees with a major amount of valuable information. In this stage, the amount of collected information is not the most important variable; the quality of the information is the most crucial factor.

Moreover, when the situation is analyzed and information has been collected, a brief is developed. This brief is describing the situation and then problem statements are formulated. Goals and objectives of the project are clarified, presented and described to the customer. This provides the customer with an opportunity to continue with the project or to cut off the cooperation.

Furthermore, creative solutions are always desirable, according to M1. The employees need to let go of all the restraints in order to come up with creative solutions. M1 states that management should push for and encourage creativity in the workplace. Social events are often used as a measure for stimulating creativity in the workplace.

In the creativity process, management is most often dealing with the basic thought for the projects, while the employees are involved in further developing the ideas around the basic thought. The project leaders first develop a creative statement, which is then further developed by the rest of the project group. Graphics and text are examples of measures that the group produces in order to solve the task. The project groups most often include three to

four persons. Brainstorming is the measure that is being used to generate creative ideas within the project groups.

Every new idea is taken into consideration, even though most ideas are not useful. M1 states that quantity as well as quality is important. However, quantity is perceived as the most significant measure of ideas. The ideas are thereafter evaluated and compared to the basic concept. The ideas must be coherent with the basic concept for acceptance of the ideas. The final decision on an idea comes natural, according to M1. There is no doubt that the right idea is at hand when the feeling becomes apparent.

M1 states that it is not possible to describe a general outline for acceptance of an idea. M1 further states that everything is relative and other factors are more important than an outline for acceptance of an idea. The most crucial factor is trust, every member of the organization need to develop trust towards each other. When trust is accomplished throughout the organization, acceptance will be gained more easy and effective. But, M1 states that it is extremely important for A1 to keep an atmosphere where the employees feel joy regarding their workplace. In the end, A1 needs to emphasize and focus on the customer.

### ***5.1.3 Creativity managers according to M1***

M1 states that the company is satisfied with the trademark, values and principles of the organization. However, M1 further states that the company is not satisfied with the current situation. A1 is constantly seeking to improve the organization and its projects. It is crucial for the company to make sure that they never become satisfied with the current situation. A1 is relatively newly started and the time aspect is one of the reasons why A1 has not come that far down the road. Engagement is highly important for boosting the creativity in the workplace.

Therefore, vision is a conscious part of A1's organization strategy where joy is a central part. The employees should have fun in the workplace in order to increase the level of creativity. M1 states that people and creativity are linked together and that they are not distinguishable. There is a channel between people and ideas; it is not possible to focus on either of them. Ideas cannot be generated without people and people cannot be creative as long as ideas are not emphasized.

Moreover, M1 states that managers are rather authoritarian within A1, the organization is centralized and major decisions are made with little involvement from the employees. This is considered more effective and management often holds greater amount of knowledge and insight to the needs and wants of the customer. Decisions are made more time efficient from the top with little involvement from the rest of the organization, according to M1.

M1 recognizes the everyday life as a great barrier to creativity. The private life needs to be in balance if the creativity is to be stimulated. Hobbies beside the workplace can also constrain the creativity. The technical development can also be an obstacle for creativity, if it becomes a problem to stay updated with the development. It is important to keep up with the development and stay ahead of its competitors.

All members of A1 are contributing with its individual talents to increase the creativity level in the workplace. There are no particular persons that work with creativity. As a matter of

fact, the entire organization is involved. Moreover, there are no individual rewards, due to the company size and the conviction of A1 that individual rewards are not influencing creativity in a positive way. On the other hand, social events are used within the organization and they can be seen as general rewards where every employee can take part.

Furthermore, changes can bring the company to a new stage where the company can become even more successful. All changes are constantly valued and the organization is always striving forward. The design of the organization is a conscious measure to stimulate and enhance the level of creativity. Furthermore, community building is something that comes naturally to A1; there is no active work of building communities. M1 states that the community is built through social events, such as parties and journeys. Community is important for A1 where trust and confidence are lead words, according to M1.

Evaluations are rarely done at A1, which is known by the company. Personnel meetings are held four times a year where evaluation is the subject and opinions are shared with the rest of the organization. M1 acknowledge that the lack of evaluation is a weak point of the company and improvement is required for future development. However, M1 states that evaluation can be accomplished after performed project with an especially large customer.

#### ***5.1.4 Factors influencing creativity according to E1***

E1 states that working under pressure is harming the creativity. The pressure will take the creativity spirit away and standardized solutions are more likely to occur than creative solutions. The pressure needs to be removed in order to encourage and stimulate the level of creativity in the workplace. Ideas are most often created outside the regular office hours, even outside the regular office environments.

Additionally, high prestige among the co-workers might restrain creativity and encourage individualistic work instead of giving confidence to teamwork. Employees should not take criticism personally; they should see it as constructive feedback and learn for future assignments. This will lead to improved work results and an enhanced creative atmosphere at work. Moreover, trust is a very important factor to improve the creativity in the workplace. Employees should feel secure with their co-workers and an atmosphere of joy should evolve within the organization.

Cooperation is an important factor that influences creativity in the workplace. Competition should be avoided within the company and the company should be perceived as a team striving towards a common goal. As a result, the company should create a team spirit and compete as a team against other companies in the same industry. This type of teamwork supports creativity and should be promoted and encouraged within the organization.

Moreover, a strong hierarchical organizational structure damages the creativity. All employees should be involved in the process from its start, since participation enhances the creativity level. E1 states that all project members should have the possibility to take an active part in the early stage of the creativity process. If not, many creative ideas might be lost due to the fact that the employees need to feel a complete involvement in the project to maximize the amount of creative ideas.

When all decisions are made centrally, it decreases the creativity level among the employees. “That little extra spark” from the employees might diminish and the motivation of creativity is somewhat blocked. Therefore, the project leader should engage the employees and provide support, as this is a very important issue when creating that little extra energy. Open flow of communication is preferred for this purpose as well. E1 suggests that the structure of an organization should be more flat and states that a hierarchical structure hinders the creativity process. When being hierarchical, the organization automatically divides the agency into two separate teams - managers and employees. This distorted distribution of power leads to reduced team spirit. It also results in an inefficient communication process with high power distance.

When dividing the agency into these two teams, the employees feel that they lose the important customer contact that is needed for solving the problem with a high level of creativity. E1 states the importance of working as a group through the whole creativity process. Another factor that influences the creativity is modern technology, which may lower the creativity. The respondent considers working by the computer initially, instead of using a sketch-pad or doing some drawing first, to be negative. It is also important to have variation in the procedure of the work. To have the possibility to do as you please under own responsibility is a benefit that enhances creativity, since it brings inspiration from external sources. In addition, the private life has a large impact on creativity. If one has problems at home it may lower his or her creativity; it is hard to be creative if you do not feel safe and secure in the everyday life.

E1 states that creative thinking can make one tired and exhausted due to intensive problem solving. It is important to keep a mix of innovative thinking and routine jobs, as the latter does not require active problem solving issues. Moreover, E1 considers rewards to be important; even little efforts like a pat on the shoulder can be enough. However, team rewards are the most desirable reward since it strengthens the relationship between the employees and leads to enhanced creativity.

Finally, quality is preferred above quantity due to the fact that high quality makes the company more attractive among the customers. Characteristics of a good employee that will produce high quality work is that they are positive, warm, hold a good social competence, are open minded, willing to change, like to solve complex tasks and do not keep a nonchalant attitude.

#### ***5.1.5 Creativity process according to E1***

The first stage of A1’s creativity process is the identification of the problem. According to E1, the managers identify the problem with no involvement from the rest of the organization. All customer contact is handled by management, which then supplies the employees with the information regarding the customer.

The next step in the creativity process is the information gathering. The managers also handle this issue of the creativity process. The amount of information gathered is important, since a greater amount of information will bring a deeper understanding of the problem to the employees. E1 claims that it is preferred to have a large amount of data. The problem description of the problem is given by management, which may cause loss of crucial

information. As a comparison, E1 claims that a movie provides a facilitated understanding if seen at a movie theatre, compared to a friend telling you about it.

The next step in the creativity process involves brainstorming, as it brings a large amount of ideas to the project. E1 considers it to be good to have a large amount of ideas since new ideas or a combination of ideas leads to improvements. It is more useful to create 100 new ideas where only five are good, instead of creating only a few mediocre ideas. During the creativity process, everyone can express their feelings and criticize ideas without creating hard feelings. However, if someone should criticize an idea he or she must have some suggestions for improvement. Constructive criticism has the ability of improving the ideas while negative criticism just makes the situation indefensible.

The project leader makes the final decision regarding what idea to ultimately use. Modification of ideas might be necessary in order to gain an agreement of the final decision concerning what idea to use. Total agreement is not essential in the project group; the main issue is that the customer's needs are fulfilled. Finally, E1 claims that the creativity process is progressive as fashion and trends affect creativity on a regular basis.

#### ***5.1.6 Creativity managers according to E1***

The management of A1 constantly seeks improvement of the organization for future projects. One way of dealing with this issue is to create new collaborations both internally and externally. It also involves development on a personal level for all the members of the organization, which is a measure for enhancing the creativity.

E1 establishes that there is a vision within the company that focuses on constant development. However, resources in form of financial aspects and personnel turnover affect the vision and therefore the organization must adjust to the current situation. The vision is functioning as a motivator and keeps the employees focused towards the goal, which have a positive affect on the creativity in the workplace.

Furthermore, E1 claims that there are no distinctive separation between people and ideas. Both parameters are crucial for the company and are important in the establishment of creativity. People and ideas are highly linked together and A1 does not exclude the other. Managers supervise their employees and show them respect in order to develop an atmosphere of creativity.

Managers in A1 are rather authoritarian and employees have little influence, according to E1. There are few evaluation meetings and evaluation is not a formal way of working. As a result, it destroys creativity and E1 acknowledge that the company would need more opportunities for evaluation in order to increase the quality of the projects. Feedback and evaluation is very important, according to E1. Major mistakes could easily be avoided if a thorough evaluation process would be implemented.

A1 is not seeking for barriers actively; the barriers are solved when they are recognized in the organization. Every member of the organization contributes to enhancing the creativity since it is a relatively small company, according to E1. E1 claims that the structure of the organization is somewhat hierarchical and that this structure is slowing down the creativity. E1 further states that a more flat structure would be preferable and that everyone should be

more participative in the decision-making. Managers should work actively to reach full involvement within the project groups.

Community building is more important than external rewards, such as a greater paycheck. E1 states that social events are important measures for increasing the well-being among co-workers. The respondent argues that a common reward system adds more value than an individual reward system. The management needs to understand and observe the current situation in order to improve the working conditions and thereby increase the interests of the employees.

The evaluation process of A1 is not an official part of the creativity process and most of the projects are not evaluated. However, large projects are often discussed and appraised. The reason why evaluation is not a part of the creativity process is the issue of time pressure, which most often leads to absence of creativity.

## **5.2 Advertising Agency 2**

As stated earlier in this chapter, coding is used in order to keep the involved companies anonymous. The second company will be referred to as A2 (Ad Agency 2) and the persons interviewed, will be referred to as M2 (Manager 2) and E2 (Employee 2). A2 was founded in the year of 1997 and there are currently twelve employees within the organization. The ad agency is working on a wide range of activities covering all forms of information and market communication. The company claims that it is providing a comprehensive view of communication in general.

### **5.2.1 Factors influencing creativity according to M2**

M2 states that it is important to encourage employees' own initiatives. The organization should be enthusiastic, which involves encouragement from management as an important factor for creativity among the co-workers. The employees need to feel optimistic and valued in order to increase the ability to share their ideas and innovative solutions.

Furthermore, work hours should be adjusted to each employee's individual schedule as most creative ideas are generated outside the office. This means that work might be performed at other times than "regular office hours". Activities on spare time are an injection for unique ideas that break the common pattern. However, responsibility must be considered and each employee has to deal with the individual responsibility of working instructions. For example, an employee has to take care of the regular working hours that are a natural part of the operational directions. Moreover, managers working at A2 have privileges that the other employees do not have access to. However, M2 does not consider this to disturb the creativity, as it does not make the employees jealous.

M2 claims that it is crucial for the level of creativity that management should not guide its employees too much; the projects should be somewhat autonomy. Managers need to back off some times and leave space for the employees. Employees will then gain respect and comfort, which is furtherance for creativity in the workplace.

Moreover, there are a lot of different roles within A2 and the company holds a great deal of human capital in its employees. This fact enhances trust among the co-workers due to the fact

that the atmosphere is becoming friendly and secure. M2 claims that the level of creativity increases when the atmosphere is friendly and secure. M2 further argues that the atmosphere of A2 is very much relaxed and there are few rules and guidelines. The respondent also adds that the present working atmosphere boost creativity.

Freedom is a crucial factor that enhances and influences creativity to a great extent, as it facilitates the generation of new ideas. The employees can follow its own instinct and the organization does not hold back people's creation of ideas. New ideas can be tested and shared among the co-workers at A2. The company has a relatively low personnel turnover, compared to competitors. A low turnover creates a climate of safety, which leads to a comfort zone where employees feel comfort and the level of creativity is in favor.

Furthermore, M2 states that happiness is a central part of A2's workplace; managers should increase the level of enjoyment among co-workers by a casual leadership style. A laid-back leadership style will allow every member of the organization to share and express ideas and opinions. A situation where everyone is able to share its ideas will create many new ideas and contribute to the creativity of the organization.

Competition may arise from time to time within the organization to some degree. However, this does not affect the personal ability of creativity, but it can be a barrier for the company when conducting business. As a result, the organization stresses the importance of cooperation, according to the respondent.

Newly employed co-workers may face difficulties when trying to become accepted in the organization. This is very much connected to prior experiences, social competence and age above all. This is considered during the employment interview and much responsibility is put on the organization to speed up the acceptance process. However, this does not affect the creativity among the co-workers, according to M2.

Decision-making is central in its nature regarding business matters. Yet, there is always an open flow of communication, no matter what issue to be discussed. All employees cannot be involved in these decisions as it is not effective and they are not familiar with these issues. Regarding the creativity process, more democratic decisions are taken into consideration; everyone may be involved in the discussions. The open flow of internal communication within A2, which among other things involves weekly meetings and discussions, creates a motivation to participate, which leads to increased creativity.

Furthermore, teamwork is preferred above individualistic work. Different skills and knowledge are combined and compounded when working in a team, which leads to a maximized result. All the skills and knowledge within the company need to be accumulated, in order to perform a high quality job. M2 states that all the accumulated skills and knowledge is contributing to the degree of creativity within the company.

Challenging work and stimuli favor the creativity. Coming to work is generating a social net of contacts and can be seen as a reward. This generates added value to the organization and its employees, but also to the customers. The added value is the motive power that carries the organization forward. One of the most important factors influencing creativity is the possibility to break the everyday patterns. To enhance the creativity, employees must feel free

to change their work environment from time to time. Leaving the office for a couple of hours and instead observe the daily life in society can provide new impressions.

Resources in the form of time and money do not affect the creativity, regardless of which level. It may hinder the organization to develop in the desired direction, but M2 does not consider the personal creativity to be influenced by these factors. However, limited resources may indirectly affect investments of doing things together, such as social events. M2 states that doing things together strengthens the well being in the organization. This increases the creativity as co-workers appreciate being involved in the organization that creates a pleasant atmosphere. Social events' main purpose is to take care of and look after employees and strengthen the cooperation between the members of the organization.

Focusing on quality rather than quantity is enhancing the creativity in the workplace. Quality is an important factor as people often only remember the last job done. Due to the fact that the organization never is better than its latest project, employees should always keep in mind that the customer values quality. This leads to innovative capacity of thinking and increases the competitiveness of the organization.

M2 states that an open organizational climate is a main factor that increases the creativity level. However, management does not provide all information regarding some organizational issues, as all employees should not have access to all information. The management is yet increasing the flow of communication regarding organizational issues. Therefore, all ideas are encouraged and employees are welcome to discuss organizational matters. There is a wide range of informational flow within A2. This internal communication makes the employees feel involved and part of the creativity process.

Every individual contributes to the creativity process with its own talent, experience and individual competence. Employees must take initiatives and are encouraged to do so. Complex work situation is a useful measure that stimulates creativity as it forces employees to take important decisions and initiatives.

M2 lists some personality traits that characterize a creative person. A good education constitutes a solid base for creativity. Furthermore, social competence often outweighs gender even if women are underrepresented at the moment in the advertising industry. It is also good to have a wide variety of hobbies or spare time activities outside the working environment as it breaks the daily routine, which is a factor that benefits the creativity of an employee. An organizational factor that enhances the creativity in the workplace is to have a good mix of employees. The employees should hold different skills and have different backgrounds that can complement each other. An even mix of both old and young people as well as both men and women influence the creativity, since different perspectives are valued.

Intrinsic motivation is more important than extrinsic, since it has a stronger impact on the creativity. M2 considers money to be a factor that may decrease the ability to be creative. Therefore it is hard to make employees perform a better job with the help of monetary funds. M2 considers the ability to be creative to be a benefit that comes naturally from within every individual. The organizational structure of A2 is rather flat. This is a deliberate choice from the management for enhancing the creativity. The layout of the offices involves an open landscape, which enhances open communication between co-workers. This leads to good contact between employees and management and no employee feels left out. This also leads

to a well-established contact with customers and all members of the project group have a direct contact with the customer. The managers only work as a staff function, according to M2.

Project leaders have the first contact with customers but it is important that all individuals involved in the project group have a good communication with the customer, according to M2. An employee can contact the customer without involving the project leader as the project leader trust and feel secure with its co-workers. The close cooperation between A2 and its customer results in a better understanding of objectives and can therefore lead to a better outcome.

M2 stresses the importance of reshuffling so you do not fall back in old habits. Falling back into old habits destroys creativity, as new ideas are not likely to be generated. Furthermore, it hinders the individual to think in new dimensions, which is considered as a barrier for new inventions.

Deadlines and time pressure may control individuals and increase the stress. This is one of the major factors that hinder creativity, since it forces the individuals to solve the problem in a short time duration, which blocks people to maximize the creativity process. Instead, enough time should be provided in order to stimulate creativity.

Internal interactions provide a greater creativity level to the organization of A2. M2 argues that it is important to listen to ideas and opinions; this gives the employees support in the work. Gaining creative ideas requires leaving the comfort zone and think beyond the box. Therefore, it is essential to encourage, support and reward the employees who act as a creativity sponsor. Prestige has to be eliminated in order to keep the creativity process on track. Otherwise, the creativity level will decrease; one has to be susceptible to new information and ideas.

### ***5.2.2 Creativity process according to M2***

In order to solve a problem the company needs to be aware of the customer situation and understand its needs and wants. M2 states that A2 gains this information by conducting analysis and making a SWOT analysis of the current customer situation. The most important stage is to get into the mind of the customer and gain a deeper understanding of the problem.

M2 argues that a large amount of information facilitates the remaining creativity process. The respondent further states that the company prefers to work with previous customers, since it increases the efficiency and the company is able to gain a much deeper understanding of these customers' situation. It is important to recognize signals from the surrounding and be able to acknowledge present trends in the world.

The next step of A2's creativity process is to develop an analysis of the problem in discussion groups and form a problem statement. Every individual of the project group contribute with its competence and its personal talent. All ideas are encouraged and own initiatives are expressed. M2 states that complex work tasks stimulate the level of creativity and challenges usually tend to entice creative thinking.

The respondent further argues that an efficient information flow is crucial for creativity at A2. The internal communication flow is especially important, according to M2. Everyone need to stay updated and informed of the current situation in order to make appropriate adjustments and make the necessary rearrangements.

A2 collects information through focus groups and deep interviews, which usually includes two to five persons. M2 further claims that the answers are often found in the surrounding environment. A large amount of information is gained through collaborations with external sources when needed. These external sources possess unique qualifications that A2 can benefit from as these qualifications do not exist within the organization. The amount of information is not important for the level of creativity, according to M2. On the other hand, the quality is of vital importance for the creativity in the workplace.

The next step of the creativity process involves creating a formal problem statement, which is presented to the customer. As A2 have a close cooperation with its customers, follow-ups during the process are made continuously. These actions are helpful for the company to keep on track and make sure that the perceived problem is the problem stated by the customer. Therefore, a good connection with the customer is important, which leads to a common way to solve the problem.

Moreover, it is significant to pay attention and follow trends in the society. This is accomplished by reading newspapers and relevant articles. A2 needs to investigate different methods of solving the problem in order to maximize the effort towards the project. Internet is also a growing source for gaining updated information. Flexibility is a guide line when collecting information for each specific and unique project.

Members of project groups at A2 are consistent throughout the entire process, from the start until the end. However, new members can be involved in the group when new inspiration and/or knowledge are required. It is somewhat common to ask the rest of the organization for second opinions in order to increase the project quality.

A2 uses brainstorming as a tool to come up with ideas within the project group. However, ideas can also be funded at the weekly meetings. All ideas are recognized and everyone can freely share ideas and opinions. An evaluation is thereafter accomplished to sort out the useful ideas and reject the ideas that do not match the purpose. Ideas are evaluated by testing them against the reality, both externally and internally.

The final selection of ideas comes naturally to the project group. The selection is rarely done by choosing between two options and voting is never used as a method of making the final selection. Instead, the final idea is decided by agreement within the project group and is created by having discussions regarding the requirements. The project leader has the utmost responsibility towards the customer, which means that the project leader can come to a final decision without support from other project members.

M2 states that it is important to remember that every employee possesses different backgrounds, competencies and experiences. As a result, cooperation in the form of teamwork leads to a converging of all the unique qualifications of every employee. The company should make united efforts to maximize the output of the creativity process.

### **5.2.3 Creativity managers according to M2**

Managers should never grow to be satisfied with the current situation, according to M2. If managers have a sense of satisfaction regarding the existing position, they should look for another job. It is also important to seek various solutions and to make every effort possible to go forward.

An organizational vision will lead the way to success and is working as a guideline for future projects. The vision of A2 describes where the company is heading and facilitates the mission for the employees. Vision and mission statements are revised in connection to world changes and how the business is developing. The vision is a guiding star for the future and the company cannot jump from different missions without having the way marked out. M2 recognizes that people and ideas are attached and that they are decidedly linked together. An idea cannot be generated without the stimulation of the people and people cannot come up with ideas without the emphasizing of ideas.

Management makes the operational directions of A2, with little participation from the other parts of the organization. Strategic decision and key operations are also decisions that management makes without asking the other employees upon. The creative process is more of a flat outline where the entire project group is working together. Furthermore, managers do not have to be involved in all work regarding decisions within a project group. M2 states that management, as well as the rest of the project group is at the same level and everyone is contributing with individual competence. Experience is a crucial factor in these creative processes. The employees that hold a great deal of experience on the specific subject will be more likely to recognize the problem and solve it more efficiently than the employees that lack experience.

M2 considers good internal communication and trust between co-workers to be of great significance when creating a good atmosphere. In contradiction to this, poor communication can restrain the flow of creativity, as well as prestige. Moreover, employees that are suspicious and hold a vast deal of prestige will hold down the creativity and are not likely to produce good results. Monetary resources and dissension among the co-workers might also hold back the creativity in the workplace.

M2 states that the company is constantly trying to find new solutions and improvements. It is important to create a positive working climate in order to reach this objective. Every member of the organization needs to maximize his or her effort to stimulate the climate; every member should feel secure and pride in being a part of the organization. All employees are different from one another; some are more extroverts while some are the opposite. However, everyone can work together and get on well with each other. If harmony is created in the organization; the level of creativity will boost and the desirable results can be reached.

Some employees will bring joy to the organization on a daily basis and these people are important for the creativity. M2 states that it is important to promote these people and keep them on track. The positive feeling that these people bring can easily affect the entire organization and shed some light during troublesome periods. This feeling might loosen up the atmosphere and give impressions to each other within the organization, but also further on to the customers.

The management of A2 is not looking to actively control the employees, since such behavior would be an obstacle towards creativity in the workplace. The managers are not telling the co-workers what to do and guide them through a detailed working description. Instead, new ideas and solutions are encouraged and direct contact with the customer is also appreciated when needed. However, M2 states that it is crucial to deal with interpersonal issues as soon as they arise. If these issues are neglected, they will grow and hurt the company. The leadership cannot be afraid of conflicts in order to keep harmony within the organization and keep the employees on track.

M2 declares that community building is very significant for creativity within A2. Social events are common and these events create a familiar atmosphere where opinions and judgments are freely shared. Working together is also creating a working family that enhances the community and consolidates trust. Activities next to the working environment are also arranged by the company, which can be seen as a measure of increasing the level of creativity.

Finally, evaluations are made at a regular basis, these evaluations deal with current missions and accomplished assignments. Follow-ups are made in order to establish the result of what has been done good and what has been poorly outperformed. These evaluations and follow-ups will enhance the work of A2 in the future. Both the project group and the organization as a whole are evaluating projects, work situations and other important issues every week. This is a conscious decision from the management to increase the participation among employees, which in turn leads to enhanced creativity level.

#### ***5.2.4 Factors influencing creativity according to E2***

The respondent claims that freedom on one's own responsibility is highly influential regarding the creativity level in the workplace. Freedom is providing the employees with a positive atmosphere where confidence is established and the management trusts the employees. As people are different in nature, creativity evolves from different ways of working. Some people are more creative when active, while some people might be more creative during relaxation and not during times of hard work. It is important that leaders and management respect these differences and that they are sure not to pressure the employees to work hard at all times, since this might harm creativity.

Furthermore, in order to increase the creativity, deadlines are helpful as it pushes the employees to strive forward and find new solutions. Time pressure is positively related to creativity when the duration of time is somewhat appropriate, an exaggerated tight time schedule is negatively related to creativity as it blocks the right brain activity.

The ability to prioritize and stay focused on the task is an influential factor for creativity as well. The employees need to gain space and support to focus on one task at a time; this will emphasize focus and add to creativity. The company is usually working in teams and stresses team work to improve the cooperation. However, improvised contests can be used as a measure to stimulate creativity in the workplace as it incites the willingness to stay creative.

The decision-making is rather centralized and decisions are often made with little or no involvement from the rest of the organization. The situation that excludes participation decreases the creativity and employee's motivation for creativity is reduced. E2 states that there are no special privileges within A2 that influence the creativity.

Challenges are positively related to creativity, according to E2. The respondent further states that the company accomplishes a various range of tasks and that routine work is disturbing the creativity, as it does not require any creative thinking. Moreover, resources in the form of money are not an issue influencing creativity. As mentioned earlier, E2 considers resources in the form of time have great impact on creativity, since extreme time pressure offsets creativity.

There is no reward system that is directly related to individuals or project groups within the organization. Instead, A2 supports co-workers by activities involving all employees. The job quality is important as it stimulates creativity and appropriate time duration is provided. E2 claims that quantity is creating time pressure and stresses the employees to make mistakes and poor results.

The organizational climate should involve a pleasant atmosphere where the employees should look forward to come to work. This in turn, will lead to an enhanced creativity as people look forward going to work. Organizational climate is an important stronghold for creativity and provides a solid base for fellowship at work. E2 claims that a creative person's desirable personality traits include openness and happiness, which are exceedingly influential for the creativity potential. A creative person should also be willing to provide and gain constructive criticism and feedback. Being happy and open for change is of greater significance than competence regarding creativity, according to E2.

The respondent further states that intrinsic motivation outmaneuvers extrinsic motivation as the individual's willingness to succeed enhances the creativity. A positive attitude is also a great motivational factor as it facilitates the creation of new ideas and to break old patterns. The organizational structure of A2 is somewhat hierarchical, according to E2. There are a few people at the top who are running the business and making all the key decisions. The rest of the organization is considered to work at an equal level even though different roles exist. This management style has a negative effect on creativity. However, this hierarchical leadership style controls the employees and make sure that efficiency is obtained.

Another major factor that influences creativity in the workplace is to obtain a close customer contact, according to E2. However, E2 further states that there is seldom any customer contact for the employees within A2. This fact harms the creativity as a close customer contact brings greater knowledge to the project.

### ***5.2.5 Creativity process according to E2***

The project leader has the first contact with the customer and collects information that he or she perceives as valuable and relevant for the project. In the next step; the project leader provides the project group with information gained. This makes the process centralized in its nature where the project leader is the centre. However, E2 would rather see that everyone involved in the project group are involved from the beginning with primary customer contact.

The next step involves a statement of the problem, which has been developed by the project leader. In connection with the problem statement, the project leader provides the project group with a time schedule. Proceeding from this stage, the group is divided and each member work as individuals to accomplish its area of responsibility. Meetings occur on a regular basis to

follow-up the project and to share ideas and opinions. The process described above is linked to the fact that the customer has strong opinions regarding the project. This reduces the creativity, as the process is predetermined to a large extent.

The final choice of idea is determined on a separate meeting where every member of the project group attends. However, in some cases the project leader has made the choice before other opinions are involved in the project group. If a member disagrees with the project leader, he or she must struggle and try to convince the project leader to change opinion. E2 further states that the members of a project group are replaceable if special competence or experience is required.

### ***5.2.6 Creativity managers according to E2***

Cooperation between project leader and employees is considered good, according to E2. The project leader tries to listen to group members, but occasionally the customer controls too much and the creativity is damaged. However, a situation may arise where the project leader control its members too much. This may lead to a situation where the employees generate what they think that the project leader wants instead of generating according to customer needs.

The managers of A2 are quite satisfied with the current situation and do not see the need of changing the image, according to E2. E2 further states that other companies within the industry are more offensive than A2. The work performed by A2 is focused on providing information, not on creative solutions. It is important for the creativity level to work with interesting customers. Furthermore, E2 does not acknowledge any organizational vision to use as a guideline. The respondent claims that this is a problem and the work situation is perceived as working in a vacuum.

People are perceived as more important corner stones than ideas. E2 states that it is important whom you talk to and what to say as A2 is a small company. To gain penetrative power on ideas, the employee must communicate through the “right” persons. This is linked to the fact that management holds a great deal of authority that can cause some hesitation among the employees. This management style can put a check on creativity and hinder new ideas. However, some situations require some authority from management that will take charge and make sure that the development goes on.

Managers are sometimes asking employees for help and opinions when he or she needs to be relieved. Moreover, managers can ask for help when they recognize more appropriate knowledge from other employees within the organization, which often is linked to experience. When the managers need to be relieved, other employees are given the attractive part of the task and the less “fun” part is taken care of by the project leader.

E2 claims that there is no active search for creativity barriers, it seems like the managers tend to put barriers aside instead of dealing with them. However, the respondent stresses the importance of dealing with problems as they arise and that managers should actively handle these issues. The respondent further states that the major barriers within A2 are the facts that no direct customer contact occurs for employees and the fact that the organization is too centralized. Management needs to support and encourage its employees to stimulate creativity and the managers also need to stress the importance of each project in order to maximize the

project quality. When managers proclaim the use of small resources, the creativity will be destroyed since it brings the employees to a state of mind where creativity is neglected.

Some people within the organization are more positive than others regarding creativity. They have an important role within the organization as they provide other employees with energy. E2 claims that these creativity sponsors are appreciated and encouraged to continue providing the organization with a good atmosphere. Changes that occur within the company are valued and examined. Everyone has the ability to share its ideas and opinions among the co-workers within the organization. Moreover, E2 states that opinions and ideas are taken seriously upon and given appropriate respect even though it may take some time.

The organization is well thought through and it is easy for the project leader to take control and guide the project group. E2 claims that the organization is well planned, but that it has lost parts of its purpose. Community among the co-workers is highly important and every employee must be involved and not left out. Social events are used sometimes to increase the community within the organization and the management tries to gather all employees to these events. This community building takes part during office hours as well as during spare time. However, the respondent claims that it can be somewhat hard to gather everyone for social events since the co-workers are living far distance from each other.

If evaluation occurs, only top management is involved. Yet, E2 considers that it is important that everyone is involved in the evaluation process, since it provides the organization with knowledge, experience and participation that the organization can benefit from. E2 states that employees often hold many good opinions after accomplished projects that need to be brought up. But the employees also need positive and negative feedback to improve for future assignments. If there is no opportunity to share opinions on accomplished projects, the process will be identical in the future on good and bad.

## 6 Analysis

*This chapter will analyze the collected data, which was presented in chapter five. First, a within-case analysis is made where the gathered data is compared to previous research, discussed in the conceptualization. To make the analysis more clear, the analysis is linked to the frame of reference. Moreover, a cross-case analysis is provided, where the two cases are compared with each other and the conceptualization.*

### 6.1 Factors influencing creativity

In this section, we will analyze our first research question against the conceptualization. Each dimension of the conceptualization for research question one will be analyzed against each of our two cases. Ahmed (1998) presents a model involving three organizational factors that affect creativity in the workplace.

*Organizational climate* - Ahmed (1998) states that there are four dimensions of organizational climate that influences creativity. Regarding the dimension of *nature of interpersonal relationships*, A1 and A2 are acting in accordance to previous research, but notes that the treatment of new employees does not affect the creativity. On the subject of *nature of hierarchy*, both cases recognize this factor to influence creativity in the workplace. However, both cases also state that special privileges are not affecting the creativity in the workplace.

Considering the *nature of work*, A1 and A2 perceive this as an influential factor for the creativity level. Nevertheless, M2 does not consider resources in the form of time and money to be an influential factor on creativity. Furthermore, E2 states that money do not affect the level of creativity and deviates from previous research. Therefore, A2 somewhat contradicts to previous research. Regarding the issue of *focus of support and rewards*, A1 and A2 are in correlation with Ahmed (1998). The parameter of basis for employment that is stated by Ahmed (1998) is not considered as an influential factor by A1 and A2, therefore the cases are not in accordance to previous research regarding this specific parameter.

A1 and A2 have further stated different factors involved in the organizational climate that influence the creativity in the workplace. Those factors are not in accordance with Ahmed (1998). All the respondents argue that variation of work environment, participation, involvement, private life and freedom of work with responsibility are the main factors influencing creativity. Moreover, E1 and M2 perceive the work hours and prestige as an influential creativity factor. Finally, A2 states the importance of creating an atmosphere where employees feel secure and the leadership is rather laid-back.

*Organizational culture* - Ahmed (1998) states that there are a number of *personality traits* that shows what desirable characteristics a creative employee should hold that influences creativity. Regarding this issue, A1 and A2 are deviating from previous research to a large extent. Yet, A1 considers curiosity, attraction to complexity, broad interests and independence of judgment to be factors that influence creativity and these factors are in accordance with previous research. A2 considers broad interests, attraction to complexity and independence of judgment that are factors that agree with Ahmed (1998).

However, A1 adds to previous research some specific personality traits that influence creativity in the workplace. These include the ability to think beyond the box, to be open-minded and social competence. M1 further adds the importance of turning things upside down and being uncomfortable for the company to break the common pattern. E1 adds being positive, warm, willing to change and not keep a nonchalant attitude. A2 adds to previous research some specific personality trait that influence creativity in the workplace and these are happiness and showing respect. M2 further adds to previous research some specific personality traits and these include being enthusiastic, ability to think beyond the box and hold social competence. E2 further adds the ability to prioritize, open-minded and keep a positive attitude. Moreover, Ahmed (1998) argues that there are some *personal motivational factors affecting innovation* and these are in accordance with A1 and A2.

*Organizational structure* - Ahmed (1998) claims that organizational structure has great impact on the creativity level in the workplace. The two poles of opposition regarding the organizational structure are *mechanistic* and *organic*. A1 and A2 are acting in accordance to prior research and perceive the organizational structure as an influential factor regarding the creativity level in the workplace.

A1 and A2 further add to previous research by adding open flow of communication as an important measure for enhancing creativity. E1, M2 and E2 also stress the significance of customer contact for each employee in the organization. M2 further emphasize autonomy in the organization as a factor influencing creativity. Moreover, M1 and M2 consider the composition of employees to be a highly influential factor regarding the level of creativity.

## 6.2 Creativity process

In this section, we will analyze our second research question against the conceptualization. Each dimension of the conceptualization for research question two will be analyzed against each of the two cases. Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) states that the creativity process includes six stages.

*Mess finding* - Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) argues that the first stage in the creativity process is mess finding, in which an organization must become aware of challenges, concerns and opportunities. It was discovered that this stage was absent in each case due to the fact that it is the customer who turns to the companies when need is determined. This means that neither of the cases are acting according to previous research.

*Fact finding* - Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) claims that this stage is an information-gathering task and it is intended to increase the understanding of the mess. A1 states that the organization uses this step in its creativity process. The company starts off with an analysis of the customer and the situation, followed by a trial project. Thereafter the company starts to collect the information needed for the project. A2 starts its creativity process by performing a situation analysis and a SWOT analysis and the process then continues with collection of information. As a result, both cases act in accordance to previous research.

*Problem finding* - Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) states that the next step, which is problem finding, includes generating different statements and thereafter evaluate these in order to identify the real problem. A1 develops a brief that describes the current problem situation and presents goals and objectives. A2 on the other hand develops an analysis of the problem, which is followed by a problem statement. It was discovered that both cases act in accordance to prior research.

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*Idea finding* - Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) argues that in the idea finding stage, the organization generates as many ideas or potential solutions as possible. A1 and A2 recognize the value of quantity in this stage of the process, as it provides the project with useful ideas. Furthermore, the cases in this study show that brainstorming is a valuable method to maximize the outcome and are acting in accordance to previous research.

*Solution finding* - Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) declares that in the solution finding stage, the organization evaluates, judges and selects potential solutions. The purpose of this stage is to evaluate potential solutions and develop those solutions into useful actions in order to solve the problem. In this stage, A1 uses discussions within the project groups to make a final decision where every employee can contribute with ideas and opinions. This is not in accordance to previous research as it only touches upon this issue very briefly. Regarding A2, evaluation of ideas is conducted that leads to a final selection, which is in accordance to previous research. A2 further adds to previous research the significance of testing ideas.

*Acceptance finding* - Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>) claims that in the acceptance finding phase, the focus is on overcoming barriers to implementation. Individuals must gain acceptance from themselves as well as from the group. A1 and A2 state that trust is important for acceptance of ideas. However, modification of ideas might be implemented in order to gain acceptance. On the other hand, E1 and E2 state that no agreement within the group is necessary as the project leader and the customer have the predominant power. This means that none of the cases are acting in accordance to previous research. A2 further adds the importance of meetings and follow-ups within the group and with the customer during the creativity process.

### **6.3 Creativity managers**

In this section, we will analyze our third research question against the conceptualization. Each dimension of the conceptualization for research question three will be analyzed against each of our two cases. Pinchot & Pellman (1999) stress some simple steps that will open the doors of creativity and innovation.

*Discourage status quo* - Pinchot & Pellman (1999) state that managers must discourage the current situation and make sure that the employees do not feel satisfied regarding the current situation and with things as they are. A1 is not satisfied with the current situation and is thereby constantly seeking improvement by creating collaborations internally and externally. This is in accordance with Pinchot & Pellman (1999). A2 are rather divided concerning this issue as M2 claims that the company is acting in accordance to previous research, while E2 considers managers to be quite satisfied with the current situation.

*Create a vision* – Pinchot & Pellman (1999) argue that the vision should stretch beyond the day-to-day business and align employees towards creative performance. A1 keeps a conscious vision that focuses on development and must be adjusted to the current situation. A1 is acting in accordance to previous research. A2 considers vision to be very important, as it will lead the way to success and work as a guideline for the organization. However, E2 does not acknowledge any vision to use as guideline within the organization. This elicits the fact that A2 is somewhat acting in accordance to previous research.

*Bet on people* - Pinchot & Pellman (1999) further states that managers should bet on people, not just ideas. The people that bring new ideas forward should be closely looked at. A1 states that people and ideas are closely linked together and are not able to separate. This is in accordance to previous research. A2 is somewhat divided in this issue as M2 claims that the company is acting in accordance to previous research, as people and ideas are considered inseparable. E2 on the other hand, states that the managers within A2 perceive people to be more important than ideas and is therefore not acting in accordance to previous research.

*Ask for help* – Pinchot & Pellman (1999) state that it is important for managers to realize that they cannot take absolute control and dictate its employees. Managers should lower their status and become a natural part of the team. A1 argues that the managers are rather authoritarian and the organization is centralized in its nature. As a result, the employees have little influence. The managers within the organization of A1 are not acting in accordance to previous research. Within the organization of A2, the managers are also rather authoritarian. However, managers can ask their employees for help at any time and managers are not always involved in the creativity process. Therefore, we have discovered that A2 is acting in accordance with Pinchot & Pellman (1999).

*Find creativity barriers* – Pinchot & Pellman (1999) declare that managers need to examine the situation on a regular basis in order to sort out and eliminate the current barriers that offsets creativity in the workplace. Neither A1 nor A2 are actively searching for creativity barriers and are therefore not performing in unity with previous research. A1 and M2 add to previous research that managers must deal with problems as they arise within the organization.

*Search for and reward sponsors* - Pinchot & Pellman (1999) claim that creativity sponsors should be searched for and rewarded by the managers. Effective sponsors recognize a promising idea before it is obvious and brings out the best from it. A1 states that there is no single person that works with creativity, but A1 claims that every employee is contributing to the creativity level in the organization. Meaning that, the company is not acting in accordance to prior research. A2 states that people that bring joy to the organization are important and are therefore appreciated and encouraged, which is somewhat in accordance to previous research.

*Value improvements* - Pinchot & Pellman (1999) further state that it is crucial for the development of creativity to value every progress that is being made. Both cases state that every change or suggestions for change is valued and taken into consideration. This fact is therefore highly in accordance to previous research.

*Create a mutable organization* - Pinchot & Pellman (1999) claim that organizations that are striving to increase the degree of creativity within its organization should be flexible; the essence is elasticity. A1 and A2 keep a hierarchical job design where most decisions are made centrally. However, M1 and M2 claim that the designs of the organizations are conscious choices to increase flexibility. On the other hand, E1 and E2 consider the structures to somewhat hinder the creativity process and they would rather prefer a more flat organization. Consequently, neither of the two cases are acting in accordance to previous research.

*Community building* – Pinchot & Pellman (1999) argue that managers should encourage a community where employees' values and opinions are addressed. The community should stand for something the employees can be proud of; something that makes it meaningful to

rise above self-centered issues and work for the entire organization. Regarding this issue, both cases are acting in accordance to previous research, as they perceive community building to be of great significance. Both cases report that community comes naturally but may be encouraged by social events.

*Evaluation* – Finally, Pinchot & Pellman (1999) proclaim that managers need to evaluate the work on a regular basis to be aware of the problems that exist. A1 acknowledge no evaluation at all within the organization, which means that A1 is not performing in accordance to previous research. However, A2 evaluates current missions on a regular basis. This is in accordance to prior research. Moreover, E2 underlines that only top management is involved in the evaluation process.

## **6.4 Cross-case analysis**

In the previous section a within-case analysis was presented. The data collection was compared to the conceptualization discussed in chapter three. As a mean to discover possible similarities and differences between the two cases, a cross-case analysis is conducted. The cross-case analysis is presented according to each research question under which the two cases are discussed. This facilitates the understanding and highlights possible similarities and differences between the cases.

The within-case analysis showed whether the responses from the interviews were in line with our conceptualization or not. We will in this section display the situation in matrices, where a form of coding will be used. The coding we have chosen is based on the pattern that was discovered during our interviews. There are some clear distinctions between management and employees that were revealed during our research, which motivated our choice of coding. If both responses within the same company are in accordance with the conceptualization, “Yes” will be positioned in the matrix. On the other hand, if the responses should contradict the theory, “No” will be placed in the matrix. The word “Partial” will be situated in the matrices if the respondents’ answers within the same company differ regarding previous research. If the respondent adds something to previous research, “N/A” will appear in the matrices. Moreover, the key for the additional coding in the matrices is as follows:

- +/+ Important both in theory and according to the respondent
- +/- Important in theory but not for the respondent
- -/+ Important for the respondent but not in theory
- -/- Important neither in theory nor for the respondent

### **6.4.1 Factors influencing creativity**

Ahmed (1998) states three main factors influencing the creativity in the workplace. We will first illustrate our cross-case analysis regarding organizational climate in Table 6.1. The matrix compares the cases, respondents and the conceptualization. Differences and similarities were discovered when the research was processed. These emerged patterns are further discussed in the text following Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Cross-case analysis – Organizational climate

<i>Organizational climate</i>	<i>A1</i>	<i>M1</i>	<i>E1</i>	<i>A2</i>	<i>M2</i>	<i>E2</i>
Trust/mistrust	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Reciprocal/competitive	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Treatment of new employees	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Valuation within the organization	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Central/participative	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Teamwork/individualistic	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Special privileges	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Challenging/boring	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Routines/flexibility	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Resources	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Partial</b>	+/-	+/+
Aspects of performance that are appraised and rewarded	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Support	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Quantity/Quality	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Basis for employment	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Variation of work environment	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Participation	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Private life	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Freedom of work	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Work hours	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-
Prestige	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-
Security	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Laid-back leadership	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+

As visualized in Table 6.1, the correlations towards previous research regarding organizational climate are quite similar in our cases. Our research indicates that organizational climate has a great impact on creativity in the workplace as the cases provide the research with coherent statements towards the conceptualization. Only a few factors mentioned by Ahmed (1998) were found to deviate from the cases, which involve treatment of new employees, special privileges and basis for employment. When the cases contradict to the conceptualization, all respondents oppose theory, which enhances the consistency in our research. The factors added to previous research are all involved in the two cases to a certain extent, except security and laid-back leadership. However, all these factors contribute to prior research as they bring up new dimensions of organizational climate. Summarizing the organizational climate, the largest differences arise among those factors that add to previous

research as employee and management disagree in some of these issues. Moving on, we will now illustrate our cross-case analysis regarding organizational culture in Table 6.2. The matrix compares the cases, respondents and the conceptualization. Differences and similarities were discovered when the research was processed. These emerged patterns are further discussed in the text following Table 6.2.

*Table 6.2 Cross-case analysis – Organizational culture*

<b><i>Organizational culture</i></b>	<b><i>A1</i></b>	<b><i>M1</i></b>	<b><i>E1</i></b>	<b><i>A2</i></b>	<b><i>M2</i></b>	<b><i>E2</i></b>
Valuation of aesthetic quality	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Broad interests	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Attraction to complexity	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
High energy	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Independence of judgment	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Intuition	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Self-confidence	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Accommodate opposites	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Firm sense of self as creative	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Persistence	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Curiosity	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Energy	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Intellectual honesty	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Internal locus of control	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Think beyond the box	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-
To be open-minded	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+
Social competence	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-
Turning things upside down	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-
Positive & warm	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-
Willing to change	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-
Attitude	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+
Happiness	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Show respect	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Enthusiasm	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-
Ability to prioritize	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+
Intrinsic/extrinsic motivation	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Challenging individuals	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Skills & knowledge	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+

Regarding organizational culture the cases are somewhat in agreement to each other regarding the personality traits, yet they contradict previous research to a large extent. Both cases

consider broad interests, attraction to complexity and independence of judgment to be influential factors on the creativity. They only differ in the factor concerning curiosity. Nevertheless, both cases add several factors to the personality traits influencing creativity. Regarding these factors, there is no general coherence between the two cases. However, what can be gathered from this cross-case analysis is that employees perceive attitude to be of great significance, while managers do not perceive it as an influential factor. Summarizing the personality traits, it can be stated that there is no specific commonness within the cases and among the respondents regarding this issue.

Concerning the personal motivational factors, the cases illustrate a strong coherence to previous research. This reveals that these issues are highly crucial for enhancing the level of creativity in the workplace. Furthermore, all the respondents added nothing to previous research and this fact reinforces the importance of the factors stated by Ahmed (1998), regarding personal motivational factors.

Finally, we will now illustrate our cross-case analysis regarding organizational structure in Table 6.3. The matrix compares the cases, respondents and the conceptualization. Differences and similarities were discovered when the research was processed. These emerged patterns are further discussed in the text following Table 6.3.

*Table 6.3 Cross-case analysis – Organizational structure*

<b>Organizational structure</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>M1</b>	<b>E1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>M2</b>	<b>E2</b>
Organic	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Mechanistic	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Open flow of communication	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Customer contact	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+
Autonomy	<b>N/A</b>	-/-	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-
Mix of employees	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-

Concerning the organizational structure, the cases illustrate a strong coherence to previous research regardless whether it is organic or mechanistic. Moreover, all the respondents state that open flow of communication is an essential factor affecting creativity. Therefore, previous research can be perceived as weak since it does not cover this issue. In general, both cases underline the importance of a customer contact. However, only E1, M2 and E2 consider this issue to affect the creativity while M1 perceive it as an efficiency solution. An interesting point of view is that only managers stress the importance of a good mix of employees as a structural issue that influences the creativity in the workplace. Summarizing the organizational structure, it reveals that this issue is very vital for boosting the level of creativity in the workplace.

#### **6.4.2 Creativity process**

We will illustrate our cross-case analysis regarding the creativity process in Table 6.4. The matrix compares the cases, respondents and the conceptualization. Differences and

similarities were discovered when the research was processed. These emerged patterns are further discussed in the text following Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 Cross-case analysis – Research question two

<i>Principle of creative thinking</i>	<i>A1</i>	<i>M1</i>	<i>E1</i>	<i>A2</i>	<i>M2</i>	<i>E2</i>
Mess finding	No	+/-	+/-	No	+/-	+/-
Fact finding	Partial	+/+	+/-	Partial	+/+	+/-
Problem finding	Yes	+/+	+/+	Yes	+/+	+/+
Idea finding	Yes	+/+	+/+	Yes	+/+	+/+
Solution finding	No	+/-	+/-	Yes	+/+	+/+
Acceptance finding	No	+/-	+/-	No	+/-	+/-
Importance of testing ideas	N/A	-/-	-/-	N/A	-/+	-/+
Meetings and follow-ups	N/A	-/-	-/-	N/A	-/+	-/+

None of the respondents claim that they accomplish the first stage of the creativity process by Evans (1997<sup>1,2</sup>), mess finding. Regarding the fact finding stage, managers state that the companies consider this issue while the employees claim that this stage is neglected within the organizations. Nevertheless, there is a strong coherence between the conceptualization and the answers from all respondents, on the subject of problem finding and idea finding. The research revealed that A2 is implementing the stage of solution finding into its creativity process, whereas A1 is not including this stage in its creativity process. None of the respondents claim that they accomplish the stage of acceptance finding. A2 adds to previous research by stressing the significance of testing ideas and conducting meetings and follow-ups during the process to keep the organization up to date. Summarizing the creativity process, it can be stated that the cases and the conceptualization match fairly well.

### 6.4.3 Creativity managers

We will illustrate our cross-case analysis regarding the creativity managers in Table 6.5. The matrix compares the cases, respondents and the conceptualization. Differences and similarities were discovered when the research was processed. These emerged patterns are further discussed in the text following Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Cross-case analysis - Research question three

<b><i>Creativity managers</i></b>	<b><i>A1</i></b>	<b><i>M1</i></b>	<b><i>E1</i></b>	<b><i>A2</i></b>	<b><i>M2</i></b>	<b><i>E2</i></b>
Discourage status quo	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Partial</b>	+/+	+/-
Create a vision	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Partial</b>	+/+	+/-
Bet on people and ideas	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Partial</b>	+/+	+/-
Ask for help	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Find creativity barriers	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Search for sponsors	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Value improvements	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Mutable organization	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-
Community building	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Evaluation	<b>No</b>	+/-	+/-	<b>Yes</b>	+/+	+/+
Deal with problems	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/+	<b>N/A</b>	-/+	-/-

Regarding the creativity managers, our research reveals that A1 keeps a consistent view towards theory provided by Pinchot & Pellman (1999). On the other hand, A2 has disagreements where managers and employees have different views on the subject of discouraging status quo, creating a vision and betting on people. Furthermore, it can be stated that A2 is somewhat more in line with previous research compared to A1. All respondents disagree with Pinchot & Pellman (1999) concerning finding creativity barriers and mutable organization. Moreover, the cases have similarities with previous theory on the subject of community building and valuation of improvements. An interesting adding to previous research is dealing with problems as they arise, which three of the four respondents claimed to be present within the organizations. Summarizing the creativity managers, it can be stated that there is no specific common pattern between the cases regarding this issue.

## **7 Conclusions & implications**

*In the previous chapter, the data collection was analyzed by comparing it to the conceptualization, but also between the cases presented in chapter five. This chapter will first present the main findings and conclusions based on research conducted in this thesis. The purpose of these conclusions is to answer the three research questions stated in chapter one. Each of the research questions will be answered in separate sections. Finally, implications for management, theory and future research are presented.*

### **7.1 Conclusions**

To provide conclusions to this study, each set of research question is answered. By answering the research questions, the research purpose posed in the first chapter is solved. The research purpose stated in this thesis was *to gain a better understanding of how to add value to the organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace.*

#### ***7.1.1 How can the factors influencing creativity in the workplace be described?***

This thesis revealed several factors influencing creativity in the workplace. However, when looking at it broadly, the primary and most all-embracing factors involve participation, trust, freedom and personality. We perceive these factors to be significant and comprehensive, as they cover many aspects of creativity.

We have found that participation among members of an organization is a highly influential factor, as it results in power of initiative and breaks up the common pattern. Participation put employees in a position where everyone has the ability to act on one's own initiative and the team spirit is enhanced. Being participative also involves taking part in the decision-making and customer contact throughout the entire creativity process.

Furthermore, companies perceive trust as an influential factor, since it creates an atmosphere that grows to be friendlier in its nature. This is somewhat related to participation, because greater participation may be based on trust among the members of an organization. However, this thesis has discovered that managers seem to act as authoritarian unities of power that tell the employees how to carry out the work but not the aim of the work. This leads to a decreased level of creativity, as the employees feel too much pressure and control that hinders the right brain activities and the willingness to think creatively. This thesis therefore reveals that companies instead should give employees more freedom in their workplace, which increases motivation, innovation and creativity.

Nevertheless, freedom must be connected to responsibility and members of an organization cannot act on one's own initiative without considering the customer needs and work descriptions. Freedom further includes personal choice of work environment that brings variation to the employees, which in turn enhances the creativity. This factor encourages the employees to think beyond the box instead of trying to satisfy the manager's needs and wants.

The final main factor that influences creativity in the workplace is personality. Appropriate personality traits of members of an organization are very important for the creativity level, as they provide the organization with engagement and enthusiasm. A good mix of different

backgrounds, experiences, age and gender bring diverse perspectives to the organization. Diverse perspectives will in turn carry different points of view, which strengthen the quality of the work and enhance the level of creativity in the workplace.

Another main factor that influence creativity is that intrinsic motivation is in favor of extrinsic motivation, as it brings greater self-fulfillment to the employees. Intrinsic motivation is more important than extrinsic, since it has a stronger impact on the creativity. Extrinsic motivation on the other hand, might bring a lot of pressure to the situation and employees might feel stressed and experience the feeling of being forced to act creatively. As a result, the creativity decreases and holds back future innovation.

Adding up, all these factors are highly influential regarding the creativity level. However, internal communication is the most crucial underlying cause for a high level of creativity in the workplace. This research has penetrated the lack of internal communication and to be deficient in creativity, which illustrates that organizations need to utilize an open flow of communication between all levels. It further exposes the significance of using a flat structure of the organization, where all members are seen as equal and everyone can share ideas and opinions.

From this discussion, we conclude from the major findings the following conclusions:

- Participation and trust provide a creativity atmosphere where the common pattern is challenged.
- Freedom eliminates negative pressure and personality of the employees, influences to what extent engagement and enthusiasm is flourished within the organization and enhances the level of creativity in the workplace.
- It is important to keep an open flow of communication and stress the significance of internal communication between all levels. An open flow of communication will smooth the sequence of work and sustain a high level of creativity in the workplace.
- Intrinsic motivation is preferred over extrinsic motivation in an environment where creativity is needed. Intrinsic motivation brings greater self-fulfillment to the employees and has a stronger impact on the level of creativity in the workplace.

### ***7.1.2 How can the creativity process be described?***

This thesis implies that a common creativity process can be established within organizations and involves six steps. The process is initiated by problem recognition by a client or a customer. However, this stage is in the hands of the customer and is not included in the purpose of this thesis. This thesis reveals that the process should start with a situation analysis, where the client or customer is analyzed. For example, a SWOT analysis can be utilized to succeed in this first stage of the creativity process.

Our research implies that a company will continue the creativity process by gathering information for each specific assignment. In addition, it can underline the significance of seeking information both internally and externally, as the members of an organization often holds a great deal of unique competence within specific areas. Furthermore, external sources

can add more depth to a project and bring new perspectives when the project group is going round in circles without any results. Therefore, the information gathering is an important step towards increasing the creativity in the workplace.

Following the information gathering, a problem statement needs to be developed to reach new heights in the creativity process. The statement is crucial for an understanding of the situation and the assignment. Moreover, the statement will decrease the risk of misinterpretation between the customer's wants and in what way the company perceives the situation. The problem statement should be supported by a discussion and an analysis of the problem, which must be combined into a comprehensive description.

Moving on to the fourth step, which includes the generating of ideas, companies are facing an important stage in the creativity process. Companies need to congregate all competencies and opinions within the organization to maximize the outcome. We have found that brainstorming is an exceedingly significant tool to generate as many ideas as possible. A large amount of ideas will bring new perspectives to the scene, which in turn will increase creativity in the workplace.

After creating the ideas, it is time to find a solution. Therefore, the fifth step includes the phase of finding this final solution. The purpose of this stage is to evaluate potential solutions and develop those solutions into useful actions in order to solve the problem. We have discovered that it is important that the project group should include a strong manager that can make decisions when the group members are not in agreement with each other.

Finally, we have found that the last step of the creativity process is evaluation. When working with the creativity process, it is needed to evaluate the effects of the efforts continuously. If evaluations reveal unattractive results, essential adjustments can be made in order to make improvements for future projects. It is fundamental that every project member is participating in the evaluation stage, as many viewpoints will bring greater perspective to the evaluation.

Summing up the creativity process, all the steps are outstandingly crucial to consider for increasing the level of creativity in the workplace. However, an efficient communication flow is extremely vital to reflect on to gain a good flow throughout the entire creativity process. This research has penetrated the lack of internal communication and to be deficient in creativity, which illustrates that organizations need to utilize an open flow of communication between all levels. We have discovered that every member should be involved in the project group from the start, in order to gain top results.

With regards of the creativity process, the following conclusions can be made:

- The creativity process embraces six steps and these include situation analysis, information gathering, problem statement, generating of ideas, solution finding and evaluation.
- The creativity process must be communicated to all members of a project group, because everyone in the organization needs to be a part of the creativity efforts for improvement of further creativity efforts.

### **7.1.3 How can a creativity manager be described?**

This thesis implies that a manager that stimulates creativity should never be satisfied with the current situation and constantly strive forward. Moreover, he or she should always try to seek new solutions and encourage solutions that break the common pattern. A creativity manager needs to discourage status quo, seek possibilities to innovate and deal with the increasing competition around the world.

Furthermore, creativity managers should create an organizational vision that can work as a guiding star for the organization. The vision involves common objectives to strive for and can pull the organization together. The thesis illustrates that it further congregates all the unique competencies and experiences within the organization.

To maximize the creativity efforts, managers need to support and respect the employees. This is a measure to engage the employees to think creatively. Managers should give an encouraging pat on the back, as it presents the appreciation and positive reception towards the employees. Appreciation will provide the employees with a positive feeling of creativity and give confidence for further improvements. Managers need to make sure that every idea is valued and that everyone can share ideas and opinions. A similar action to support is to encourage participation and flexibility of the structure. The design of the organization is therefore a vital part of the creativity stimulation, as it can provide an atmosphere where everyone feels involved and a part of the process.

Finally, as we have mentioned earlier, internal communication is of great significance for creativity managers to consider. Every member of the organization needs to be aware of the current situation and understand the entire process and the company situation. The internal communication work as a red thread and keeps the business operations on the right track, since everyone contributes and makes sure that the creativity is maximized.

From this discussion, we conclude from the major findings the following conclusions:

- The most important measures that a creativity manager should consider involve discouraging status quo, creating a vision, supporting the employees and flexibility of the structure. These measures will stimulate and enhance the level of creativity in the workplace.
- All employees within an organization need to feel participation in the organization and its everyday life in order to maximize the level of creativity. Participation among the employees in an organization is gained when every idea is valued and that everyone can share ideas and opinions.
- Creativity managers should keep an efficient flow of communication within the organization, in order to stimulate and enhance the level of creativity in the workplace.

## **7.2 Implications**

In this final section, we will give our recommendations. This will be based on the conclusions that have been made in the previous section. Here, implications for the various fields where

this study can be useful will be presented. These are implications for management, theory and future research regarding creativity management.

### ***7.2.1 Implications for management***

After concluding this thesis, we have come up with a number of issues we feel can be beneficial to the corporate manager. These implications for management are listed below:

- Our findings motivate us to believe that communication is the utmost underlying cause for encouraging creativity in the workplace. An efficient flow of communication within the organization will increase the team spirit and everyone will experience comfort at work. As a result, the level of creativity will boost.
- Furthermore, trust and support seem to be important foundations when developing and encouraging creativity in the workplace. Employees need to feel support from the organization to be able to share ideas and opinions, as trust creates an atmosphere where creativity is stimulated.
- Our findings further motivate us to believe that encouraging employee participation is a crucial factor to increase the level of creativity in the workplace. Participation among the employees in an organization is gained when every idea is valued and that everyone can share ideas and opinions. Management need to put employees in a position where everyone has the ability to act on one's own initiative to create participation within the organization.
- Finally, managers must encourage participation and customer contact to further enhance the possibility of stimulating creativity in the workplace. It is essential for engagement to involve employees in the entire business process. A great deal of creativity can be lost if customer contact is exclusively for managers.

### ***7.2.2 Implications for theory***

The research area of this thesis is creativity management. We have deductively formulated our purpose and research questions, based on previous studies by several authors. The purpose has been to gain a deeper understanding about how an organization adds value through enhancing creativity in the workplace. Therefore, we have in this thesis explored, described and begun to explain how creativity management can be described.

We have explored how a company adds value to the organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace. Furthermore, we have described how factors influencing creativity in the workplace can be described, how the creativity process can be described and how a creativity manager can be described. As a result, we have begun to explain how creativity management can be described. The data collected is somewhat in line with previous research. However, some matters are not in accordance with the cases of this study. In general, our findings tend to be more extensive compared to previous research. Yet, our findings reveal that previous research is missing many aspects of the topic of creativity management. Hence, this research contributes to theory by adding a large amount of issues that can be stated regarding how to add value to an organization through enhancing creativity in the workplace. These issues include a large amount of features and include a wide range of

aspects. Regarding research question one, the issues that contribute to previous research are presented in Table 7.1.

*Table 7.1 Issues that contribute to previous research, regarding research question one*

➤ Variation of work	➤ Positive & warm
➤ Participation	➤ Willing to change
➤ Private life	➤ Attitude
➤ Freedom of work	➤ Happiness
➤ Work hours	➤ Show respect
➤ Prestige	➤ Enthusiasm
➤ Security	➤ Ability to prioritize
➤ Laid-back leadership	➤ Open flow of communication
➤ Think beyond the box	➤ Customer contact
➤ To be open-minded	➤ Autonomy
➤ Social competence	➤ Mix of employees
➤ Turning things upside down	

On the subject of research question two, the features that contribute to prior research are the importance of testing ideas, meetings and follow-ups. Regarding research question three, the issue that contributes to previous research is the importance for creativity managers to deal with problems in time.

### **7.2.3 Implications for future research**

This research has presented a wide but careful insight into a company's creativity management. This area of research would be very interesting to further study by more exclusively explore how creativity is perceived by management versus employees, as we have noted an interesting pattern that separates these entities. Moreover, the same study can be made in a different line of business on different companies. Such research would be highly interesting, as it would explore how creativity is handled within an industry that does not involve creativity as a natural part of its everyday activities.

Our research has showed that companies can involve other issues (See section 7.2.2 for a detailed discussion) concerning creativity management, in addition to those suggested in previous research. Thus, it would be interesting to study whether these issues are frequently stated or not in other organizations. We suggest that a survey should be conducted on a much larger random sample with the intention of finding an answer, as several organizations would have to be examined if this is to be clarified.

Finally, an interesting angle of approach for future research would be to compare the perceptions upon creativity management of men and women. We believe that the topic would be perceived differently regarding this issue, as women tend to use right brain activity more efficient than men.

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### **Material from the World Wide Web**

Accessed: Homepage of A1; available 2003-11-20

Accessed: Homepage of A2; available 2003-11-20

### **Personal interviews**

M1, project leader/copy writer at A1, conducted 2003-11-27

E1, designer at A1, conducted 2003-11-27

M2, project leader/vice president at A2, conducted 2003-11-28

E2, art director at A2, conducted 2003-12-03

## Interview guide - English version

### I General information

- Position within the organization?
  - Top management/Employee?

### II Factors influencing creativity

#### *RQ1. How can the factors influencing creativity in the workplace be described?*

- What factors influence creativity in the workplace?
    - Why?
    - How?
  - How do you describe the organizational climate in your organization?
    - How does it influence the creativity?
    - Why?
    - Nature of interpersonal relationships
      - Trust/mistrust
      - Reciprocal/competitive
      - Treatment of new employees
      - Valuation within the organization
    - Nature of hierarchy
      - Central/participative decision-making
      - Teamwork/individualistic
      - Special privileges
    - Nature of work
      - Challenging/boring
      - Routines/flexibility
      - Resources
    - Focus of support and rewards
      - Aspects of performance that are appraised and rewarded
      - Support
      - Quantity/quality
    - Basis for employment
  - How do you describe the organizational culture in your organization?
    - How does it influence the creativity?
    - Why?
    - Personality traits
      - High valuation of aesthetic qualities in experience
      - Broad interests
-

- Attraction to complexity
- High energy
- Independence of judgment
- Intuition
- Self-confidence
- Ability to accommodate opposites
- Firm sense of self as creative
- Persistence
- Curiosity
- Energy
- Intellectual honesty
- Internal locus of control (reflective/introspective)
- Personal motivational factors affecting innovation
  - Intrinsic/extrinsic motivation
  - Challenging individuals
  - Skills and knowledge
- How do you describe the organizational structure of your organization?
  - How does it influence the creativity?
  - Organic/Mechanistic?
  - Why?
- Other comments?

### **III Creativity process**

#### ***RQ2. How can the creativity process be described?***

- How would you describe the creativity process within your company?
    - What steps does your organization go through when solving a problem?
  - How does your organization identify the problem?
    - Why?
  - How does your organization gather information to solve the problem?
    - How important is the amount of fact gathered?
    - Why?
  - Does your organization develop a statement of the problem?
    - How? Why?
-

- How does your organization go about to gain as creative solutions from the group as possible?
  - What tools do you use to be as creative as possible?
  - Why?
- Does your organization evaluate the ideas for solving the problem?
  - How? Why?
- How does your organization make the final selection of idea?
  - Why?
- How is the acceptance decided upon regarding the idea created within the organization?
  - Why?
- Other comments?

#### **IV Creativity managers**

##### ***RQ3. How can a creativity manager be described?***

- What managerial efforts are undertaken in order to increase the level of creativity in the workplace?
    - Is the current situation challenged on a regular basis within your organization?
      - How? Why?
    - Is vision a part of your organization's strategy towards boosting the level of creativity in the workplace?
      - How? Why?
    - Does your organization bet on people or ideas?
      - How? Why?
    - Do managers ask for help from the rest of the organization?
      - How? Why?
    - Does your organization actively investigate if there exist any creativity barriers?
      - How? Why?
    - Does your organization search for and reward sponsors in your workplace?
      - How? Why?
    - Are changes valued within your organization?
      - Every change? Improvements?
      - How? Why?
-

- Is the design of your organization a measure to increase the level of creativity?
  - Flat, hierarchical, free?
  - How? Why?
- Is community building a part of your creativity organization?
  - How? Why?
- Does your organization evaluate your creativity management efforts?
  - Regular basis?
  - How? Why?

➤ Other comments?

### **V Other comments?**

➤ Do you have anything to add?

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## Interview guide

### Swedish version

#### I Bakgrund

- Position inom företaget?
  - Ledning/Anställd?

#### II Faktorer som påverkar kreativiteten

##### *FF1. Hur kan faktorerna som påverkar kreativiteten på arbetsplatsen beskrivas?*

- Vilka faktorer påverkar kreativiteten på arbetsplatsen?
    - Varför?
    - Hur?
  - Hur beskriver Ni organisationsklimatet på Ert företag?
    - Personalrelationer
      - Förtroende/missförtroende
      - Samarbete/konkurrens
      - Introducering av nyanställda
      - Uppskattning inom organisationen
    - Hierarki
      - Central/deltagande beslutsfattande
      - Teamwork/individualistisk
      - Speciella privilegier
    - Arbete
      - Utmanande/tråkigt
      - Rutiner/flexibilitet
      - Resurser
    - Support och belöning
      - Aspekter på genomförande som uppskattas och belönas
      - Support
      - Kvantitet/kvalité
      - Grund för anställning
  - Hur beskriver Ni organisationskulturen i Ert företag?
    - Hur påverkar den kreativiteten?
    - Varför?
    - Personlighetsdrag
-

- Hög värdering av estetiska kvaliteter
  - Brett intresse
  - Attraktion mot komplexitet
  - Hög energi
  - Oberoende bedömning
  - Intuition
  - Självförtroende
  - Förmåga att tillmötesgå skillnader
  - Ser sig själv som kreativ
  - Ihärdighet
  - Nyfikenhet
  - Energi
  - Intellektuell ärlighet
  - Intern kontroll (reflektiv/själviakttagande)
  - Personliga motivationsfaktorer
    - Inre/extern motivation
    - Villig att ta utmaningar
    - Färdigheter och kunskaper
- Hur beskriver Ni organisationsstrukturen i Er organisation?
- Organisk/Mekanisk?
  - Hur påverkar den kreativiteten?
  - Varför?
- Övriga kommentarer?

### III Kreativitets process

#### *FF2. Hur kan kreativitetsprocessen beskrivas?*

- Hur skulle Ni beskriva kreativitetsprocessen i Er organisation?
- Vilka steg går Ni igenom när Ni löser problem?
- Hur identifierar Er organisation problem?
- Varför?
- Hur samlar Er organisation information för att lösa problem?
- Hur stor betydelse har mängden information som är insamlad?
  - Varför?
- Utvecklar Er organisation en redovisning av problemet?
- Hur? Varför?
-

- Hur går ni till väga för att få så kreativa lösningar som möjligt från Era anställda?
  - Vilka verktyg använder ni i denna process?
  - Varför?
- Utvärderar Er organisation alla idéer för att lösa ett problem?
  - Hur? Varför?
- Hur väljer Ni den slutliga idéen för att lösa problemet?
  - Varför?
- Hur skapas och erhålles acceptans för beslut angående idéer skapade i Er organisation?
  - Varför?
- Övriga kommentarer?

## **IV Kreativitets ledare**

### ***FF3. Hur kan en kreativitets ledare beskrivas?***

- Vilka ledar insatser görs för att öka kreativitetsnivån på Er arbetsplats?
    - Utmanas den nuvarande situationen med jämna mellanrum inom Er organisation?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Ingår vision i Er organisationsstrategi mot att öka kreativitetsnivån?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Prioriterar Er organisation människor eller idéer?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Frågar ledare om hjälp från övriga delar inom organisationen?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Undersöker Er organisation aktivt om det finns några hinder för kreativitet?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Söker och belönar Er organisation “kreativitets sponsorer”?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Är förändringar värderade inom Er organisation?
      - Alla förändringar? Förbättringar?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Är designen av Er organisation en åtgärd för att öka kreativitetsnivån i Er organisation?
      - Platt, Hierarkisk, Fri?
      - Hur? Varför?
    - Är gemenskapsbyggande en del av Er kreativitetsorganisation?
-

- Hur? Varför?
- Utvärderar Er organisation de kreativa ledarnas insatser?
  - Regelbundet?
  - Hur? Varför?

➤ Övriga kommentarer?

**V Övriga kommentarer?**

➤ Har Ni något att tillägga?