Promoting Creativity at Work: Implications for Scientific Creativity

Prof. Dr. Sandra Ohly, University of Kassel
Creative process

Problem identification → Preparation → Idea generation → Idea validation → Creative Idea

- Task motivation
- Domain relevant skills
- Creativity relevant skills

Amabile, 1996
Intrinsic motivation

„engagement as an end in itself, and not as a means to some extrinsic goal“ (Amabile, 1996)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>$k$</th>
<th>$n$</th>
<th>$\bar{r}$</th>
<th>$\hat{\rho}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3,417</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,319</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job self-efficacy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,257</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative self-efficacy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,746</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hammond et al., 2011)
Work context of creativity

Job design (Shalley, Zhou & Oldham, 2004)

- Job control
- Job complexity
- Time pressure

Support from colleagues and supervisor (Madjar, Oldham & Pratt, 2002; Madjar, 2008; Zhou, 2003)

- emotional: encouragement, role modeling
- informational: feedback, learning
Effect of time pressure

Creativity

Ohly et al., 2006
Creative requirement

Perception that a job requires the incumbent to have creative ideas (Shalley, Gilson, & Blum, 2000; Unsworth, 2001; Scott & Bruce, 1996)

Depending on high levels of

- job control
- job complexity
- time pressure
- and low levels of organizational control (formalization) (Shalley et al, 2000)
- supportive leadership (Unsworth et al., 2005)
Trust

Willingness to be vulnerable to the actions of another party (Colquitt, Scott & LePine, 2007)
Willingness to take risks (Schormann, Mayer, & Davis, 2007)

Sources (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995)
- Perceived ability of others
- Perceived benevolence of others
- Perceived integrity of others
Research model

Job design

Group climate

Intrinsic motivation

Creative requirement

Trust

Creativity
Results: Mediated model

- **Job control**
- **Supervisor support**
- **Intrinsic motivation**
- **Creative requirement**
- **Trust**

- **Creativity**

Relationships:
- Job control → Intrinsic motivation: 0.33*** (0.15*)
- Supervisor support → Creative requirement: 0.17** (0.10)
- Trust → Creativity: 0.17** (0.10)
More macro perspective: organizational climate

Hammond et al., 2011; Nahrgang et al., 2009
More micro perspective: Daily experiences

To, Fisher, Ashkanasy, & Rowe, 2012
## Daily work events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Event</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Rel. frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Goal attainment, problem solving, task-related success | „I met the deadline“
„Had a successful presentation“
„Discussed and finished the agenda for a workshop with colleagues“ | 54.20%         |
| Praise, appreciation, positive feedback | „received praise“
„my supervisor thanked me“
„received praise for being credible“
„I was given credit by the principal“ | 21.12%         |
| Perceived competence in or through social interactions | „Assisted my supervisor and felt competent“
„Was asked for help in a research project by colleagues from another department“
„successful teamwork“ | 16.99%         |
| Passively experienced, externally determined positive experiences | „was assigned to a new project leader“
„service assignment in Spain“
„received a promotion“
„My colleague got a baby“ | 7.69%          |

Ohly & Schmitt, 2015
Implications

To enhance creativity universities need to

1. Build trusting relationships and foster a supportive climate
2. Articulate creative requirements and stress the importance of creativity
3. Provide working conditions that foster daily positive affect
References


Overview: