

Individual personal ties strengthen teams' overall creativity

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With more employees working in teams, it is critical to find ways to enable teams to be more creative in their work. A new article in *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* explores how imagination, insight, and creative ideas develop, evolve, and spread from one team member to another, ultimately increasing the team's ability to think creatively about a range of problems.

The article highlights the fact that although creative ideas occur in the minds of individuals, and can arise in part from having personal ties to diverse others, ways of thinking about and approaching problems also can be jointly developed by the team. In essence, there is a team mindset that is greater than the sum of individual team members. When this synergistic process occurs, teams have the capacity to achieve high levels of creativity.

Christina E. Shalley, Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Georgia Tech College of Management and Jill Perry-Smith, Assistant Professor of Organization and Management at Emory University develop the concept of "team creative cognition," which refers to a shared repertoire of cognitive processes among team members that provides a framework for how the team approaches solving problems creatively.

Team creative cognition is transferred and infused within a team to facilitate the team's creativity. Shalley and Perry-Smith propose that team member centrality in the team's sociocognitive network, as well as the evolution of the entrepreneurial team, are critical to fully

understanding the infusion process and the resulting emergence of team creative cognition.

"If we can learn how team members approach problem solving and how members' creative problem solving approaches transfer from the individual to the team and become collective, cognitive processes of the team this can enable us to help facilitate teams in trying to be more creative at work," the authors conclude.

Source: Wiley

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