

Violeta Bulc

www.vibacom.si

www.incomovement.si

www.violeta.com

The title: Catalysts THAT facilitate MASS INNOVATION - a need and a concept that a modern education can not overlook, but integrate

There is a need for a framework, that can help to increase the success rate of implemented innovation ecosystems, and the speed of their deployment, that can help to decrease the time the ecosystem takes to readjust, and yet extend it's existence, and also the period within which they can produce the expected value.

The benefits that such a framework/model/concept could bring are a systematic and transparent approach to the presented issue; In order to get a new inside to the presented issue a broader discussion is needed. I would like to explore the thoughts, experiences and views about the following topics:

1. "mass" innovation is more sustainable than the "expert" innovation.
2. "mass" innovation creates far greater value than the "expert" innovation.
3. "mass" innovation is influenced by social anthropology, social behavior, stages of organizational/social evolution.
4. in order to trigger, lead and evolve mass innovation a new leadership style is needed.

Based on my filed work I can say, that this topic is becoming critical for the evolution of innovation ecosystems; many sources are intimating that (business) environments that support mass innovation, are substantially better in the long run than others. However, practical experiences are showing that the traditional approach of hierarchical leadership is no longer successful. So, new ways and forms of leadership are probably needed. In addition, we live in an era of innovation that so far, can only be created by people, so every person's contribution counts, and the "war on talents" is present at the full scale. So, how to behave as a manager and leader? How to achieve a critical mass of active participants in innovation ecosystem? These are the questions that I hope we will explore in our discussions.

Why would this topic be of any interest to the academic and management community? I believe that this specific area has been only superficially explored, especially from the cultural, anthropological, and evolutionary point of view. Therefore, we too often suggest that one deployment model for mass innovation will satisfy all, when we see, that it really works only in the sphere of origin. So, a new understanding of what triggers mass innovation could improve organizational innovation strategies, national innovation policies and individual awareness of innovation ecosystem behavior.

Introduction of some of the preliminary thoughts

Innovation

Today, innovationⁱ is a key means of creating additional value. It has presumed productivity and quality, as the entry factors for the successful development of any organization or society to an entirely new level. Whether this is as a consequence of, or a cause for, increased individual awareness and an even greater need for the establishment of the individual's identity will be shown by analysis over a substantial period of time.

It is a fact that today's world still heavily influenced by the western world, and these western markets encourage everything that is different, everything that reflects one's individuality and one's

own attitude towards the world. It appears on first sight, that the transition from quality to innovation is similar to the transition from productivity to quality. However, if we consider the consequences of a systems' behaviour, it becomes clear that what we are talking about is a transition of a completely different nature. Productivity and quality are recipes for success in vertical systems and static structures. Innovation, on the other hand, requires open, non-hierarchical dynamic structures, which allow the free-flow of knowledge and experience. To be able to flourish, innovation requires constant adaption, transforming and changing those structures which encourage inter-structural dialogue, continuous co-operation and co-creation and liberation from the stagnation of linear structures, that which breaks taboos, pushes the boundaries of the known and the possible, and challenges the existent. Increased productivity has been mainly related to technology, and increased quality to production process. Innovation, on the other hand, has stepped out of the framework of external facilitation and transferred the power to create added value to human beings and their ability to view the world and the situation within it in a way that is new, fresh and potential-laden, and different. Innovation has triggered a process which is not only economic, but, consequently, also social: a process which has been re-establishing respect, the value of being human, raising the individual to be more than the results of their work, technology and structure, and placing them at the core of the natural processes of creation.

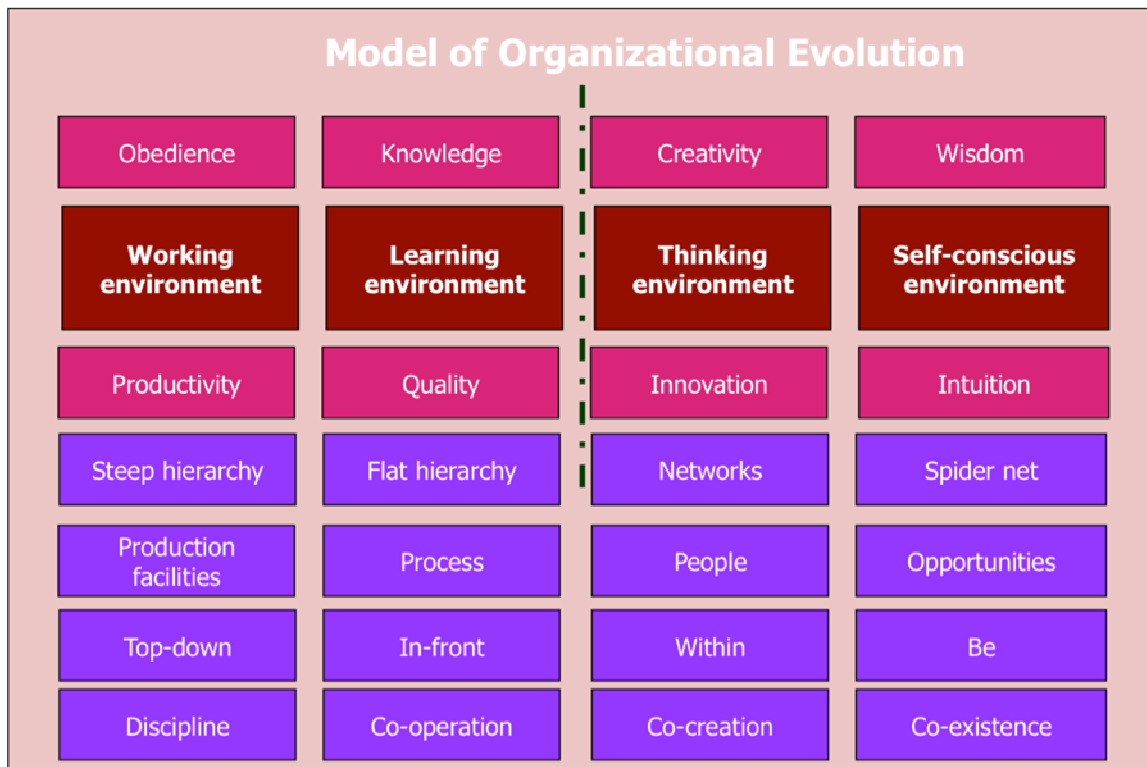
Creativity and innovation are now needed at all levels of business, because only a holistic view of the market, combined with a niche perspective can ensure the understanding of market needs and hence the creation of proper value. Development has become the domain of all people. Technology can help, but not without man-made instructions and human interpretation of results. Human beings have once again been given the opportunity to define and direct the structure.

Innovation presents a challenge for all existing structures. It encourages them to transform themselves from static to dynamic formations, able to continually adapt to the process of creation and innovation. I therefore believe that innovation is another tentative signal pointing to a new paradigm, a new direction in the development of society.

New structures and leadership style

The first important changes in response to static business practices were related to organizational development and behaviour, and the conceptual understanding of what organizations really are. Let me share my own experience with indicators in these areas.

For the last sixteen years I have been observing organizations as "beings". It is important to state that businesses are human-made systems created with a purpose and a mission. The fundamental characteristics are profoundly defined by their owners, managers, employees and other participants in the organizational ecosystem.



*intellectual property of Vibacom; www.vibacom.si

Let me invite you to regard organizations as unique organisms, as beings that have their own history, future, feelings, dreams, fears and life span. Have we ever thought of our businesses as such? Have we treated them as such? Have we incorporated the laws of nature and uniqueness in business solutions, structures, products and services? The search for answers to these questions brings us to the model of organizational evolution.

Let us imagine that organizational evolution consists of four key phases related to the working environment, learning environment, thinking environment and conscious environment, respectively. The four phases evolve in a logical sequence. Each of them has specific rules of conduct. It engages different resources, types of corporate governance, values and management tools. Each new phase requires the vital forces of its predecessor.

Evidence from the real world of business reveals that evolutionary phases do not evolve in a predetermined time sequence. On the contrary, each organizational system has its own dynamics. Each requires a different time span to transfer from one phase to another.

The transition to a new evolutionary phase is also subject to social and overall economic development. It occurs only when relevant conducive conditions are met.

Let us look at the model from four different points of view: the core values, the source of value creation, the organizational structure and the leadership style.

The key challenge in this evolution seems to be the transition from a learning to a thinking environment, for two particular reasons:

1. Creativity is not welcomed by hierarchy, so a dynamic network-type structure needs to be introduced, and that causes a lot of aggravation for management on all levels.
2. For the first time, managers do not manage directly the source of value creation (production facilities or machinery in the first phase, and process in the second). What they do manage is an

environment where value creation is generated. In such an environment they can get the most out of the core competences and creative power of each individual or a group.

Now imagine that this evolution model is a spiral that keeps growing and that the momentum driving the spiral is the depth of consciousness present in a team, company, community, region or on the planet. More and more it seems that time has nothing to do with progress and development and that the density of consciousness is what we need to focus on, especially in leadership, because it drives the transformation of business evolution.

Now let us see what kind of leadership can manage these transitions and transformations and what kind of leadership can change organizations from learning environments to thinking environments and beyond. My argument is that none of the existing types of leadership can do that; so I propose that we look into the so-called leadership within.

It seems that today's new leaders no longer need to lead. At least not in the traditional sense of leadership which is usually coupled, and dependent upon, followership. Instead, they simply need to be fully present to inspire people; to energize the grid they are connected with; to feed relationships through waves of personal energy; to hold the space with trust, and security, for people to create and innovate freely. With a simple gesture, leaders can empower us with their inner light, help us move and change and encourage the manifestation of the mission to be fulfilled by each and every one of us.

The 'leadership within' concept allows the transition from goals and static systems to dynamic systems and a process of constant transformation and adjustment where participants are connecting on the level of consciousness, awareness, interest and the higher good. ie. ethics

I have been testing this new type of leadership. In my experience it produces inspiring results created by the collective consciousness of teams and companies and produces sparkles in people's eyes. There is a great amount of experience that the Slovenian (business) ecosystem has to offer to the world's consciousness. Based on centuries of wisdom, and the experience of tears being replaced by wide smiles and visions of light, the Slovenian ecosystem invites all other ecosystems to follow its example. Then we can truly learn from each other and create an open system where knowledge is a universal good and leaders do not master but inspire and encourage the good in people.

My experience shows that when people are given an opportunity to be fully creative based on their own core competence and in a safe environment, the results are in favour of both the individual and society as a whole. Therefore, "leadership within" does not have much to do with time, but with something beyond our current ways of measuring: I suggest, the density of consciousness. When the conditions are right, when there is the right amount of energy present, the right amount of density of consciousness, things happen. Changes occur. The transformation happens.

Additional questions:

1. "mass" innovation is more sustainable than the "expert" innovation
Is this true? Why? What really makes an innovation ecosystem successful? How do we get there?
2. "mass" innovation creates more value than the "expert" innovation
Is this true? How can we prove it? Under what condition this might be true?
3. "mass" innovation is influenced by social anthropology, social behavior, stages of organizational/social evolution
Is this true? How can we prove it? Which are the catalysts? Are the catalysts the same in all environments? Where do differences appear, which are the common denominators?
4. in order to trigger, lead and evolve mass innovation a new leadership style is needed

Why the currently known leadership styles might not be the sufficient? What do we need to change?

The conclusion:

In my research I would like to include as much field work as possible (interview, observations, monitoring); I would also like to use IT solutions that can simulate, recognize patterns of behavior, and suggest different relationships among the elements of observation; I plan to set up a virtual community for 2 key reasons:

1. to connect experts that are interested in the same topic in an open space environment where we share our observations and help each other to create models and methodologies.
2. to connect participants from different cultural and historical environments on mass innovation on selected topics and observe and analyze their behavior.

For more see:

www.violeta.sj; www.incomovement.sj;
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxABDkVcdW0>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvbW02JGDq4>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18VM3pXiA9U>

ⁱ Innovation is a process of moving from an idea to an invention (a working invention or prototype) and, finally, to the market implementation of an idea (innovation).