

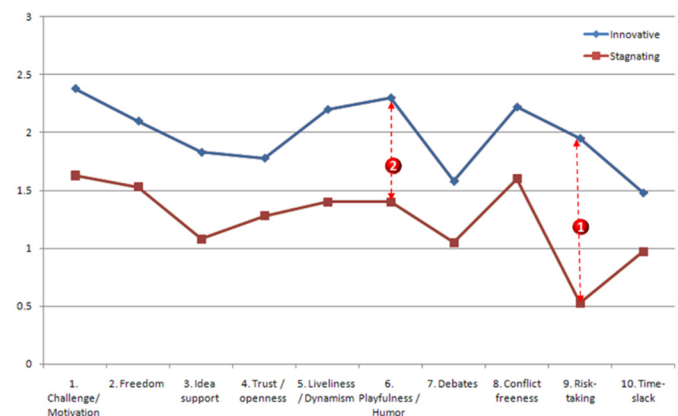
Creative climate factors that separate innovative from stagnating companies

Professor Göran Ekvall from Lund University has created a questionnaire that was successfully and extensively tested in more than 600 companies. This was done in order to check what factors constitute the Creative Climate within a company and which of these factors that separate innovative from stagnating companies. Whether the companies were innovative or stagnating was correlated to facts like financial outcome and ability to come up with new and rewarding offers on the market. The respondents got 5 questions in each of 10 areas to answer either with "I totally agree" (= 3) or "I totally disagree" (=0).

The 10 Creative Climate areas where;

1. **Challenge/Motivation:** Question example = People here usually enjoy their jobs
2. **Freedom:** Question example = It is common here that people take the initiative to solve problems.
3. **Idea support:** Question example = This unit is usually accepting new ideas
4. **Trust/Openness:** Question example = People here trust each other
5. **Liveliness/Dynamism:** Question example = The atmosphere where I work is exciting
6. **Playfulness/Humor:** Question example = People here tend to joke quite a bit
7. **Debates:** Question example = Many different points of view are expressed here
8. **Conflict freeness:** Question example = There are no power and territorial struggles in my unit
9. **Risk taking:** Question example = People here dare to take the initiative even if the outcome is uncertain
10. **Time slack:** Question example = The pace of work allows for the testing of new ideas

So, what was the outcome then? Well, have a look at the curves below...



The absolutely biggest difference between the 2 curves is in the Risk-taking ability area! (Please note here that risk taking here is more meaning the handling of new and uncertain tasks rather than calculating risks of more known tasks). The 2nd biggest difference between innovative and stagnating companies is in the Playfulness/humour area. The interesting thing is that I think they are interrelated! If you have an atmosphere of jokes, fun, humour and laughter it is easier to try new things and fail. Laughing at what you tried out, and this time failed with together with your colleagues, makes it easier to try again & learn until you eventually succeed! Where are You on Your company? Indications are that we need to on improve on risk taking ability, otherwise we are quite innovative, circling around the blue curve!

Take Away:

Risk taking is fun, so why do not combine the most important differentiators. ☺

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