Addressing the Human and Technical Capacity Challenges Through Digital Skills ITU—DOT TRAINING PROGRAM

INNOVATION IN THE WORKPLACE

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Topics

1. What is a culture of innovation?

2. Tools of an innovative workplace

3. Cultivating the innovative culture

What is innovation?

Efforts to extract economic and social value from ideas,

and, in doing so,

generates new or improved products, services or processes.
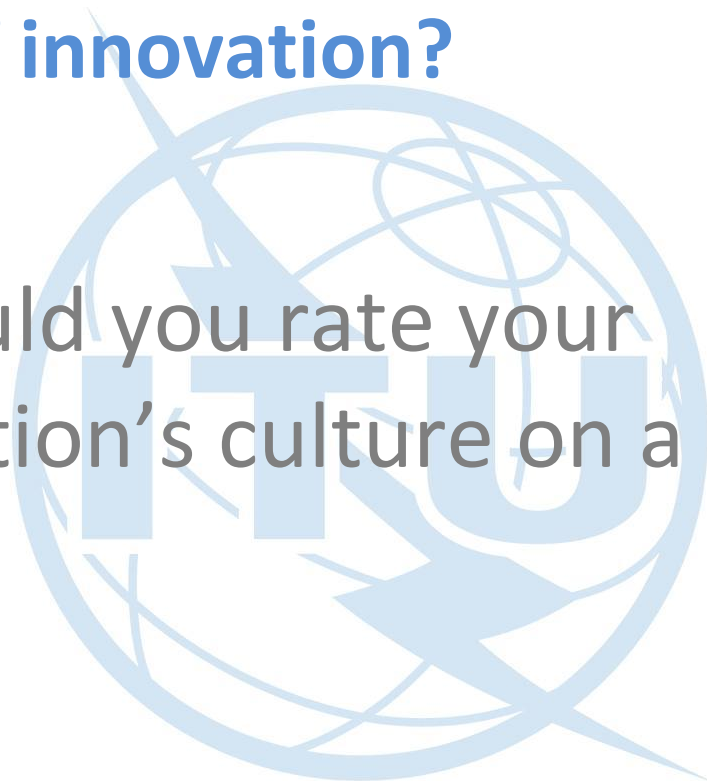
What is a culture of innovation?

An **environment**

that **supports creative thinking**

that leads to innovation.

Does your organisation have a culture of innovation?

How would you rate your organisation's culture on a scale of 1 to 10?

Investing in innovation

Organisations value innovation but most don't know how to achieve it.

Some organisations pay 'lip service' to it.

Investing in innovation

Organisations need to **invest** in a culture of innovation to achieve it.

- There is some cost to creating and sustaining innovation
- The payoff is huge!
- **The cost for not investing in innovation is bigger**

Investing in innovation is a no-brainer!

Costs of a culture of innovation?

1. **Change**
   Leaders and workers can struggle with change. Knowing this can help you prepare people for it.

1. **Time**
   People need dedicated time to be innovative.

1. **Money**
   Investment in people, tools and rewards are an important component of creating a culture of innovation.

Benefits of a culture of innovation?

1. **Happy people**
   a. Interesting work
   b. Making a difference
   c. Rewards

2. **Happy community**
   a. New products, services or processes
   b. Efficient delivery of products or services

3. **Happy stakeholders**
   a. Targets met faster and cheaper
   b. Higher profits for businesses

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Environment
Definition

the circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded

the complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors (such as climate, soil, and living things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival

the aggregate of social and cultural conditions that influence the life of an individual or community

A hot house is a great metaphor for an environment that cultivates a culture of innovation.

- A hot house allows the creation of the right environment.

- It needs to be monitored and maintained.

- The right tools need to be available *and* used.

- Needs dedicated people to work in it.

- The people are given time to work in it.

- If all the above are true, it produces valuable products.

Creating the right environment

Supporting creative thinking.

1. Organisational strategy that supports creative thinking
2. Encourage new ideas from *all* people in the organisation
3. Provide tools to foster new ideas
4. Provide time to foster new ideas
5. Work on good ideas
6. Celebrate successes
7. Recognise failure as an acceptable outcome — you've found something that doesn't work.

Monitoring and maintaining

"You cannot improve what you do not measure."

Metrics need to be collected to monitor and maintain the right environment.

The metrics that need to be collected are different for every organisation.
Include organisation's strategic goals in target metrics.

Transparency is important so the whole organisation is aware of the progress being made.

Providing the tools

Tools are great but they don't work on their own.

People need to know how to use them and actually use them.

1. Education and training
2. Hack days, hackathons
3. Idea catchers, discussion platform
4. Laboratory (Innovation lab)
5. Lean startup and Agile project methodologies, frameworks

Providing the time

If people are always busy doing their everyday work, they don't have the time to come up with creative new ideas.

1. Education and training
2. Hack days, hackathons
3. Free time in the Innovation Lab

Work on good ideas

Encouraging your people to come up with new ideas is great.

But if no one does anything with them, people will stop communicating their ideas.

Leaders need to recognise good ideas and invest in them.

Celebrate successes

Innovation needs to be celebrated to encourage more good ideas.

People involved should be rewarded through recognition.

Successes should be published internally and externally.

Failure is OK

It is just as important to show that failure is an acceptable outcome.

If there is fear of embarrassment or shame due to failure, people will not communicate their ideas.

Failure is inherent in any enterprise, it is always a risk. But innovation cannot happen without risk being taken.

People must feel encouraged to take risks.

Tools

Tools

1. Education and training

2. Hack days, hackathons

3. Idea catchers, discussion platform

4. Laboratory (Innovation lab)

5. Lean startup and Agile project methodologies, frameworks

Hackathons

Hackathons (or hack days) are morale-boosting events that are designed to encourage innovation and educate participants.

Creative ideas are born in hackathons.

Hackathons can be exhausting for participants and even more so for organisers.

So much learning in such a short time!

Hackathons

A typical Hackathon:

1. One to two day event
2. Participants pitch an idea for an innovative product or service
3. Participants choose an idea to work together on
4. Space and time are provided for teams to work together to develop the idea
5. Mentors rove around and give advice and feedback to teams
6. Teams present or pitch their product or service
7. A panel of judges choose winners
8. Everyone has a party

Successful Hackathons

Invite people from all parts of the organisation to participate — including management.

Educate participants on startup methodologies and tools.

Provide a relaxed, yet energised atmosphere where people can focus and be removed from the distractions of their everyday work.

Provide food and drinks 😊

Invite the whole organisation to be present for the judging, awards and party.

Successful Hackathons

Invite the general public to be a part of the hackathon.

Organise on a regular schedule.

Choose a theme.

Take the winning products or services and develop them further.

Publicise the event and outcomes, internally and externally.

Idea catchers, discussion platform

Ideas need to be captured so they can be shared, discussed and acted upon.

Old fashioned suggestion box is a great start.

But a digital platform is much better.

Social network tools like 'up-voting' or 'liking' can be great ways to incentivise people to share ideas and discuss them positively.

Innovation lab

Innovation labs can be created for low cost.

It can be just a dedicated space where teams (or individuals) can:
- be educated,
- work on ideas,
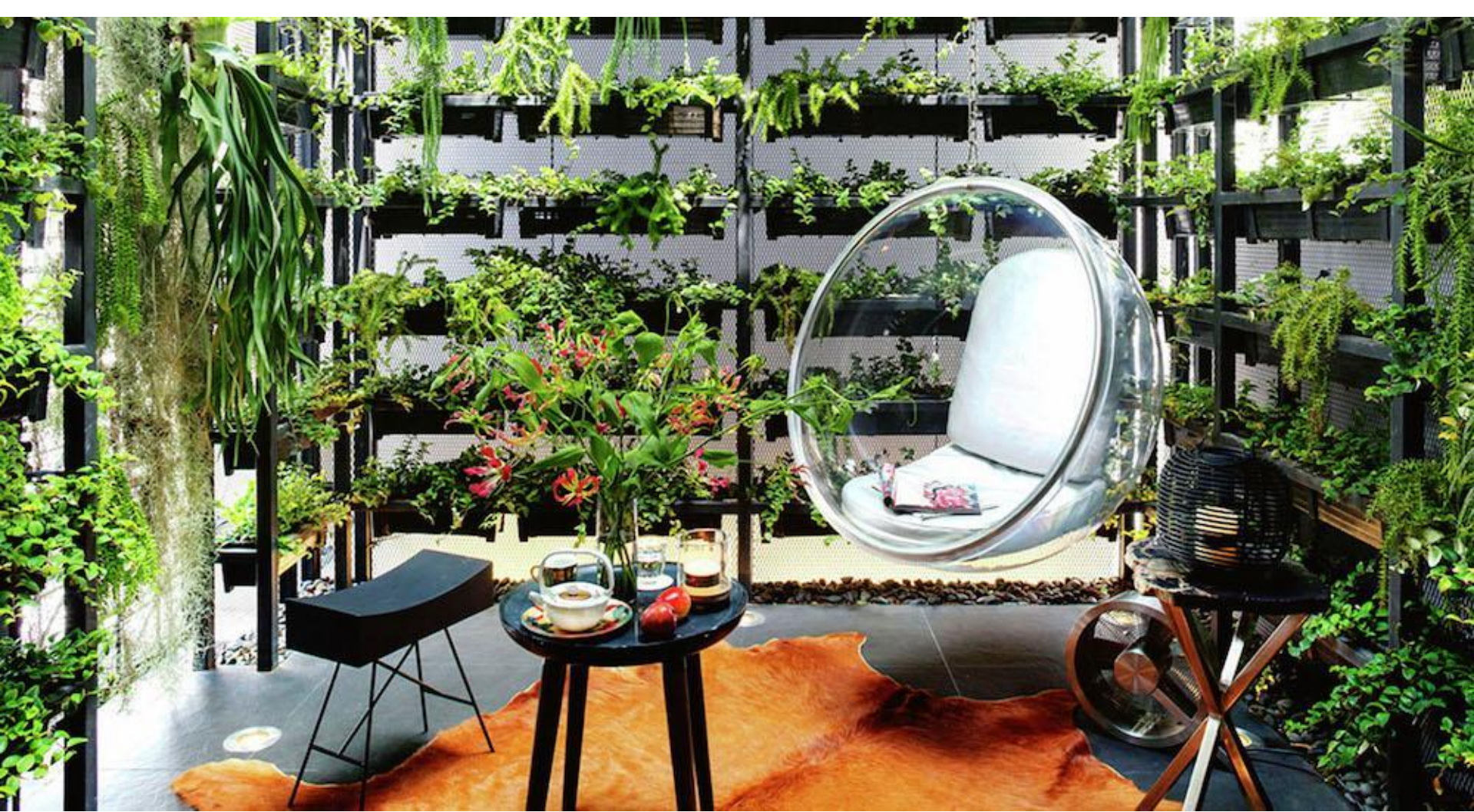- think creatively

Decorate the lab with:
- inspirational imagery
- successful innovations
- whiteboards
- creativity boosting games, technology

The chalkboard reads:

Sensory Stimulation

Hot Cold Sweat

Naps

Sleep

Crunchy

What gives you energy?

Exercise

Running Yoga Zumba Hiking

Drinks

Taking Breaks

Food

Caffeine Sugar Carbohydrates B-Vitamins

Wine

Unconditional love

Spending time with Kids

SAY HELLO
TO SPROUT

START
HERE

Lean and Agile methodologies

Technology start-ups have popularised many tools that encourage innovation.

Large organisations can also use these tools effectively.

- Business Model Canvas / Lean Canvas
- Value Proposition Design
- User Experience Design / Service Design / Human-centred Design
- Personas
- Agile teams

Education and Training

Investment in training can pay big dividends for any organisation.

Again, to know whether training is being effective, the organisation needs to be **collecting metrics**.

A learning needs analysis process along with a skills audit can help an organisation **align strategy with required skills**.
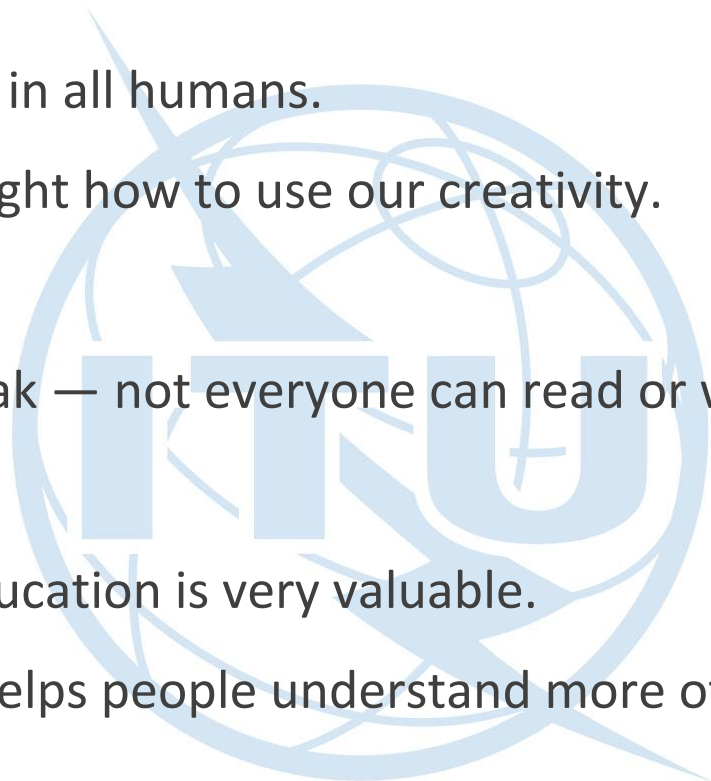
Education and Training

Creativity is innate in all humans.

We need to be taught how to use our creativity.

(Everyone can speak — not everyone can read or write.)

Design thinking education is very valuable.

Any training that helps people understand more of what is possible

with technology.

Education and Training

Education is required on all of the other tools so that they can be used effectively.

1. Hackathons

2. Idea catching and discussion tools

3. Innovation lab

4. Methodologies and frameworks

Innovative Culture Audit

Give your organisation a score out of 5 for each of the following points.

1. Organisational strategy supports creative thinking
2. New ideas are encouraged from *all* people in the organisation
3. Education and training is provided
4. Tools are provided to foster new ideas
5. Time is provided to foster new ideas
6. Good ideas are developed
7. Successes are celebrated
8. Failure is OK

What is the score out of 40?

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Creating a culture of innovation in your workplace

Every workplace is different. They have different strategies, goals and people.

Each organisation needs to decide for themselves what they need to do to cultivate a culture of innovation.

TEAM CHALLENGE (2)

Creating a culture of innovation in your workplace
In teams of 2 - 4, discuss how your organisation can improve its innovation culture and become a "hot house of innovation".

Which strategies, goals, tools, education and activities would you implement?

Here is the link to the Team Challenge Evaluation Form:
bit.ly/eval-team

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I Thank U (ITU)