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CO-CREATIVE ORGANIZATION THROUGH REPRESENTATION THAT LEVERAGES INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM POTENTIALS

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Co-Creative Organization through Representation that Leverages Individual and Team Potentials

Maria Socorro Cristina L. FERNANDO[1]

Abstract

This is qualitative research that explores insights on elements of representation in the workplace that leads to the enhancement of individual and team potential and to offer recommendations that could be utilized as key strategies to enhance individual and team level potential through representation towards a co-creative organization. The 15 informants come from 4 Asian countries and work in various industries. The themes from qualitative data analysis using content analysis showed that by focusing on diversity, collaboration, recognition, and professional development, organizations can cultivate an environment that not only benefits individuals but also strengthens the collective workforce.

*Keywords:*co-creative organization; representation; individual and team potential.

Introduction

The world of work is a global village. Organizational boundaries are becoming more seamless involving a diversity of people, technologies, and organizational designs. The development of organizations sees the increasing mobility of people across borders and regions. Organizations are more flexible and increasingly diverse based on context, functions, and priorities. Increasing diversity in the workforce presents a challenge and an opportunity for leaders and managers as organizations see an increasing presence of various genders, age, race, culture, orientations, and values in the workplace. Organizational effectiveness can be pursued by management perspectives, strategic responses, and implementation approaches addressing the pressures posed by diversity and leverage resources (Cummings & Worley, 2015) .The publication of McKinsey (2020) on Diversity Matters stated that “inclusion and diversity is a powerful enabler of business performance . As more organizations operate as networks, diversity and inclusion

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strengthen organizational performance Research showed that teams which are diverse and inclusive would be more engaged, creative, and innovative (Mckinsey, 2017).

The "Diversity Wins: How Inclusion Matters" report by McKinsey (2020) underscores the increasing business value of diversity, highlighting that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive teams are 25% more likely to achieve above-average profitability, up from 21% in 2017. Additionally, organizations with higher ethnic and cultural diversity outperform by 36% in profitability. The report emphasizes that fostering an inclusive environment is as critical as achieving diversity itself, ensuring employees feel valued and opportunities are equitable (McKinsey, 2020).

Dillon and Burke (2013) compared high-performing teams with less performing teams and found that that employees who feel involved are more able share their ideas and participate better (Dillon and Burke, 2013 , apud. Bourke *et al*., 2016). Representation in the workplace is essential for the development of individual and team potentials towards a co-creative organization. Taking from different perspectives, this study explores insights on elements of representation in the workplace that leads to the enhancement of individual and team potential and to offer recommendations that could be utilized as key strategies to enhance individual and team level potential through representation towards a co-creative organization.

Literature Review

Theoretical Perspectives

Social Identity Theory states that "individuals define their own identities with regard to social groups and such identifications protect and bolster self-identity." The creation of group identities involves both the "classification of one's in-group with regard to an out-group and there is a propensity to view one's own group with a positive bias regarding the out-group" (Turner *et al.*, 1987, as cited in Islam , 2015).

Mor Barak (2017) describes the implications of Social Identity Theory for understanding workplace diversity and exclusion as follows: (1) People regard themselves and others as members of particular social groups instead of distinctive individuals; (2) The meaning connected to the social categories influences the way that people interact with those who belong to or do not belong to their identity group; (3) People would like to belong to groups where they enjoy distinctive and constructive identities; (4) Employees who are members of groups with perceived higher social status will accept and include those who are similar to them and exclude those whom they perceive as different.

Optimal distinctiveness theory states that the social self is a being the same and different at the same time. The theory "proposes that individuals have two fundamental and competing human needs which are the need for inclusion and the need for differentiation" (Leonardelli *et al.*, 2010). Membership in moderately inclusive and optimally distinctive groups helps to meet these needs. The research explains that the "needs for inclusion and differentiation influence self-categorization which results in a relation between group inclusiveness and group identification". Furthermore, these "two needs influence perceptions and judgments of the self and others including the nature of intragroup and intergroup relations. The interplay of the needs for inclusion and differentiation across levels of the self and the needs for inclusion and differentiation influences the level of self either at the individual or collective levels (Leonardelli *et al.*, 2010).

Shore *et al.* (2011) state that the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory explains issues related to the need for individualism and the need for being unique as well as the need for similarity with others. When a person is more involved, the need for inclusion is satisfied while the need for differentiation arises and vice versa. Humans need a level of distinctiveness that involves both uniqueness and assimilation (Abrams, 2009). Trust, loyalty, and cooperation develop when a person feels included while on the other hand, when group members are perceived to be similar, the need to be different is unfulfilled and people will seek to distinguish themselves by comparison. Therefore, people choose to identify with specific social groups that satisfy both the need to be unique and aid to help avoid loneliness (Pickett *et al.*, 2002). This theory overlaps with social identity theory that states that there may be situations that arise when one's needs overpower the other, particularly when the situation results from social identity. In this way, the necessity of social identity prevails over all other needs. For example, if someone from Asia working with Americans gets his proposals rejected publicly then one may relate the rejection is due to his race and this activates the need for belongingness (Shore *et al.*, 2011). This theory focuses on the individual factors related to diversity and inclusion because inclusion is defined as a extent to which a person feels as a member of a group while satisfying both one's needs of being unique and being included. (Fernando, 2021)

Co-creative Organization

A co-creative organization is one that fosters collaboration and shared creativity among its members, stakeholders, and sometimes even external partners to achieve collective goals and innovation. In such an organization, participants are empowered to contribute their unique ideas, perspectives, and skills, creating value together rather than relying on a top-down decision-making approach. Co-creative organizations often emphasize openness, trust, mutual respect, and inclusivity to encourage active participation and engagement from everyone involved. They typically thrive in environments that encourage experimentation, adaptability, and

continuous learning, making them better equipped to navigate complex challenges and drive innovation. It's a dynamic and participatory model, where success is shaped by the collective contributions of all.

Co-creative organizations are underpinned by several theories that emphasize collaboration, shared value creation, and innovation. One such theory is the Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), which suggests that organizations can achieve sustained success by addressing the needs and interests of all stakeholders, fostering an inclusive and collaborative environment. Another relevant framework is Design Thinking, which promotes cross-functional teamwork and iterative problem-solving to enhance co-creation and creativity in organizations (Brown, 2009). Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) also aligns with co-creation by highlighting the importance of reciprocal relationships, trust, and mutual benefit in fostering collaboration. Additionally, Complexity Theory underscores the dynamic, adaptive nature of co-creative organizations, where diverse inputs interact to produce innovative solutions (Uhl-Bien *et al.*, 2007). These theories collectively provide a foundation for understanding the mechanisms and benefits of co-creative organizations.

Representation

Representation in the workplace refers to the inclusion and participation of individuals from diverse demographic and identity groups—such as gender, ethnicity, age, disability status, or socioeconomic background—across all levels of an organization. It involves ensuring that people from underrepresented groups have equitable opportunities to access leadership positions, decision-making roles, and other key areas of influence within the workplace. Representation is critical for fostering innovation, improving organizational culture, and ensuring fair and inclusive practices.

Representation plays a pivotal role in fostering co-creative organizations by enabling diverse perspectives, equitable participation, and collaborative innovation. Research by Ramaswamy and Gouillart (2010) highlights that co-creation thrives in environments where representation ensures inclusivity and shared ownership of ideas. Similarly, Schlott (2024) emphasizes that diverse teams in co-creative organizations enhance design thinking and problem-solving capabilities. Delice *et al.* (2019) found that representation in team dynamics fosters adaptability and creativity, essential for co-creation. Cross *et al.* (2016) demonstrated that inclusive teams improve collaboration and engagement, driving co-creative processes. Lastly, Kozlowski and Ilgen (2006) argue that diversity in team composition is crucial for developing high-performing, co-creative organizations capable of addressing complex challenges. These studies collectively underscore the importance of representation in building co-creative organizations.

Individual Potential

Individual potential in the workplace refers to an employee's capacity to achieve personal growth, excel in their role, and contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. This potential is influenced by a combination of skills, knowledge, experiences, personality traits, and motivation. Unlocking individual potential involves providing opportunities for professional development, fostering a supportive environment, and aligning an individual's strengths with their responsibilities.

Empirical research consistently highlights the positive relationship between workplace representation and individual potential development. For instance, Wang *et al.* (2022) found that inclusive coaching frameworks significantly enhance employees' self-efficacy and goal attainment. Similarly, Day *et al.* (2021) demonstrated that leadership training in diverse environments fosters individual growth and organizational sustainability2. Beausaert *et al.* (2011) emphasized the role of personal development plans (PDPs) in promoting professional growth, particularly in diverse settings. McKinsey's "Diversity Wins" report (2020) revealed that organizations with diverse leadership teams are more likely to create environments conducive to individual development. Additionally, Bell and Berry (2020) highlighted that representation in leadership roles directly correlates with increased opportunities for skill enhancement and career progression. These studies collectively underscore the importance of representation in unlocking individual potential in the workplace.

Team Potential

Team potential in the workplace is the collective ability of a group of employees to collaborate effectively, innovate, and achieve shared objectives. It thrives when team members leverage each other's diverse skills and perspectives, communicate openly, and build trust. A high-performing team maximizes its combined talents to deliver outcomes that exceed the sum of individual contributions.

Representation in the workplace significantly enhances team potential by fostering diverse perspectives, improving collaboration, and driving innovation. Research by Delice *et al.* (2019) highlights that diverse teams adapt better to dynamic environments, leveraging varied skills and experiences to achieve common goals. Buła *et al.* (2024) emphasize the importance of representation in nurturing communication, creativity, and culture within hybrid work models, which are increasingly prevalent. Schlott (2024) demonstrates how design thinking in diverse teams enhances team interactions and performance, contributing to organizational transformation. Cross *et al.* (2016) found that inclusive teams increase employee participation and performance, creating a more engaged workforce. Lastly, Kozlowski and Ilgen (2006) argue that diversity in team composition is crucial for developing high-performing teams capable of addressing complex challenges.

These studies collectively underscore the vital role of representation in unlocking team potential and achieving organizational success.

Conceptual Framework

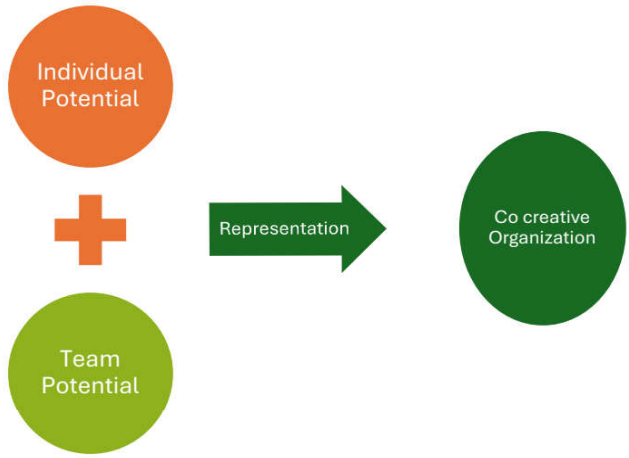


Figure 1. Co-Creative Organization through Representation that Leverages Individual and Team Potentials

Methodology

The research design is purely qualitative research. The data collection was conducted online open-ended questionnaires.

Qualitative Research Informants

The informants interviewed for the qualitative research included nine (9) respondents who worked in various positions in multi-cultural teams /companies in Thailand, China, Myanmar , and the Philippines for more than five years . Purposive sampling was used to identify the informants for the interview.

Patton (2002) states that qualitative study uses purposive sampling using selected people, communities, organizations, events, cultures, incidences because they are “information rich” and “illuminative”. This means that informants who are purposively selected offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest. Sampling is aimed at insight into the phenomenon, not empirical generalization from a sample to a population.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) indicated that sample size depends on the type of qualitative design. Narrative needs one to two individuals; phenomenology studies

need a range of 3-10, grounded theory need between 20-30. Another approach that is equally viable is to use "saturation" when one stops collecting data when the categories (or themes) are saturated, that means, that the researcher finds that when gathering fresh data, there is no longer new insights revealed .

Research Instrument

The research instrument was designed using the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) protocol template for the purpose of conducting strengths-based inquiry on a specific phenomenon.

The qualitative interview protocol utilized the SOAR Framework based on Appreciative Inquiry. Stavros and Hinrichs (2009:16) stated that "SOAR involves creating a series of conversations to gain a whole system perspective. The questions used in the conversation are designed to understand what happens when the organization is working at its best and how to apply that information to create a desired future." Questions using this approach based on the generative process of Appreciative Inquiry designs questions that explore the chosen topic for the conversations. SOAR, which stands of Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results is an appreciative approach to strategic thinking and planning (Hammond, 2013).

Research Instrument

Table 1: The research instrument consisting of four (4) open ended questions.

Share your experience, ideas, and aspirations based on your actual company experience related to " Co-creative organization through representation that leverages individual & team potential" The responses are to be written on the table. You may use sentences or bullet points for your responses and brief explanation.
Co-creative organization through representation that leverages individual & team potential. People in the organization feel that there is recognition and acceptance of workplace diversity and inclusion where they feel that they are recognized, valued, safe, and secure to be who they are and can contribute whatever they can in the workplace. The organization provides fair and equal opportunities in the representation of talents from talent acquisition and advancing talents into executive, management, technical, and board roles
Question 1. Share 1-2 current best practices in your workplace? Please describe briefly.

Question 2. What do you want to accomplish more within the next two years? (mention 1-2 priorities only) Please describe briefly
Question 3. Based on Q2: What changes can be made that will result in improvement? Please describe the changes briefly
Question 4. Based on Question 3: What will be measured? How would you know that the change is an improvement? You can mention indicators of expected positive change

Content Analysis

The interview data from the informants were transcribed verbatim, organized into a coding table by the researcher. The table analyzed using coders and online qualitative program for synthesis to craft common themes and categories.

Triangulation

Triangulation was also utilized to define the qualitative validity, which means determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of the account. (Creswell & Miller, 2013, as cited in Creswell & Creswell, 2018) This is done by intercoder agreement (or cross-checking), Such agreement is based on whether two or more coders agree on the codes used for the same passages. In terms of qualitative results from coding, Miles & Huberman (1994, as cited in Creswell & Creswell, 2018) recommended that the consistency of the coding agree with at least 80% of the time for good qualitative reliability. In this study, the summary table was sent to the coders and one informant. All three confirmed that the final codes generated reflected the ideas/themes that resulted from the coding analysis

Results

Demographics

Table 2 shows the demographic data of the informants where 33% are from Thailand, mostly were Female (80%) and 46.67% worked in private business enterprises.

Table 2: Demographic Data of Informants

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Nationality		
Myanmar	4	26.67%
China	3	20.00%
Philippines	3	20.00%
Thailand	5	33.33%
	Total 15	100%
Gender		
Male	3	20.00%
Female	12	80.00%
	Total : 15	100%
Industry		
Education	4	26.67%
Government	2	13.33%
Non-Profit Organizations	2	13,33%
Private Business Enterprises	7	46.67%
	Total 15	100%

Current best practices in the workplace

Table 2 shows the codes and themes derived that exhibit the various best practices reflect a combination of structured systems, leadership inclusion, employee engagement, feedback culture, and diverse development opportunities that encourage growth, collaboration, and safety within the workplace. Each practice contributes to enhancing performance and fostering an environment of continuous improvement.

Table 2: Codes, sample excerpts, and themes generated: Current best practices in the workplace

Codes and Excerpts	**Themes**
Performance self-assessment & goal setting *"Mechanism like the performance management system where individuals in the organization participate in assessing his/her performance and charting areas for professional and personal growth. This process starts with the personnel setting his/her goal for the year and identifying the areas of development towards the end of the year."*	• Goal-Oriented Performance and Development System • Collaborative and Transparent Evaluation Processes

Structured and transparent evaluation *"In our workplace, we have developed a structured, periodic teacher evaluation system designed to be transparent and inclusive. The evaluation is based on 20 detailed assessment criteria, ensuring a comprehensive review of teaching performance. Each evaluation involves two assessors, who independently score on a 100-point scale, with the final score calculated as an average."*	• Inclusive Decision-Making and Employee Involvement • Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunities • Recognition and Reward for Contributions • Capability-Based Roles and Flat Structure • Professional Growth Through Training and Workshops • Mentorship and Coaching for Skill Enhancement
Inclusive leadership teams and collaboration *"We ensure our leadership teams and committees include teachers from diverse backgrounds, expertise, and teaching levels. This brings varied perspectives, fosters collaboration, and allows individual talents to shine. It creates ownership and inclusion, as our voices influence key decisions."*	
Inclusion and diversity focused workplace initiatives *"My organization has been actively working on fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace through various initiatives. One of the approaches includes embedding Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) into the company's core values and everyday practices."*	
Employee engagement and feedback channels *"After each assignment, our managing directors would ask for feedback to refine our solution and improve on the working style, if any."*	
Recognition and sharing contributions *"The best practice in my workplace is when the team member (regardless of work level) sharing the idea, make the contribution and drive the team success and his/her success story has been shared to other team member to recognize the contribution and being an encouragement to other."*	
Multi-role and talent development opportunities *"Most of staff I know here, they have different background some of them can have two roles for example teachers here they can support schools and students by using their potential and connection with supervising the student clubs. And if they have talent with sport, they also can sign up to be sports coaches after school. They have chances to manage their activities and initiate."*	
Capabilities-based project assignment *"When it comes to project assignment, instead of being assigned by rank, we are awarded projects based on our capabilities and prior experience."*	
Awareness initiatives and risk management *"Safety is everyone's responsibility project, this project makes awareness to team members to prioritize their safety work, team members can report the risk may occur before starting work with customer site."*	
Mentorship and coaching integration programs *"Coaching and mentoring are integrated part of the system for a more focused development of one's potentials and provide opportunities for individuals to optimize the use of their talents matching these with the needs of the organization."*	

The organization described has established a robust and inclusive performance management system to assess individual performance, foster professional and personal growth, and align individual goals with the needs of the organization. The process begins with employees setting annual goals and identifying areas for development.

- Coaching and mentoring are integral components of this system, providing employees with opportunities to optimize their talents and match their capabilities to organizational objectives.
- Leadership teams come from diverse backgrounds and levels, ensuring varied perspectives and inclusive decision-making.
- Employees at all levels are encouraged to voice their opinions about the management and leadership styles they prefer. Regular interactive meetings provide venues for suggestions and foster team collaboration. Organizations and teams are committed to fostering an inclusive workplace by setting in the core values of inclusion and diversity Professional development is a priority, such as sessions focusing on innovative teaching strategies, and classroom practices. The organization recognizes employees' contributions through initiatives such as Team Member Awards for categories like Innovation, Expertise, and Young Leadership. Other programs, like the "Safety is Everyone's Responsibility" campaign, emphasize workplace safety and encourage proactive risk management.
- A culture of recognition is promoted through online recognition cards, acknowledgment during team meetings, and awards for exemplary behavior aligned with company values. The informants mentioned that there is room for more consistency across teams, as the extent of implementation often depends on individual team leaders.
- Employees take on multiple roles based on their talents. For example, teachers may supervise student clubs, coach sports teams, or take on administrative roles such as deputy principal or dean. The organization emphasizes capability-based project assignments rather than rank-based allocation. This flat organizational structure allows employees to contribute ideas and collaborate equally on projects.
- Employee empowerment is a priority, with young employees involved in decision-making and co-creation projects. They are paired with senior mentors which allow them to develop skill and confidence. Furthermore, forums that facilitate idea exchange between leaders and younger staff members are held and these promote mutual growth and an inclusive culture.
- There is a consideration for women for leadership roles and ensures representation of persons with disabilities, providing equal opportunities based on qualifications. Training programs and workshops, held bi-weekly, further enhance employees' skills and foster inclusivity. Weekly face-to-face counseling sessions are also available for employees in need.
- The workplace features a transparent and inclusive teacher evaluation system based on 20 detailed assessment criteria. For example, one case indi-

cated that two independent assessors score each teacher, with final scores averaging their evaluations. This system fosters trust, ensures accountability, and provides clear feedback for professional development. Evaluators, selected from high-performing teachers, contribute to maintaining high standards and fostering collaboration among peers.

- Leaders also encourage teachers to attend academic conferences, enhancing their professional expertise. Other initiatives include project allocation to stimulate employees' potential, secondment opportunities across departments and locations, and pathways for achieving higher academic titles. Salary adjustments linked to performance and creativity further motivate employees.
- The organization /teams emphasize collaboration and shared success. Employees are encouraged to share ideas, contribute to team success, and celebrate achievements. Success stories are often shared to inspire others.
- Managers act as liaisons between higher units and frontline employees, ensuring smooth operations. This approach incentivizes creativity and dedication while aligning individual growth with organizational objectives.

In summary, the informants experienced that their organizations have built an inclusive, supportive, and growth-oriented culture. The focus on diversity, collaboration, recognition, and professional development ensures employees feel valued and empowered to contribute their best to the organization. By continuously refining the systems and practices, the organizations fosters a thriving and innovative workplace.

What do you want to accomplish more within the next two years?

Table 3 shows the codes and themes from the transcript that reflect both personal and team-level aspirations. On the personal level, the goals focus on career progression and advancement, acquiring and developing new skills, achieving work-life integration and recognition. On the team level, the focus is on improving collaboration, fostering an inclusive culture, enhancing mentorship programs, fostering a supportive, high-performing workplace, and promoting employee engagement and recognition. These goals align with the broader mission of enhancing individual potential and development while contributing to the success of the team and organization.

Table 3. Themes generated from the interviews with excerpts

Codes and excerpts	Themes
Personal Level Goals	**Personal Level Themes**
Academic and Career Advancement *"Fulfill the requirements for 3-year evaluation and prepare for running a higher academic title." ; "Increase the circulation of your journal; Be rated as an associate professor." ;"Hoping to get accustomed to new role and new responsibilities ASAP."*	• Academic and Career Advancement
Skill and Knowledge Enhancement *"I want to further develop both personally and professionally."; "Strengthening the school's mentorship programs where experienced teachers collaborate with newer staff.";"Strengthening policies on talent management and development."*	• Professional Development and Skill • Growth
Work-Life Integration *"Work-life integration; where my work and life go together." ;"Work experience supports my life skill, and my life experience supports my work skill."*	• Work-Life Integration and Balance
Experience New Roles *"My current role as Technical Director is to conduct quality control of reports and outputs and I want also to experience being a Project Director." ;"Challenge for other positions."*	• Exploring New Roles and Responsibilities
Team Level Goals	**Team Level Themes**
Collaboration and Communication *"Implement more efficient communication and collaboration mechanisms between our teaching team, academic administration, and teacher management teams." "Establish joint task forces for key projects or regular knowledge-sharing sessions." "Create clear KPIs such as client satisfaction and team engagement."*	• Enhanced Communication and Collaboration
Inclusive Culture and Empowerment *"Moving out from respecting and valuing people from position levels but equally treat everybody respectfully."; "Enhancing listening culture among management to initiate a safe space for team members." ; "Create equal opportunities for all team members, enabling everyone to have a voice."*	• Inclusive Culture and Empowerment • Cross Departmental Collaboration and Innovation
Cross Departmental Collaboration *"Expand cross-departmental collaboration through regular inter-disciplinary planning sessions."; "Maximize collective strengths and enhance the overall learning experience for students." ; "Develop more cross-departmental planning and academic/non-academic events."*	• Mentorship and Knowledge Sharing
Mentorship and Skill Sharing *"Pair experienced teachers with newer staff to share expertise and foster professional growth."; "Develop stronger mentorship programs to create opportunities for mutual learning." ;"Enhance school's mentorship programs to build a stronger, more cohesive teaching community."*	• Employee Engagement and Recognition
Employee Engagement and Recognition *"Ensure all team members are actively participating in the Team Member Awards and Safety initiatives." ; "Encourage everyone to initiate projects, activities, or clubs at least once per academic year." ;"Promote working closely with clients and other external stakeholders to ensure long-term relationships."*	

What changes can be made that will result in improvement? What will be measured? How would you know that the change is an improvement?

The identified codes reflect key personal and team-level changes that can lead to improvements in the next two years. Personal level changes focus on career development, upskilling, leadership development, and academic growth. Team level changes emphasize inclusive decision-making, mentorship, cross-departmental collaboration, recognition, performance management, and leadership development. These changes can collectively foster individual and team potential

Changes That Can Lead to Improvement in the Next Two Years

The changes identified in the data provided can be classified into personal and team levels. Each category includes actionable steps that can drive improvements, enhance productivity, and create a positive work environment in the next two years.

Personal Level Changes

Career and Academic Development

- Objective: Accomplishing career milestones play a pivotal role in personal development. Individuals are aiming to increase their academic qualifications and enhance their professional reputation within the organization.
- Impact: These efforts contribute to higher job satisfaction, personal growth, and recognition within their respective fields. Measuring success can be done through tracking academic achievements, promotions, and the number of journal publications.
- Indicators of Improvement: A clear indicator of improvement will be the completion of significant academic milestones (e.g., doctoral degree), greater visibility in academic circles, and career advancement.

Personal Performance and Skill Development

- Objective: A commitment to continuous learning and career progression is essential for personal development. Participation in skill-building programs, acquiring new skills, and adopting a growth mindset are key focuses.
- Impact: The personal focus is on gaining new skills to improve both job performance and adaptability. The measurement of success can include tracking the number of skills acquired, career advancement, and increased productivity.
- Indicators of Improvement: Improved performance in work output, higher satisfaction levels, and tangible evidence of increased skills through post-training evaluations.

Effective Communication and Adaptability

- Objective: Personal development in areas such as communication effectiveness, adaptability, and mutual learning is essential. These attributes enable individuals to navigate complex challenges and work environments with greater success.
- Impact: Focus on adaptability and communication will enhance personal performance, helping individuals to thrive in changing circumstances and collaborate more effectively with others. Measuring improvement can be done through self-assessments and peer reviews.
- Indicators of Improvement: Positive feedback on communication, adaptability in facing challenges, and higher performance in handling projects or tasks.

Enhancing Work-Life Balance and Happiness

- Objective: Individuals aim to achieve a balance where work supports personal life and vice versa. Ensuring happiness in both life and work is key to long-term success and job satisfaction.
- Impact: A strong emphasis on work-life integration leads to happier employees who are more engaged, creative, and productive. Monitoring employee engagement, turnover rates, and overall job satisfaction can gauge the success of this initiative.
- Indicators of Improvement: Lower turnover rates, higher employee engagement, and improved morale as measured by surveys and feedback.

Team Level Changes

Leadership Development and Succession Planning

- Objective: Succession planning and leadership development are crucial for long-term organizational growth. The consultative process in decision-making ensures that not only middle and top management but also employees at the rank-and-file level contribute to leadership selections and transitions.
- Impact: Succession planning drives a more inclusive and transparent organizational culture, ensuring that the right people are positioned in leadership roles. Success can be measured through leadership pipeline strength, the smooth transition of leadership roles, and the effectiveness of newly appointed leaders.
- Indicators of Improvement: Increased retention of high-performing leaders, a better match between leadership roles and talent, and improved organizational stability.

Team Building and Mentorship Programs

- Objective: Developing and promoting mentorship programs within the organization will foster skill-sharing, enhance employee development, and promote a collaborative culture. This includes pairing experienced team members with newer employees to provide guidance and foster mutual learning.
- Impact: Mentorship enhances both individual and team performance by transferring knowledge and promoting a culture of continuous improvement. The effectiveness of mentorship programs can be measured by tracking participation rates, feedback from both mentors and mentees, and improvements in individual performance.
- Indicators of Improvement: Increased engagement, participation in mentorship programs, and feedback on enhanced collaboration and skill development.

Cross Departmental Collaboration

- Objective: Encouraging collaboration between different departments and increasing interdepartmental planning sessions can lead to innovative solutions and more efficient workflows.
- Impact: Cross-departmental collaboration drives innovation and enables the organization to integrate diverse perspectives into its processes and products. Success can be measured through the frequency and quality of collaborative efforts, along with their impact on overall productivity and project outcomes.
- Indicators of Improvement: Higher rates of shared projects, positive feedback from cross-departmental teams, and improved results from collaborative initiatives.

Inclusive Culture and Employee Empowerment

- Objective: Fostering an inclusive environment where all employees feel valued and empowered to contribute to organizational success is essential. This involves initiatives like providing training on inclusive practices, encouraging employees to propose new ideas, and recognizing achievements.
- Impact: An inclusive culture leads to a more engaged workforce, increases retention, and promotes higher morale. Success can be tracked through employee satisfaction surveys, participation in inclusion-focused activities, and the diversity of ideas generated within teams.
- Indicators of Improvement: Increased employee participation in inclusion initiatives, higher satisfaction rates, and measurable improvements in team morale and collaboration.

Employee Development and Career Path Alignment

- Objective: The organization aims to identify high-potential employees and align their career development with the right roles. Providing targeted training and promoting internal growth opportunities is key to ensuring talent retention and growth.
- Impact: Effective career path alignment enhances employee satisfaction, reduces turnover, and ensures that the right skills are in place to meet organizational goals. Measurement will include tracking internal promotions, training participation, and the number of employees successfully placed in roles aligned with their skills.
- Indicators of Improvement: A higher rate of internal promotions, decreased turnover, and successful career transitions.

Regular Feedback and Performance Assessments

- Objective: Implementing regular performance assessments, such as 360-degree feedback and KPIs, ensures continuous improvement both for individuals and teams.
- Impact: Regular assessments help teams and individuals track their progress, identify areas for improvement, and adjust strategies accordingly. Success can be measured by tracking improvement in performance metrics and feedback scores from peers and supervisors.
- Indicators of Improvement: Higher performance ratings, increased accountability, and improved team dynamics based on feedback.

The proposed changes, whether on a personal or team level, are designed to foster a culture of growth, empowerment, and collaboration. On a personal level, improvements in career development, skill-building, and work-life integration are central to individual success. On team level, fostering leadership development, mentorship, cross-departmental collaboration, and inclusivity will strengthen the organization. By tracking specific indicators of improvement, organizations can ensure that these changes have a lasting impact on both individual and organizational growth.

The identified codes represent a variety of measurable outcomes that will allow the organization to track improvements at both personal and team levels. Personal-level metrics, such as career milestones, project management success, and skill development, help gauge individual progress and satisfaction. On team level, metrics related to employee engagement, mentorship success, collaboration, and client feedback provide insights into the organization's overall health, effectiveness, and growth. By tracking these indicators, the organization will be able to determine whether the implemented changes lead to meaningful improvements over time.

These themes provide a comprehensive understanding of the measurable outcomes related to both personal and team improvements, with clear indicators of progress.

Discussion

Organizations that prioritize an inclusive, supportive, and growth-oriented culture tend to create a workplace where employees feel valued, engaged, and empowered to contribute their best. Studies indicate that workplace inclusion enhances employee satisfaction, productivity, and retention (Shore *et al.*, 2018). By focusing on diversity, collaboration, recognition, and professional development, organizations can cultivate an environment that not only benefits individuals but also strengthens the collective workforce. These attributes align closely with co-creative organizations, which emphasize collective intelligence, shared leadership, and participatory decision-making to drive innovation and sustained success (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2018).

Personal-Level Goals and Development

At the personal level, career progression, skill acquisition, and work-life integration are key components that drive individual success. Employees are increasingly prioritizing continuous learning and professional development, as these contribute to career longevity and job satisfaction (Noe *et al.*, 2017). The emphasis on upskilling, leadership development, and academic growth aligns with the broader trend of lifelong learning, which is crucial in today's dynamic work environment (Billett, 2018). In co-creative organizations, personal development is closely tied to collaborative knowledge creation and shared experiences, fostering an ecosystem where individuals can learn from each other and contribute to the collective intelligence of the organization (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014).

Work-life integration is another significant factor influencing employee well-being and productivity. Research by Kossek *et al.* (2019) highlights that organizations support flexible work arrangements and encourage work-life balance experience, lower burnout rates and higher job engagement. Ensuring recognition for employee contributions further motivates individuals to perform at their best, fostering a culture of appreciation and intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2017). In co-creative settings, work-life integration is further supported by decentralized decision-making structures that empower employees to co-design their work processes, making flexibility and autonomy a shared responsibility (Sanders & Stappers, 2008).

Team-Level Goals and Collaboration

At team level, fostering collaboration, inclusiveness, mentorship, and a high-performing culture is essential for long-term success. Inclusive decision-making has been linked to increased innovation and employee engagement, as it ensures diverse perspectives are considered in organizational strategies (Nishii, 2013). Additionally, mentorship programs play a vital role in professional growth,

particularly for early-career employees, by providing guidance, skill development, and career advancement opportunities (Allen *et al.*, 2019). Co-creative organizations leverage mentorship and peer-learning models that enable dynamic skill-sharing and foster a culture of mutual growth (Ramaswamy, 2009).

Cross-departmental collaboration enhances efficiency and knowledge sharing, enabling organizations to adapt to complex challenges. Studies have shown that organizations with strong collaborative cultures outperform competitors in problem-solving and strategic agility (Salas *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, performance management practices that integrate continuous feedback and recognition mechanisms contribute to higher levels of motivation and job satisfaction (Aguinis, 2019). In co-creative organizations, collaboration extends beyond internal teams, often involving external stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and communities in co-designing products, services, and strategies, leading to more sustainable and innovative solutions (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

Tracking Progress and Measuring Success

To ensure that personal and team-level improvements lead to tangible outcomes, organizations must establish measurable indicators of success. Personal-level metrics such as career milestones, skill development, and project accomplishments provide insights into individual growth. Research suggests that employees who set and achieve career-related goals are more likely to experience job fulfillment and long-term engagement (Locke & Latham, 2019).

On the team level, tracking metrics related to employee engagement, mentorship success, collaboration effectiveness, and client feedback helps assess overall organizational health and performance. Engaged employees are more likely to contribute proactively to team initiatives, driving innovation and continuous improvement (Harter *et al.*, 2020). In co-creative organizations, tracking progress often involves participatory evaluation methods where employees and stakeholders co-assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies, ensuring alignment with collective goals (Ramaswamy & Gouillart, 2010). By monitoring these indicators, organizations can refine their strategies and practices to ensure sustained progress and alignment with their mission.

Conclusion

The proposed personal and team-level changes aim to foster a workplace culture that prioritizes growth, empowerment, and collaboration. Investments in career development, upskilling, leadership training, and work-life integration contribute to individual success. Simultaneously, strengthening mentorship, inclusivity, and performance management enhances team cohesion and overall organizational effectiveness. Co-creative organizations, in particular, benefit from these changes

by harnessing collective intelligence, promoting participatory leadership, and fostering an open innovative ecosystem. By systematically tracking progress, organizations can ensure that these initiatives lead to meaningful and lasting improvements in the workplace.

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