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TechShop members to bring their creative ideas to fruition.⁷¹ Newton is the Managing Director of TechShop.⁷²

Members engage in all kinds of activities at TechShop ranging from laser-engraving wedding invitations to making synthetic diamonds. TechShop has been the birthplace of start-ups such as Clustered Systems Company, a three-person company that has a new technology for cooling computer servers. Phil Hughes started Clustered Systems, which received a \$2.8 million Department of Energy grant and has a licensing agreement with a major manufacturer, and continues to operate it out of a TechShop.⁷³

In addition to the original TechShop in Menlo Park, TechShop also has workshops in Portland, Oregon, and Durham, North Carolina, and plans to open more TechShops in the future.⁷⁴ As TechShop CEO Mark Hatch indicates, “We are inventors. We are creators. Once you give people access to the tools, there will be a resurgence of creativity and innovation.”⁷⁵

Two specific personality traits likely to contribute to creativity are *locus of control* and *self-esteem* (see Chapter 2). Locus of control captures the extent to which people think their own actions and behaviors are important in determining what happens. *Internals* believe they have a lot of control over their environments and what happens to them. *Externals* believe outside forces determine their fates. An *internal* locus of control contributes to creativity because it results in employees’ feeling responsible for coming up with new ideas and being creative.⁷⁶ An *external* locus of control hinders creativity because employees believe their own efforts are unimportant.⁷⁷

Self-esteem is pride in oneself and in one’s capabilities.⁷⁸ Self-esteem contributes to employees’ confidence that they can come up with creative ideas, and it gives them the confidence to take risks and suggest ideas that may seem outlandish.

In addition to personality, it also is likely that ability contributes to creativity. At the broadest level, intelligence contributes to creativity because it helps employees come up with new ideas, see connections between things that other people do not see, view things from different perspectives, and synthesize a lot of information. Other cognitive abilities also contribute to creativity, especially when they are relevant to the kind of work an employee is engaged in. Numerical ability (the speed and accuracy with which a person can solve arithmetic problems), for example, is likely to contribute to creativity in a group of people who are looking at the overall cost implications of various changes to a manufacturing process.

TASK-RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE Task-relevant knowledge is all of the information, skills, and expertise that an individual or group has about the kind of work being performed.⁷⁹ Without task-relevant knowledge, it would be difficult for an architect to come up with a creative design for a new building, for a doctor to find a new way to treat arthritis, or for a secretary to discover a unique and useful filing system. To generate creative responses, the architect needs a good understanding of building design and architectural principles, the doctor needs knowledge pertaining to medicine in general and to arthritis in particular, and the secretary needs to be familiar with the kinds of information to be filed, the ways in which it needs to be accessed, and how frequently it’s accessed.

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION In Chapter 6, we distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. For intrinsically motivated employees, the source of motivation is the work itself. These employees enjoy performing their jobs, often love their work, and get a sense of personal satisfaction when they do a good job or come up with a creative idea. Extrinsically motivated employees may perform at a high level, but the source of their motivation is external; they are motivated by, for example, the pay they receive and the chances of receiving a bonus, raise, or promotion—positive reinforcers provided by others, in other words.

In general, employees are more likely to be creative when they are intrinsically motivated.⁸⁰ The high level of involvement in the work that intrinsic motivation brings seems to spur creativity.

Characteristics of the Organizational Situation That Contribute to Creativity

Although certain individuals may be more likely than others to be creative, creativity is also more likely to occur in certain situations than in others. Four situational characteristics are likely to affect creativity: level of autonomy, form of evaluation, reward system, and the importance of a task or problem (see Exhibit 5.5).