

WORK CURIOSITY AS AN INDICATOR OF EMPLOYEE INNOVATION

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ABSTRACT

Curiosity has long been recognized as the driving force behind individuals 'exploratory drive, learning behavior, and willingness to embrace Uniqueness. It is generally believed that the exploratory spirit of a curious mind can enhance the individual's imagination and cognitive capability for creative ideation. But there has been surprisingly little work to clarify the relationship between curiosity and creativity. Moreover, existing research commonly oversimplifies the operationalization of creature curiosity. From a pluralist view of curiosity, this paper leverages insights from psychological research to explain how curiosity can be applied in the organizational context and help to better understand employee creativity. We draw upon several seminal theories on curiosity and Inducement and explore the effects of organizational context and individual differences on employees' work curiosity. We furthermore elucidate how work curiosity leads to employee creativity by affecting the cognitive processes and psychological states. Implications for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Work Curiosity, Employee Innovation, Employee Performance, deprivation, sensitivity, surprise

INTRODUCTION

Curiosity is the state of being curious: inquisitive, wondering, ready to poke around and figure something out. The word used to mean "very, very careful," and only in the last few hundred years turned into a word expressing the desire to know more. Maybe that's because when you're poking around in secret business, you need to be very, very careful. We also call weird things curiosities, like a phone shaped like a duck, or a shark in a jar.

Curiosity is the urge you feel to know more about something. If you find a diary in a coffee shop, curiosity will make you want to look inside — but respect for the writer's privacy may convince you not to.

FEATURES

Why curious people make better employees

Most hiring **managers'** focus only on finding candidates with the most impressive qualifications, but there is more to potential employees than a resume. To build self-motivated and inspired teams, you need to hire people who are not only qualified, but curious.

Curiosity isn't reserved for childhood. It's a powerful characteristic that keeps you engaged and sharp at work. And, at the right company, being a curious person might land you a job over someone who may look more qualified on paper.

CURIOS PEOPLE INVEST IN THEM SELVES

Running a startup takes a lot of energy, and it doesn't leave much time for you to monitor employees to ensure they're staying engaged. With curious people, there is less to worry about in terms of engagement since their curious natures inherently drive them to move their career forward. Leaders will have to spend less time motivating employees, which means they'll have more time to invest in the company and drive innovation.

"Intellectually curious persons bring their willingness to invest in themselves throughout their tenure with Jump Ramp. Technology and the challenges that come with it change month over month especially in mobile. Those that don't continue to grow will become outdated rather quickly and provide less value to their teams and the company," Vartanian says.

Working for a startup can be stressful and many fail. But Gallup's study points out that those with intellectual curiosity report having more optimism about the future, which is important at a startup where the future is uncertain. Employing people who see a bright future and who are driven by curiosity will help keep that momentum and they'll be less likely to want to give up too soon. These curious workers will take all the energy they invest into themselves and give that right back to your startup, giving your company the best chance at success.

HABITS OF CURIOUS PEOPLE:

1. THEY LISTEN WITHOUT JUDGMENT

Most of us size up and make assumptions as we listen to others. Curious people, on the other hand, have no hidden agenda, says Taberner. They seek to understand the perspectives of others, and are willing to sit in ambiguity, open and curious without being invested in the outcome.

"Curious people are non-blaming, non-shaming, and supportive, working together, focused on exploring options to find the best solution, one that supports collaboration and leads to innovation," she says.

2. THEY ASK LOTS OF QUESTIONS

Curious people ask questions that start with "how," "what," "when," "where" and "why," says Taberner.

"They stay away from questions that can be answered with a yes or no," she says. "This creates openness for the person who is being asked, and for the person who is asking."

3. THEY SEEK SURPRISE

Many of us have a love/hate relationship with surprise, says Tania Luna, coauthor of *Surprise: Embrace the Unpredictable and Engineer the Unexpected*. "When we have too much surprise, we experience anxiety, but when we don't have enough, we get bored and disengaged,

"We feel most comfortable when things are certain, but we feel most alive when they're not."

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Curious people welcome surprise in their lives. They try new foods, talk to a stranger, or ask a question they've never asked before. "Welcoming surprise is just asking yourself, 'How alive do I want to feel?'" Luna says.

4. THEY'RE FULLY PRESENT

Curious people turn off their phones and focus on conversations, says Taberner.

"It means not cooking dinner while talking to your families," she says. "If you're multitasking, you're not creating space to be curious."

5. THEY'RE WILLING TO BE WRONG.

The ability to shelve a sense of being right in favor of being open to the insights and opinions of others is a trait of curious people, says Sue Heilbronner, cofounder and CEO of Merge Lane, an accelerator program that focus on female-run companies.

Curiosity often must be instilled intentionally, it comes from intentional pauses.

"There are tremendous benefits to a culture of curiosity in companies, particularly among leaders," she says.

"Curious teams always look at a broader array of options for product innovations, marketing angles, and solutions to problems. A team lodged in 'rightness' does the opposite."

6. THEY MAKE TIME FOR CURIOSITY

Heilbronner advises leaders to take one day a month to think of scenarios that are three years in the future, to question all of their major assumptions, and to wonder if they're doing things they no longer should be doing.

"Curiosity often must be instilled intentionally," she says. "It comes from intentional pauses."

7. THEY AREN'T AFRAID TO SAY, "I DON'T KNOW."

Curious people are always seeking new knowledge by engaging in conversations. When asked a question, they aren't afraid to admit when they don't have an answer, says LeeAnn Renninger, coauthor of *Surprise: Embrace the Unpredictable and Engineer the Unexpected*.

"It's more important for them to learn than to look smart," she says.

8. THEY DON'T LET PAST HURTS AFFECT THEIR FUTURE

Our minds have two parts: one that has new experiences and one that understands those experiences, says David Klow, founder of Skylight Counseling Center in Chicago. One cannot work without the other.

“The problem for many adults is that we stop being curious about new experiences and are instead focused on understanding what we’ve already been through.”

5 Dimensions of curiosity:

1. **Joyous Exploration** - This is the prototype of curiosity – the recognition and desire to seek out new knowledge and information, and the subsequent joy of learning and growing.
2. **Deprivation Sensitivity** - This dimension has a distinct emotional tone, with anxiety and tension being more prominent than joy – pondering abstract or complex ideas, trying to solve problems, and seeking to reduce gaps in knowledge.
3. **Stress Tolerance** - This dimension is about the willingness to embrace the doubt, confusion, anxiety, and other forms of distress that arise from exploring new, unexpected, complex, mysterious, or obscure events.
4. **Social Curiosity** - Wanting to know what other people are thinking and doing by observing, talking, or listening in to conversations.
5. **Thrill Seeking** - The willingness to take physical, social, and financial risks to acquire varied, complex, and intense experiences.

4 types of curious people:

1. **The Fascinated** - high on all dimensions of curiosity, particularly Joyous Exploration
2. **Problem Solvers** - high on Deprivation Sensitivity, medium on other dimensions
3. **Empathizers** - high on Social Curiosity, medium on other dimensions
4. **Avoiders** - low on all dimensions, particularly Stress Tolerance

Advantages of Curiosity:

1. Holiday and Sick Pay

If you are a full-time employee, you will receive more annual leave and sick days than part-timers, as paid time off is usually calculated based on the number of total hours employed. By having more days off you can plan for holidays, short-breaks and can take time out when you're sick without feeling too responsible.

2. Job Advancement is Easier

No one can guarantee that you will be offered a promotion, but you have more chances of qualifying for any advancement opportunities than part-time or temporary workers. Another positive of being a permanent employee is that the company views you as a long term investment, and they will be more inclined to invest in your development and help you advance the career ladder.

3. Companies Offer Insurance Benefits

Most people would say that one of the best advantages of a 9-5 job is company-subsidized or company-paid insurance benefits. These insurance policies include things such as health, life, disability or even accidental death with many companies offering family coverage as well. Even though this usually comes after the probation period (3-6 months), it's nevertheless a massive cost that you don't have to pay for.

4. You Have a Fixed Schedule

As a full-time employee, you will have a fixed schedule with specific working hours. This means that you will be able to plan the rest of your day accordingly without being unsure of your work schedule. No one will call you to change your working hours at the last minute or switch shifts.

5. A Fixed Salary

Your employer will provide you with a fixed salary on a weekly or monthly basis. All you have to do is complete your job duties and meet your daily or weekly quotas, be a good employee and at the end of the month, you will get paid a specific amount of money. This way you can plan and pay all your expenses, put money aside for other long-term investments and feel safe that, no matter what, you will have money in your pocket for at least one more month.

Disadvantages of Curiosity:

1. You Become Stagnant: Sticking with one employer can result in career stagnation. You become comfortable with the pay, the amount of work given, and the workplace environment. You're just happy to have a job. You don't even consider thinking about any other careers.

At the same time, you may become robotic in the same routine. A long-term boss may give you the same daily demands making it an easy schedule to follow. But, you might find yourself constantly fulfilling the needs of your employer and that's it. This can hold you back from realising talents and gifts you never knew you had.

2. Realising Your True Potential is Hard: While we're on the subject of unknown talent, a 9-5 job can make you feel like you're working inside a box. You go to work day-in and day-out without asking any questions about other people's duties and remain confined to your tasks and your cubicle.

Believing whatever your employer says to you blinds you to other passions you may have. Your curiosity to know what else is available to you in the outside world is taken away from you. All that is common to you is the job you are doing, meaning that your true potential will never be reached.

3. Buying and Selling Services Become Blurred: When you work under someone, you are obviously selling a service that the employer is buying from you. Without any hesitation, you fulfill tasks and assignments that are given to you. These projects, more than likely, have no worth to you as a professional person, but they do for your boss.

4. Your CV is Boring and Lacks Various Experiences: Having the same job for many years can negatively affect your CV. As mentioned before, companies sometimes look for an array of experiences when considering a potential candidate. Since you've been working for the same employer for X amount of years, your CV becomes dull and dry, lacking versatility in skills and services.

A boring CV may get you overlooked by competition that has varied experience in their career history. Meanwhile, the key to having a top-tier CV and cover letter is opening yourself up to other occupations, whether they end up being similar or completely off-centre from your profession of choice.

5. Job-Hunting Becomes Difficult: Full-time work can make it hard for you to get back in the groove of Job Hunting. If you haven't looked for a job for a long time, you may not know where to begin. As mentioned before, becoming too content with where you are could lead to disaster; especially if you find yourself laid off or fired from your job.

Also, your employer may be a person who tries to hold you hostage. They may give you bonuses or rewards as a way to keep you satisfied with the job. If you're anxious to see what else is out there, then don't let your current job prevent you from expanding your horizons.

CONCLUSION:

Success starts in the mind. This paper explored the current situations of curiosity of employee and its innovative performance. The conceptualization of Curiosity is closely linked to some fundamentals of psychological concept. The literature reviews show that the curious people are always ready to learn some new things, imaginative, exposing their powers as possible, more innovative and greater quick performer. Curious people are always Self Motivated, Punctual, and Super Power etc... These are valuable assets to the employees of the companies. However I'm trying to express my opinion regarding how much they are innovative and what are the Barometer of employee innovation, reinforcing source of employee innovation etc. What are the benefits of the employees from the company? Are they really innovative, then what the difference between employee and curious employee is. What are the effective plans they are taken especially if they are curious people.

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