# Innovation in big companies

*Published on December 19, 2016*

## Introduction

There is not a single and unique receipt that works for every company and every working environment. Each of both have their own culture, history and social bias.

However, it is a good exercise to write down some common aspects to improve in order to deploy a successful transition strategy to bring in the company the *innovation fiat* [1].

## Human Capital First

I am strongly agree with the quote

> The bottom line is that we need to put the human back into human capital.

It is fundamental, because people make the difference. Period.

People who works in a company are named *Human Resources.* Sometimes definitions confuse us. When a resource is ended, we throw it up. Humans are valuable by their own and they deserve a good *Human Capital Management*.

## Know-How Hybridisation

The other big issue that block innovation is the *silos division*: static and strict roles.

People are kept into their roles without the chance to mix up together, learn each others, hybridise their knowledge. This is a limit of some organisation structures, both in horizontal and vertical. Role changing stimulates, challenges and grows-up people.

Static roles are the tomb of creativity because of the boredom, the lack of interesting stimulus. Routine is a good path to depression, hating the job and the job place.

People quit what they dislike, as soon as they can.

## Freedom of Speech

Information goes up many steps and directives goes down many steps, trough the underline command chains. The command chains are the nerves of a company while the organisation structure are the skeleton. This body was made for the hand-work!

During this traditional process the flow of information and directives losses the opportunity to gain multiple perspectives because they goes trough a funnel with many filters, both up and down. The brain is connected as a network, instead.

People like the chance to meet and communicate each others, despite the roles.

Innovation need this kind of freedom of speech.

## Career Path

When the traditional career path is vertical only, then changing the company is the only way to break this fate. Because it is vertical: up, stay or down. *Staying* does not exists, in fact. If others goes up, those stay are going down. It is more like a doom than a fate.

People that agree with their leader or bosses make a faster and easier career. Their compliance accelerate their fate. While for others, it accelerates their doom. If the boss makes a mistake, all the people under him/er will be lead by that mistake.

Different opinions are the fuel of innovation and resilience, as well.

## Mistakes Management

Since the school, we have learned the tendency to punish the mistakes.

> No mistakes, no experiments, no initiatives.

Not all mistakes are equivalent, not all mistakes should be equally tolerate.

Some mistakes could be prised, instead. Those are made by initiatives and experiments. These are *good mistakes* because they bring experience and they shown initiative. This happens when they have been made following a method, only.

Random tries or misbehaviour are not useful, brings confusion and should not tolerate.

## Day Management

I worked in Germany in a company in which the rule 9am to 5pm was quite strict.

The main idea beyond that rule, was that: *if somebody needs to stay at work after 5pm then somebody makes wrong things*. It may be the boss that decided a too much strict schedule timelines or it may be the worker that did not manage to be in time with the agreed deadline. Someone fault, in any case.

## Cultural Sensitivity

In those countries in which the day is longer because the latitude, the rule 9-5 could be changed into 9-6 but with a 2 hours of lunch break 12:30-14:30 or 13-15. One hour for the meal and another one to meet and talk with others in front of a good coffee or tea.

Especially where good food is exceptional and lunch is about 2 or 3 plates. Eat and go straight to work, make people sleepy and dumb. Good food and good coffee supplies are another of those details that make people happy to came to work for our company.

An eye to comply with local traditions and compensate the biases, is always welcomed.

## How to Manage for Trust

### The Neuroscience of Trust by Paul J. Zak

*Through the experiments and the surveys, I identified 8 management behaviors that foster trust. These behaviors are measurable and can be managed to improve performance.*

1. *Recognize excellence* [...]
2. *Induce "challenge stress."* [...] (not too easy, not to hard)
3. *Give people discretion in how they do their work.* [...]
4. *Enable job crafting.* [...]
5. *Share information broadly.* [...]
6. *Intentionally build relationships.* [...]
7. *Facilitate whole-person growth.* [...]
8. *Show vulnerability.* [...]

## Conclusion

We are not surprised that successful and innovative companies have a some great common spaces in which everybody could meet everybody else and these companies allow and suggest their people to spend some working time to carry on their own projects and their own ideas. Not surprisingly, these companies offer nice spaces, nice food, cheap and healthy beverages. They take care of their people and their people take care of their company. Not surprisingly, reciprocity works and it works better.

## Comics

Dilbert Employee Unauthorised Happiness



## Note

[1] *fiat* is a latin word that implies the will to make something happen.