

A Study of the Team Management in Design Organizations

Shih-Hsi Yang^{1(✉)} and Wen-Tsung Huang²

¹ Ph.D. Program in Design, Chung Yuan Christian University,
9F., No. 12, Tianxiang 3rd Street, Taoyuan District,
Taoyuan City 330, Taiwan, R.O.C.
shihhsyi.yang@gmail.com

² Department of Commercial Design, Chung Yuan Christian University,
Taoyuan City, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Abstract. With the rapid change of technology and the rise of design-driven innovation, creativity is considered as an important role to enterprise's growth. It seems creativity stimulate the economy over the past few decades. However, it is supported by a particular context and condition these days. No matter the creative economy or the flat white economy, it is an outcome of a specific working organization or creative labor relationship. Instead of individual talent, a team could contribute more within organization as a whole. At this point, design manager plays a core role in an organization and design management is seen as the business side of design. Although there is abundant research relating to designer's individual creativity, there have been few studies focus on team management in design organization. The study intends to get into the factors that influence design team and interpret the design management from its attribute and feature in order to organize a communication tendency among the design manager and team members. For further analysis of studies, there is no single effective rule to improve creativity and profession since differences of business environment and leading style among organizations. For design origination, in order to fit into need of team member and client, manager must revise methods in both profession and management part.

Keywords: Creative team · Design management · Design business

1 Creativity and Creative Class

Over the past decade a number of companies have become apparent in their creativity and innovation, the most famous are Apple, Google and Facebook. All of them took a risk and delivered a creative concept into an innovation. They have opened a new appearance of technology and media. Without doubt their success started with a personal talent and creativity. Creativity is usually consider as a product of individual. However, each steps and progress are connected and relied on others in the creative industry. The final result is a incorporating both individual and group's creativity. Unlike mass production always has standard operating procedure, creative workers are expected to have unique and original ideas. That's also why the creativity is valuable.

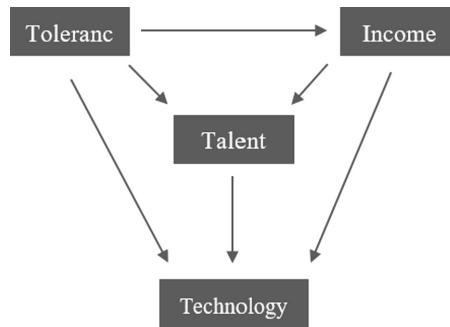


Fig. 1. Structure of 3Ts: technology, talent and tolerance (Source: Florida, p. 153)

Daily routines may not bring creative ideas, but complexity and ambiguity do. They are energy, vitality required for creative workers. Instead of transactional leadership, such as promotion and remuneration, creative workers are willing to bear uncertainty in order to self-fulfilling [1]. Florida claim Creative Class's major work is to create. Comparing with Working Class and Service Class, who execute plans or orders, Creative Class own more autonomy and flexibility. Both creativity and Creative Class are grow in a city that including essential 3 Ts, technology, talent, and tolerance (Fig. 1). With technology, talent people and tolerance, it's easy to stimulate creativity and innovation in a space [2]. The essentials for a creative city could be implied to a creative organization. Tolerance is the willingness to tolerate any career, gender, race, and lifestyle. Tolerance brings diversity and inclusion which are fundamentals for a creative team. Here is the greatest sample of tolerance in the organization, IDEO, a design and innovation consulting firm. Tom Kelley, IDEO partner, also suggested that the Cross-Pollinator connects between unrelated ideas and break fresh ground. In IDEO, the concrete method to implement cross-pollinate is to recruit peopled from different professions fields, such as anthropologist, educator, and so on. The Cross-Pollinator brings in inspiration from the outside world to their team [3]. Many organizations pay attention on creativity and art, and reflect it as a guarantee of profit. Considering the attributes of creative, to manage creative by scientific management is barely possible. For the reason that creative management are considered as a new profession in the creative industry. Mangers plays a central, core role in a creative practice [4].

2 Creative Team and Management

Creative management is a new subject in the industry. Many business and management scholar claimed that creative management is just as same as usual business management. However, many humanities and art academics were encroaching because people ignore “autonomy” in the creative industry [5]. As mentioned earlier, creative works are require diversity and complexity. The most important creative workers’ endeavor is the striving for self-fulfilled. In order to achieve the purpose, they accept to take long

work hours and the uncertainty of work. To be specific, creative workers would like to work more flexible and fewer limitations, such as flexible work time/hours, casual clothes, work space, and the method to finish the works. Instead of giving orders directly, it goes back to discussion and negotiation. Sometime is argument. With less supervision, more input come from workers themselves [6]. That's why it matters, autonomy brings more diversity and possibility to both creative workers and organizations. These attributes are not accept in the usual business fields, yet it's very common in the creative organizations. Being a creative manager, must to understand these attributes and to make best use of resources within a team.

Multitasking is another characteristic in a creative team. A creative group usually start with only a few people. In the beginning of business, creative workers have to take multi-tasks at the same time. It seems no choice when the team was small. Despite of working hard, having multitasks helps creative workers could think from different angles. By taking multi-tasks and play other roles in the team at a time, creative workers could expanding their empathy and perspectives. It bridges the gap between team members, moreover communicating and articulating inside the team become much easier. The goal is to adapt the changes and to make sure every parts in the team could work together smoothly and effectively. That's the main reason why most creative group keep itself in a small or medium sizes [1]. It's a flatter structure instead of traditional hierarchical structure. Lester et al. [7] point out that the interpretive managerial perspective is seen as a new approach of management. Refer to traditional “hard” management, creative management is more tend to “soft” management [4].

3 Design Team Manager

In this case, a managers plays the role more like a mentor instead of a bureaucratic manager. To manage a group of professionals and creative is not a usual managerial job. According to Ryan's observation in the film industry, a manager works as professional creative/adviser and bureaucratic manager at the same time (see Table 1).

Table 1. Project team positions and conditions (Source: Ryan, p. 133)

Position	Production Relation	Basis Of Authority	Formatting	Form Of Control
Producer	manager	bureaucratic (executive) charismatic (artistic leadership)		managerialism commercialism
Director	contracted artist	bureaucratic (organizational) charismatic (artistic leadership)		managerialism commercialism
leading executant	contracted artist	artistic (commercial reputation)		collaboration commercialism
Supporting executant	professional creative	artistic (professional reputation)		Direction professionalism

Nowadays they are expected to capable of both artistic profession and business acumen. There is no doubt that a creative manger plays a central, core role in a project team [4, 6].

In recent years, more and more people noticed the power of design thinking and design-driven innovation. Design that used to be considered as an appendant's position, namely more colors options for products in the consumerism, but now is viewed as a creative economy. Designer are always expected to bring new, creative, and high quality artworks. To combine artistic idea with business thinking, design should bring good profit for corporation. A motive for designers is self-actualization, the highest need of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. They care about their reputation. Not transactional promotion or remuneration, designers expect to understand the vision and value system of leader or organization [1]. A manager's job is to create a comfortable environment where designers could express intent and play creative, even take risk. A safe space that with "hand-off" culture is much important to designer, for example, Greenhouse in IDEO and Braintrust in Pixar [8]. As a manager, not only have to meet the demand of designers but also need to make commercial guarantee to an organization. Creativity and market are dynamic and unpredictable. Ackoff's 'anticipatory decision-making' is the major responsibility of design manager. It's to plan how design can contribute on and how to realize in the real business world, not only about the design's style or function. That's also one of the reason that why more and people demand to understand design tool, design thinking and design process [9]. In order to make sure that creative teams are always in good condition to have creative, original solutions and ideas. A major responsibility to team manager is to restructure team member to keep diversity. It's not easy for a manager to interference processing of creative, yet a manager could control how to build a team. Different members in a team could stimulate new concepts, break the rules, and help members think in different perspective. In other hand, it could avoid team members always think in the same direction, which may cause small group myths [1]. The manager also needs courage to take risks, accept failure and take other perspectives [10]. The leader sets up a clarity vision, and the manager ensure each steps are in the track, so that the designer can concentrate on deliver good outcomes [9]. The successful management is achieving the best business value outcomes. More and more people consider that creative management as a professional not as usual management.

4 Conclusion

The great piece of work are always come after a creative abrasion among the team members [11]. Team managers are always expected to deal with these abrasion saturations. The glory of a success work may go to the star design leader, yet it must be a team work. Without a clarity leadership and version, designers must wither away. Creative industry is absolutely human-centered field, including both designer and audience. In Taiwan, most design organizations or designers start their business with original equipment manufacturers so that even design manager focus on how to manage project time, cost of project and how to achieve a project. Even the largest design firm in Taiwan, Nova Design, create their own knowledge platform to

accumulated project experience and materials, yet not very much on designer or team management [12]. Young designers yearn for a new appearance in Taiwan design industry. To understand and manage the attribute of design industry is an essential. That's all managers' challenge to face on in the new era.

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