Chapter 11
From Creativity to Innovation:
Four Leadership Lessons about Capitalizing on High-Potential Ideas

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ABSTRACT   Creative ideas fuel modern organizations and are increasingly salient in times of change. However, novelty—one defining characteristic of creative ideas—is associated with risk. That being said, highly creative ideas tend to represent the most potential, relative to the value they add to organizations and their members. How can leaders increase the odds of successfully transforming high-potential creative ideas into innovative realities? This chapter reviews the most current research findings on optimizing high-potential creative ideas to render the innovation advances they promise. It summarizes and exemplifies the following four leadership lessons: 1) change agents, 2) supportive leadership, 3) integrating multiple perspectives from assorted stakeholders, and 4) facilitating creative employee behavior in the workplace. Research suggests that effectively capitalizing on high-potential ideas in organizational settings requires active leadership that involves a mastery of the competencies of relevant change agents, as the development of new ideas requires rigorous in-context management of the change process. Leaders need to show two-dimensional support of tasks and individuals, not only to provide resources and assistance as needed, but also to facilitate proactive behaviors by challenging employees to depart from the status quo. The successful leader, above all, recognizes that capitalizing on creativity is a social process that requires contributions from multiple viewpoints, and that various stakeholders need to be involved.

KEYWORDS: leadership | creativity | innovation | change agent

11.1 INTRODUCTION

> We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.
>
> *– Albert Einstein*

The BI Norwegian Business School's celebration of its 75 years of existence corresponds with many unprecedented challenges that we face as societies, organizations, and individuals. Some literature (Rittel and Webber, 1973) refers to issues as "wicked problems", a term that refers to a class of ill-formulated social-system problems characterized by ambiguous information, multiple clients and decision makers with conflicting preferences, and thoroughly confusing ramifications for and within the whole system. At the societal level, the United Nations (UN, 2015) declared 17 sustainable development goals (accompanied by 149 targets) that, with a vast scope, including the following, as expected: eradication of poverty, zero-level hunger, universal good health and well-being, clean energy and water, protective climate action, reduction of inequalities, decent work opportunities. However, the UN's list of goals included additional items that represent complicated and higher-order goals, such as promoting sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation, to name just few. At an organizational level, strategic priorities include digital transformations, technological advances (artificial intelligence and big data), the automation and robotization of work, disruptive business models, gradually-evolving organizational cultures, new agile and design-oriented methods of working and thinking, and the development of change-agency capacity. Individuals perceive such goals as dual challenges, reflecting both opportunities and threats that impose a need to make sense and meaning of new realities. The cards are being reshuffled, as some authors assert that we now face the fourth S-curve or a fourth industrial revolution, powered by new raw material (data), new machines (systems of intelligence, particularly artificial ones), and new business models (Frank, Roehrig, and Pring, 2017).

Although the UN explicitly frames innovation as one of its sustainable development goals, I argue that creativity and innovation are as integral to the problem as the solution. Much of the trouble with innovation processes derives from the so-called innovation paradox, which refers to the following observation: while innovation requires both the creation and implementation of novel ideas, the same conditions that favor the creation of novel ideas often impede the process of implementing those ideas (Miron-Spektor, Erez, and Naveh, 2011). While new societal, organizational, and individual challenges require innovative solutions, creativity has yet to become a sufficient precondition for the resolution of our societal challenges.

Despite their potential utility, high-potential ideas aimed at solving wicked problems typically depart from the status quo, and therefore tend to be perceived as radically novel, even threatening. They square with many intuitive organizational and psychological barriers, including the "not-invented-here syndrome" (Katz and Allen, 1982) and middle status conformity (Phillips and Zuckerman, 2001). Consequently, high-potential ideas are less likely to be deployed than ideas that are only moderately novel—and thereby represent lower potential for innovative solutions (Škerlavaj, Černe, and Dysvik, 2014). One particularly vivid example is entomophagy, the emerging industry of edible insects (Nurmohamed and Harrison, 2016), which has the potential to feed many more individuals in a much more environmentally-sustainable way than our current nutritional strategies. While the practice of eating insects may be less unusual in Eastern cultures, Western cultural reactions to the prospect tend to be strongly negative, often involving a sense of revulsion. To wit, while we certainly need innovative ideas, the simple novelty of such ideas will not suffice.

From a perspective that regards organizations as platforms for coordinated human activity (Barnard, 1968), I invite the reader to focus on the role organizational leaders assume in the process of capitalizing on high-potential ideas. The central research question of this chapter revolves around how organizational leaders can promote successful capitalization on highly creative ideas with the potential to resolve the challenges of the modern world. This cutting-edge literature review is based on a book project (Škerlavaj, Dysvik, Černe, and Carlsen, 2016) generated by an impressive spectrum of thinkers—42 researchers from 28 organizations, in 13 countries across four continents—all of whom focus on identifying the actions most capable of effectively deploying the creativity intrinsic to high-potential ideas that depart significantly from the status quo. This chapter narrows its focus to interpret four critical lessons for innovative leadership, summarize current literature about the most advanced modes of employing the innovation process, and furnish implications for practical leadership strategies and techniques.

11.2 LEADING HIGH-POTENTIAL CREATIVE IDEAS TO INNOVATION

Capitalizing on creativity is not analogous to traveling down a one-way street embellished with sequential moments of glory, where ideas can grow from birth to realization, without regard for disruptions or obstacles (Černe, Carlsen, Škerlavaj, and Dysvik, 2016). Actual journeys from creativity to innovation (Van de Ven, 1999) are far messier, because ideas are seldom static when they confront and

interact with the people interested in applying them. In fact, it is far from unusual to generate metaphors related to creative and innovative work that refer to maze behavior, or hiking toward a hostile, mountainous terrain that keeps the ultimate goal hidden from sight (Fisher, Pillemer, and Amabile, 2017).

Regardless of the domain, most research on creativity regards it as a combination of novelty and potential utility (Amabile, 1996; George, 2007; Simonton, 2004). Intrinsic to the very concept of creativity is the belief that, for an idea to be authentically creative, it must be deployed in the field and highly valued by key stakeholders (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999); mere novelty is not adequate enough. In agreement with recent literature reviews on idea generation and idea implementation (Anderson, Potočnik, and Zhou, 2014), and aiming to theorize about novelty and utility as dimensions of creativity (Berry, 2012), I propose the term *high-potential ideas* to refer to ideas that are, first, highly novel, relative to the mainstream and second, have high potential utility for the key stakeholders. Paradoxically, key stakeholders are often unaware or unwilling to recognize the utility of high-potential creative ideas, as illustrated by the foregoing example of the entomophagy industry. The perceived potential utility and the actual potential utility of ideas are rarely the same. Furthermore, ideas are rarely born in their most novel or useful forms; rather, they become novel or useful, as people work on them—expanding, molding, amplifying, reiterating, sharpening, and intermingling them in order to distill and intensify their most valuable components and implications (Carlsen, Clegg, and Gjersvik, 2012). As such, capitalizing on high-potential ideas requires achieving mastery of the labyrinthine process by which high-potential ideas are led carefully toward their embodiment as innovations, and that (along with other prerequisites and boundary-condition facilitation) involves active leadership.

What kind of leadership (and what sort of following) is conducive to more effective capitalization on high-potential ideas? The four key lessons for leaders of the innovation process (according to multiple contributions to the recently edited book project) are delineated in Figure 11.1. This chapter therefore aims to elaborate on, and exemplify, each of the four leadership lessons. First, introducing innovations and capitalizing on high-potential ideas requires the consistent championing of ideas (Černe, Kaše, and Škerlavaj, 2016) and the development of change-agency skills that involve a deep understanding of context, process, and the nature of the change that will be necessary to capitalize on the new idea. Second, supportive leadership (Buch and Kuvaas, 2016; Černe, Škerlavaj, and Dysvik, 2016) can improve the odds for successfully capitalizing on high-potential ideas, by providing both task- and role-oriented support related to dimensions of

resource allocation, motivational prompting, and role modeling. Third, capitalizing on creativity is a multi-player game (Mørk and Hoholm, 2016), in which the ability to observe the scene from different angles is essential. Leaders must understand and receive instruction in their role as facilitators, employing different idea-work methods, including agile and design-based thinking (Rauth and Nabergoj, 2016). Fourth, leaders must construct working environments that inspire employees to demonstrate and reach for their highest proactive potential (Hudovernik, Škerlavaj, and Černe, 2016).
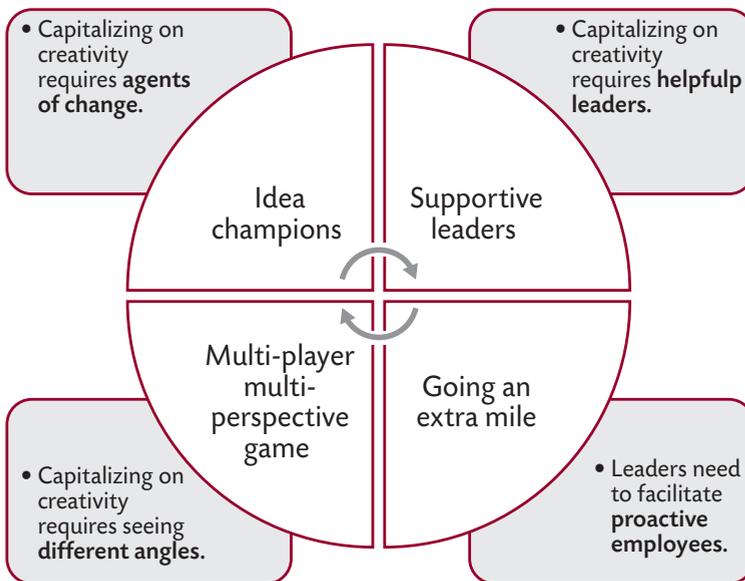

FIGURE 11.1. Four leadership lessons about capitalizing on creativity

11.2.1 LESSON ONE: CAPITALIZING ON HIGH-POTENTIAL IDEAS REQUIRES CHANGE AGENTS

Capitalizing on high-potential ideas is essentially a process of change management. The content of such processes consists of capitalizing on ideas that are perceived as departures from the status quo, and this require leaders to act as agents within the context of this pursuit of change. High-potential ideas are never born in a vacuum, and they invariably compete (and connect) with other ideas for time, man-hours, brainpower, finances, and other resources needed for successful capitalization. High-potential ideas also have consequences for extant ideas and the people associated with them. Schön (1963) goes so far as to claim that ideas must

either find a champion or die. All of this implies the substantial importance that attaches to the interpersonal processes that revolve around successfully capitalizing on a high-potential idea. In practice, human agency represents the realized capacity of people to act upon the world in a purposive and reflective manner, and to acknowledge an emergent need to remake that world, if they will continue to live within it (Inden, 1990).

Markham and colleagues (1991) describe innovation change agents or idea champions as strong advocates for a project who generate positive behavioral support for an innovation during its development in the face of organizational neutrality or opposition. The literature cites a wide variety of forms, names, and special cases of innovation change agents. Internal agents of change stand tall, elevated above the crowd by their vision and focus, and work actively to build coalitions, seek sponsorship, and ultimately aim toward legitimizing an idea. Creative "bootleggers" are those organizational members who take the initiative to work on ideas in the absence of formal support (or even the awareness of upper management) with the aim of benefiting the company (Criscuolo, Salter, and Ter Wal, 2013). Similarly, corporate "smugglers" experiment, evolve their methods, and endeavor to include others, instead of pushing creative ideas through organizations by force (Lempiälä, 2011). Stealth innovators operate under the radar (Miller and Wedell-Wedellsborg, 2013), quietly hidden from supervisors in their pursuit of innovation; this operating mode is exemplified by the change agency involved in the conception of outsourcing tasks, rather than entire jobs, at a global pharmaceutical company.

The change agent arrived at the idea by using his own experience and a human-centric approach toward innovation to unburden knowledge-workers of the grunt work associated with direct on-click outsourcing (e.g., slide preparation, data entry, and analysis) to trusted partners. He stayed under the radar for one year, and actively spent this time developing the proposed service, while accumulating evidence in favor of its utility, and gaining allies to support his ultimate disclosure of the work. Then, he went public, received funds, and even attained a formal role attached to the new service, which he had successfully innovated. While this is a relatively straightforward case, in which a single individual championed the idea he came up with in the first place, one that is analogous to Grant's (2017) idea of originals, many organizational realities involved with capitalizing on high-potential ideas are substantively more complex and often intuitively distinguish between the tasks of idea ownership and idea championing.

Whether above or below the radar, these forms of change agency aimed at capitalizing on high-potential creative ideas entail an extraordinarily high level of

commitment from either leaders or team members. The crux of change and innovation leadership competencies largely consists of timing actions appropriately in a given organizational context in order to determine the best possible fit between actions, context, and content of a high-potential creative idea. The major role of change agents involves the engagement of (Ford, Ford, and D'Amelio, 2008; Sonenshein and Dholakia, 2012) the intended recipients of the change, focused on conquering the shortcomings of still-prevalent top-down approaches to change management (Kotter, 2007), which rarely function effectively when successfully capitalizing on ideas requires winning people's hearts and minds. Luckily, the competencies associated with change agency and change leadership can and should be sharpened by instruction and practice.

11.2.2 LESSON TWO: CAPITALIZING ON HIGH-POTENTIAL IDEAS REQUIRES SUPPORTIVE AND HELPFUL LEADERS

Leaders must serve as change agents for innovation; they also need to empower others to contribute to capitalizing on high-potential ideas. One important way they can do this is by practicing supportive supervision, which can be defined as the degree to which employees believe their supervisors authentically value their contributions and care about their well-being (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades, 2002). It involves both task- and relationship-oriented behavior, in the same way that it involves both instrumental and socio-emotional forms of support (Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, and Kramer, 2004). Supportive supervisors enable their employees to capitalize on high-potential creative ideas by providing resources, motivational support, and serving as role models.

In terms of resource allocation, supportive leaders provide employees with access to those resources necessary for successful implementation of ideas; providing such resources might involve rendering the optimal amount of time, advice, funds, equipment, and connections to experts and implementers. Motivational support refers to the stimulation of employee perceptions of competence and relatedness, while role modeling increases the perceived challenge (as opposed to hindrance) by having managers demonstrate innovation-related behaviors themselves.

Some recent exemplary behaviors include helping employees navigate complex tasks, (i.e. providing deep help; Fisher et al., 2017), guiding or path-clearing as a way of providing external help with complex tasks related to capitalizing on high-potential ideas, and providing meaningful feedback (Harrison and Dossinger,

2017; Hoever, Zhou, and van Knippenberg, 2017). As one leader puts it "(leading innovation)… is often about removing obstacles (including those in people's minds) and securing resources." (—Marc O'Neill, from Liedtka, 2009).

11.2.3 LESSON THREE: CAPITALIZING ON HIGH-POTENTIAL IDEAS REQUIRES OBSERVING THE SITUATION FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES AND INTEGRATING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

Early work on creativity emphasizes the role of different perspectives in generating creative output. The random variation model of creativity postulates that idea generation (i.e., creativity) derives from divergent inputs that increase variance across ideas, thereby raising the odds that one of the group's ideas will be a radical breakthrough, clearly streaking toward a successful creative product. More recent work (Harvey, 2014) has put forth a theoretical dialectical model that regards the integration of group member perspectives—identified as "creative synthesis"—as the foundation for novel, breakthrough, high-potential ideas. Team members must combine their resources and capacities, at the cognitive (i.e., the abilities of individual members to generate ideas), social (i.e., the specific composition of the group), and environmental (i.e., the extent to which the organizational environment supports and motivates group members) levels to promote the creation of extraordinary output. While creative synthesis is a prerequisite for this output, it does not, by itself, suffice as a mode to ensure capitalization on high-potential ideas. When breakthrough ideas move from creative teams into the broader organizational space, they need help from all available quarters to take flight.

In their study of a global consumer products company, Rauth and Nabergoj (2016) describe *design thinking* (Brown, 2008) as a multi-actor sense-making process for capitalizing on high-potential breakthrough ideas. On this journey, ideas confront many internal and external stakeholders, who often hold conflicting views. One example was a project that dealt with illegally pirated copies of products, aiming to develop ideas about suitable technique to frustrate counterfeiters and cause them to cease their efforts to copy company brands. This organization hosted a series of workshops that derived and applied the following set of practices: 1) iterative engagement of functionally and hierarchically diverse individuals; 2) heterogeneous composition of teams; 3) iterative involvement of individuals, teams, and groups, and 4) exposure to, engagement with, and action within the context of conflicting views (one at the time). As a key leadership lesson aimed at promoting capitalization on high-potential creative ideas, value attaches to design thinking when it is functionally applied as a mode of describing precisely how such capitalization operates when leaders actively facilitate human-centered inno-

vation journeys (Kolko, 2015) aimed at dealing with wicked problems. However, it might be noted here that for a high-potential idea to be worthy of the efforts to capitalize on it, the idea must make sense to a variety of internal and external stakeholders. In turn, this requires handling a set of views that are often conflicting, or at least confused, in an iterative and experimental fashion that resembles several of the innovative working methods suggested by lean startup (Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010) and the innovator's method (Furr and Dyer, 2014). To ensure that breakthrough ideas actually emerge, it also requires getting stakeholders across organizational hierarchy levels involved at a relatively early point in the process, due to an increased sense of ownership, commitment, and access to cognitive, social, and environmental resources.

Theoretical (Hernaus, 2016) and empirical work (Černe, Hernaus, Dysvik, and Škerlavaj, 2017) related to job characteristics suitable for creative and innovative work, respectively, have explored the differences between job design related to these two disparate types of work. Comparing job characteristics that share, at a minimum, the capacity to facilitate either idea generation or idea implementation reflects a primary distinction between certain types of job design that derives from the disparate social characteristics of certain jobs. Job designs more suitable to (i.e., idea implementation) capitalizing on high-potential ideas require more social interaction, increased task interdependence, and intensified social support; more creatively-focused job designs are comparatively solitary (although conventional notions of the lonely genius no longer actually apply), but recent work on the relational job design model has suggested that creative workers can be motivated by prosocial conceptions of the meaning of their contributions. To wit, relational job designs (Grant, 2007) that promote feedback intrinsic to the job itself, while exposing the creative workers to the beneficiary of such contributions, can serve as powerful sources of motivation that facilitate the implementation-related tasks of capitalizing on creative work for the ultimate purpose of innovation.

Given the international nature of modern work, leaders and employees can benefit from further intercultural collaboration and the development of cultural intelligence (Bogilović, Černe, and Škerlavaj, 2017; Bogilović, Škerlavaj, and Wong, 2016). Cultural intelligence (Earley and Ang, 2003), which refers to the capacity to function effectively in culturally diverse environments, across meta-cognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions, is a vital personal competency that is crucial to understanding and operationalizing the broad range of perspectives that organizational members must depart from if they are to enjoy success in their collective innovative endeavors. A recent meta-analysis (Taras, Steel, and Kirkman, 2016), which assembled all previous studies in accordance with

Hofstede's typology of national culture, showed that 80% of the variation in work-related cultural values could be observed within countries, leaving only 20% of such variations at the international level; the analysis argues against falsely conflating work culture with national culture. It further implies that no room for cultural stereotyping exists in today's world, and begs for considerably more emphasis on individual sources of cognitive and functional diversity, particularly in the context of work involving the generation and implementation of ideas. Furthermore, diversity does not, by itself, breed creativity (Hoever, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel, and Barkema, 2012), let alone make it possible to capitalize on it. Capitalizing on high-potential ideas thereby requires individuals with enough cultural intelligence to thoughtfully examine different perspectives, and leaders capable of making sense and meaning out of them.

11.2.4 LESSON FOUR: LEADERS NEED TO FACILITATE PROACTIVE EMPLOYEE BEHAVIORS

If a multiplicity of perspectives represents the flint of the creative process, than proactive employee behaviors are its fuel. Proactive employee behaviors include such descriptors as self-starting, anticipatory, long-term oriented, and persistent (Frese and Fay, 2001); these characteristics can be illustrated by behaviors like feedback seeking, voice, job crafting, taking charge, issue selling, and building social networks (Lam, Spreitzer, and Fritz, 2014). Proactive behaviors are increasingly regarded as critical components of high-caliber job performance (Crant, 2000), and have been associated with desirable organizational outcomes, including creativity (Ohly and Fritz, 2010). Due to their persistent and resilient nature, proactive employee behaviors are important drivers that contribute to the success of capitalizing on high-potential ideas, as they move through organizational landscapes and beyond.

Hudovernik, Černe, and Škerlavaj (2016) used a grounded theory approach to study three cases from the automotive industry, and managed to develop a model that identified antecedents of the proactive employee behaviors needed to capitalize on high-potential creative ideas. At the individual level, previous research (e.g., Crant, 2000; Parker, Bindl, and Strauss, 2010) showed that individual-level antecedents can be organized within an ability–motivation–opportunity framework. Determinants of proactive employee behavior as organized within this framework are as follows: 1) proactive personality, personal initiative, taking charge (personality/ability); 2) role-breadth, self-efficacy, and cognitive-motivational processes (motivation), as well as 3) flexible role orientation, autonomy,

trust, social ties, task interdependence, task complexity, and coworkers' proactive behaviors (opportunity). However, relying on personal dispositions and recruiting employees with proactive personalities may be necessary, but it is hardly sufficient. As a rule, organizations that are successful in capitalizing on high-potential creative ideas have a set of diverse and specific institutional practices that are aimed at motivating proactive employee behaviors. Some of the better-known examples of these enshrined practices include lean workshops that create a bridge between business functions, 20 keys for workplace improvements, ideation workshops and hackathons, IT platforms for innovation combined with off-line activities (such as innovation month), and daily audits; needless to say, these are a mere few among many. All such practices are coupled with personnel, one of who might be the designated innovation process sponsor, including a pool of trained innovation facilitators. Finally, yet crucially, top management philosophy in support of innovation complements all of the abovementioned antecedents to employee proactivity by communicating, visualizing and embodying innovation as an organizational value. Leaders that rely on employee proactivity should regard our model as a system of interconnected-activities operating on multiple levels: individual, team, and organizational.

11.3 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Research suggests that at least four groups of leadership competencies are required to successfully capitalize on high-potential creative ideas in organizational settings: active leadership that includes mastery of change agent competencies, as new ideas require contextual change process management; second, supportive leadership in task- and people-oriented dimensions, which not only requires leaders to provide resources and other types of support, but also demands that they challenge employees in a way that promotes movement away from the status quo; third, the facilitation of proactive employee behaviors; and fourth, leadership acknowledgement of the nature of capitalizing on creativity as a social process, which requires the involvement of multiple viewpoints and various stakeholders. Such skills, along with a great many more, comprise the role of leaders who wish to propel high-potential creative ideas on the journey toward rebirth as high-value-added innovative services, products, and solutions.

We can derive several practical implications from this. First, any leader in an organization that depends upon renewal, creativity and innovation, should be trained as a change agent. Vital to excelling at change agency is a nuanced understanding of the psychology of change followers and of change as a social process.

The most reliable approach is neither top-down nor strategy-in-the-clouds in terms of abstraction, but rather engaging and involving. Such training programs, as a rule, use experiential learning methods (i.e., case studies, simulations) in their on-the-job programs for broadened systematic training impact (Dysvik, Carlsen, and Škerlavaj, 2017).

Second, leaders must be selected, continuously trained, developed, and promoted on the basis of their supportive and helping behaviors. Despite the ongoing rhetoric that celebrates supportive leadership, studies (Hogan and Kaiser, 2005) continue to report a lack of such supportive leadership, with as many as two-thirds of respondent employees citing leadership as the worst aspect of their job. Significant change is needed, with greater emphasis on more employee-centered forms of leadership pointing toward the route of highest potential. Among them, one should note servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977, 2002; Stone, Russell, and Patterson, 2004; Van Dierendonck, 2011) as the single leadership form that is directly focused on its followers. Equally important, however, is transformational leadership, with its focus on organization and strong association with innovative work behaviors (Hammond, Neff, Farr, Schwall, and Zhao, 2011). Concrete examples of behaviors required by leaders to improve the odds of capitalizing on high-potential creative ideas include so-called "deep help" (Fisher et al., 2017), where leaders both support and challenge innovation project members, "guiding a team through a difficult juncture by working with its members in several prolonged, tightly clustered sessions, and/or path-clearing by helping a team address a persistent deficit via briefer, intermittent sessions throughout a project's life" (p. 3).

Third, capitalizing on high-potential creative ideas is a social process and a multi-player game. Leaders need to facilitate collaborative employee behaviors during and around innovation journeys. Some approaches shown to be productive are design thinking (Brown, 2009), relational job design, exposure to primary beneficiaries of work (Grant, 2007), cultural intelligence (Earley and Ang, 2003), reciprocity rings (Baker and Bulkley, 2014) and other tools for collaboration that facilitate perspective taking and heightened empathy (Škerlavaj, 2016). Stepping into the shoes of another person, acknowledging that person's perspective, and determining the most suitable course for the innovation journey are prerequisites to benefiting from cognitive, functional, ethnocentric and other types of diversity, as such practices further increases the odds of capitalizing on high-potential creative ideas.

Finally, yet significantly, innovation journeys require persistence, grit (Duckworth, 2016), resilience, and self-initiated proactive employee behaviors. Selecting people who are predisposed toward proactivity is only part of the story. The

development of organizational practices and top management support that both favor employee proactivity constitutes much of the rest of the story representing the prerequisites for capitalizing on high-potential creative ideas as they meet organizational and environmental boundary conditions.

11.4 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The journey to discover the ideal role of leadership for capitalizing on high-potential ideas is far from complete. The essential question, then, concerns the best and most necessary direction for the additional research. Some recent examples (e.g., Fisher et al., 2017; Perry-Smith and Mannucci, 2017) make compelling claims for the vast potential outcomes of future research about complex innovative work. First, quantitative and qualitative research traditions will need to collaborate in additional research on capitalizing on high-potential ideas in order to bring practice- and process-based perspectives (Langley, 1999) closer to advances in multi-level theorizing and analysis (Kozlowski, Chao, Grand, Braun, and Kuljanin, 2013). With such a dual, yet integrated, approach, we will be able to understand the process of capitalizing on ideas in the context of a clear conception of how leadership and followership of creative and innovative work actually occur.

Second, when discussing leadership, creativity, and innovation, there should be an enlarged focus on the behaviors of leaders and followers. To what extent are leadership practices significant beyond what they say about intentions, attitudes, or traits? Some of the most recent studies focusing on deep help in complex and knowledge-intensive projects recognize leaders as facilitators. Essential skills, therefore, should involve respectful inquiry (Van Quaquebeke and Felps, 2016), as well as feedback giving and searching (Harrison and Dossinger, 2017; Harrison and Rouse, 2015).

In my opening remarks about the challenges and opportunities our society and organizations currently face, I argued that creativity and innovation could function as both the problem, as well as the solution. Generating breakthrough creative ideas is a job that has barely started. Capitalizing on high-potential creative ideas to address the challenges we all face requires mastering leadership competencies for innovative work. Leaders capable of rendering transformations in universal attitudes toward, for example, eating bugs and the emerging industry of entomophagy, will be leaders capable of addressing and meeting the challenges involved in sustainable development goals.

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