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# The Importance of Recognising Playfulness to Develop Creativity: The Case of Blip Web Engineers

by

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## Biographical Note

António Alexandre de Sousa Barbeta was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, on the 21st of September of 1989.

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## Abstract

The following dissertation aims to investigate on how the work climate affects creativity, focusing on the cultural contexts and leadership behaviours. It is based on a single case study, were the primary data collected lies mainly on semi-structured interviews and observations made on the site – a company within the IT sector: Blip Web Engineers.

In two senses, the present document addresses both creativity and play culture. Play manifests itself through organisational behaviours as a form of engagement, so as to positively influence work climates, and thus creative approaches.

The research proposes to understand both personal and contextual conditions that play and affiliative leadership influence in the balance between work context and employee's creativity. Drawing on the following analysis, the research looks to describe how play can support creativity in organisations.

**Keywords**: Creativity, organisational climate, play, playspace, affiliative leadership.

## Resumo

A presente dissertação tem como objetivo investigar de que forma o clima organizacional afeta a criatividade, dando enfoque aos contextos culturais e comportamentos da liderança. A investigação tem como base um estudo de caso, no qual os dados primários são recolhidos principalmente através de entrevistas semi-estruturadas e observações feitas no local de análise –a empresa do sector das TI selecionada foi a Blip Web Engineers.

Simultaneamente o presente documento aborda temas como a criatividade e a cultura *play*. O conceito *play* manifesta-se através de comportamentos organizacionais como uma forma de envolvimento, de modo a influenciar positivamente o clima de trabalho e, desta forma, as abordagens criativas.

Esta pesquisa propõe perceber as condicionantes pessoais e contextuais que tanto a cultura *play* como a liderança afiliativa desempenham no equilíbrio entre o contexto do trabalho e a criatividade dos colaboradores. Com base na análise que se segue, esta dissertação procura descrever como a cultura *play* pode oferecer suporte para a criatividade nas organizações.



**Palavras-chave:** Criatividade, clima organizacional, *play*, *playspace*, liderança afiliativa.

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# 1. Introduction

The following document focuses mainly on creativity and on how an organisational climate can enhance it. The research looks to provide empirical evidence on the relation between play and affiliative leadership. The creative behaviours derived from the play culture, and affiliative leadership incentives, look to promote a context of a healthy social work climate. Furthermore, the research provides an analysis of the organisational contexts required to increase the happiness, wellbeing, and trust among all employees, which will prove to be essential to enhance creativity among employees.

The implementation of a play culture attends to the quality of the employee's well-being and relationships, and looks to enhance one's intrinsic motivation (Gyn, 1994). The interaction, coming out of play increases the employee's organisational skills and provides a healthy and happy social work climate (Meyer, 2012).

Assuming that a culture shapes the behaviours, norms and values, of both organisation and its members; and the fact that a culture is molded by the vision and values of a leader; therefore it is important to understand what are their roles towards creating an environment that contributes for the well-being of the employees and how can they create a spirit of unity.

In consequence of the group interactivity a culture emerges, an organisational culture that is defined as an ensemble of mental suppositions, which guides an organisation to its own appropriate behaviour in various situations (Ravis & Schultz, 2006).

Having that said, the main topics of the research are, fundamentally, play and playspace. The research looks to answer the present investigating question: "How can a work climate, namely play, playspace and orgnisational practices, foster creativity among employees?"

The aim of the research is to understand how cultural values in combination with people's interaction with the work environment can influence their creativity. These

are the variables that will be investigated throughout the literature. From those guidelines two objectives surface: (1) Recognize the importance of work climates as leverage for creativity; and (2) Acknowledge the importance that organisational practices exert in fostering creativity.

This thesis is structured in five chapters. Besides the present introduction, which covers the context and purpose of the following research, the next chapter includes a literature review related to the interaction between contextual and social factors that characterize creativity. This chapter looks to comprehend what are defining values of a play culture – while at the same time making a parallel with affiliative leadership.
The third chapter makes reference to the primary and secondary objectives of the project. In this chapter the targeted population, the sample, and the data collected will be properly described, ending with a personal note.
The fourth chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the results that were obtained from the collected data.
Finally, the fifth chapter presents the conclusions of the study as well as their contributions and methodological limitations.

## 2. Creative Cultures

The following chapter rests on the manifestation of play cultures as a source of creativity. The following organisational research explores motivation, work climate, and the interaction between personal and contextual factors. In other words, the body of this chapter looks to supports on how that social context, motivation, and domain-relevant skills interact to ease the creative process. Drawing on that analysis the objective is to demonstrate how play cultures and affiliative leadership can build and foster relationships, and therefore work as an enhancer towards creativity.

In order to understand the extent of the research, the present chapter has the objective to define creativity; to explore the factors that are correlated to creativity; and to recognize how leadership and cultural processes can influence creativity.

### 2.1. Defining Creativity

In most of the organisations change is certain to happen. The concept of creative cultures is rapidly becoming more important and a vital foundation for strategic advantage.

Managers and manager's actions are constantly being confronted with fast-changing atmospheres, complex demand, fast technology growth, international competition and the need to take quick decisions, and so the organisation's capability to generate creativity and innovation from its employees is becoming extremely important (Kreitner*et al,* 1999; Sefertzi, 2000; Runco, 2004; Oldham & Cummings, 1996; Kotter, 1998). In light of such scenario, a process raises to surface – creativity – that is defined by Kreitner*et al,* (1999:359) as "a process of developing something new or unique". In other words this procedure can be described as a form of combining skill and imagination, in order to fabricate a new product, process or thought (Scott, 1995).

Creativity is an essential feature of human intelligence (Amabile, 1996), so in this sense, employees have an important role when it comes to the creative process, and therefore, play a vital part of an organisations efficiency and survival (Nonaka, 1991).

Organisations that foster creativity have the objective to achieve breakthroughs (Shalley, 1995). Creativity supports our everyday encounter, for example, in the association of ideas, reminding, perception, analogical thinking, searching a structured problem-space, and reflecting self-criticism. It is not only involved in a cognitive way, through the breeding of new ideas, but also in motivation and emotion, aspects that help define a certain cultural environment and personality factors (Boden, 1998).

The ability of an organisation to create new knowledge, products, and services or to solve a problem has its basis in the human recourse and its capability of being creative, thus making people an asset for any organisation (Greenberg, 2011; Amabile, 1996; Zhou & Shalley, 2003)

Creativity focuses on thinking beyond the prevailing restrictions, to explore outside rational, conventional and formal routes, in other words the main objective of the creative process to promote and confront change (Sefertzi, 2000).

### 2.2. Creative People: Contextual and Social Factors

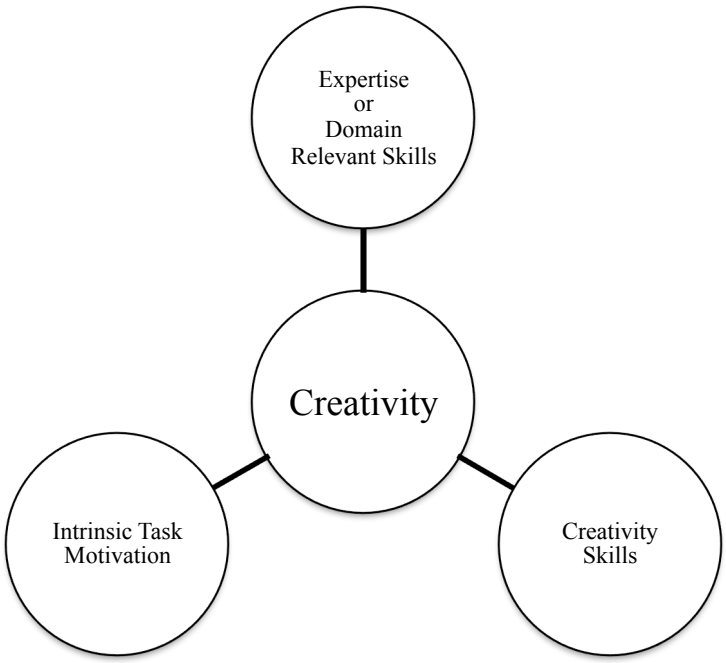
Vital organisational outcomes, such as creativity arise not only from the corporate strategies or the easy access they have to resources but, essentially, from the minds of the individuals, and groups or teams (Amabile, 2004). When an organisation empowers in the development of new ideas all of its efforts will be measured in terms of quality, originality, and productivity (Mumford, 2000).

Creativity is more than just a process that involves both individuals and teams, but a process that underlies an organisational structure. This structure has its components like every configuration, subdivided in levels such as: individual, group, and organisational (Woodman *et al,* 1993). Managers concur that they would like their personnel to be more creative, communicative and interactive, however for these same managers, it is not always well defined on how to lead their employees to such conduct (Shalley & Gilson, 2004; Oldham & Cummings, 1996). Since creativity is such an ambiguous process, it proves to be difficult to evaluate the outcomes, mostly because information regarding objective results are not available. Additionally the

evaluation often implies risk, which leads to an excessively critical evaluation, and therefore it can affect the motivational levels of employees, putting in cause future creative results (Mumford, 2000).

Creativity is about a combination of various factors: personality; cognitive features; motivation, and social and contextual impacts. However these aspects need to be paired up with a set of skills, in order to harvest creativity (Woodman, 1993; Shalley *et al,* 2004). Complementary, Amabile (1997) with the Componential Theory of Creativity describes the components that integrate individual and group creativity – domain relevant skills or expertise, creativity relevant skills, and intrinsic task motivation – as illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 1:** Componential Theory of Creativity




Source: Adapted from Amabile, 1997:47

Amabile (1997:42) states "expertise is the foundation for all creative work. It can be viewed as the set of cognitive pathways that may be followed for solving a given problem or doing a given task". While preforming any type of tasks it is required to undertake some abilities and knowledge, in order for creativity to occur. On balance, if an individual does not have the capacity to perform a task at the most basic level, some difficulties demonstrating creativity will arise (Greenberg, 2011). Some

individuals have valuable potential, but in order to make good use of such attributes they must learn to think of the problematic in divergent ways. Being exposed to different cultures and to other creative individuals, which serve as an example to follow, is also a factor that develops and inspires the creative process (Robbins & Judge, 2002).

Apart from the basic attributes that one must possess, some additional capacities are needed, in order to be innovative – the so-called creative thinking. Such skills help individual achieve creative results (Greenberg, 2011). Creative thinking embraces personality individualities related with creativity; the aptitude of using analogies; orientation towards risk-taking; persistence regarding frustration; and the absence of fear if something is not socially approved (Robbins & Judge, 2002; Amabile, 1997).

The third and last component, task motivation, involves all the attitudes and insights regarding tasks (Zhou & Shalley, 2003). Greenberg (2011:190) states that task motivation "is the desire to work on something because it's interesting, involving, exciting, satisfying, or personally challenging", in other words task motivation is what establishes what an employee will do and how he will perform (Amabile, 1997). While expertise and creativity relevant skills emphases on what individuals are qualified of doing, task motivation focuses to what people are willing to do (Greenberg, 2011; Zhou & Shalley, 2003). Since the creative process compels such a great level of the human mental activity, they must be highly motivated, in order to successfully accomplish its mission and objectives (Shalley, 1995).

In short, creative outputs require expertise. So, in such case, the creative work, results and achievements of employees are their identity, this is, the creative people are strongly bonded to their work. This bond means, that creative employees are very often ambitious in two features – objectives and accomplishments – which by definition lead them to higher levels of motivation. The nature of these same employees has its implications in leadership. A leader must always structure and articulate his vision and plans in the line of work of his employees, so as to keep high motivational levels during task completion (Byrne *et al,* 2009).

Zhou & Shalley (2003) and Amabile (1996; 1997) come to a common conclusion that

work environment can increase intrinsic motivation, which leads to creativity among professionals.

### 2.3. Organisational Climate and Organisational Culture

Becoming creative demands more than just recourses, it requires an organisational culture, a culture that can guide professionals; it also requires the proper climate, so it can lead to a creative approach.

Culture is considered to be a fundamental factor for creativity. An organisation with its own identity – culture – combined with the proper recourses can be creatively productive. In other words, culture needs to be matched with the right climate (Ahmed, 1998).

Thus, the following literature research is concerned with distinguishing climate from culture, and to understand the multiple elements that inhibit creative behaviours, before formulating a parallelism between creativity and play culture.

Organisational climate refers to the shared insights members have about the organisation and environment in which they are positioned (Robins & Judge, 2012), thus the concept of climate relates the individual and organisational level (Hofstede, 1998).

Climates can interact with one another to produce behaviour and influence the habits people adopt. For example, a positive climate for worker's empowerment can lead to higher levels of performance in organisations and if the climate aimed at safety is positive, then high levels of well-being will certainly surface (Robbins & Judge, 2012).

But what is organisational climate? Litwin and Stringer (1968:1) defined it as "to a set of measurable properties of the work environment, perceived directly or indirectly by the people who live and work in this environment and assumed to influence their motivation and behaviour" (Hofstede, 1998); while Tagiuri and Litwin (1968: 25), described organisational climate as "the relatively enduring quality of the total

organisational environment that (a) is experienced by the occupants, (b) influences their behaviour, and (c) can be described in terms of the values of a particular set of characteristics (or attributes) of the environment" (Denison, 1996).

Studying culture required qualitative research procedures and an analysis of individual social settings, while research related to organisational climate required quantitative techniques (Denison, 1996). However, though climate studies, being identical to culture studies, have been criticized for being considered "studies of job satisfaction". Analysis found that across different tests, psychological climate was strongly related to the level of job satisfaction, involvement, commitment, and motivation (Robbins & Judge, 2012). Nonetheless, future studies demonstrated that climate procedures "that are designed to reflect organisational/descriptive rather than individual/evaluative differences differ from satisfaction measures" (Hofstede, 1998)

**Table 1:** Differences between Organisational Climate and Culture

| Type | Description |
|---|---|
| Organisational Culture | Culture derives from anthropology; |
| | Culture is entirely linked at the organisational level; |
| | Culture can be different without one being objectively better than the other. |
| | Culture has its focus on the organisational practices. |
| Organisational Climate | Climate derives from sociology; |
| | Climate is more closely linked with individual motivation and behaviour; |
| | Climate has an evaluative connotation and partly overlaps with satisfaction; |
| | Climate can fruitfully be seen as a sub-set of culture. |

Source: Adapted from Hofstede, 1998

Both definitions have similarities and both attempt to describe the nature, durability and roots of social contexts in organisations. Climate refers to a situation and its link to thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of organisational members, so it is temporal, subjective, while culture, refers to an evolved environment (Denison, 1996).

Given the definition of organisational culture, it is possible to study its characteristics and functions.

On the base of any organisational culture is a set of core characteristics that are valued by members of that same organisation, such as sensitivity to others, interest in new ideas, willingness to take risks, the value placed on people, openness of available communication options, friendliness and congeniality (Greenberg, 2011).

According to the research followed by Oreilley *et al*, (1991) and Chatman & Jehn (1994), group characteristics where given to organisational culture. It is on the basis of those same features that it can be possible to define if a culture is "strong" or "weak", meaning that the "collective value" assumed by members towards those features makes a culture stronger or weaker (Robbins & Judge, 2012; Greenberg, 2011).

**Table 2:** Organisational Culture's Core Characteristics

| Core Characteristics | Description |
|---|---|
| Innovation and risk taking | The degree to which employees are encouraged to be innovative and take risks. |
| Attention to detail | The degree to which employees are expected to exhibit precision, analysis, and attention to detail. |
| Outcome orientation | The degree to which management focuses on results or outcomes rather than on the techniques and processes used to achieve them. |
| People orientation | The degree to which management decisions take into consideration the effect of outcomes on people within the organisation. |
| Team orientation | The degree to which work activities are organized around teams rather than individuals. |
| Aggressiveness | The degree to which people are aggressive and competitive rather than easygoing. |
| Stability | The degree to which organisational activities emphasize |

| | |
|---|---|
| | maintaining the status quo in contrast to growth. |

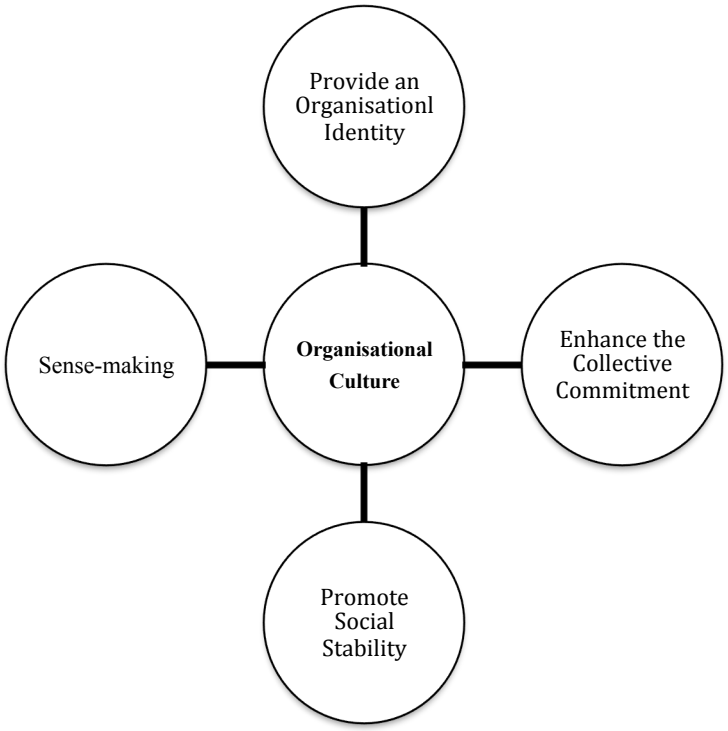
Source: Adapted from Robbins & Judge, 2012, pp. 16-17

The characteristics exist on a continuum from high to low (Martins & Martin, 2000) and they are the roots of any organisational culture (Greenberg, 2011). These dominant values must be accepted throughout the organisation in order to secure as one single culture (Robbins & Judge, 2012). The strength of the organisations culture comes about through shared assumptions that are mutually reinforced (Schein, 2004).

The power of a culture depends on the fulfilment of its core characteristics. Greenberg (2011) states that a strong culture is defined by a high agreement regarding the core characteristics, with all members, in order to employ a great influence. More members accepting the core values and the greater their commitment, can only have one end, a strong culture. This is likely to be found in organisations with little employees and thus suggesting that, as companies grow older and larger in size, the effects of culture becomes disseminated.
That same cultural power should decrease employee turnover "because it demonstrates high agreement about what the organisation represents" (Schein, 2004).

An organisational culture serves different functions. In other words, culture is envisioned as a shared key of values, beliefs and assumptions that can be summarised in four purposes: (a) provide a sense of identity to organisation members; (b) enhance the commitment towards the organisations mission; (c) promote a social system stability; (d) structure behaviour by helping members make sense of their environment (Kreitner *et al,* 1999; Greenberg, 2011; Smirich, 1983) - as Figure 1 demonstrates it.

**Figure 2:** Organisational Culture's Functions




Source: Adapted from Kreitner *et al*, 1999, pp. 58-59

Firstly a culture is responsible for conceiving a sense of identity to every organisational member (Smirich, 1983). The clearer the organisations shared values, beliefs and assumptions are defined, the stronger the relation between the member of the organisations and its mission (Greenberg, 2011). To illustrate this argument, Kreitner *et al,* (1999) gives the example of 3M. Given that this company is one the leaders in innovation, they have sustained an identity by creating rewards that reinforce innovation, thus maintain the role of an innovative company.

Secondly, there is an urge for a collective "happiness state" within the members and teams of an organisation (Kreitner *et al,* 1999). Sometimes those same employees or members present difficulties to think beyond their own interests, however, more important than those individual interests, "culture reminds them of their organisation is all about" (Greenberg, 2011). Again, Kreitner *et al,* (1999) demonstrate this point with 3M employees opinions, quoting that it is "a company that employees are proud to be part of" and "people that who like 3M's culture tend to stay employed there for long periods of time".

Thirdly, culture enhances the stability of social systems (Robbins & Judge, 2012). This reflects the extent to which the organisational environment is seen as positive and reinforced, and conflict and change is managed efficiently (Kreitner *et al,* 1999). Culture must be seen as the glue that holds the entire organisation and that defines what members must do and not do (Robbins & Judge, 2012).
Finally, the "sense-making" function of organisational culture helps the organisational members understand why the organisation does what it does and the way it aims to achieve its objectives (Kreitner *et al,* 1999). Culture in this logic is "a control mechanism that guides and shapes employee's attitudes and behaviour" (Robbins & Judge, 2012).

Serving these functions, an organisational culture is sure to have a strong and influent force and behaviour to both the employees and organisation (Greenberg, 2011).

## 2.4. Play Culture

Bearing in mind that both climate and culture contexts have strong implications for creativity, it is imperative to study its variants. If the right norms are well defined and well communicated throughout the organisation, then culture can and will stimulate creativity. Just as easily, the wrong culture, regardless the effort put in creativity, can produce less breakthrough ideas.

### 2.4.1. Play

Play consists in an organisational behaviour, distinguished be the way it handles means to its ends, and those who handle it. Ends are not eliminated, however they don't determine the means. This state suggests a high level of autonomy, in order for freedom to assume what in another way would not be possible (Miller, 1973).

Play refers to situations where employees see their work turn into play. In this sense, play is a behavioural orientation on the way work is performed. Play tends to affect creativity by shaping or molding the social climate (Amabile, 1996; Elsbach & Hargadon, 2006).

Mainemelis & Ronson (2006:92) state that "play manifests in two ways: first, play can be a form of diversion from work tasks; second, play may also be intern to work tasks, that is, a way for engaging with one's work".

The objective is to redefine a situation, in other words, it provides flexibility towards the approach that employees want to have, when confronting daily tasks. This culture aims to have some tolerance regarding certain behaviours, so as to confront different mental assumptions – reconfiguration of behaviours (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006).

Organisations that adopt play focus mostly on giving their employees the opportunity to learn and to explore, in other words, employees have the possibility to explore different perspectives, and assume different roles (Meyer, 2012; Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006). Glynn (1994:43) states that "play decreases the risks commonly associated with experimentation and, thus, may produce more variance with circuitous, organic, and galumphing responses". The freedom that play provides from extrinsic and intrinsic constraints stimulates idea generation for the tasks at hand. The freedom given to employees tends to nurture different ideas and behaviours (Amabile, 1996).

When adopting play, a wide extent of emotions (joy, happiness, contentment, passion, excitement) is bound to arise. These emotions are very important for creativity, because it allows employees to explore, experiment and to expand self-development (Elsbach & Hargadin, 2006). This positive psychological affect combined with the proper work climate and guidance (leadership) provide the conditions needed for employees to be creative (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006).

An organisation that values this variant of culture is an organisation that manages the workload and the daily pressure. When workload pressure is high it is important to stimulate a positive affect, while in the presence of low workload pressure, negative affects may be necessary. The reason for this is to break the monotony of the daily work, this interaction between play and climate can decrease the work fatigue, thus increase one's attention (Elsbach & Hargadin, 2006).

### 2.4.2. Playspace

The implementation of a play culture, besides shifting the mind set on the whole organisation, also transforms the workplace. This means that the workspace can is no longer a common space, but a playspace (Meyer, 2012; Apagor 1999).

Playspace is destined for "the play of new ideas, for people to play new roles, for more play in the system, and for provisional play" Meyer (2012:26).

Replacing a workplace with an open place space common when adopting play culture. However oraganisations may very well provide team rooms and work stations. The objective is to maintain a stable social climate, so as to enhance team building, a fundamental factor for creativity. When implementing a playspace, organisations look to mold the space to their needs (Apagor, 1999).

Playspace provides healthy social climates in the workplace, and with that implication, other positive affect emerge, such as compatibility of the environment with the employee's goals and the possibility to break routines – mental breaks (Elsbach & Hargadon, 2006). Given that play is not a set of activities, but an orientation for organisational behaviours towards work tasks, organisation that adopt play, can also express freedom, by incentivising experimentation and improvisation (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006). The aim of such decision is to provide freedom and flexibility, so as to increase the chances of creative outputs. These results may arise, in great part due to the positive affects that play environments offer (Shalley *et al*, 2004).

Play emphasis on liberating means to ends, developing and nurturing relationships through environmental strategies, in order foster creativity (Meyer, 2012; Elsbach & Hargadon, 2006).

Adopting an alternative workplace – playspace – proves to increase the employee's creative results, because there is a tendency to devote less time to routines, and therefore maintain high levels of motivation. The objective is to maintain a stable social climate, so as to enhance team building – fundamental fact for creativity to

prosper. Thus, adopting methodologies such as play expresses and fosters creative freedom.

### 2.4.3. Hack Day

Hack Days, also called hackathons, hack fests or code fests are events where multi-skilled teams work on their own projects. The individuals and teams organise themselves around a certain topic, or concentrate on a particular issue, problem or challenge. In order to develop the projects, each team, or individual have a time margin, this is the development of the idea is limited by time (e.g. one day, a weekend). Some companies, besides adopting the concept of hack day go beyond it, this is sometimes they nurture a competitive environment by rewarding prizes to whom produces the best hack (Kendrew *et al*, 2014).

According to Rowan, Hawkins and Cobley (2007:1) hack days focus mainly on the following tasks:
*"1. To come up with a new and innovative idea that has relevance to the new media industry;*
*2. To present their ideas in a fashion designed to inform others about the nature of their project, and to invite discussion and feedback from industry professionals;*
*3. To develop a working prototype using the most appropriate technologies and development techniques;*
*4. To present the finished project in a competitive environment similar to that met in commercial organisations."*

The importance of hack days is growing and have become and important networking events for the IT industry. The reason for it lies in the freedom given to the designers, developers or managers to demonstrate their skills, abilities and creativity. With that in mind, the aim is to nurture ideas through the development of prototypes (Kendrew *et al,* 2014).

The mindset stimulated by the hack day is what sets it apart from traditional practices. Hack days can be compared to a day were it is dedicated to brainstorm out your own vision, ideas and therefore projects. Traditionally when companies want to develop a

new concept, a meeting is called, which, at most, might last hours. The idea of hackathon is different; it intends to create an environment of self development, individuals are not just participating in meeting or brainstorming, they are using their own means to their own ends (marketingmagazine.co.uk).

In other words, the hack day is a challenge for all individuals and teams who participate. The structure of the event is developed around the needs of those who participate in it, so as not to restrain them (Rowan *et al*, 2007).

### 2.5. The Impact of Leadership in Creativity

As Ahmed (1998:31) states, "to examine culture in isolation is a mistake". The literature previously studied was dedicated to the social context, in terms of climate and culture, which benefits creativity. However it is necessary to complement such approach with another key element for creativity and to implement a culture – leadership. By the followed literature review, the essence of the projects objective will all be articulated.

First of all, it is important to distinguish leadership from management. Leadership looks to motivate, inspire, direct, and support people with common objectives. It is about coping with change, complexity and shaping new frontiers. While management look to perform tasks, to plan, to investigate and to control. Management tends to restrict and positions and roles. In other words, management is clearly organisatinal and control, while leadership e more motivational and inspiring (Kreitner *et al,* 1999; Kotter, 1998).

According to Kreitner *et al,* (1999:72) leadership means "vision, cheering, enthusiasm, love, trust, verve, passion, obsession, consistency, the use of symbols, paying attention as illustrated by the content one's calendar, out-and-out drama, creating heroes at all levels, coaching, effectively wandering around, and numerous other things."

Leadership is future oriented. It looks to influence employees and move them from one stage to another. Leadership uses motivation and appealing direction to move

their followers (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2011).

However leadership expands through various deviations, such as affiliative leadership.

Affialitive leadership gives value to both employees and to their emotions, especially when it comes to task accomplishment and emotional needs. The objective of such style is to keep people happy, and to embrace harmonious climates, in other words, it tends to create a team. An affiliative leader has the concern to cultivate interactions and to nurture strong and healthy relationships – they look to value emotional and social work climates (Goleman, 2004).

In order to build and sustain a culture, leadership is essential. Leadership acts towards work environment and therefore around all of the employees.

Leaders need to accept the ambiguity of creativity. The fact that creative outputs emerge from ambiguous contexts means that leaders must tolerate it in relationships and in the work environment. If ambiguity is tolerated, then people are willing to take risks, explore and challenge different alternatives (Ahmed, 1998).

For creativity to emerge an individual's cognitive perception must involve itself with a combination of information, considerations, memories and high concentration levels. As soon as individuals interact with different types opinions, ideas and solutions, it is more probable to make them to be more creative (Shalley *et al,* 2004; Amabile 1996). Another aspect relevant, is the level of commitment that an individual faces when confronted with new challenges, challenges however that involve working in a distinctive or creative form, while accomplishing his job or task (Shalley *et al,* 2004; Shalley & Oldham, 1997).

Naturally risk is always present in creativity. I order for an employee or an organisation to be successfully creative producing new products, services and processes, they must have the will to attempt new approaches, as they also need to be prepared to fail or actually fail. Creativity involves and evolves around a "*trial-and-error process*", were error is bound to occur along success. Having employees averse

to risk means that the organisation runs on routines and not on innovative approaches - the key and source of creativity. Therefore to incentivise employees to take chances, to risk or to break routines is the path to being creative (Shalley *et al,* 2004).

Much is known regarding behaviour individualities associated with creative individuals (Amabile, 1996), however there is a need do comprehend the context and factors that enhance and encourage creativity as also, fosters interactivity in the work environment (Shalley & Gilson, 2004).

The nature of the job complexity is considered to be an essential influence to the employee's creativity, in terms of motivation, expertise and performance levels (Oldham & Cummings, 1996) The more complex and challenging the job, the higher is the level of commitment, motivation and desire to take risks on a different approach, yet creative (Shalley *et al,* 2004; Oldham & Cummings, 1996).

The job level can either be complex or simple. If an individual is presented with a highly complex and challenging task, it is expected for his attention to be focused on considering a different alternative or direction, opening the door to creativity and not doing things the safe way – to undertake risks – and also the employees excitement when completing the job will be higher, when in the absence of any constraints. On the other side, if an employee faces a straightforward task – a job also described as routinized – it does not incentivise an employee to take risks, and consequently to underperform on a creative point of view (Shalley *et al,* 2004; Shalley *et al,* 2000; Oldham & Cummings, 1996).

Shalley *et al,* (2000), support this vision with studies showing that employees who operate in a work environment complemented with the proper creative needs are more satisfied and less likely to have intention of turning over. The consideration take into account regarding the job features and objectives will always describe the course of the individual's creative level, in other words the complexity of the task at hand inspires the employee to allocate his attention to a multiple magnitudes of his work, while a routinized task constrains such (Oldham & Cummings, 1996).

Setting a goal, defining a rewards or outlining a task can have a great influence both on creativity and on performance levels of an employee (Mumford, 2000). Managerial goals result from the necessity, while leaders tend to adopt a more personal attitude into goal setting (Zaleznik, 1998). The role of a leader, when setting goals, differs from a manager specially, as Zaleznik (1998:66) states, because the leader can influence "altering moods, evoking images and expectation, and establishing specific desires and objectives".

This has a great influence in the personnel and a greater impact on the motivational level. Goals are truly a strong motivational factor for numerous reasons, but mainly because they enhance the commitment towards a certain assignment, the attention on how individuals affect their efforts, and the way employees peruse their objectives and for how long. (Shalley *et al,* 2004). However, Mumford (2000) clarifies that the action of setting goals, and by consequently defining the direction of an organisation, has some implications in the management of creative employees (as demonstrated in Table 5), nonetheless goals are an important guiding mechanism to aid in creative perspectives due to its vagueness and evaluative anxiety.

**Table 3:** Implications of Goal Setting

| Implication | Description |
|---|---|
| Goal Definition | Goals should be defined in wide terms, giving more attention and emphasis on creative response than on production. Following such guidelines, objectives should be outlined in away that it allows personnel to practice different types of approaches. |
| Goal Focus | The focus of goals should be not in outcomes, but instead on people and on how those same individuals work methodology and strategies used. To enhance such vision a training and formation is required to be given to the organisations employees. |
| Work Direction | The work environment must have a team enrolment towards task completion, expressly through collaborative reviews. |

Source: Adapted from Mumford, 2000:322

Leaders can engage the manifestation of creativity to the employees by making it a requirement. If the leader makes it implicit that a creative approach must be taken, in order to achieve the performance and outgoing needed, then it will appear normally

(Shalley *et al,* 2004; Shalley *et al,* 2000). Leaders must view their employees as fundamental recourses to succeed, and in order to extol their capabilities, the level of commitment, and the information flux – from the leader to the employees – to implement an idea requires both the support of the leader and form working teams, so as to proceed in a creative way (Woodman *et al,* 1993; Shalley *et al,* 2004).

According to Oldham and Cummings (1996) a "supportive and non-controlling" leadership type can bring abundant advantages, and can easily foster creativity. Shalley *et al,* (2004) support this theory and emphasizes, according to its studies, that managers must inspire, foster, and support healthy professional relationships. A supportive leader just eases the appearance of creative behaviours, however to provide such freedom and at the same time support, they must have and develop a stable relationship. Feedback also has its form of enhancing creative responses. According to the studies of Zhou (1998) and Zhou and Oldham (2001) it is said that that if feedback is delivered in a non-controlling or a non-demanding way, then the levels of creativity will be higher than if it was provided on a disciplinary point of view. Zhou (2003) adds to these perspectives that a feedback with orientation will result also in high levels of creativity.

A creative leadership allows leaders to run organisations in rewarding new routes. This point of view must be supported by the organisational structure of the company, as also on some especial points, like the one's discussed previously – risk taking, job complexity and goal setting. Leaders with a creative approach are more efficient at fostering positive change and stimulating their followers than leaders who lack creative attitude (Stenberg, Kaufman & Pretz, 2003).

A leader supports and encourages a work climate that is described by team member support, shared objectives, and exchanges of viewpoints (Mathisen *et al,* 2012; Amabile, 1996; Oldham and Cummings, 1996; Woodman *et al,* 1993). In other words, a leader can strongly influence an employee by adjusting his social climate of the employee's workplace (Harris, 2009). The openness and enthusiasm of a leader towards new ways of thinking and playing with ideas will certainly pass on to his work environment, and thus molding the organisations culture. The fact that the openness of a leader promotes an atmosphere with high tolerance for new ideas and

suggestions, will also nurture an environment that welcomes improvement and recommendations; a task oriented and democratic environment; and finally an environment that stimulates and makes employees attempt for creative solutions (Mathisen *et al,* 2012; Harris, 2009).

### 2.6. Conclusion

By implementing a culture oriented towards creativity, and in this case paly culture, leaders must give autonomy to employees. It is through the combination of the contextual and emotional factors that employees can produce creative outputs. Rewarding people for their achievements and contributions is important, so as to keep motivational levels at a high stance. However in a creative oriented environment, there needs to a certain worry towards recognition. Employees favor intrinsic rewards or recognition. The fact that employees feel the sense of accomplishment and achievement just motivates to try, experiment and think in divergent ways. Motivation is the foundation for creative results, and therefore for a healthy social climate and competitiveness.

In conclusion, all organisational characteristics and context created that manages both individual and group activity influence creativity, that is to say that creativity is a function of team interactivity and contextual impacts (Woodman *et al,* 1993). It is safe to say that the creative process is directly influenced by individual characteristics (willingness to take risks, to overcome obstacles, the ability to persuade and influence others, the capacity to recognize an idea that is worth pursuing), group characteristics (roles, diversity, size, and norms), and organisational (culture, recourses, rewards, strategy, and structure) – these same factors interact between themselves, forming a system or an organisational process. In other words, the individual's behaviour is affected by a diversity of individualities, which influence the interaction and performance of the groups or teams. The relation between group and organisation is also dictated by the individual's characteristics and behaviour's. Therefore the relations between individuals and groups, and groups and the organisation define the creative process, the culture and overall performance of the organisation (Kreitner *et al,* 1999).

# 3. Methodology

## 3.1. Introduction

Research is a process that relies on research, findings, reflection and generating new knowledge. In an early stage, this process is marked by uncertainty, and then tends to get clarified as information is collected and analysed.

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the trajectory of the empirical research considered previously.

The first part of the chapter summarises the concepts that were essential to the project.

In the second part, the research question is presented along with the general and specific objectives of the research. In this same chapter, the structure of the empirical research was designed.

In the third part the information analysis techniques were determined, in order to assure the proper data treatment, so that by its own means could sustain the legitimacy of the research problem.

The final part of the chapter finishes with a reflection, which presents the limitations of the conducted research.

## 3.2. BLIP - Web Engineers

The sample for this study was obtained from employees of the chosen company – Blip Web Engineers. This is a comprehensive sample of female and male gender, with the various administrative and operational functions. Data collection was done through interviews.

Blip is a company specialized in web engineering were it identifies and analyses its client´s needs manages to propose innovative and skilled solutions, thus developing high performance and scalable web applications.

Blip Web Engineers appeared in March 2009 by the will of two friends from college who, dissatisfied with their work routines, decided to invest in a personal project. One of the founders, José Fonseca, who still works in the company, had the vision to create a company directed and specialized in the web applications engineering.

In a first stage, Blip was incubated in UPTEC - Park of Science and Technology, University of Porto, until moving to new offices. Today the space has 1500 square meters in a building in the center of Porto - Domus Trindade - this is a demonstration of the company's rapid growth. Another scenario that demonstrates the rapid evolution lye's in the fact that the company started its activity in 2009 with four team members; in 2010 it presented a body of 101 members, and today there are 200 collaborators working at Blip.

The organisation's growth is due, in part, to the fact that it was purchased, in October 2010, by the multinational TSE Holdings Limited, owned by Betfair Group, specializing in online betting.

## 3.3. Operational Models

### 3.3.1. Flat Hierarchy

For culture to succeed in its implementation it is vital to clearly study the structure of the organisation.

The organisational structure is the description of the distribution of the employees and their positions, and of the relationships among those same units. The dimensions of structure can be distinguished by the following conditions: size (number of employees), functional divisions (groups or teams), and levels of management (Ghiselli & Siegel, 1972; Porter and Lawler, 1964).

A flat hierarchy in "an organisational structure in which most middle-management levels and their functions have been eliminated, thus bringing the top management in direct contact with the frontline (…) floor employees." (Bussinessdictionary.com).

Organisations that involve a large number of employees reporting to their managers, and operating on a flat structure, means that managers will not be able to provide a close guidance, thus leading to employee's freedom (Porter & Lawler, 1964).

The fact that flat structured organisation gives employee's some freedom means that the development of team-based organisation surface. Eliminating one or more organisational levels and therefore creating a flat organisation with self-managed teams, looks to empower the employee's performance. In other words, the freedom given to each employees passes through activities such as: scheduling work tasks on their own; rotating tasks and assignments with other work colleagues, teams or projects; deciding on team leadership – rotation of roles; setting key team goals inside the organisational goals; and evaluating one another's performance (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2011).

When adopting flat structure managers must assume great responsibility because there are a greater number of employees directly below them, who strongly depend on their direction, support and vision is well coordinated (Ghiselli & Siegel, 1972).

When managers supervise in flat structures, employees experience greater levels of role ambiguity – factor that can enhance their creativity (Porter & Lawler, 1964; Ghiselli & Siegel, 1972).

Finally, flat structures have the particularity of satisfying employee's needs, such as self-realization, and security needs. Since tall structures are normally well structured and well established companies, it is not as easy as for a flat structured company to make employees feel a greater sense of job security (Porter & Lawler, 1964).

### 3.3.2. SCRUM

In what regards to the operational model, Blip Web Engineers operates through the Scrum methodology, and for that reason, before interpreting the results obtained, it is vital to understand this model.

Scrum is a framework for development and maintenance of complex products (Sutherland & Schwaber, 2013). Scrum is an open and non-predictable model, it offers a set of practices or a methodology does not detail what should be done. The goal of Scrum is to give a vision to these problems and serve as a guide (Varaschim, 2009). Scrum framework helps reduce the challenges and drawbacks in traditional software development (Mantri, 2014).

With this in mind, Scrum is highly recommended for organisations that have in their cycle of projects, products that have high rate of requirements change (Sutherland & Schwaber, 2013).

**Table 4:** Roles in Scrum Methodology

| Role | Description |
|---|---|
| Product Owner | Responsible for representing the interests of everyone with a stake in the project and its resulting system. |
| Team | The Team is responsible for developing functionality. Teams are self-managing, self-organizing, and cross functional, and they are responsible for figuring out how to turn Product Backlog into an increment of functionality within an iteration and managing their own work to do so. |
| Scrum Master | The Scrum Master is responsible for the Scrum process, for teaching Scrum to everyone involved in the project, for implementing Scrum so that it fits within an organisation's culture and still delivers the expected benefits, and for ensuring that everyone follows Scrum rules and practices. |

Source: Schwaber, 2004:19

Scrum's progress development is based on interactions that last between two and six weeks – Sprints (Varaschim, 2009). The team development (see roles on Table 10 for Scrum roles) consists of professionals, whose job is to deliver in the end of each iteration or sprint (Sutherland & Schwaber, 2013).

Sprint is set to be a short development cycle, were the team focuses on achieving the objective. During this set period the team, must have full authority to its management

and must not suffer external interferences, especially form the Product Owner (Varaschim, 2009).

The ideal size for the team development should be small enough to remain agile (Sutherland & Schwaber, 2013). Besides being small, the Scrum team needs to be multidisciplinary and self-organized. After the implementation, of agile methods, a change surfaces in the profile of the team members, as they gradually become collaborative in other areas (Varaschim, 2009).

As Khanuja (2014) states *"PMs can act the servant leaders, providing a vision to the team and at the same team empowering the team to find possible solutions and implement the best one for the project. Agile methods like Scrum represent the shift from traditional leadership, which involves generally the accumulation and exercise of power by someone at the "top of the pyramid," to servant-leadership, where the leader shares power, puts the needs of others first, and helps develop and perform the people's highly possible. Servant leaders believe in drawing on the intelligence of the team members rather than for dictating decisions to them*".

### 3.4.Research Approach and Objectives

The presentation of a thesis drifts from a well organized, rigorous and more or less extensive research. Such document also has in its foundation, methodological and technical applications, subjacent to the social science research at matter (Fernandes, 1995).

Throughout the research, sets of stages are monitored. Each stage follows objectives and norms, as to solve the main issue of the research purpose. During this phase it is fundamental to succeed in the observation procedure – set of operations, a phase were information is collected and analysed continuously (Quivy & Camponhoudt, 1998).

Academics have put a great amount of attention towards creativity (Amabile, 1996, 1997, 1998; Ford, 1996; Mumford, 2000; Mumford *et al,* 2002; Olham & Cummings, 1996), understanding the importance of work environments (Shalley, 1991, 1996; Meyer 2012; Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006) and a growing preoccupation towards the

role of leadership on creativity (Haag & Coget, 2010; Mathisen *et al,* 2012; Byne *et al,* 2009; Basadur, 2010).

The central essence of the project focuses on the condition towards the role of cultural and organisational practices in the creative process, exploring perspectives on how to enhance employee's creativity through their working climate. These two concepts prove to be a true asset for organisational change and behaviour studies.

Arising from this hypothesis, the following question is formulated:

**How can a work climate, namely play, playspace and orgnisational practices, foster creativity among employees?**

In order to respond to the research problem, objectives needed to be outlined, as the following table illustrates:

**Table 5:** Research Objectives

| General Objectives | Specific Objectives |
|---|---|
| Recognize the importance of work climates as a leverage for creativity; | Identify the factors that are responsible for providing a climate (physical, social and emotional) for creativity; |
| | Define and understand the hypothesis of play cultures. |
| Acknowledge the importance that organisational practices exert in fostering creativity. | Understand the relation between social and contextual factors from the point of view of affiliative leadership style; |

Source: Own Elaboration

Once these objectives were categorised, the next stage was to develop a theoretical background, embracing the following areas: organisational cultures; creativity; and leadership (as shown in Figure 4).

### 3.5.Instruments and Procedures in Collecting Data

This project's purpose sets its basis around the concept of leadership and its role towards creativity, through a research of "a contemporary phenomenon within real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2003:13).

The research, observation, analysis and categorisation of facts must meet certain principles: objectivity (lets understand that the facts are not as reality shows them); intelligibility (shows reality is understandable); rationality (demonstrates the possibility to explicit the relations existing between facts). Such principles are the basis of the research and data, and to this end, researchers need to use methods and techniques, in order to be able to explain and demonstrate, the purpose of the study in question (Fernandes, 1995)

Research is surrounded by social context and some attention I needed when considering the multicity of factors in which human behaviour is part of. So, some attention is required to three topics, in order to link all facts to documentation: The (a) review of the literature; (b) an elaborated theory; and (c) *the customary discourse on method.* The three issues have become an essential part of the recording process that, in many qualitative or qualitative dissertations (Walcott, 2002).

Every methodology has its strengths and weaknesses and every single one is each is suitable for a certain context. The methods selected to collect depends on the nature of the information needed (Bell, 2005)

There are three major groups of methods to collect information that can be used in qualitative research: (a) the observation; (b) the inquire – possible to be elaborated through a survey or through an oral interview; and (c) document analysis (Quivy & Campnhoudt, 2003; Fernandes, 1995, Bell, 2005).

The following project suggest the need to have a qualitative analysis, in other words the dissertation is based on a single case study, conducted by semi-structured interviews.

Following the subject at hand, two concepts need be exposed and clarified, so as to clearly understand the approach taken into action:

- Case Study;
- Interview (semi-structured).

For a deeper understanding of the dissertation's research question and of the general and specific objectives proposed by the research a qualitative approach was chosen.

The case study is described by deep and comprehensive study of one or more objects, so as to allow their wide and detailed knowledge, task almost impossible by the other designs considered (Bell, 2005)

According to Yin (2003), the case study investigates a phenomenon within its current context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined. It supposes a logical sequence that connects the initial questions of empirical research study to its conclusions; in other words, the development of the research project has direct influence on the results to be obtained and the validity of the conclusions of the work.
It aims to understand and clarify specific factors that may foster a greater understanding of causality.

Thus, it is in such line of thought that the case study was chosen as the method that best responds to the concerns of research, however, and like other research methods, case studies have their advantages and disadvantages (see Table 7).

**Table 6:** Advantages and Disadvantages of the Case Study

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| Enables collecting information from different techniques; | Unlike experiments and surveys, to conduct case studies strict methodological procedures are not set; |
| Allows a thorough data collection on the topic under study; | Generalization is not always possible; |
| Provides richer, real, holistic information | Case studies demand a longer time to be |

| | |
|---|---|
| due to its qualitative approach. | comprehended and often their results become inconsistent. |

Source: Adapted from Gill, 2008, pp. 58-59; and Bell, 2005, pp. 11-13.

The interview method is distinguished from other techniques by the process of communication and interaction (Quivy & Campnhoudt, 2003). While a technical data collection, the interview is quite adequate for obtaining information about what people know, believe, expect, feel or want, intend to do, make or have made, as well as about their reasons or explanations regarding previous facts (Gil, 2008).

Interview techniques can be categorized as an intensive direct observation, which distinguishes itself in the depth that reaches exploring the attitudes and behaviours of individuals who undertakes the questionnaire (Fernandes, 1995).

Interview is one of the techniques for collecting data and presents advantages and disadvantages (see Table 8).

**Table 7:** Advantages and Limitations of Interviewing

| Advantages | Limitations |
|---|---|
| Allows to deepen the elements of analysis of the data collected; | Lack of motivation from the interviewee answering the he is questioned; |
| Flexibility enables collecting interpretations, respecting their own frames of reference; | Possible inadequate understanding of the questions; |
| The data collected is receptive for an analysis based on classification and quantification; | Providing false answers; |
| Enables the possibility to obtain data from a variety of social aspects. | Influence of personal opinion. |

Source: Adapted from Quivy & Campnhoudt, 2003:195 and Gil, 2008:110

The data collected in the given sample from the targeted population, once properly analysed, will allow answering the research's objectives, based on the literature review.

The questions for the interview guide (see Attachment A and Attachment B) were based on the assumptions of organisational cultures, creativity, and above all of leadership roles (see Table 9).

**Table 8:** Contextualization of the Research's Objectives

| Contextualization | Description |
|---|---|
| Creativity | How to foster and maintain creativity, through work climate incentives. |
| Culture | Is the workspace an organisational feature that characterises the company's culture? |
| Affliliative Leadership | Does team spirit perform an essential role so as to maintain a healthy and stable work climate for creativity? |

Source: Own Elaboration

### 3.6. Personal Note

In a first stage, a contact was made through e-mail to the operations manager, Sofia Reis, in order to schedule a meeting to discuss the necessary permission for the study. After the study was duly authorized, 11 collaborators were interviewed (see Attachment C).

The selection of the collaborators that were going to be interviewed had been chosen based on their job position. The objective to have made such selection was to understand the employee's point of view from both sides of the hierarchy. It is important to verify if the concepts, being studied, are equality understood or if there are any divergences. In other words, it was of the utmost importance to analyse the role and influence of both managers and operational employees to the research topics.

The interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the interviewees. After recording, the information was sorted based on the analysis proposed for the study's objectives.

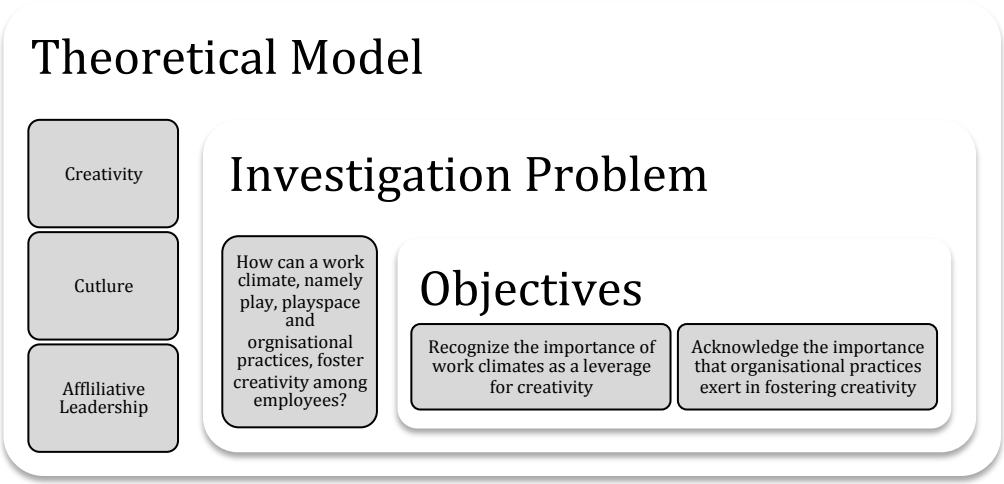
The interviews took place between June and August of 2014, and were made in person.

Tracing the lines of methodological research proved to be a hard, complex and time-consuming task, but a truly valuable process, guidance and clarification, so as understand and justify the work done.

The major difficulties or obstacles encountered through the research were mostly on aligning the interview guide to two points: objectives of the dissertation and to the company's cultural identity. The first three interviews were purely experimental, reason that led to the conclusion that there was a need to quickly adjust the interview guide to the study's objectives. The purpose of the adjustment was to align the results obtained with the established objectives. Once the interview guide was altered, and therefore with a more specific scope towards the objectives, the interviews were conducted and better results surfaced.

Have such said it is possible to summarize the project's structure through the following figure:

**Figure 3:** Theoretical Model




Source: Own Elaboration

# 4. Analysis and Discussion

## 4.1. Introduction

The literature review in Chapter 2 discussed various studies, such as: (a) the relation between culture and climate; and (b) the impact of affiliative leadership and play on creativity.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the following project has two major objectives: (a) Recognize the importance of work climates as leverage for creativity; (b) Acknowledge the importance that leadership exerts in fostering creativity. In other words the project looks to explore the relationship between leadership behaviours and creativity, and also to determine if leadership roles have any influence in the organisational culture installed.

This chapter has the main objective of interpreting the findings or results of the prior research. Based on the interviews submitted to the selected employees, evidently it is detected the presence of the concepts of play culture and leadership, which look to enhance creative approaches.

The division of the following chapter sets its foundations on theComponential Theory of Creativity (Amabile, 1997) where it describes the components that integrate individual and group creativity.

## 4.2. Result Interpretation

### 4.2.1. Working Environment and Working Practices

As we enter Blip a foosball table jumps out, nearly always occupied, two arcade consoles, a punching bag, a table with a console and some musical instruments. This is the relaxation, informality and good humor with which employees are welcomed. These are key ingredients for the satisfaction of its employees.

A few more steps forward we reach a large kitchen where every day employees are served breakfast and refreshments. The impression given is that everyone acts as if

they were in the kitchens at home. At the end of the kitchen, a board can be found; this is where people share ideas and knowledge regarding various topics. These elements contributed for Blip to have its own culture, a culture that is strongly influenced by play and by an open space workplace.

Passing through a glass door, that separates the kitchen from the open space, we enter a space full of desks, beanbags, sofas, photographs and tables – this is where the people work.

Photos are a very present cultural element present in the company. It has the objective to make people feel confortable and connected with their work colleagues. This aspect has strong implications in team building and consequently in the team's performance.

> "One of my favorite things in our space are the photographs, because it makes us feel in a very familiarly environment. The space is thought around those terms and concepts, so that people feel well, present, involved, and not in an environment that intimidates them. Our culture functions around that perspective. (…) The foundations of the company are set on the definitions of attitudes towards human feelings." (José Fonseca, Co-Founder)

According to the Co-Founder, José Fonseca, the vision set for the organisation was to create a space were people felt well, happy and with the desire to work. Implementing a play culture and therefore a space that positively affects the employee's well-being, meant that the workplace was to be converted to an open space. This cultural element is what defines the organisation, however it also does more than that – it molds the employees.

According to Robbins & Judge, (2012) the founder or leader's personality becomes rooted in the culture when the organisation succeeds, and therefore vital hiring staff. The attitudes, values, and morals mold the culture and are transmitted to the new members.

Through play it is possible to provide both intrinsic and extrinsic conditions, and therefore not imposing limitations in people's imaginations and actions. Play looks to

make people fell confortable and supported. Like so, employees understand what the organisation and its management want to offer, which is freedom and cooperation towards idea generation.

> "Blip has its own and very unique culture. Not just because of the space that Blip has, but also because of the culture of proximity that and the commitment that we put, by working in big team that are divide into smaller teams; due to the fact that we always have someone who is nominated to accompany a new member; the fact that we have our meals in a common place helps to know basically everyone. Now it is a bit more difficult, however our teams are very dynamic and are always "jumping" from one team to another, so that also helps knowing everyone." (Paula Costa, Senior Delivery Manager)

It is clear that the playspace can be what defines the organisational culture. However this can, in most cases, mislead people from understanding the real culture. Yes the space, and its purpose, is a strong component that characterizes the organisation, nonetheless, people are the true defining element of the organisational culture. It is on the employee's values, morals and abilities that the organisation's sets its foundations.

> "What I really think that identifies our culture are the people, because people are who created this." (Bruno Lopes, Senior Developer)

While adopting a play culture, Blip implemented an open space with purpose to build and nurture relationships, and for employees to benefit from a stress free workplace.

The fact of having an open space just proves that the organisation has the objective to unite its employees. In the open space, it is possible to have both open areas but also common spaces. When embracing a play culture is common for those areas to be occupied with space for leisure activities, relaxation, socialization, etc. with the objective for people to bond and to help employees feel confortable with their work tasks. Thus, a playspace surfaces, with the purpose to encourage free thoughts, to interact and to experiment, and not just a space where people are obligated to perform their task.

Unconsciously bond is certain to surface, reason why a play culture is implemented. The decisions were meticulously analysed, so as to bring the very best of the employee's performance, and comfort towards it. It is clear that Blip wants to give its employees the opportunity to bond with each other, so that greater results may rise from those relationships.

> "Nothing is done for no reason. The fact that next to the entrance we have the kitchen and the social spaces; the fact that we have a big kitchen and not two small ones, all of this is deliberate so that people have to cross with one another, so they talk not just about work, and so they can be relaxed." (Guilherme Almeida, Delivery Manager)

It is imperative for the organisation to foster creativity and to ease the process of decision-making. For that reason it is vital to provide the best conditions for collaboration. Without collaboration, there would be a tremendous struggle to bring together the expertise of individuals and teams - essential factor to deliver results within the time frames.

Employees have the opportunity to mold the space, so as to completely satisfy their needs. Boundaries can be quite flexible, and for that reason employees have the freedom and therefore have the initiative to define their own work environment.

> "We were told that this place was for us, that we must be confortable with it." (Bruno Lopes, Senior Developer)

Basically this opportunity - improve the flexibility and adaptability of the workplace - looks to develop organisational effectiveness. This is a fundamental aspect because Blip values creative approaches. In other words, if the adaptability can actually be improved, then the workspace offers potential gains for collaborative work - key element for developing a diversity of ideas. The solution for this challenge can be found along the workplace, represented by extensive areas displayed with whiteboards, writeable walls, lounge furnishings, gaming console areas, a big kitchen – components that spark creative thinking.

Like so, employees can easily express their ideas in multiple ways by sharing visual information. To foster creative thinking and to bring out a diversity of ideas or approaches, it is important to foster interaction between employees, and to do so, the workplace must be a group/social-oriented structure.

"Most organisations consider the social component of work separate from "work" spaces. To foster social interaction, some copy the obvious characteristics of successful public spaces (the café, bar, market, lounge, etc.) mistakenly hoping that the variety of social interactions occurring in the public versions of these spaces will translate to a business setting." (Knoll, 2013:1)

People have the possibility and freedom to use whiteboards, their laptops, larger screens or projectors to present and share visual information. Accessing the technology should not diminish the ability to quickly meet, share information and interact.

Inside Blip, the collaborative spaces clearly offer both visual and auditory privacy. People have the freedom to choose between an open or enclosed place to work, in other words, they have no obligation to use collaborative spaces; therefore they are free to do as they please.

"Meeting spaces that are too large make small groups feel uncomfortable and reduce space utilization rates. To support informal interactions in small groups, meeting spaces should also offer a playful or relaxed sensibility." (Knoll, 2013:4)

It is evident that the employees feel comfortable creating and sharing ideas or having debates/discussions. The various spaces, with the right size and conveniently located, have the power to produce rich discussions, whether the topic at matter is about work or whether it is about personal backgrounds-/interests.

> "We have groups that attack and that are more flexible. We have small groups that are all coordinated and that help each other. When they have to "attack" each other they do and when they have help one another, they also do it." (Paula Costa, Senior Delivery Manager)

“Workplace that afford people the opportunity to be authentic and invite whole-person, whole-body engagement are likely to be places where workers expend discretionary, creative energy for the good of the organisation.” (Meyer, 2012 pp. 39-30)

Conversation and interaction is stimulated among employees, independently of their levels or background.

The fact that the organisation makes strong contributions to nurture relationships has quick responses when it comes to managing conflicts, assisting coworkers in difficult times, sharing and supporting each other’s ideas, but at the same time confronting one another, so as to generate rich and appropriate solutions.

Play allows employees to express their vision and opinion during moments of tension, without distorting the relationship. Because play’s nature is ambiguous, it enables experimentation among employees, therefore the presence the organisational culture is constantly allowing and valuing confrontation of ideas. This allows the company’s members to understand the organisational culture while at the same time help employees to develop multiple interpretations. Constantly challenging ideals and opinions is a trademark in play culture, which sparks creative advances. As formerly analysed, play culture encourages relationships to nurture, in other words, it is working as a channel for communication, allowing people, without anxieties of conformity, to freely disagree and doubt.

“The benefit for creativity is increased psychological safety for experimenting with diverse ideas and processes. Psychological safety is the belief that one is free from evaluation, and that one will be accepted unconditionally, regardless of how he behaves in a given situation. Psychological safety reduces the anxiety and fear for negative evaluation of risk interpersonal behaviours, such as experimenting, asking questions, and suggesting new ideas.” (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006:105)

By changing the nature of everyone’s relationship, and consequently empowering people to relate with one another, play clearly helps people feel comfortable with both

their work and work colleagues.

Since there is a strong bond that unites all of the employees, play just proves that breaking the social restrains can smoothen the network bond between the organisation's employees, which is an impulse for creativity. In this sense, play enhances the trust that people put in each other, and also providing them with the feeling of belonging.

Thus playspace looks to connect employees to one another, in a way that it is able to approach a wide variety of perspectives, information and outputs. The social process intrinsic to playspace helps to initiate a social contact with other coworkers. This interaction increases the bonds, expanding the people's networks and therefore enhancing creativity. The social network created provide employees with a great amount of information and diverse of perspectives, and it does not mean that people have to be in conformity, something that is bound to happened when working in a closed group. Since creativity is an ambiguous process, and since it requires for people to interact, play culture comforts people in processing and exploring problems in new ways, and weighing the different possibilities. When the employees are "playing" they develop a disposition to be creative and so, are offered the opportunity to practice the creation or combination of new approaches.

As Ahmed (1998:31) states, "to examine culture in isolation is a mistake". It is evident that play and affiliative leadership have a connection which looks to influence people's behaviour towards their well-being, and consequently creativity. Since affiliative leadership strengthens connections, and since play molds the social climate, it is safe to say that both have a fundamental role towards creativity.

When interviewing José Fonseca, Blip's Co-Founder, it was clear that the vision for the organisation was to create a climate were people felt happy, safe, related, and welcomed. Being that the case, creating an alternative workplace, and by this, adopting play culture, it becomes even more evident the role of affiliative leadership.

Providing the contextual elements for people to interact in the workplace just shows that the nature of the leadership is focused on people making feel well with their work

methods. Thus, affiliative leadership tends to have a positive impact on the performance of teams, while at the same time giving space and contextual conditions for creativity to surface.

> "We try to involve people as much as possible in decision making. It is about guarantying that you are a leader and not a boss; a leader that is there to support and to aid; to guide when necessary; propose solutions when they are not available; and to guarantee happiness. It is about creating a spirit, a group spirit. If you open yourself to others, if you are friendly to others, if you listen to them, if you are close to people, then people will start to rely more on you – with the intention to cement personal relations. I am friend of people whose work I manage or am responsible for it." (Sérgio Lopes, Delivery Manager)

The purpose of wanting people to socialize from time to time is to create a harmony, so when working in teams, people can feel valued. This is an essential factor because it will bring confidence for people to experiment, and freely give ideas.

Kreitner *et al*, (1999) makes reference that in an organised pattern embedding a culture involves a teaching process. So, surrounding people with both leadership styles and play, just proves that the foundation of the well-being of employees and team performance, relies on what each member teaches one another. In other words the contributions that everyone gives to the organisation and also to each member, is vital for productivity, however in this particularly case, it is vital for people to experiment and support divergent thinking throughout the cultural mind set implemented.

> "Leadership is about you willing to abdicate some time, after you finish your work or instead of going home earlier, to go and help others." (Guilherme Almeida, Delivery Manager)

In other words, the comfort provided by play and affiliative leadership, besides creating a harmonious work climate, it also contributes for high performance, and thus emphasising the team work, team members, while at the same time, trying to understand their feelings.

> "A value that I usually set up in the team is that the only thing that separates us is our functions, our responsibilities. All of us are colleagues, all of us have a job to do, and all that separates us is that I have to guarantee something and you have to guarantee another, that's it." (Sérgio Lopes, Delivery Manager)

Using the references Kreitner*et al,* (1999); Greenberg, (2011) and Smirich, (1983) it can easily be concluded and summarized that culture and leadership focus on identical issues, which in turn, has great influence with what regards to the well-being of people, and therefore enhancing creativity. So, both play and affialitive leadership, with their own characteristics and recourses provide a sense of identity to the organisation's members; enhance the commitment towards the organisations mission; promote a social system stability; and structure behaviour by helping members make sense of their environment.

Affiliative leadership and play act towards creativity by focusing on people rather than task, it focuses on the process and not on the final result.

#### 4.2.2. Motivation

It is obvious that the play focus on playing with new ideas, new roles, so as to promote the diversity of ideas. The influence that play exerts in the people's emotions is significant, especially when it comes to positive affects.

Great part of the ideas appears from situations that are not related to the actual problem. Solutions arise from analogies that one would not assume because of fear, lack of freedom, support, and most importantly due to the absence of a strong relationship with coworkers.

Since Blip's culture works around a supportive style, towards employee's happiness, and fostering a healthy social climate, just show their approach concerning errors.

> "My work is to make people happy. I try to guarantee that they have the necessary conditions to do their work; try to unlock any blockers that may

> cause restrains in their work; to guarantee the quality of the work; all of this while at the same time, assuring that they are happy. Not only the team, but its team members as well. They must feel happy with what they are doing. I want them to wake up, and know that they are happy to go to work, because of their work; and then to go home because of what is yet to come out of it." (Sérgio Lopes, Delivery Manager)

When interviewing people with roles that involved less technical work, and more guidance work, it was evident that besides building team spirit, another primary function was to motivate employees - intrinsic motivation. Inside Blip, motivations surround the employees and groups. There is a strong vein of recognition in every member of the organisation. The reason for it resides in the type of leadership initially implemented in the organisation's vision – everybody is to help one another, and by so, it means that team spirit and recognition must be a constant.

> "I remember this one time I wrote a letter to an employee, congratulating him on his good work, and put it in his backpack, without him knowing."(José Fonseca, Co-Founder)

Positive affect increases people's interest and joy towards daily activities. It enhances people's satisfaction when performing theirs tasks, in their words it makes people engage more with their work. The feeling of relaxation, while at the same time recognition, increases their motivational levels.

"For instance, while people are engaged in their work, induced positive affect increases the inherent satisfaction they feel from the work, and it has also been shown to increase the creativity with which they go about the task, to improve their performance on creative-problem-solving tasks as well as other tasks." (Isen & Reeve, 2005:229)

Following the example of when people make mistakes during a certain given task, it is quite easy to understand the type of climate that fills the environment. It is normal for employees to make mistakes. The support with which Blip's employee's are offered, surfaced during the interviews made. When employees are confronted with

mistakes of their own, coworkers always assume a position on cooperation, understanding and support, embracing a non-critical position. Making mistakes can bring out negative emotions; it can make people feel vulnerable and less confident with future actions and decisions. Controlling the emotions that arise from these situations is fundamental.

Affiliative leadership just shows how it performs well in such scenarios, because by building trust among employees, means that they are willing to aid and support coworkers; and by building a healthy social climate, relations are so solid that people are willing to help each other with supportive incentives. Evidence proves that this is a fact in Blip, this is, when questioning the interviewees of what they considered to be the essential trait to lead towards creative, the answers circled around the same.8

> "Aiding and supporting is what we do, it is our culture." (José Fonseca, Co-Founder)

> "Leadership is setting the example and giving the best for people who you work with. Either because they are incredible workers, or because they are shy and you, and for that you must demonstrate and make other know how good they are." (Guilherme Almeida, Delivery Manager)

> "It is important that leaders are people who already enrolled a more technical position, in this case, programming. Why? Because you can never be a leader without knowing what it takes to make the things you set out to. The fact that most of the Delivery and Senior Delivery Managers in here, are people that started from the bottom, helps understand how hard that is. So, how can you help creativity? Someone has a task to do, right. And that person says it will take 2 or 3 days to complete it, however he took one more day. Instead of it, the person takes 4 or days to complete it. A good leader is a person who wants to understand what happened, who knows that it could happen; and understands that sometimes losing a day or two it means that the person took more time to think, it helps in creative aspects. Because if you are operating with a time box very strict, then you just want to hurry things up." (Pedro Torres, Delivery Manager)

> "You have to hearten people, to give them confidence." (Sérgio Lopes)

This is a fundamental process for the success of the organisation, as also for the recruiting process. Blip thrives with the success of their human recourses, so recruiting people with such characteristics is vital to maintain a healthy, and stable social climate.

Employees are the leaders themselves, affiliative leaders that is. Due to the nature of affiliative leadership, employees feel the need to focus more on the process of teamwork rather than relying on individual's expertise. Employees constantly have in their mind that they will not be able to solve all of the problems alone, unless they ask for help. Being that the situation, and given the status of the relationships that are built around trust, evidently that recognition is a constant. People always help one another; people always work on each other's moral so that performance and happiness are at the highest levels.

To leverage the skills of other employees, they are given the opportunity and continuously encouraged to find important challenges that are not related to their task. Rather than telling them what to do, people have the some freedom to choose tasks, or develop their own projects, besides their actual assignment. The positive affect raised from play increases interest, involvement, and curiosity towards the content of the employee's task.

> "For example, if I have ten people working for me, and if I am telling them exactly what I want them to do, and if I am giving them little margin for them to bring out their own value into the task, they will never be creative. One thing is to say, "you have to do A, B and C", this is, tell them what to do step by step; and another thing is to give them a problem and tell them to figure it out. Here is where you star to foster creativity, because before a problem, people will think for solutions." (Pedro Torres, Delivery Manager)

People have the conditions and abilities to be creative. Given that the proper climate is set, employees believe in their own capacities, and this is fundamental for creativity

to nurture, this leads us to another element of Amabile's Componential Theory of Creativity – in this case expertise. With the proper conditions people excel their knowledge, gain new visions, new experiences or methods that will enhance their organisational and technical skills.

> "If people are here, if they passed through the hiring process it is because they have talent. You have to give them space, so they can demonstrate it during their daily activities; so they demonstrate what they really are. People don't have the fear to make mistakes." (Sérgio Lopes, Delivery Manager)

As Amabile (1997:42) states "expertise is the foundation for all creative work. It can be viewed as the set of cognitive pathways that may be followed for solving a given problem or doing a given task".

#### 4.2.3. Creative Thinking

> "We have moments dedicated for creativity that are official – which is Hack Day – were we give free will to the teams. They have the freedom to do their own project or projects related to their working area." (Paula Costa, Senior Delivery Manager)

Hack days are highly optimized events born in play cultures. It comes to my understanding that the concept of the hack day was design around freedom, play, creativity and engineering solutions. In the end, hack days are destined for engineers, due to the nature of their work.

Many companies organise spontaneous events for their employees with one objective in mind, to stimulate creative outputs (Meyer, 2012).

When labeling a workday as a hack day, what organisations tend to do, is to let employees exercise their organisational skills, so as to produce their own projects, and to experiment by their own means, while having fun at the same time. During those activities, means dominate ends, the reason for it, is because play is process oriented and not result oriented (Glynn, 1994).

When performing the interviews, and questing the effects of Blip's Hack Day, excitement, freedom, no means to ends, creativity and innovation were the ideas that immediately jump out. The notion of a hack day quickly was understood. It quickly showed me another dimension of Blip's culture. When it comes to freedom, and willingness to foster creativity within the company, they have total support of the both employees and organisation.

Traditionally hack days start with a presentation about the event, so as to define the scope or subject of it. Then participants, based on individual interests and skills, develop their own projects.

Although hack days can be more optimized for engineers, due to the nature of their work, everyone is invited, and encouraged to participate.

When asking people, and by using their past experiences, on how Blip's Hack Day could be considered an asset for creativity and for generating new ideas, the answers were almost in the same line of thought.

> "Our hack day, typically, values the things that bring benefits to our daily life inside the organisation. For instance: people created a website that tells you were you can see all of the rooms that are or not available, so you can book it for meetings. This was created, for example. Another extent of the hack day is that the projects are directly related to our products." (Sérgio Lopes, Delivery Manager)

> "It is a spectacular idea (…) That gap/slack that is important for people to daily/weekly cement creativity and to seek out new ideas is declared as an official period (…) It is almost as if you are saying for people to forget their work, the stress (…) Let's make crazy things. That crazy idea that you had, but didn't have the time to do it, because of all the work, forget it now." (Pedro Torres, Delivery Manager)

Having this in mind hack days influence in many ways the behaviours of the

employees, such as independence, implementing an exploration spirit, and raising diversity.

Hack days are the best way for employees to learn by themselves and by actually doing something, rather than just reading, talking, or analysing. It is not just about developing an idea into a pet project, it is not just a fun thing to do – it is a powerful and effective method to expose talented new technology, new ideas, giving people the opportunity to explore without boundaries, not limiting the means to ends, and most importantly, to set a philosophy of a constant learning process inside the organisation.

This type of work strongly suggests the performing tasks by their own means, the pressure to accomplish results are low, and for that reason, enhance creativity (Elsbach & Hargadon, 2006). In other words, when labeling hack day, organisations tend to provide the necessary freedom and flexibility for creative outputs to surface (Shalley *et al,* 2004).

In other words people can do something out of the scope of their daily tasks; they can work with people with whom they normally do not have the chance, and therefore, increasing their network, improving the status of their relationship with colleagues, while at the same time get inspired and motivated by the others people ideas or new concepts.

This type of practice has a major contribution for the health and well-being of the employee's relationships. By nurturing healthy climates and by delivering the necessary recourses, and by allowing flexible behaviours and responses, employees are able to develop both individual and group skills (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006).

Another advantage of the hack day is related to the fact that when people developed their own ideas or projects, the results taken from them can be channeled into their regular work. This will make people understand better the purpose of new insights, new ideas, new methods or processes that can be applied to a common work day drawback.

Hack days are a day are very important for independence, it is the day when people

are able to break free, and work on an idea that they find personally interesting, which may help the organisation in their vision. If people have an idea, this is the day they can make it happen.

Hack day projects are shared with all of the "participants" and with the entire organisation. Judging can be compared to another event, event that everyone is encouraged to join. It is very important to cement hack days as a cultural element, rather than just as a random practice, or an activity dedicated for certain departments, which involves employees with more technical function, such as engineers.

Some "hack day projects" can be very appealing, were immediately a desire rises to try and make it a product of the company. In some cases these projects actually can lead to a prototype stage.

Participants consider the hack day as a challenge, however a healthy and joyful challenge. This is related to the fact that people have a certain time window, in Blip's case one day, to develop their own idea or project. It is because of freedom given and because of the opportunity to use their own means to an end, that it is possible for great ideas to arise from everyone's imagination or desire. In most cases, participants will finish a hack day with new knowledge, new corporate objectives, stronger and healthier relationships, and new abilities to deliver their results.

Finally, the event besides having the objective to generate new ideas or develop new projects also has an important role towards intrinsic motivation. In other words, the final phase of the hack day – judging – for many employees has the most significant impact: recognition of their work. This recognition is a reward, a boost in the motivation and desire for people to continue trying and experimenting different approaches. Thus, it is important to recognize one's effort so as to break routines, and therefore continuing questioning methods.

# 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

## 5.1. Conclusion

Concepts such as organisational culture, creativity and leadership are current in the business world. Many research papers and journals have analysed and studied such topics; however research regarding the relation between organisational culture (play) and leadership (affiliative), and the impact of organisational climates towards creativity, are issues that are increasingly being explored.

The following project contributed to the emerging research of the social and contextual factors that enhances creativity through the positive affects, and through the strengthening of connections that are cultivated by play culture and affiliative leadership.

In consequence of the group interactivity a culture emerges, an organisational culture that is defined as an ensemble of mental suppositions, which guides an organisation to its own appropriate behaviour in various situations (Ravis & Schultz, 2006).

It was quite clear to understand that Blip has more than just development teams that are working daily on the projects and tasks assigned to them. This is an organisation that gives extreme importance for the employee's feelings, thoughts or ideas, and contributions. The culture of the organisation focuses on creating and supporting the most suitable work climate and social environment, so as to foster creativity, and to connect to people to each other, almost as if they are one big family that who are working towards the same objective.

The implementation of a play culture attends more to the quality employee's well-being and relationships, and looks to enhance one's intrinsic motivation (Gyn, 1994). The interaction, which is risen from play, increases the employee's organisational skills and provides a healthy, and happy social work climate (Meyer, 2012).

However, besides the strong influence of play and affiliative leadership, the success of the state of happiness and creative results come from the fact that Blip operates through an agile method – Scrum – and has a flat organisational structure.

Since Scrum is an open and non-predictable model, that offers a set of practices or a methodology that does not detail what should be done, employees are free to explore their own visions and ideas. Besides the flexibility offered by Scrum, employees can benefit from team spirit provided by the flatness of the organisational structure. Because of this flatness information travels quicker from employees to employee, enhancing the communication throughout the organisation. Information travels faster from the bottom up to the top management levels. This simple fact brings great advantages when it comes to the planning and implementation of new ideas, concepts or even managing projects.

When conducting the interviews and when given the opportunity to have a guided visit through the company, the sensation of teamwork, the feeling of trust and joy toward employee's work, hovered the environment. In other words people feel happy for their work, they feel can are eared and that they are actually contributing for the success of the organisation. Many elements that are important to foster creativity, that were analysed in the literature review stood out.

Employees have the opportunity to build healthy relations, and it because of those same relations that they are able to exchange experiences, opinions and ideas. The more experiences people exchange the more ideas they can have in the present. On of the big elements of creativity is experience exchanging.

An affiliative leader looks to stimulate companionship, and to create harmony when connecting employees (Goleman, Boyatzis and Mckee, 2004).

Another key element for creativity is the absence of fear. Clearly this is present in Blip. If people don't think creatively, this is, if they do not try different approaches and break routine procedures, then creative results will surface. People don't have the fear to show their opinion and don't have the worry about the success of their idea, they are simply happy for being given the chance to do so. The fact employees are

fearless this creates the desire to simply change perspectives, routines, therefore solving problems and at the same time inspire work colleagues. Creativity will rise from the interaction that people have with on another.

The work climate gives people time to think, reflect, experiment, and to explore ideas. This is a central aspect of Blip's culture. In other words, it is natural for employees to have freedom to develop their own line of thought.

As Mainemelis & Ronson (2006:89) state "play is relatively free from external constraints and allows participants a considerable degree of autonomy to manipulate processes and assume new, even unrealistic identities and roles. At the same time, play imposes its own internal constraints, which are determined or voluntary accepted by the players themselves".

For Blip's employees it is vital for them to be able to set aside time, so as to relax and reflect at the same time. Since different people bring different ideas, and since they have different cultural, academic and professional backgrounds, the diversity of attitudes and thinking styles are extensive. Because of this interaction, and because of the communication within the groups, ideas and solutions flow freely.

With open communication, ideas are quickly and effectively communicated to everyone, connections surface, and creativity increases. Since Blip promotes a work climate that offers people time and space to think, and that accepts diversity, people share thus commitment and support one another's attempts to be creative.

In other words, the combination of play and affiliative leadership has a positive effect towards creativity, because of the influence that it exerts in all of the dimensions of the organisation's climate: nature of the interpersonal relationships; nature of the hierarchy; nature of the work; and focus of the support and rewards. It is possible to state that climate and culture are strongly allied. Culture reflects on organisation's climate, while operating in deeper levels (Ahmed, 1998).

In conclusion the combination between play and affiliative leadership creates an atmosphere characterised by creativity and happiness. Giving time to break the

monotony of daily work tasks, to play computer games or to play with other colleagues has a great impact in the organisation's creativity. For this reason, play is not seen as a waste of time, but as a requirement to enrich the work climate, so as to facilitate and, consequently, accelerate the implementation of a free, fluid and alternative thinking, thus breaking the status quo.

### 5.2.Limitations and Future Contributions

Despite the exhaustive research method and the rigorous analysis, the present chapter presents some of its limitations along with recommendations, which should be considered, so as to add valuable considerations for future research.

The literature shows that personal characteristics (influence of the motivational process brought by affiliative leadership) in conjunction with social contexts (play culture) are an essential contribution for creativity. The literature related to this interaction is vast, however little content regarding affiliative leadership, and on how it influences creativity exists.

Having in mind that the employee's behaviour is simultaneously influenced by the physical workplace and its psychological side effects, it is important to understand how positive emotions, motivational behaviours, healthy relations, and openness (physical and psychological) can support a creative work climate. Little studies have been made relating the power of leadership and play, from a social perspective. In other words, how do relationships help creativity through feelings such as trust and the absence of fear towards work colleagues, or work supervisors.

From a methodological point of view, the sample can always be an issue when analysing the results. Using a SME (from the IT sector) as the target population can provide generalizability to the study, but it can also be a disadvantage. A further extension of this research to larger organisations (e.g. with different cultures, sizes, histories, etc.) could enrich future research. Considering extending the study to other regions, countries, and especially different sectors, would allow us to analyse the influence that different cultures and leadership styles have

towards creativity.

Finally, while the study reports the interaction of organisational culture and the relationship between creativity and work climate, other variables, such as organisational structure and other contextual factors, may enhance or weaken the encouragements for creativity. It would be a great asset for the following study to have such extension, this is, to further understand the role and influence of a flat structure towards creativity.

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## Attachments

### Attachment A

Interview Guide (Experimental Version)

1. As the organisation grows, there may be some tendency to “dampen the inspiration". Drawing on past experience, if this is the case or has been in the past, how do prevent it?

2. Through daily experience examples, how is creativity stimulated among employees?

3. According to the organisational culture and the creative environment installed, how do you ensure that your organisation and its activities are aligned with the objectives and core values?

4. Based on your experience, what aspects do you consider especially important in leading for creativity?

5. Describe a situation where you have demonstrated leadership attributes.

6. What great leadership lessons have you learned so far?

7. What would you highlight as your major achievements? How was leadership important for that?

# Attachment B

Interview Guide (Final Version)

1. As the organisation grows, there may be some tendency to “dampen the inspiration". Drawing on past experience, if this is the case or has been in the past, how do prevent it?

2. Through daily experience examples, how is creativity stimulated among employees?

4.Considering that the organisational space (playspace) an element that describes Blip’s organisational culture, how can it improve the employee’s ability to achieve the strategic goals? Does it have an impact on efficiency and productivity?

5. Through your experience, how can you explain that Blip’s Hack Day can be considered an asset for creativity and for generating new ideas? In the same line of thought, what do you think has gone less well in this process?

6. According to the organisational culture and the creative environment installed, how do you ensure that your organisation and its activities are aligned with the objectives and core values?

7. Based on your experience, what aspects do you consider especially important in leading for creativity?

8. Describe a situation where you have demonstrated leadership attributes.

## Attachment C

| Name | Role |
|---|---|
| Sofia Reis | Senior Delivery Manager |
| Paula Costa | Senior Delivery Manager |
| Sérgio Lopes | Delivery Manager |
| Maria João Correia | Business Analyst |
| José Fonseca | Co-Founder |
| Nuno Ferreira | Software Delivery Manager |
| Daniel Reis | Frontend Developer |
| Carlos Jesus | Senior Delivery Manager |
| Bruno Lopes | Senior Delivery Manager |
| Pedro Gustavo Torres | Delivery Manager |
| Guilherme Almeida | Delivery Manager |
| Tiago Guerra | Delivery Manager |