

How google
demonstrates
paradoxical thinking
business essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

For decades, the management theorists have focused their attention on three types of thinking i. e. Magical thinking, modern thinking and postmodern thinking. The latest inclusion is the paradoxical thinking which was being studied by the researchers of the science field. The main reason that paradoxical thinking has gained importance in the business world is that there were some buzz phrases that were being used by the employees of the organisations such as controlled chaos, getting outside the box, breaking the frame of reference, creative destruction, fuzzy logic and etc. (Lovy, 2011).

All of these terminologies show that a business can develop something impossible by going beyond the imaginative framework and these old models have less importance in the contemporary world. The primary crux of the paradoxical thinking is that the openness can be anything but it is indecisive, lacks principled convictions and is sometimes passionless as well (Gebert, Boerner & Kearney, 2010). According to Sak and Oz (2010), paradoxical thinking implies that problems should be looked from different angles rather than one perspective so that it can be resolved effectively.

The term ' paradox' is described as a range or group of statements that are contradictory and challenge the conventional thinking parameters. Likewise, the paradoxical thinking is stated as the way of looking at a situation or a problem from a various range of perspectives and carrying out in-depth analysis to understand the problem completely (Miron-Spektor, Gino & Argote, 2011). One of the best examples of the application of paradoxical thinking is evident in the work performed by Faraday in about 1830s.

Faraday observed that when the electricity current is passed through a wire it can cause a magnetised needle to move that is located adjacent to the wire to move in a direction which is rotational; it formed the basis of electric motor invention. In order to extend his learning and thinking capabilities, he increased his efforts and found that even the moving magnets can ease the flow of electricity in the system. He challenged the ways in which the conventional theorists of physics were working so that he could make valuable contribution in the field (Kasi et al., 2008).

It has been found that the companies that encourage paradoxical thinking within their culture are able to make successful progression and their success is evident from the robust performance in the industry. The paradoxical thinking is found in abundance in leading corporations especially technology related firms such as Microsoft, IBM, Apple, Dell, Google, Sony, Wal-Mart, Coca-Cola and many more.

Examples of how Google demonstrates Paradoxical Thinking

Google is definitely the market leader around the world as it has created a new virtual world for the Internet surfers. The company has been growing at a rapid pace in the Internet-related products and services market as it has efficiently responded to all the demands of the customers as soon as they are required by them. Since gaining top position in the market as a dominant search engine in 1988, it has ensured that it fosters a paradoxical thinking climate within its business operations (Stoltzfus, Stohl, & Seibold, 2011).

The basic foundation of the paradoxical thinking is that the employees have to be provided an open and innovative culture that will allow them to think a huge range of imaginative and compelling ideas that have never been offered in the market. Google was the first company to identify the need of creating an online search engine from where the people seeking information about different things can retrieve valuable information easily. When Google was thinking about introducing this offering, it had to face resistance from the traditional companies who found the idea to be unrealistic and ineffective.

The owners of Google were not let down by such discouraging comments and launched this facility for the Internet users. Since then, the company has been flourishing successfully in the market and has encountered all the challenges with determination and bravery. In order to present the customers with unique offerings, Google has created a work environment that is friendly, fun-loving, enthusiastic and relaxing so that the people working there love to come to their job every day (Baldwin et al., 2010).

As a result of such appealing working environment, the employees have successfully employed the concept of paradoxical thinking in the company's product and service offerings which are even evident in the form of its advertisements. The employees show creativity by sharing their ideas with the management and the ones that are compelling are implemented after some modifications. Google has a Loose-Tight structure where the employees are given autonomy to work but have to comply with the Google's unified philosophy (Korn & Silverman, 2012).

Following are some of the initiatives that are undertaken by Google demonstrate the application of paradoxical thinking in its business operations:

In 2005, the Summer of Code mentoring program was launched for students of ages eighteen and older to get them engaged in the free and open-source software. It even made valuable contribution in the open source community.

Google MentalPlex on April Fools' Days feature the usage of mental power for searching the web.

In 2007, it announced the introduction of TiSP (Toilet Internet Service Provider) where one could easily obtain the connection by flushing an end of the fiber-optic cable down in the toilet.

It even started advertisements in 2007 about the Gmail paper that could be used by Gmail users to print and ship the email messages.

It changed its company name in 2010 to Topeka to display its honour of Topeka Kansas where its Mayor changed the name of the city to Google for limited time period so that it can sway Google's decision of new Google Fiber Project.

In its search engine, it added language selection features of Swedish Chef such as Bork bork bork, Pig Latin, Klingon, Elmer Fudd and Hacker.

Google Map, Google Notebook and other features are all examples of the paradoxical thinking implications. Hence, innovation is properly embedded in

the company's culture so that it can create something new and pioneering for its customers and enhance their online surfing time.

Paradoxical Thinking – Whether it can be learnt or not

The proponents of paradoxical thinking state that the people have to think out of the box and do in-depth analysis of any contradictory thought because it can give rise to something new that is not present in the market (Lovy, 2011). There is no science involved in learning the paradoxical thinking as the learners just have to change their thinking patterns. Sometimes, a solution or invention may appear not to make any sense but it might appeal to the target audience. For instance, when sports cars were introduced, people were sceptical about it that whether it will be accepted in the market or not; now it is the leading choice in the sports world.

Similarly, when solar cars were launched by Saturn, it had to face huge amount of criticism but it was successful in meeting the demands of its customers and providing them an energy efficient car that is beneficial for the environment (Luscher & Lewis, 2008). The key requirements of developing paradoxical thinking are open mindedness, courage to take risks and experimenting with new ideas. It is important to remain alert about the absurd ideas that are present all the time in minds; they have to be noted down and then dwelt.

The employees of an organisation need to be encouraged to play with even vague ideas because there are chances that a unique proposition gets clicked in the mind that can be beneficial for the company's enhanced performance. For this form of thinking, openness is crucial because it allows

the individuals to learn new subjects that might not have any linkages to the profession. It is vital to extend the learning boundaries so that unleashed features can be addressed; therefore, increased exploration is the basic requirement of paradoxical thinking (Gobert, Boener & Kearney, 2010).

Wagner (2009) stated that the basic foundation of the paradoxical thinking is being sceptical all the time; meaning looking at the things from varying perspectives. For instance, when looking at a product, a person can think about making changes in it that can make it look more attractive or changing the style or ingredients that can appeal to other markets (Ging et al., 2010). Hence, paradoxical thinking can be learnt easily by changing the way of looking and observing things in the surroundings so that a new perspective is highlighted.

0230190406001. png

(Source: Smith, Binns & Tushman, 2010)

Paradoxical Thinking – Least used intelligence skill

Since every organisation emphasises the importance of creating work environment that is conducive and comprises of competed people who have high intelligence skills, such organisations encounter problems when implementing the paradoxical thinking framework. The basics of the paradoxical thinking implies considering the irrational aspects as well so that innovation is encouraged throughout the organisation. It has been found that the paradoxical thinking is one of the eight skills that are related to the intelligence framework (Banff Executive Leadership Inc., 2010).

<https://assignbuster.com/how-google-demonstrates-paradoxical-thinking-business-essay/>

The eight skills that are linked to the intelligence are judgement, perception, reason, intuition, imagination, logic, memory and paradox. Among all the skills mentioned, the least commonly used one is the paradoxical thinking because people are reluctant to get involved in illogical thinking. The traditional specialists still show resistance to apply the concept of paradoxical thinking within the business environment because they feel that it is not appropriate for a business to get involved in such irrational activities. However, the trend is now shifting to the paradox paradigm when the company's management have realised that the customers are looking for both functional and creative solutions (Baldwin et al., 2010).

The reason that paradoxical thinking is linked to intelligence is that it allows the people to apply their thinking skills to modify the idea into something feasible that will be appealing for the end-consumers. IBM has ensured that it allows its employees to give any kinds of practical suggestions to the company that can help it in increasing its proficiency and eliminate the drawbacks that are prevalent within the firm (Miron-Spektor, Erez, & Naveh, 2011).

USA Today is the leading newspaper in the country and it was the first one to introduce the concept of online newspaper so that the customers can read the paper on Internet. When the owner wanted to launch this idea, majority of the people felt that it will have to encounter problems as people prefer to enhance their knowledge about the latest happenings through paper newspapers. However, the paper is considered to be the top selling newspaper in the region that has successfully met the needs of the

customers especially who is looking for previous issues to get access to a particular article or piece of information (Wit & Meyer, 2005).

Ways in which paradoxical thinking can improve organisation's performance

Since the basic requirements of paradoxical thinking are open working culture and going out of the traditional ways to introduce innovative offerings, the organisations have to make these two elements the integral part of their working environments. The leaders of these companies have to show their appreciation for the efforts put in by the employees in the form of imaginative and appealing ideas so that they are encouraged to enhance their level of productivity (Wit & Meyer, 2005).

When employees are encouraged to become a crucial part of the organisation's decision making process, it enhanced their level of motivation and they are willing to make more meaningful additions in the business processes (Miron-Spektor, Gino, & Argote, 2011). In order to support the paradoxical thinking within the company, the top management has to understand that they need to create an environment which allows the employees to play with creative elements, get engaged in activities that will help them in unleashing unexploited avenues of the business operations and ensure that the customers are provided with unique offerings at a fast pace.

0010470201001. png

(Source: Ging et al., (2010))

Hence, with the help of creativity, openness, innovation and sceptical thinking, the paradoxical thinking will be promoted within the business organisation. All of these factors will ensure that the company's productivity is increased, competitive edge is attained in the industry and performance continues to grow in a profitable way and at an accelerating rate.

Conclusion

In today's competitive environment which is being impacted by globalisation and accelerating rate of changes, the organisations have to remain alert all the time about the happenings so that the challenges can be encountered proactively. The managers and leaders of the organisations have to foster an innovative climate within the firms so that the paradoxical thinking can be nurtured which will ultimately make significant contribution in their enhanced performance.