

Fostering Creativity and Innovation without Encouraging Unethical Behavior

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ABSTRACT. Many prescriptions offered in the literature for enhancing creativity and innovation in organizations raise ethical concerns, yet creativity researchers rarely discuss ethics. We identify four categories of behavior proffered as a means for fostering creativity that raise serious ethical issues: (1) breaking rules and standard operating procedures; (2) challenging authority and avoiding tradition; (3) creating conflict, competition and stress; and (4) taking risks. We discuss each category, briefly identifying research supporting these prescriptions for fostering creativity and then we delve into ethical issues associated with engaging in the prescribed behavior.

These four rubrics illustrate ethical issues that need to be incorporated into the creativity and innovation literature. Recommendations for how organizations can respond to the ethical issues are offered based on practices of exemplary organizations and theories of organizational ethics. A research agenda for empirically investigating the ethical impact these four categories of behavior have on organizations concludes the article.

KEY WORDS: ethics, ethical organizations, creativity, innovation

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Introduction

Organizations face significant environmental complexity in today's global economy. Representative of these challenges are the criticality of flexibility and speed in responding to customers and markets (Davis et al., 1999), operational efficiency to lower costs, environmental issues, management of a diverse workforce that often lacks commitment and the development of good working relationships with various stakeholder groups (Freeman, 1984; Waddock, 2001) – all while creating wealth for the firm's shareholders. Researchers have responded to many of these competitive challenges by advocating creativity as a solution, whether in the guise of developing a learning organization (Kline and Saunders, 1993; Senge, 1990), an innovative firm (Kelley, 2001) or simply a creative company (Robinson and Stern, 1997). Firms commonly encourage employees to use their creativity and judgment through empowerment (Gandz and Bird, 1996). Organizations increasingly recognize that they must engage in ongoing processes of experimentation, rethinking their design and operations to creatively problem solve, innovate and add value (Thomke, 2003). Creative problem solving can enable organizations to develop innovative products and processes, as well as cope with polarizing issues such as outsourcing in ways that convey long-term benefit to all stakeholders.

This heightened emphasis on creativity has resulted in a variety of articles prescribing ways that organizations can increase creative thinking and problem solving. These articles address means for employees to enhance their creativity in all organizational climates, whether supportive or hostile. For instance, the creativity literature suggests that employees should develop prototypes of new products or processes in order to gain useful feedback from colleagues (Schrage, 2000). Some creativity models advocate using different thinking styles (deBono, 1999) or developing more complete problem-solving processes that incorporate problem formulation, solution formulation, and solution implementation stages (Basadur, 1995). Employees are urged to develop "brain banks" of creative ideas, talk with colleagues from diverse backgrounds when working on problems, and rely on a series of exercises that can enhance their creative problem solving skills (Michalko, 1991).

These techniques represent just a few of the many prescriptions aimed at individuals who want to improve their creativity.

Most researchers and managers recognize that creativity at the individual level represents only part of the challenge. Organizations must create environments that allow and encourage employees to engage in creativity. Most organizations have developed layers of rules, procedures and bureaucratic processes that stifle creativity (MacKenzie, 1998). Corporate norms and reward systems can also discourage novel thinking. Structural impediments take many forms: favoring proven or expedient solutions; avoiding or punishing failure; advocating consensus to the exclusion of critical thinking within a group (Basadur, 1995; van Oech, 1998). A classic prescription to overcome structural inertia is empowerment. Though variously defined, empowerment commonly has three attributes: employees are given reasonable autonomy; they are provided with mission critical resources; they are given the freedom to fail (Yukl, 2006). That said, organizations attempting to empower employees and facilitate creative thinking often encounter resistance from managers whose roles have changed or who have difficulty unlearning older, hierarchical leadership styles (Gandz and Bird, 1996).

The dilemma

The creativity literature contains numerous prescriptions for managers to facilitate creativity and suggests ways for employees to "orbit the hairballs" (MacKenzie, 1998, viz., to operate outside of the bureaucratic morass and engage in creative endeavors). Our overarching objective is not to provide an exhaustive review of the literature addressing ways to enhance organizational creativity. Other researchers provide excellent reviews of factors that increase or inhibit creativity and innovation (see, for example, Alencar and Bruno-Faria, 1997; Fiol, 1996; Glynn, 1996; Woodman et al., 1993). Rather, this article focuses on the surprising lack of attention to ethical issues and questions within the creativity literature. We acknowledge that many approaches for enhancing creativity raise few ethical questions (e.g., fostering open dialogue among employees across specialized disciplines). However, an ines-

TABLE I
Creativity recommendations and ethical issues

Recommendations for increasing creativity or innovation <i>Break the rules and standard operating procedures/approaches</i>	Citations	Primary ethical issue(s)
Hire “Slow Learners” of the organizational code	Sutton (2001, 2002)	Which rules to break?
Reward new thinking	Utterback (1994)	When to break the rules?
Avoid emphasis on the status quo	Amabile (1996)	How far to go in breaking the rules?
Break rules, take shortcuts, & don’t follow directions	Kelley with Littman (2001)	Who gets to make or break the rules?
Break the rules & change the game	Gaynor (2002); Ricchiuto (1997)	
Bring new rules of the game into reality	Winslow and Solomon (1993)	
Hire people you (probably) don’t need	Sutton (2001, 2002)	
Use job interviews to get ideas, not to screen candidates	Sutton (2001, 2002)	
Play the revolutionary and challenge the rules	von Oech (1998)	
“Break from Accepted Practices”	Winslow and Solomon (1993)	
Provide flexible norms in the organization	Alencar and Bruno-Faria (1997)	
<i>Challenge authority and avoid tradition</i>		
Encourage people to ignore & defy superiors & peers	Sutton (2001, 2002)	How do managers and employees ethically
Loosen organizational controls	Utterback (1994)	challenge authority?
Provide ambiguity (ambiguity is essential for innovation)	Winslow and Solomon (1993)	How do managers respond ethically to employees’ challenges?
Don’t try to learn anything from people who seem to have solved the problems you face	Sutton (2001, 2002)	How do managers discourage illegitimate challenges to authority while encouraging legitimate challenges?
Forget the past, especially your company’s successes	Sutton (2001, 2002)	
Become less aware of and less concerned with how disruptions from creativity/innovation will impact “the Existing Web of Mutual Obligations & Understood Limits” in the firm’s industry	Utterback (1994)	
Ask lots of provocative questions	Ricchiuto (1997)	
Innovators ignore past history, rituals & traditions	Winslow and Solomon (1993)	

Table I
continued

Recommendations for increasing creativity or innovation <i>Create conflict, competition & stress</i>	Citations	Primary ethical issue(s)
Find some happy people & get them to fight View conflict as failure to find collaborative rather than "Either-Or" solutions	Sutton (2001, 2002) Ricchiuto (1997)	What means can managers ethically use to create conflict, competition and stress?
Foster competition with outside organizations	Amabile (1996)	How far should managers go in developing conflict, competition and stress?
Hire people who make you uncomfortable, even those you dislike	Sutton (2001, 2002)	What are the tradeoffs in creating a culture of conflict as a means of getting more out of employees?
Develop weak social ties with people within and outside the company & avoid becoming too central in the social network Avoid conformity by doing the opposite of what's expected & by being foolish	Perry-Smith and Shalley (2003)	
Avoid, distract & bore customers, critics & anyone who just wants to talk about money	von Oech (1998)	
Emphasize play to increase flexibility, new ideas & liveliness	Sutton (2001, 2002)	
Encourage play, including gags, tricks, games & one-upmanship between employees	Amabile (1996); Ricchiuto (1997)	
<i>Take risks</i>	Kelley with Littman (2001)	
Support risk-taking	Alencar and Bruno-Faria (1997)	What types and sizes of risks can employees ethically take in the organization?
Managers must take risks themselves	Nolan (1989); Weaver (1993)	What ethical consequences may arise from employees' risk taking?
Tolerate greater ambiguity & hold positive fantasies about the future	Winslow and Solomon (1993)	How should managers keep employee risk-taking within reasonable levels (e.g., reward risk taking without letting it get out of hand)?
Reward success & failure, punish inaction	Sutton (2001, 2002)	
Reward risk-taking & entrepreneurial behavior	Utterback (1994)	
Encourage risk-taking and intelligent failures; reward risk-takers	Leonard and Swap (2002)	
Reward an individual's competence & the value of his/her work, not the results of the work (i.e., avoid evaluation of work)	Amabile (1996)	
Decide to do something that will probably fail, then convince yourself & everyone else that success is certain	Sutton (2001, 2002)	
Think of some ridiculous or impractical things to do, then plan to do them	Sutton (2001, 2002)	

capable tension between creativity and ethics results when employees are told to relax standards as they seek to innovate. Our synthesis of the literature suggests four categories of recommendations for fostering creativity and innovation that seem particularly problematic for organizational ethics: (1) breaking the rules or avoiding standard approaches to problems; (2) challenging authority and avoiding traditions; (3) creating conflict, competition and stress; and (4) taking risks.

We aspire to make several contributions to the field of ethics. We seek to integrate the ethics and creativity literature, demonstrating that efforts to foster creativity must encompass concerns for ethical behavior. We discuss four categories of behavior commonly advocated by creativity scholars, exploring how each may increase organizational creativity. Our identification of key ethical issues embedded in each category suggest questions that need to be addressed by practitioners and researchers. We then demonstrate how these ethical questions may be incorporated fully into practice and research on creativity within organizations.

We begin our article by defining creativity. We then examine the four categories of behavior offered in the literature as ways to foster creativity (summarized in Table I). We identify and discuss major ethical issues within each category that need to be integrated into discussions of creativity and innovation. Recommendations for organizational responses follow, along with a research agenda suggesting how to empirically test some of the arguments in our article. We conclude with implications for theory and practice.

Definition of creativity

Creativity has been variously defined; we adopt a definition that encompasses both the processes individuals use and the outcomes that they develop. Thus, “creativity can be regarded as the quality of products or responses judged to be creative by appropriate observers, and it can also be regarded as the process by which something so judged is produced” (Amabile, 1996: 33). We rely on this definition of creativity that encompasses both *process* and *product/outcome* for two key reasons: ethical frameworks often evaluate both means (processes)

and ends (outcomes); and we aim to integrate research on creativity and innovation with ethics research in an effort to develop processes that simultaneously foster creative and ethical behaviors that add value for the organization and its stakeholders.

Amabile augments this definition with an important distinction: *creativity* involves “the production of novel and appropriate ideas by individuals or small groups” while *innovation* typically refers to “the successful implementation of creative ideas by the organization” (1996: 230). This definition thus imposes a litmus test for creativity: though products or outcomes judged as creative may be novel, unique, surprising, or dramatically different, they must work well for the purpose intended. A radically different idea falls short of the “creative” standard if it fails to serve a useful function or purpose.

Our preference for a definition of creativity that embraces process and outcome excludes any definition that emphasizes a personological view, whether traits, cognitive style or related phenomena. That perspective (mistakenly) reinforces the notion that creativity resides in some but not all people. Research suggests that creativity does not require a special or unusual type of thinking (Goldenberg and Mazursky, 2002). Most researchers agree that all individuals possess creativity, though, admittedly, some people neither develop nor use their capabilities. Regrettably, contextual factors may suppress novel thinking. Some jobs do not require or permit creativity, such as a collectively bargained manufacturing environment that enforces rigid work rules. Significant anecdotal evidence suggests that some individuals and organizations regard creativity as a frivolous distraction or a negative attribute. Indeed, some educational processes discourage creativity and emphasize conformity (MacKenzie, 1998). Organizational structure and systems need to be implemented that foster creativity such as budgetary freedom on projects, clarification of roles, network building and developing powerful champions of ideas (Rickards, 1993). The reality is that creativity may reside in most organizational actors, but it is often suppressed.

Definitions of creativity that emphasize person rather than processes and outcomes parallel the debate in ethics as to whether unethical behaviors arise

from ethically deficient actors or from aspects of the corporate culture and context that seduce individuals to engage in unethical conduct. We subscribe to the contextual approach and adopt a definition of creativity that emphasizes the importance of organizational processes and outcomes. This definition of creativity provides a foundation for our discussion of the four major categories of prescriptions offered to enhance creativity.

Four problematic prescriptions for creativity

Our review of the creativity literature reveals four prescriptions for fostering creativity that raise serious ethical issues. These four prescriptions include: (1) breaking the rules or avoiding standard approaches to problems; (2) challenging authority and avoiding traditions; (3) creating conflict, competition and stress; and (4) taking risks.

Writers apparently assume that employees will understand that these four categories of behavior should not include unethical or illegal behavior. Some authors include a caveat to this effect. For instance, von Oech's footnote to his discussion of breaking rules admonishes: "I'm not advocating you to do anything that's illegal, immoral, or unethical. Most of the rules you follow, however, aren't written down in some manual or book of legal statutes" (1998: 64). This caveat offers little concrete guidance for recognizing or addressing ethical issues. It also implies that employees should concern themselves with adhering to codified rules and standards rather than higher order, unwritten ethical principles or virtues (e.g., respect, integrity, trust or honesty). To be sure, some researchers suggest that managers seeking creativity and innovation should build trust, maintain accountability and establish integrity with stakeholders in and outside the firm (Gaynor, 2002). However, these ethical practices seem to conflict with other prescriptions for developing creativity.

Discussions of rule-breaking and the other three categories of recommendations for increasing creativity do not explore the ethical dilemmas and issues with which managers and their employees must wrestle to engage in creative and ethical endeavors. Managers striving to implement recommendations for improving creativity or employees attempting to

behave creatively may not know what ethical questions to consider. Their efforts to foster and engage in creativity may result in unethical behavior or give rise to an organizational culture that encourages and rewards misconduct.

Each of the following sections delves into one of four categories of behavior for fostering creativity. We review the rationale behind the prescription, explain how it should enhance creativity and discuss the ethical issues involved within that rubric. Each category ends with a section styled as *Organizational Responses* that reports organizational-specific adaptations and offers prescriptions from the literature.

Break rules and standard operating procedures

How breaking the rules enhances creativity

Most organizations develop rules, procedures and processes to provide consistency in and control over decisions and behavior. MacKenzie (1998) describes how these "hairballs" stifle creativity at Hallmark Cards: employees become bogged down as they attempt to generate new ideas and get worn down by unnecessary steps and managerial approvals required to experiment with new ideas. A rigid, bureaucratic structure and rigid norms can inhibit creativity (Alencar and Bruno-Faria, 1997) to the point where creative employees adhere to the motto, "Better to ask forgiveness than permission" (Winslow and Solomon, 1993: 77). Often, employees become discouraged as they try to acquire resources to support their creative activities. Some innovative organizations have successfully streamlined these processes, but most firms underestimate the negative impact that extant rules and procedures have on creativity. Bureaucratic rigidity has led to much advice aimed at encouraging employees to break the rules and avoid standard operating procedures.

Evidence suggests that organizations allowing or enabling employees to break the rules may be more creative. Winslow and Solomon (1993) suggest that highly innovative individuals "break from accepted practices" (p. 80) and adapt to develop new solutions for conventional problems. Sutton's (2001, 2002)

work shows that some highly creative firms consciously hire employees who are “slow learners” of the organizational code or set of rules; these employees resist learning and following rules and standard operational procedures within the firm. These “slow learners” offer new perspectives, initiate different solutions to problems and raise questions about why the organization operates as it does. Arguably, these behaviors can enhance creativity, but deviant actions may carry risk.

Creative organizations also may break from traditional human resource management protocols by using job interviews to gather new ideas from applicants, rather than as a mechanism to screen candidates, or by hiring a job seeker judged to be exemplary when no open position exists (Sutton, 2002). Breaking these human resource rules can mean in the former case that a manager must find new ways to use employees’ knowledge and talents; an example might be rethinking the firm’s strategies or product lines. The latter situation may encourage managers to cast a wide net in the search for new ideas and subsequently marginalize interviews as screening tools.

Other researchers offer similar rule-breaking advice. Employees are told to break the firm’s rules and look for ways to “change the game” (Gaynor, 2002; Ricchiuto, 1997), play the role of a revolutionary and challenge the rules (von Oech, 1998), or take shortcuts and not follow directions they are given (Kelley, 2001). Amabile (1996), a leading researcher on creativity, advocates avoiding the status quo. When viewed through the lens of creativity, *status quo* is defined as the ways in which managers and employees traditionally operate in an organization. Rather, employees are urged to think about problems, processes and procedures in new ways, and managers are obligated to reward new thinking (Utterback, 1994).

Scholars who prescribe rule breaking recognize that firms may have rules and procedures that no longer apply and have become “frozen” into corporate habits that limit creative behavior. Employees may blindly follow these rules and procedures, behaving in ways that worked in the past, have become irrelevant, and when followed, can prevent employees from considering novel, adaptive behaviors. The central argument under this rubric is that rule breaking has the potential to expose man-

agers and employees to new ways of thinking and behaving, thus enhancing creativity and firm performance. That may be true but there is a dark side. Rule breaking can also expose an organization to the consequences of unethical behavior as we discuss in the next section.

Ethical issues associated with breaking the rules

Ethics researchers have argued for codes of conduct or broad guidelines to which employees must adhere in an effort to foster ethical organizations (Baucus and Beck-Dudley, 2005; Trevino and Nelson, 2007). We know that a code of conduct alone does not ensure ethical behavior (Mathews, 1988), but it represents one component of the design of an ethical organization. A code of conduct also serves to moderate the practice of rule breaking found in the creativity literature.

The call to “break rules” recognizes an obvious limitation of all managers: they can neither anticipate all possible problems nor can they establish rules or procedures to guide all possible responses. Anomalies occur and employees face situations for which rules offer little guidance or, indeed, may elicit fundamentally flawed responses. Consider, for example, an airline traveler who misses a connecting flight because of a late departure and must overnight at an enroute airport. The classic air carrier response is to provide coupons for lodging, food and the like. This response ignores the reality that people often choose air travel because of a time critical event – a business meeting, a child’s graduation ceremony or bereavement. We muddy the water by setting rules and then encouraging employees to break them, in essence saying, “never mind” the rules. This rubric of rule-breaking leaves employees to decide key ethical issues on their own. Minimally, that set of issues would include: (a) which rules to break; (b) under what circumstances should rules be broken; (c) how far to go in breaking the rules; and (d) who gets to make or break the rules.

Employees regularly face difficult choices and a break-the-rules recommendation that essentially says “you decide” does not help. Advising employees to break rules explicitly to foster creativity thrusts them into a decision-making quagmire, inviting unethical, inappropriate and possibly illegal conduct. Recent

corporate scandals (for example, fraudulent accounting representations at Enron, Health South, Tyco and WorldCom) illustrate the downside of miscues associated with employees who failed to adhere to critical rules. Employees face the same conundrum when provided with underdeveloped guidelines designed to permit greater flexibility. We are reminded of Google's terse standard: "Don't be evil." Soft directives provide insufficient guidance so employees may ignore ethics and default to the standard of legality. Few would argue that the Law represents society's minimum standard of acceptable behavior; to fall below that standard brings sanctions. Regrettably, behavior that is legal may not be broadly discerned as ethical. We present a prototypical example, followed by two legal options: a customer asks a salesperson to expedite an order; an accelerated delivery would compromise longstanding corporate values by unfairly accommodating one customer at the expense of others. Should the salesperson refuse to expedite that order because it conflicts with company policy or should she recognize a special circumstance and gain a loyal customer for the firm? The employee's actions could enhance customer satisfaction and grow market share. On the other hand, the decision to favor one customer may push back preexisting orders and create greater pressure to deliver or in the extreme, compromise quality.

Organizational responses

It is improbable that any scholar would advocate breaking rules for the sake of breaking rules. If true, organizations could hire anarchists, lunatics and criminals. Rather, employees should be empowered to think for themselves in anomalous situations. Autonomous behaviors require that employees must work from a well-developed personal moral code and a holistic understanding of the business – a keen awareness of its corporate values, operations and administrative mechanisms so that they can adapt, improvise and exceed expectations. Commonly, managers establish rules and procedures based on the premise that they possess greater experience, superior judgment and a better grasp of functional interrelationships, schedules and resource constraints than their subordinates.

We do not confuse hierarchical decision-making authority with hubris but observe that employees may indeed require fewer rules and less structure if they possess rich insights about a firm and its operations. Southwest Airlines (SWA) may be an exemplar in this regard. Southwest thrives in a hypercompetitive environment; the domestic airline industry is capital intensive, heavily unionized, highly regulated and provides undifferentiated services to air travelers. While all other domestic flag carriers hemorrhage billions of dollars in losses annually, SWA has sustained profitability for 30 plus years. We are convinced that the firm's corporate culture represents its competitive weapon. Its employees are well informed about SWA and its competitive environment and probably share the same core values. It is that collective passionate commitment to excellence that distinguishes SWA from its competitors. Southwest has a long-standing solution to the natural tension between creativity and ethicality. The company articulates a policy that it calls the "freedom to fail" (Freiberg and Freiberg, 1996). Explicitly, if an employee does the wrong thing for the right reason, the act is forgivable. SWA recognizes that perfection is an unattainable state and that all humans may exercise poor judgment. The company does not tolerate bad behavior (doing the wrong things for the wrong reasons) and holds all employees to high ethical standards. Southwest may have found that much-sought-after balance of creativity, autonomy and accountability.

Rule breaking also represents a crude, unilaterally executed form of process innovation with far reaching impact across operating units. Assume that an employee approves the delivery of new equipment before completing required documentation and receiving approval for the expenditure. The employee may have thoughtfully considered the ethical implications of this decision and he may have acted on high order goals to capitalize on an opportunity or neutralize a threat. Alternatively, an employee engaging in rule breaking behavior may display a cavalier attitude about violating rules, squandering resources or failing to solicit competitive bids. Decisions made and actions taken in a vacuum may yield unethical and possibly illegal conduct. At a minimum, unilateral actions have the potential to adversely affect other operating units.

Rule breaking recommendations should be augmented with discussions about impact across operating units, full disclosure and refinements in decision-making processes.

In sum, the creativity literature encourages organizations to advocate rule breaking to foster creativity. Our discussion of the ethical issues associated with this practice does not condemn the essential features of this rubric. Some firms establish rules meant to be inviolate and create false comfort in the habituation of organizational routines (McGregor, 1985), but this sort of mechanistic environment typically suppresses or erodes employee spontaneity, imagination and creativity. Other companies strive to empower employees, leveraging the knowledge of frontline employees to speed innovation but offering too much freedom or vague standards (we revisit “Don’t be evil”) that lead to mistakes, unethical behaviors or illegal actions. Doubtless, most organizations struggle to provide a balance of clear boundaries coupled with freedom that enables employees to exercise independent thought, creativity and discretion.

The recommendation to “break the rules” represents one path to creativity but it does not eliminate tough decisions. Empowering employees without providing adequate training in ethical decision-making and behavior represents an approach to fostering creativity that throws managers and employees into ambiguous and uncertain situations (Gandz and Bird, 1996). Ongoing training in ethics has been advocated for corporate entrepreneurs and highly creative middle managers to resolve ethical issues that arise (Kuratko and Goldsby, 2004). On balance, the practice of rule breaking constitutes a vague, unilaterally executed, process innovation that most managers would likely view as inadvisable. It is equally unlikely that rule breaking could reconcile potential conflicts of interest, whether intra-organizational or extraorganizational. Moreover, some rules should never be broken. Organizations are exposed to liability in a wide variety of domains – product safety, financial reporting, sexual harassment, and discrimination. Break these rules and a firm opens itself to public rebuke or legal action.

We believe numerous ethical issues require attention before organizations encourage employees to indiscriminately break the rules. Firms should clearly communicate their desire to increase em-

ployee creativity. Then they need to arm employees with a big-picture perspective of the business to support independent thought (i.e., equipping them to intelligently bend rules). Organizational leaders need to develop a shared vision of the organization and its purpose that can guide employees as they engage in creative activities and face difficult decisions (Weaver, 1993). They should develop an ethical community resting on strong ethical values and assumptions that support employees as responsible, trustworthy individuals (Baucus and Beck-Dudley, 2005). Finally, leaders should foster “good conversation” about ethical issues (Waters, 1988), conflicting interests and corporate values.

Challenge authority and avoid tradition

How challenging authority and avoiding tradition increases creativity

A theoretical dichotomy used in the organizational design literature depicts two vastly different organization structures—organic and mechanistic (Burns and Stalker, 1961). An organic structure’s design relies primarily on corporate culture, that is, systems of shared values, norms and beliefs rather than on formal rules and regulations. Employees at all levels may work in teams or across functional areas, often communicate through informal channels and are empowered to make key decisions. These design characteristics foster open exchange of ideas, fresh perspectives and innovation, prompting the concomitant observation that organic corporate cultures tend to be more intellectually fertile than alternative forms. Mechanistic organizations rely on traditional hierarchy with a relatively strict chain of command in which managers at upper levels make key decisions and rely on formal communication channels and reporting relationships. Employees in mechanistic organizations may struggle to innovate because structural impedimenta make it difficult for new ideas to be developed, presented and approved. To be sure, these two designs describe the anchor points of a continuum. Most firms operate somewhere between these two prototypical structures, so employees who wish to innovate must deal with a certain amount of hierarchy, reliance on formal authority and traditional management tech-

niques. Creativity researchers address the reality of organizational constraints by recommending that innovation seekers challenge authority and avoid traditions.

Employees can challenge authority by asking provocative questions (Ricchiuto, 1997) and repeatedly asking “why” to push others’ thinking (Dundon, 2002; Michalko, 1991, 2001). They are told deliberately to ignore lessons learned or solutions developed by employees who faced similar problems (Sutton, 2002). In this literature stream, employees are coached to ignore the past, including prior successes, since past solutions presumably discourage new or innovative thinking. At the entity level, researchers advise firms to be unconcerned with the likelihood that creative endeavors may disrupt the existing network of mutual obligations and commonly understood boundaries of their industry (Utterback, 1994). At the individual level, this counsel is extended to suggest that employees should pay little attention to how new products or innovative processes may impact extant expectations, assumptions and behaviors among industry incumbents. Firms thus enhance employees’ creativity by loosening organizational controls (Utterback, 1994) and by encouraging employees to ignore (even defy) their superiors and coworkers (Sutton, 2002). The rationale behind these recommendations rests on encouraging employees to continually probe for better ways to provide value. Arguably, employees will avoid getting stuck in ruts and mindlessly relying on traditional approaches to problems. They will avoid following a boss’s orders without critical thought.

Ethical issues associated with challenging authority and avoiding tradition

Organizations that encourage employees to challenge authority must take up the duality of employees questioning authority and avoiding traditions by crafting structural mechanisms that embrace ethical decision-making and behavior. Additionally, managers need to know how to respond to employee challenges with ethical sensitivity, especially if they view the bases for the challenges as illegitimate. Other ethical issues may arise, but these two represent significant challenges that organizations should address.

Calvin (1996) suggests that people learn in two ways, and that these learning styles directly relate to the prescription to challenge authority. Some people are conditioned by the world, for example, accepting a position in a company and assimilating acceptable values and behaviors. Other people venture into and explore the world. They follow streams of logic to see where they lead, strive to understand the big picture, question, challenge assumptions and put the pieces together for themselves. They incrementally advance a logic that makes sense and eventually articulate their own understanding of how and why a business works as it does. They gain a platform (a base of knowledge), an independent voice and make contributions but they may also present ethical challenges to the organization.

Organizational responses

The recommendation to challenge authority and avoid traditions implicitly encourages employees to adopt an exploratory style of learning (as opposed to a conditioned style) and become confident thinkers. A similar approach has been advocated by researchers arguing for the creation of learning organizations (Senge, 1990). This perspective promotes a collegial relationship in which both managers and employees are knowledgeable and advance strong and often competing views. Every employee is expected to take a leadership role in contributing to a firm’s creativity and innovation (Mauzy and Harriman, 2003). That said, problems with a challenge-authority-and-traditions recommendation would likely occur if employees do not possess an adequate grasp of the business, voice opinions inappropriately or if managers respond hostilely to challenges from an empowered colleague.

Employees and managers need to engage in a “due diligence” investigation of a problem, rule or tradition before raising a challenge. Employees can then step forward with viable solutions (often in the form of innovations) rather than simply complaining about or criticizing current practices. Fact-finding activities (Basadur, 1995) may encourage each party to engage in moral empathy, fairly and fully considering alternative viewpoints (Paul, 1993); both fact-finding and moral empathy are essential for ethical reasoning and creativity. Employees who

ethically challenge authority should treat others with respect while raising questions, scrupulously avoid *ad hominem* attacks and remain open-minded to new information and alternative viewpoints. These behaviors reflect moral virtues that help create an ethical community (Solomon, 1992). Fundamentally, this perspective advances cognitive conflict in group decision-making and points out the destructive effects of social conflict in the same context (Wagner and Hollenbeck, 2005).

When the challenge-authority approach is moderated by fact finding and moral empathy, managers and employees will likely work together to discern which corporate traditions can be ignored, modified or purged while simultaneously identifying those firm-specific customs that seem critical for reinforcing organizational culture. Senior management should periodically initiate processes that revisit and assess the enduring value, if any, that espoused values, norms and traditions may have for an organization. Traditions typically represent long-standing practices earlier perceived to have enduring value to an organization and its stakeholders; an abandonment of tradition (conceptualized here as *institutional practices with continuity*) could harm a firm's legitimacy.

A difficult ethical challenge for managers speaks to the manner in which they respond to direct challenges of their authority. Managers often rely on hierarchical authority and expect immediate responses to their requests or demands, especially in fast-paced environments in which speed of competitive response is essential. The "challenge authority and traditions" recommendation requires managers to learn to listen, encourage and reward employees who express a willingness to slaughter a sacred cow or two. However, not all challenges have merit. Managers need to know how to respond ethically to challenges that are poorly timed, inappropriately delivered or lacking in substance. Challenges to authority may range from legitimate and beneficial to illegitimate and harmful. Challenges may arise because employees possess domain expertise in a particular area of operations and see a better process or discover an emergent market opportunity. Other challenges may come from employees who lack essential information on safety, government regulations or other environmental constraints. Employees may complicate a manager's life in a variety of ways. Examples might be: challenging the manager in front of customers or

coworkers; engaging in various forms of catharsis; insisting on the exploration of new ideas at time-sensitive moments; pursuing a challenge long after the company has decided on and implemented a course of action. Similarly, employees may challenge authority because they do not work well with peers, feel compelled to dominate or otherwise lack interpersonal skills. These examples simply illustrate types of problems that managers should anticipate and ethical situations that can arise as employees exercise newfound rights to challenge authority, whether motivated by creative inspiration or not.

The recommendation to challenge authority and tradition may be difficult to implement in many organizations. Research on employees fired for challenging authority (for example, wrongful firings in violation of public policy) indicates that organizations often have difficulty responding ethically to challenges to authority, even when they involve employees acting ethically by blowing the whistle on wrongdoing, legitimately refusing to engage in illegal activities or adhering to a public policy such as appearing for jury duty (Baucus and Dworkin, 1998). Thus, the practice of challenging authority and avoiding traditions begs a high standard of behavior for employees, managers and organizations. Corporations need to remain diligent in training employees so that they understand the "big picture" and the logic behind existing practices. They must help employees understand appropriate ways and times to challenge managers. All managers will require training for dealing constructively and ethically with empowered employees who challenge authority or organizational traditions (Gandz and Bird, 1996). Senior managers should model irreproachable behaviors, support lower-level managers who stand their ground against poorly timed or inappropriately motivated challenges and authentically signal that they welcome legitimate challenges to authority and tradition.

Create conflict, competition and stress

How creating conflict, competition and stress can aid creativity

Employees often conform to group pressure expressly to get along with one another and maintain the status quo (von Oech, 1998). Consensus as both

process and outcome may have great value. *Cohesion* is a social construct that becomes manifest when individuals subordinate self-interest for the good of the group (Hogg, 1992). Indeed, most of us would want to belong to cohesive groups. However, serious organizational problems may arise if employees value group membership so highly that they place higher priority on the absence of cognitive conflict than on critical thinking, sound decision-making or searching for more effective ways of operating. Groupthink represents an extreme example of this dysfunctional behavior. Definitionally, *groupthink* is operative when a group cannot critically evaluate an opportunity or threat, consider competing perspectives, evaluate alternative options, or select the optimal alternative (Janis, 1971). Prescriptive frameworks for programmed conflict exist for enhancing decision-quality and avoiding groupthink. Examples include *devil's advocacy*, in which group members (often peer selected) are assigned to probe for flawed assumptions, incomplete or inaccurate data, inconsistencies, illogical conclusions or similar deficiencies (Boulding, 1964), or *dialectic inquiry*, in which group members are partitioned into subgroups with the charge to evaluate and improve upon solutions proposed by other subgroups (Schweiger et al., 1989). However, we are aware of no studies that report the frequency of use or number of firms that employ these efficacious group decision-making techniques.

The creativity literature encourages conflict, debate and open competition in searching for the best ideas or most novel approaches. At one extreme is the recommendation that instructs managers to find happy or contented employees and provoke them to fight with one another (Sutton, 2002); the objective involves shaking up overly agreeable or complacent employees by engineering interactions that trigger debate of opposing ideas or perspectives. At the other extreme, managers and employees may view conflict as a failure to find collaborative solutions as they seek to enact "either-or" or "win-lose" solutions (Ricchiuto, 1997). Clearly, conflict may be used to foster creativity and innovation and could result in novel solutions that benefit both a corporation and its stakeholders, but there is dissensus on its value.

A number of scholars argue that creativity may be enhanced when managers ensure that all organizational

actors form weak social ties intra- and inter-organizationally (Perry-Smith and Shalley, 2003). Arguably, weak ties help employees and managers maintain independence and objectivity. Moreover, fostering interaction with other organizations may encourage employees to search for creative solutions to problems (Amabile, 1996). Finally, Sutton (2002) argues that avoiding customers, critics or anyone who simply wants to talk about money limits distractions and fosters creativity as employees strive to keep focused on core issues.

Another perspective holds that creativity may be enhanced through "competitive play." Researchers argue that play can increase flexibility, new ideas, and liveliness (Amabile, 1996; Ricchiuto, 1997), something managers can accomplish by encouraging gags, tricks, games, and one-upmanship between employees (Kelley, 2001). Managers and employees may also behave foolishly or do the opposite of that which is expected (von Oech, 1998). Research shows that some creative companies deliberately hire people who seem disagreeable or objectionable in the belief these new employees add conflict to decision-making processes, spur competition for fresh ideas, and force current employees to think and behave differently (Sutton, 2001, 2002). These approaches, designed to introduce new viewpoints, illustrate a variety of strategies that can be used to enhance creativity by increasing conflict, competition and stress among employees. Unfortunately, these same approaches elicit challenging ethical issues.

Ethical issues associated with creating conflict, competition and stress

Most researchers and managers would support initiatives that encourage employees to fully consider alternative perspectives and avoid complacency. However, apathy may not fully explain the absence of creativity; accordingly, interventions designed to shock employees into creative behavior may have a dark side. The central ethical questions that arise within this rubric address the means used to foster creativity and ask to what extent, if any, managers should create conflict, competition and stress.

Calvin (1996), LeDoux (2002) and Ackerman (2004) argue that habits and routines represent an

important part of normal life. If we had to think about every element of neuromuscular coordination needed to walk, we could not take the first step. If we needed to consciously control every facial, neck and abdominal muscle necessary to speak, we would not utter a single word. Similarly, if we had to think about every nuance of a workday, we could not perform any job. We rely on habits to eliminate the need to cognitively process every stimulus and we depend on routines to protect us from over-stimulation. Calvin (1996) argues that environmental incoherence (defined as the gap between what is expected and what actually happens) is unpleasant. People predictably react to the stress of gap phenomena by reverting to routines. Adding stress to employees' lives may be nobly intended to increase creativity. However, it may not have the desired effect and, indeed, may have an unintended secondary effect of overstressing employees.

An ethical problem exists if managers assume that uncreative employees simply lack motivation – the implicit justification for introducing conflict, competition and stress. We recognize that firms and employees may settle into operational rhythms – a stasis of sorts. Ackerman (2004) describes the downside of working in comfortable corporate routines. Lack of stimulation causes physical changes in the brain: neurons recede and synaptic connections that permit creative associations are lost. We lose the ability to create through neglect, just as we lose fluency in an unused, second language. Creativity also requires that employees possess the skills to use executive functions (for example, questioning, challenging assumptions, shifting frames, and following patterns) in working memory. Employees who work in comfortable routines may not possess an extensive set of executive functions for crafting ideas and may remain novices at using the available tools. Alternatively, employees may wish to be creative but have been discouraged from using that skill set for so long that they experience a form of creative atrophy. Gandz and Bird (1996) argue that suddenly placing demands on employees to adopt new ways of thinking and behaving without sufficient training, support and new reward systems represents an unethical approach to change.

Conflict, competition and stress could thrust employees into truly developmental experiences. For instance, Intel places new employees on

extremely challenging projects precisely because early career employees have no biases about the achievability or difficulty of a project, so they often come up with completely new ways of doing things (Anders, 2002). Another model of intraorganizational competition has teams develop new product ideas; managers judge each venture idea to see which has the greatest potential for commercialization.

Employees at IDEO play tricks on each another, continually watching for opportunities to outsmart colleagues (Kelley, 2001). IDEO founders and managers believe this atmosphere of “competitive playfulness” makes work enjoyable and fosters creativity. Organizations adopting this approach to creativity engineer interactions and design experiences for employees with the objectives of developing positive levels of conflict, competition and stress. Some theorists and managers argue that these interventions represent harmless and common practices and employees voluntarily agree to participate by virtue of accepting a position with an organization. We argue that the ethical issues surrounding this approach to creativity cannot be dismissed. These activities may have unintended negative consequences that more closely approximate “hazing” rather than “growth experiences” when conflict and competition turn ugly, or when stress levels become too high for individual employees.

Organizational responses

Organizations must distinguish between those activities that represent appropriate means for fostering spirited, refreshing discussion among employees and those that constitute unethical behavior. For example, employees should not engage in *ad hominem* attacks or premature criticism of another's ideas before fully understanding the ideas being proposed. A legitimate, related concern arises since “competitive playfulness” may morph into physical danger, abuse or harm. Deliberate attempts to foster creativity by generating conflict, competition and stress may be transformed into clearly unacceptable activities. IDEO employees once glued a manager's office door closed while he was inside; another “playful” activity took the form of hiding a coworker's critical electronic files in some obscure

sector of the company's computer system (Kelley, 2001). These pranks impede work, squander resources and impose unnecessary stress. All organizations should provide boundaries in the quest for creativity. At the individual level, employees must also have mechanisms of challenging the means used to foster creativity if they judge stress levels to be unacceptably high.

We acknowledge that organizations cannot anticipate every possible situation, so specification of absolute rules would be unachievable. Instead, firms need to promote discussions of ethical virtues to which all employees should adhere (for example, trust, compassion, respect, and honesty). Prescriptions for developing ethical organizations may apply to this domain once researchers better understand how organizations currently deal with the nexus of ethical behavior and creativity (Baucus and Beck-Dudley, 2005).

Take risks and risk failure

How risk taking increases creativity

Dollinger (1999) defines *risk* as variability in outcomes. Many organizational actors are risk averse, indeed, often articulating an aversion to failure. We wish to distinguish between personological perspectives of risk and knowledge based perspectives of risk as we explore this rubric. Sitkin and Pablo (1992) define *risk taking propensity* as the tendency to take or avoid risk. Risk taking propensity is a trait. Each of us has an idiosyncratic risk profile, a predisposition to engage in relatively stable behaviors with respect to the acceptance or avoidance of risk. Alternatively, risk assessment represents a knowledge-based construct that flows from prospect theory (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979), the entrepreneurship literature on framing (Palich and Bagby, 1995), and Bayesian probability. *Risk assessment* is defined as a decision maker's perception of threat or opportunity with the attendant prospect for gain or loss (Norton and Moore, 2006: 216). Bayes' theorem helps to operationalize this construct; the Bayesian view holds that decision-making is subjective and derives from a decision maker's personal information about a task (Gardenfors and Sahlin,

1988). Informative, prior knowledge about a domain leads to greater precision in assessing probabilistic outcomes. What a casual observer might regard as "risky behavior" is often a well-informed decision; the observer may lack domain knowledge and impose his risk taking propensity on the phenomenon of interest, while the decision maker relies on prior specific knowledge.

Path breaking innovations are risky when gauged by the likelihood for failure (Tushman and Smith, 2004), yet the commercialization of discontinuous innovations often yields radically new technologies, products or processes that generate major payoffs for the sponsoring organizations. Creativity requires experimentation and risk taking as employees test new ideas and approaches. Regrettably, organizations may create a tension between stasis and innovation by emphasizing activities that contribute to short-term profitability; this myopia often makes employees who exhibit high-risk tolerance reluctant to engage in activities without quick and fairly certain payoffs. A short-term focus typically leads to either a steady state devoid of innovation or a culture that marginally improves existing products, services and processes. Neither path facilitates creative behaviors.

Creativity scholars advocate that organizations provide "freedom to speculate and take risks" (Robinson, 2001: 184), support for risk taking, decision-making freedom and autonomy (Alencar and Bruno-Faria, 1997) and tolerance of mistakes or failures (Caldwell and O'Reilly, 1995; Leonard and Swap, 2002). Entrepreneurial employees tolerate greater uncertainty and ambiguity, holding positive fantasies of the future (Winslow and Solomon, 1993). Managers must encourage innovation among employees and be willing to take risks themselves (Nolan, 1989; Weaver, 1993). Sutton (2002) paradoxically describes creative behavior as a decision to pursue something that has a high probability of failure, coupled with the conviction that success appears certain. It may also entail forward-looking activities that appear ridiculous and impractical (Sutton, 2002; von Oech, 1998). Thus researchers argue that organizations should recognize the improbability of success and inherently difficult processes associated with creativity by rewarding employees who engage in entrepreneurial behavior

(Utterback, 1994). This structural change may be as radical as rewarding an individual by placing extrinsic value on an employee's commitment and contribution rather than evaluating outcomes or work product (Amabile, 1996). A combination of these approaches may generate ongoing creativity by rewarding entrepreneurial behaviors.

Ethical issues associated with taking risks and risking failure

The concept of encouraging employees to take risks and try out new ideas has merit but contains some inherent ethical issues. Employees will face questions about the nature and scope of risks they should take, as well as questions regarding the ethical consequences and implications of those risks for all of organizational stakeholders. We offer two examples that demonstrate the dilemmas of nature and scope.

Nick Leeson provides an extreme example of an employee willing to undertake major investment risks because of the possible payoffs for Barings Bank and its investors; unfortunately, his risks were too extreme and resulted in major losses for the organization and many of its stakeholders (Rawnsley and Leeson, 1995). A classic example that reinforces scope of risk problems comes from the Polaroid corporation. Historically, Polaroid's culture embraced risk-taking without fear of failure. Edwin Land, its founder and early product champion, committed enormous resources to develop an instant movie system called Polavision; sadly, it was commercial disaster that lost millions of dollars. If time adjusted to today's dollar, a failure of equal proportion would seriously threaten the firm's survival, given the pace of technological change and intense competition in the photography industry. These examples show that employees need to understand ethical (and financial) implications associated with risk taking.

Organizational responses

Employees and managers who become caught up in cycles of risk-taking, experimentation and creativity without the benefit of ethical parameters may take substantial and unwarranted risks. They may experiment outside of domains in which they possess

competence, blissfully ignoring downside risks; employees with diffuse or uninformed prior knowledge in children's products may not grasp dangers associated with choking hazards or fire retardant issues; they may lack expertise in designing healthy food products; they may fail to understand standards for compatibility across software platforms; they may underestimate the regulatory and clinical challenges of introducing products in the healthcare industry. The results for the firm could be far reaching and devastating. The potential for damage ranges from impairment of a firm's reputation, through litigation, loss of market value or share or both, to governmental sanctions.

Firms must reconcile employees' risk-taking propensity with the organizational need for creativity. The literature offers a set of prescriptions. First, organizations can rely on measures of risk-taking propensity that have been validated in prior research (see, for example, Gomez-Mejia and Balkin, 1989). Assessments of individuals' predisposition to take risks can facilitate formation of teams charged with creativity and innovation; individuals can self select based on low- or high-risk tolerance. Separately, simulations represent a useful technique to measure risk assessment. Norton and Moore (2006) report a study in which employees participate in a role-play. The subjects' task involves making launch or growth decisions based on a fact set; the results suggest that those who assess risk favorably tend to be entrepreneurial. Finally, the literature on dialectic inquiry offers meaning guidance. It provides a template for systematic evaluation of ideas and embeds critical thinking in group processes (Schweiger et al., 1989).

The literature on creativity advocates risk taking but pays scant attention to the essential balance between risk-taking behavior and ethical behavior. Employees need to understand the types of risks they can take, the scope of risk undertaken, and the potential negative consequences for the organization's stakeholders.

A preliminary research agenda

Our article explores the relative lack of attention to ethical issues within the creativity literature. This gap creates an opportunity for scholars to build a bridge

between creativity and ethical behavior. We suggest that a research project launching this inquiry should focus on better understanding how organizations implement the four categories of creativity recommendations we review, and how organizations deal with the ethical issues that arise when encouraging creativity. We describe central features of this proposed study and follow with logical extensions.

An appropriate research design for the first stage of investigation would be in-depth, comparative case studies of firms engaging in these four categories of creative behavior. We see merit in selecting firms with varying ethical reputations for this early investigation (a topic we shall revisit). Researchers should start by examining any codified guidelines intended to help employees consider and address ethical issues, as well as any committees or processes required for approval of new venture ideas. Researchers should examine performance appraisal and reward systems to see how firms assess each category of behavior in the four rubrics to specify outcomes when creativity clashes with ethical decision-making. Next, aspects of corporate culture such as shared values, beliefs, and norms that relate to rule-breaking, challenges to authority, creating conflict/competition and risk taking will likely inform researchers about articulated standards of behaviors and the presence or absence of safeguards designed to discourage unethical conduct. Another key dimension for study would be organizational responses to employees who engage in unethical activities while cloaked in the noble pursuit of creativity and innovation.

A sample size for this initial study might be six to eight innovative firms. In the quest to capture variability, approximately half of the firms should enjoy solid reputations as ethical companies and the other half could be selected based on reputations for unethical or questionable conduct. Reputation is neither an asset possessed by a firm nor a form of self-ordination; it is a perception broadly held by others (Itami, 1987), so this dichotomy should not be difficult to operationalize. Researchers should attempt to match each of the “ethical” firms with an “unethical” firm in terms of industry, markets served, size and performance metrics. (Our recommendation would achieve roughly equal cell sizes; we do not seek the statistical elegance of matched pairs analytics). If the sample frame contains publicly

held companies, archival data could be used for some aspects of the study. However, primary data are crucial for rich insight; interviews with employees, managers, external constituents, reviews of company documents and other information will be needed. There is superb guidance for qualitative analysis that results in rigorous theory building and theory testing (Eisenhardt, 1989; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1994). This foundational study logically leads to follow on studies expanded to other industry contexts with larger samples and more variables. Moreover, this evolving line of inquiry should permit comparisons of corporate entrepreneurs with traditional middle managers to investigate differences, if any, at the nexus of ethical behavior and creativity imperatives.

Implications for theory and practice

We believe that the arguments presented in this article have important implications for research on creativity and ethics. Prior research in creativity has not investigated the impact that efforts to increase creativity may have on ethical behavior. One of our goals involves identifying key ethical issues related to the four rubrics of behaviors used to enhance creativity. A second objective encompasses generating interest in research aimed at investigating these issues. The next step involves studying relationships among ethics and creativity to learn more about how they interact. Subsequently, we urge scholars to consider factors that may improve ethics, creativity or both of them. Finally, practitioners should reflect on the consequences for organizations that maximize creativity and marginalize ethics. We suggest that ethics researchers should consider relationships between creativity and ethics since many of the practices intended to develop ethical behavior may prove useful in generating creativity. Organizational designs and protocols that simultaneously foster ethics and creativity may be more readily adopted by firms than restricted designs aimed at addressing only one of these goals.

We believe that managers can benefit from this inquiry since we explore the duality of the four categories of recommendations for improving creativity with the companion ethical issues. Our overarching objective is to encourage managers to recognize problems hindering employees’ creativity,

identify assumptions that underlie the creativity recommendations and create paths to achieve innovative solutions that answer to unimpeachable ethical standards. Managers should consider the dark side – the undesirable and potentially unethical consequences of encouraging employees to break rules or abruptly creating stress among employees who may want to innovate but lack the ability. A manager's attempt to shock employees into seeing the need for creativity or to engineer a situation that forces employees to think and behave creatively can raise serious ethical issues;¹ for instance, a manager might pass out fake termination notices to employees as a way of illustrating the dire consequences of not developing creative solutions to problems without fully considering the negative impact this has on employees. A company trying to foster ethical behavior and creativity by placing employees in situations that call for breaking the rules, such as having someone pretend to be a customer and request a major exception to see how employees handle the request, should consider the ethical implications of such a practice. These approaches may harm trust between managers and employees, leave employees feeling deceived or “tricked” by management and raise issues of honest and authentic managerial behavior. Managers need to consider the means they use to accomplish their end of encouraging creative behavior among employees and ensure that they model ethical behavior as leaders.

Employees at all levels should discuss the potential dangers of unintentionally engaging in or encouraging unethical conduct. Managers can use these four rubrics and the ethical issues listed in Table I as a basis for ongoing discussions with employees about how to achieve a balance between creativity and ethics. New situations will continually arise so managers need to encourage “good conversation” with a long view toward the interrelationships between ethics and creativity. Ultimately, such a developmental process should yield organizations in which neither vitally important goal is compromised.

Note

¹ We wish to thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this issue about the means managers use to foster creativity among employees.

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