

**ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION MANAGEMENT.
THE ROAD TO EXCELLENCE/ MANAGEMENTUL INOVAȚIEI
ORGANIZAȚIONALE. DRUMUL SPRE EXCELENȚĂ**

Author: Mariana Nicolae

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Anca-Teodora ȘERBAN-OPRESCU¹

First, a few things about the author: Dr. Mariana Nicolae is University Professor of Business Communication in English. With one Ph.D. in education (adult education) and one in economic sciences (management), Dr. Nicolae is Head of Department - Modern Languages and Business Communication, Faculty of International Relations, Bucharest University of Economic Studies. She also coordinates as Director the Master programme in International Business Communication within the same faculty and university. With a rich teaching experience, Dr. Nicolae lectures on Leadership and Organizational Management for her own university, but also for University of Bucharest and National School of Political and Administrative Studies. Her teaching, training and writing/research activity have given her a broad and multi-faceted perspective on organizational phenomena as it is to be found in foreign settings, but, what is more interesting, have given her the insight into what might and should work for the Romanian context.

Sub-divided into 8 chapters which start from theoretical considerations toward a gradual close-up on the Romanian context and its own examples of innovative Romanian business organizations, the book documents a topic less present in the form of a consistent book in the Romanian managerial literature. As stated by the author herself “the departing premises for the book lies in the too loose use in the Romanian public discourse of the term ‘excellence’ as final goal to be accomplished for social development, a goal to which all organizations are constantly called upon to contribute and offer their best input” (9).

As such, the book starts from the already very familiar statement that, in the *knowledge society*, the age of organizational creativity and innovation is an interdisciplinary field in full growth and development. Companies emerge and disappear in the same split second, one always has new examples of successful stories popular for a day or a week and gone after the novelty of the subject is overtaken by another piece of news; people find jobs while others lose theirs in the

¹ Anca-Teodora Șerban-Oprescu, The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, teoprescu@yahoo.com

attempt of the companies to downsize, cut costs, become more efficient; and all this under the pressing urge of contemporary society to consume, spend, expand existing markets and create new ones.

With a clear purpose, Dr. Nicolae's book proposes to offer an introduction in the study of the development mechanisms of organizational structures with a special focus on development through innovation. Chapter 1 approaches the theme of excellence in an attempt to define it, to give a possible explanation for what might make it so fascinating for so many of us, experts and general public alike, and also to suggest some practical solutions that would lead to a strategy meant to foster and encourage excellence. Chapter 2 discusses relevant aspects of innovation dynamics in the modern economy and arrives at a contextualized definition of the concept of innovation. Chapter 3, further, looks at what an organization is and explores several significant takes on the term. Chapter 4 correlates the term organization of advanced knowledge in the context of the familiar *knowledge society* with the less familiar term, especially in Romanian, of 'knowledge workers' – workers whose main capital is knowledge (popular term on the internet). Given the novelty of the terms for Romanians, definitions, examples are given, meant to give an outlook on what it means to capitalize on knowledge and how fragile the domain is in Romania given the ambiguities of the term to be yet explored and clarified. Chapters 5 and 6 dwell on the notion of individual creativity underlining the process-like quality of an ordinary human act and not the deviant feature of creativity that has been persistently linked with the popularized idea that creativity is an unusual trait in human beings and not a trait already existent but in need of cultivation and attention. Furthermore, the two chapters theorize, give examples, offer solutions and tools to cultivate individual creativity and present at-hand exercises to generate creative ideas through brainstorming or De Bono's thinking hats. Chapter 7 approaches organizational creativity and the ways in which the latter is encouraged or discouraged in organizations; to itemize just a few, Teresa Amabile's approach, Alan Robinson and Sam Stern's notes, the structural model of Blanchard&Waghorn, or Moulder's cascade model. Last, not least, Chapter 8 puts into perspective and context, examples of Romanian innovative organizations (e.g. Origo coffee shop). At the end of the book the reader will find a glossary of personalities and key-terms in the field, as well as a concise and up-to-date bibliography.

Written by a person with extensive studies in adult education management, accompanied by years of practice in research and transmission of information, the book successfully covers the main theoretical aspects of the field while providing examples that clarify the notions discussed. The book makes full use of an accessible language, concise and to the point, with a notable easiness which avoids unnecessary over-use of English words whose equivalent we already have in Romanian, yet we do not bother to search. This shows deep understanding of the concepts and terms discussed, as well as a charismatic, highly communicative personality that pervades throughout the entire material.