

ALEXANDER S. MCKAY

Alexander S. McKay is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship at Virginia Commonwealth University. He earned his Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from The Pennsylvania State University in 2018. He was the recipient of APA Division 10's Frank X Barron Award. His research focuses on creativity and innovation, addressing two questions: (a) what makes people be creative/innovative? and (b) what makes people evaluate something or someone as creative/innovative? To address these questions, he utilizes a variety of methodological approaches like social network analysis, meta-analytic techniques, and person-centered analyses.

The role of affect in binding social networks and teams together for creativity and innovation

Creativity does not occur in isolation. Within organizations, people exchange information, resources, and time with their colleagues. Teams are becoming the standard unit of work. Indeed, many impactful ideas in organizations and science are now developed by a network of people with diverse backgrounds. Although teams provide multiple advantages over a "lone creator," they also bring disadvantages. For my talk, I will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration and team work emphasizing the role of each team member's mood in conjunction with the group's overall mood. I will discuss how each individual's mood and the team's mood impacts both individual and team creative and innovative performance. To better understand why and when mood impacts creativity and innovation, I will then discuss important team dynamics (e.g., trust, cooperation, communication). I will then conclude with some practical suggestions to help build better collaborative relationships to improve team collaboration and performance.

Designing opportunities for creativity in the workplace

This session is a moderated discussion about individual and team traits and skills for creativity at work, organizational climate for creativity and innovation, and training for creativity at work. We will start with the discussion of why creativity at work matters and demonstrate that creativity is important even outside industries of jobs traditionally considered creative (e.g., product design, marketing). The speakers will summarize key lessons from research on the creative process in both individuals and teams and discuss the role of problem identification, idea generation, and revision skills. We will show that creativity does not depend just on an individual, but is influenced by social processes in the organization – from emotional intelligence of supervisors and the climate they create to broader organizational support for creativity. Finally, we will offer strategies to teach creativity and show that training teams is likely to improve individual creativity, but that training only individuals might not translate into team creativity. After the introduction, we will invite audience to submit questions.

Moderator: Dr. Zorana Ivcevic Pringle, Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, USA

Participants:

Dr. Roni Reiter-Palmon, University of Nebraska, Omaha, USA

Dr. Alexander McKay, Virginia Commonwealth University, USA