BUSHOR-1445; No. of Pages 13
ARTICLE IN PRESS
Business Horizons (2017) xxx, xxx—xxx
Available online at www.sciencedirect.com
ScienceDirect
KELLEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
www.elsevier.com/locate/bushor

Assessing the maturity of crowdventuring for corporate entrepreneurship

Gianluca Elia*, Alessandro Margherita

University of Salento, Via Monteroni s.n., Campus Ecotekne, 73100 Lecce, Italy

KEYWORDS
Assessment tools;
Collective intelligence;
Corporate entrepreneurship;
Crowdsourcing;
Maturity

Abstract Corporate entrepreneurship is a process of strategic renewal and development of an existing business through the creation of new products, services, and activities, as well as new competitive postures and independent ventures. The performance of this process, which leverages the creativity and the initiative spirit of employees and managers, is thus relying on the capacity of the organization to create favorable conditions for the emergence of such latent entrepreneurial potential. The development of participatory innovation models and collective intelligence offer new insights for conducting research on factors enabling corporate entrepreneurship. In particular, the internal company 'crowd' can be investigated with the purpose to study the conditions under which the corporate entrepreneurship process can be successfully nurtured and conducted. In such view, this article moves from an extended review of corporate entrepreneurship and organizational innovation literature to define the concept of crowdventuring and to present an assessment tool aimed to evaluate the maturity of the crowdventuring process within an organization. The tool, which captures both individual and organization-related factors, is also used for an illustrative application into a multinational IT company. Some implications are also drawn at theory and practitioner levels.

1. Corporate entrepreneurship: Quo vadis?

Corporate entrepreneurship (CE) is an all-encompassing concept that indicates the process of strategic renewal of existing business (Zahra, 1991), as well as the creation of new ventures, products or services, or new strategic postures driving organizational innovation (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2004; Antoncic & Prodan, 2008). The construct is multi-faceted and includes several dimensions such as innovation, corporate venturing, intrapreneurship, strategic renewal, and industry rule breaking (Guth & Ginsberg, 1990; Hanan, 1976; Hornsby, Kuratko, & Zahra, 2002; Kuratko, Covin, & Garrett, 2009; Kuratko, Montagno, & Hornsby, 1990; Thornberry,

* Corresponding author
E-mail addresses: gianluca.elia@unisalento.it (G. Elia), alessandro.margherita@unisalento.it (A. Margherita)

0007-6813/$ — see front matter
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2017.11.008

2001; Vesper, 1984; Zahra & Covin, 1995). As a company process, CE is strongly associated with increased financial performance measured in terms of profitability, market share, and growth (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Zahra, 1991; Zahra & Covin, 1995) with success cases such as Apple, 3M, Procter & Gamble, Google, and Philips (Ford, Garnsey, & Probert, 2010; Kuratko, Hornsby, & Covin, 2014).

The relevance of the topic has attracted considerable interest of researchers, particularly for the analysis of the factors that may enable (or hinder) the successful undertaking of entrepreneurship processes within organizations. The CEAI (*Corporate Entrepreneurship Assessment Instrument*; Hornsby et al., 2002; Hornsby, Holt, & Kuratko, 2008) was introduced to focus on antecedents like management support, work discretion/autonomy, rewards/reinforcement systems, time availability, and organizational boundaries. Ireland, Kuratko, and Morris (2006a, 2006b) presented the Entrepreneurial Health Audit, a tool for assessing the firm's entrepreneurial intensity and identifying the characteristics that may support or hinder the internal entrepreneurial process. The entrepreneurial intensity is described in terms of degree (innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactivity) and frequency (new products, services, or processes), where the organizational characteristics are evaluated using the Corporate Entrepreneurship Climate Instrument (similar to the CEAI).

Later, Ireland, Covin, and Kuratko (2009) proposed a model including the antecedents of CE (individual entrepreneurial cognitions and external conditions), the founding elements (entrepreneurial vision of top management and organizational conditions), and the expected outcomes (competitive capability and strategic repositioning). Morris, van Vuuren, Cornwall, and Scheepers (2009) identified four building blocks for the design of supportive work environments (i.e., culture, structure, resource controls, and human resources management).

Kelley (2011) presented the Evolve and Connect model based on three key elements (entrepreneurial process tools, entrepreneurial strategy, and entrepreneurial structure) to improve the entrepreneurial capabilities of the firm. Soleimani and Shahnazari (2013) validated a research model based on four groups of factors supporting CE: personal characteristics of entrepreneurs (e.g., risk taking and result orientation), HRM practices (e.g., compensation strategies and job design), organizational culture (e.g., team spirit and empowerment), and employee satisfaction (e.g., relationships with colleagues and loyalty).

Based on Hornsby et al. (2002), Kuratko et al. (2014) proposed the CEAI to assess the antecedents of entrepreneurial behavior by focusing on the same elements proposed by Hornsby et al. (2002): management support, work discretion/autonomy, rewards/reinforcement systems, time availability, and organizational boundaries. Finally, Turner and Pennington (2015) developed a new framework based on motivation, opportunity, and ability to demonstrate that knowledge sharing and organizational learning are necessary ingredients to drive corporate entrepreneurship.

An essential element discussed within most of such frameworks is the relevance of the HRM practices as important boosters of CE (Hayton, 2005; Mustafa, Lundmark, & Ramos, 2016; Özdemirci & Behram, 2014; Zhang & Jia, 2010). In particular, these studies highlight these practices as crucial to drive a successful corporate entrepreneurship process: performance appraisal, management support, use of rewards, orientation and training, job design, resource availability, encouragement to learning and cooperation, and a culture of individual risk taking (Hornsby, Naffziger, Kuratko, & Montagno, 1993; Jiang, Wang, & Zhao, 2012; Morris & Jones, 1993).

In addition, HRM may stimulate the employees' entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors by supporting cooperation, motivation, commitment, and learning (Kaya, 2006; Kuratko et al., 1990; Montoro-Sánchez & Ribeiro Soriano, 2011; Rutherford & Holt, 2007; Schmelter, Mauer, Börsch, & Brettel, 2010; Schuler, 1986; Zhang, Wan, & Jia, 2008).

HRM practices are also associated with increased employee creativity (Jiang et al., 2012) since they can reduce the sense of uncertainty and stress of individuals, thus leading to a sense of psychological availability (Binyamin & Carmeli, 2010). Creativity is a key ingredient of the entrepreneurial process; it refers to the generation or production of ideas that are both novel and useful (Amabile, 1988), and it can occur at individual, team, or combined levels (Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou, 2014). Many studies investigated the enabling factors of creativity, which include learning and goal orientation (Hirst, Van Knippenberg, & Zhou, 2009), job complexity (Shalley, Gilson, & Blum, 2009), emotional ambivalence (Fong, 2006), intrinsic motivation (Shalley, Zhou, & Oldham, 2004), extrinsic motivation (Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996), and team composition (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2013).

Whereas the roles of human resource management and employee creativity driving successful CE were clearly recognized, the study of enabling factors at individual and organizational levels can benefit from the application of findings in the collective intelligence field. In its broadest sense,