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Creativity & Innovation a Road Map to Business Success and Growth in Sierra Leone: from Intuition to Process Management

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Professor Tang Xiao Hua ^α, Allieu Badara Kabia ^σ & Dorzhiev Arkady ^ρ

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I. INTRODUCTION

Business is like Mother Nature can be good or bad. The life span and success of any business depends on the business growth rate assessment tools in adopting *the corrective measures of business tradition, strategies, risk and change management of winning business success (profitability, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability) depending on the type of investment portfolio, procedures, policies and approach for business planning, priority, pacing, people, processes and controls to attain operational excellence, high employee engagement and increase customer/client centricity.* Business success to attain Growth should not be assumed rather is a decision made of weighing the merits and de-merits and the risk of growing or not growing. The basis of all businesses is meeting needs and wants of customers demand. A business entity may come up with a brand of new product and design, or create a fantastic new service for delivery to customers/client, but if it does not meet the demand utility of some real and important needs or desire of its market target segmentation, consumers/clients demand becomes defective and subsequently and inevitably, the business will fail. In most cases, business ideas were carried out base on trial and error, incomplete guidelines or rules of thumbs with the hope that they may lead to business performance, success and growth with time if it pleases the ancestors and gods of the land. There is no clear path, since the business entities (enterprise management, partnership and corporations etc.) must create one. Finding a reliable, sound, safe and an appropriate success path) is easier if the business manager approaches creativity and innovation as a logical process, and then utilizes some of the available innovative problem-solving techniques, tools and strategies within the process of its business activities, according to Keratko, Morris and Collins (2011).

Recent research studies by Abrams (2012) indicate that the most exciting and often most risky, entrepreneurial companies are innovative and creativity in nature. They bring something new and unique to the market that significantly alters and improves on the existing commodities (goods & services). This may

require given added value by building or improving on an existing commodity or finding a new use for it. Business professionals and Research scholars have also reveals that of all the necessary indicators needed for a successful business and growth, the individual (People) initiative as one of the 5ps of successful business growth seems the most critical which constitutes entrepreneurs/shareholders, management and employees. Without the visionary leadership and persistence performance of individual leadership, little or no positive business result would be accomplished. As a result of the deficiency existing within the business framework in Sierra Leone, we thought it fit and necessary to come up with a concept, vision or dream and the dream must be translated into products and processes within a business context. This concept must be adapted to reflect the realities encountered within the internal and external business environment and must persevere in mitigating, eradicating and overcoming both the normal and the arbitrary hurdles risk hazard effect that are thrown into their paths.

The success stories of global companies and successful entrepreneurs can be traced to their investment in innovation Google's Larry Page and Sergey Brin came up with more effective search engines that researchers found more reliable. Today, Google and Baidu has become a household name in social network. The Ultra external storage drive, memory sticks and iPod have made it possible to walk around with diversify files say academic and research materials, thousands of songs & movies and documents available at all times. The iPod for example represents a substantially improved, enjoyable, creative and instinctive way to meet a long standing need for music-on-demand. However, in Sierra Leone, among the factors that contribute to business failures is the inability of Sierra Leonean business entities stakeholders (entrepreneurs, shareholders & management) to be innovative, creative and to adapt process management to accomplish desired output goals- profitability, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability (PEES). All forms of business organizations need innovative and creative ideas to attain a sustainable and successful business growth.

II. NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF STUDY

Based on the preceding, the purpose of this research is to determine and assess creativity and innovation as a prime factor responsible for successful business growth and process management in a competitive business environment and a growing economy like Sierra Leone. The lack of understanding of the issue involved in innovation, creativity, business success & growth, process management and business process orientation may hinder many businesses from being successful to justify their investments and accomplish the desired output business goals.

The truth about Growing a Successful Business is as follows;

- Stress quality controls
- Stress financial controls
- Dilute one's customer value proposition
- Dilute one's culture
- Put one in a different competitive space
- Business Growth is CHANGE. Growth requires the entrepreneur, employees, processes, etc. to change as the business grows.
- Business Growth is *EVOLUTIONARY*- it evolves and everything in the business is continuously evolving, including people.
- Business Growth requires more processes and more/better management.
- Business Growth eventually requires you to build a management team.

As a business grows, it needs better processes & control, finance, Human Resource and technology tools adopting innovation and creativity for better operational performance and employee centricity in meeting the business desired output.

a) *Growing a successful business means*

- More customers?
- Selling more products/services to existing customers?
- More revenue?
- More profit (revenue-costs)?
- More assets?
- More employees?

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Drucker (1985) stated that innovation is the specific tool of businessman/entrepreneurs, the means by which they exploit change as an opportunity for a different business or service. It is capable of being learned and capable of being practiced. Branson (1998) considers innovative business as one which lives breathes 'outside the box'. According to him, innovation is not just good ideas. It is a combination of good ideas, motivated staff and an instinctive understanding of what customers of the business want and need. Davila et al (2000) assert that innovation is the application of better solutions that meet new requirements, inarticulate needs, or existing market needs. It can also be defined as something original and as consequence, new that 'breaks into' the market or into society. While something novel is often described as an innovation, in management and other social science-related disciplines, it is generally considered as a process that brings together various novel ideas in a way that they have an impact on society. This is accomplished

through more effective products, processes, services, technologies or ideas that are readily available to markets, governments and society. Innovation differs from invention in that; it refers to the use of better, and as a result, novel idea or method, whereas invention refers more directly to the creation of the idea or method itself. Companies cannot grow through cost reduction and reengineering alone. Innovation is the key in providing aggressive top line growth, and for increasing bottom line results. Therefore, Innovation is more than simply coming up with good ideas. It is the process of growing them into practical use. (Hargadon, 2003).

Innovation as a process requires turning ideas into reality and capturing value from them. Successful process innovation is in four stages. According to Tidd & Bessant (2013), these stages are:

Search: This involves finding opportunities for innovation- bringing new ideas to the system. These ideas may come from research and development, copying, market signals, regulations, competitor's behaviour and so on. The main issue here is how to organize an effective search process to ensure a steady flow of genetic variety which gives a better chance of surviving and thriving in business in the face of environmental constraints.

Select: Generating variety of ideas is not enough. Managers need to select from a set of opinions the variants most likely to help grow and develop. This requires some form of strategic choice out of all the things the businessman could do, what is going to do and why? This stage takes into account some form of competitive differentiation, that is, which choice may give the best chance of standing out from the crowd and previous capabilities that can be built on.

Implementation: Generating ideas and selecting still leaves the problem of actually making it happen. That is, committing scarce resources and energies to doing something different. Implementation involves channelling or converting ideas into reality. It is essentially a task of managing a growing commitment of resources, time, energy, money, materials and mobilizing knowledge of different kinds against the background of uncertainty. Here businesses do take calculated risk rather than random throws of the dice or through intuitive approach with the hope that it will deliver the calculated value which exceeds or at least equals what we put into it.

Capture: This stage involves determining how to get the benefits from innovation. The business needs to consider the challenge of capturing value from its innovative efforts- justifying efforts in commercial terms or in terms of creating social value. It also involves the determination of how to protect the gain from appropriation by others, how to learn from the experience and capture useful learning about how to improve the innovation process in the future.

How to make this simple process work has been the concern of entrepreneurs and business practitioners, the world over. And this is particularly disturbing in Nigerian business environment where majority of businesses are managed on trial and error, intuitive methods or rule of thumb approach. Today however, the academic community especially is working on trying to understand in a systematic way about the core process and the conditions under which the innovation process is likely to succeed and thus promote business performance.

A striking point about innovation is its source- what gives it the desired strength. Hippel (1988) through various researches found a number of useful sources of innovation to include users (customers), suppliers and manufacturers. According to him, this involves categorizing companies and individuals in terms of functional relationship through which they derive benefits from a given product, process or service innovation. Drucker (1985) identified the following seven (7) sources of innovation: the unexpected, incongruities (conflicts between opposing functions, requirements or values), process needs (necessity), industry and market structure, local and global demographics, changes in customer perception and new knowledge. The first four sources lie within the company while the last three lie outside the company and are capable of creating new products and new markets. These factors clearly provide direction for some key changes and awareness that may lead to innovation. For this study, the aspects of innovation explored by Tidd & Bessant (2013) are useful. These are: incremental innovation, platform innovation, discontinuous innovation and component/architecture innovation.

Incremental Innovation: This involves 'doing what we do but better' and requires increasing the degree of novelty involved in different places across the innovation space. Consider an innovation in a car. It may require updating the styling on the car and not coming up with a completely new one or increasing the speed and accuracy of a lathe instead of replacing it with a computer-controlled laser forming process. There are degrees of novelty in the above examples running from minor incremental improvement through to radical changes which may transform the way we think about and use them. Sometimes these changes are common to a particular sector or activity, but sometimes they are so radical and far-reaching that they change the basis of society. It is a fact that innovation may involve a discontinuous shift, most of the time it takes place in incremental fashion. Essentially this is a product/process improvement along the lines of 'doing what we do, but better'. Hollander (1965) stated that the cumulative gains in efficiency are often greater over time than those which come from occasional radical changes. After all, 'disruptive or new to the world innovations'

constitute only 6 percent to 10 percent of all projects labelled innovation. (Ettlie, 1999). It is on record that the Japanese improvement in quality and productivity over the years is as a result of sustained incremental change or innovation. (Imai, 1987).

a) *Platform Innovation*

One way in which the incremental innovation approach can be harnessed to good effect is through the concept of platforms (families). Platform innovation is one of the fundamental innovations. Such innovations normally are touching pads for a new industry. Platform innovations include personal computers, cell phones, digital printers, data bases, drug delivery services and so on. Platform innovations launch industries and change ways of life. Platforms and families are powerful ways for companies to recoup their high initial investments in research and development by deploying the technology across a number of markets fields. Hamel (2006) feels that the concept of total quality management is essentially a paradigm innovation which represents concepts which can be shaped and stretched to fit a variety of different contexts that are in line with platform innovations.

b) *Discontinuous Innovation*

The findings of Hippel's research also indicated that most of the time, innovation takes place within a set of rules which are clearly understood, and involves players trying to innovate by doing what they have been doing but better. The rules of the game are accepted and do not change. However, something happens which dislocates this framework and changes the rules of the game. These are not every day events, but have the capacity to redefine the space and boundary conditions thereby opening up new opportunities and challenging existing players to reframe what they are doing in the light of new conditions.

Discontinuous innovation is a central theme in Schumpeter's original theory of innovation which he defined in terms of 'creative destruction'. (Schumpeter, 1950 and Foster & Kaplan, 2002). This type of change can come through the emergence of a new technology or it can come through the emergence of completely new market with new characteristics and expectations. This aspect of innovation can also come about by reforming the way we think about an industry-changing the dominant business model (the rules of the game). The new way of framing the business has the power of opening up new trajectories along which all sorts of innovations begin to occur. Triggers or sources of discontinuous innovation include: the emergence of new markets, technology, political order, deregulation, unthinkable events, business model, architectural designs, shift in techno-economic paradigms and so on.

c) *Component and Architecture Innovation*

Innovation can be viewed from the opportunities that are opened up through the components within the

larger systems. In this case, innovations are thought of as changing things at the level of components or those which involve change in a whole system. It should be noted that innovation after all, is about knowledge-creating new possibilities through combining different knowledge sets. Such knowledge may already exist in our experience, result from a process of search or be in explicit form and codified in such a way that others can assess it, discuss it, transfer it, etc or it can be in tacit form. (Polanyi, 1967). It must however be noted that the process of knitting these different knowledge sets together in a successful innovation is one which takes place under highly uncertain business conditions. Innovation and creativity flourish when they are backed up by the actions and attitudes of the leaders and managers of the business. The actions provide the foundations that enable creative and innovative efforts of employees. Some of these actions according to Fry, Stoner & Hattwick (1998) are:

- Encouraging risk and experimentation
- Tolerating and learning from mistakes
- Embracing diversity and differences
- Promoting boundary less behaviour
- Maintaining close contact with customers
- Investing in training.

THEORETICAL NEXUS Finding an innovative process that would enhance business success requires an effective model or framework. The paper considers the Kline-Linked model (Kline Model) of innovation which places emphasis on potential market needs as drivers of the innovation process and described the complex and often interactive feedback loops between marketing, designs, manufacturing and so on. In this model, Kline (1985) describes the complexities in the innovation process. He acknowledges the fact that new knowledge is not necessarily the driver for innovation. Instead, the process begins with the identification of an unfilled market need. This drives research and design, then redesign and production and finally marketing with complex feedback between all this stages. There are also feedback loops with the organisation's and the world's stored base of knowledge, with basic research conducted or commissioned as necessary to fill in gaps. Caraca, Bengt-Ake & Sandro (2009) corroborate by linking this model to linear theory of innovation when they state that basic research leads to applied development, then engineering, then manufacturing and finally marketing and distribution process.

IV. CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES

A number of concepts need some clarifications. It includes: Business inception traditions, the four (4) ways of growing businesses (Improvement, Innovation, and Scaling & Strategic acquisition), Business success, Intuition, Process management and Business process orientation.

a) *The Basic Pre-Requisite Tradition of Starting Businesses- (e.g-SMEs)*

Before an Entrepreneur businesses start to grow there must be an existence of a specific business/business Idea. That is to say a plant can only grow by sewing the seed first. Private business is like a Seed. Rational Entrepreneurs should at the initial point before the start of any business to be able to answer three (3) questions for a good start:

- Do I/We Have A Business Proposal?
- Do I/We Have A Business Plan?
- Do I/We Have Edsoda So That I Can Polcca?



BUSINESS MINDSET INTUITION MODEL	
E-Experience	P-Planning
D-Direction (What, Where, When & How)	O-Organizing
S-Situation Now (Prevailing environment)	L-Leading
O-Output Desired (Vision, Mission & Objectives)	C-Controlling
D-Deadline (Time Management)	C-Coaching
A-Action Plan	A-Achievement

Figure 1 : Business Mindset Model

The 5Ws & H of Planning

Planners of Businesses would always examine the answers to six (6) key foundation questions to trigger their minds into an effective and efficient planning. As a rule of thumb, it's always profitable to answer the questions below as the aim of all businesses is to maximize profit and minimize cost, keeping risk at a lower ebb.

WHAT? What kind of Business? Identify your subject matter.

WHY? Investigate all possible reasons around the subject matter base on the business intended

WHERE? Identify the place or geographical location, as everything on Earth is subject to a place of event, action or activity.

WHEN? Similarly, everything is tied up to time and space. Determine the year(s), months(s) and week(s), etc, or time of day or night of the event to start your business.

WHO/WHOM? Nothing happens without human or animal agents. Identify who acts or takes responsibility for the happenings being planned and the market (Market target segmentation).

HOW? Is the action plan, determine the process or method that is involved in carrying out the activities or events in question.

The above models are essential indicators that determine the survival and sustainability of business in economies in the world. To be specific most businesses in developing countries economies failed because of the neglect of the monitoring, review, evaluation and assessment of policies, procedures, processes and controls by not applying the appropriate models. This is applicable not only to Large scale businesses but also Small and Medium Enterprises. Any failure of business in either the formal or informal sector of any economy has a negative impact in the country's resource base and aggregate demand/GDP. So, my advise if businesses want to remain sustainable and profitable in the world in general and developing economies to be specific need to be watchful of the aforementioned business models and assessment indicators.

Entrepreneurs and shareholder's/management should have the mindset even though they want to grow their businesses must be aware of the "IISS model" of growth for successful businesses refer to as the "Big 4(four)" of business growth

b) *The Four (4) Ways To Grow A Successful Business (Iiss Model)*

- i. *Improvements*: Being better, faster, cheaper
- ii. *Innovations*: Doing something really new or different for you that drives revenue and/or profit growth
- iii. *Scaling*: Doing lots more of what you are currently doing.
- iv. *Strategic acquisitions*: Buying someone else's customers or new products/services to sell, or buying new capabilities to develop new products/services

- i. *Improvements*
 - Constant improvement is the "heart" of a great successful business.

What can you improve?

- You can improve your product-meeting customer needs better.
- You can make your product more quickly.
- You can improve customer service.
- You can improve your sales cycle
- You can collect cash faster.

- You can make doing business with you easier and “smoother.”
- You can operate more efficiently, reducing your costs and increasing your profits.
- You can drive productivity from process improvements-doing more in same amount of time.
- You can improve every process that impacts quality, money, and customers-EVERY process.
- You can improve EVERYTHING you do: every step, of every process of your business.

How does one improve?

- You try new things in small experiments and LEARN from experience; Learning to enhance business performance is equivalent to making more money.

Why are improvements necessary?

- To stay ahead of the competition: “Bear in the woods” story.

ii. *Innovations & Creativity*

Meaning doing something that’s really new or different.

The Latin word ‘innovare’ meaning ‘to make something new’ is what is translated to mean innovation. There are many definitions put forward from different school of thought to explain what innovation means. For example, Drucker (1985) stated that innovation is the specific tool of businessman/entrepreneurs, the means by which they exploit change as an opportunity for a different business or service. Definitions of innovation may differ in wordings, but they all stress the need to complete the development and exploitation aspects of new knowledge, not just its invention- the first step in widespread and effective use. Further research indicates that innovative programmes are most frequently driven by:

- Improved quality
- Creation of new markets
- Improved production process
- Reduced labour costs
- Extension of product range
- Reduced environmental damage
- Replacement of products or services
- Reduced energy consumption
- Conformance to regulations

How does innovation usually occur?

- Combining existing things in a new way.
- Learning something from a different type of business and transferring it to your business.
- Challenging the “usual way” assumptions. Asking why it’s done this way in this type of business.
- Learning from competitors.

- Innovating with customers-customer co-creation
- From “Learning Launches”-small, cheap, fast experiments that test new ideas and ways of doing

iii. *Scaling*

This is the turbo charger of business success and high growth meaning

- Doing lots more at the same time of what you are doing now- doing more
- Scaling requires successfully doing the 5 Ps (Planning, Priority, People, Pacing Process & control).
- Why would you outsource?
 - Scale faster?
 - Cheaper?
 - Allows you to focus on critical processes and parts of your business
- What should you rarely outsource?
 - Quality controls. Why?
 - Financial controls. Why?
 - Control of your customer. Why?

Scaling boosters

- Businesses basically grow by adding more customers and/or by selling more product/services to existing customers.
- Scaling boosters checklist:
 - What complementary products/services can I sell to existing customers?
 - What new products/services do I have the ability to make that my customers need?
 - Can I reduce the features of my current offering and offer a cheaper version to a different customer segment?
 - What can I do to increase the frequency of purchases? Loyalty program?
 - Can I add a new distribution channel to reach new customers? Internet?
 - Can I bundle services to products or bundle more services together?
 - Can I add pricing, financing and/or guarantees that will produce more buyers?

iv. *Strategic Acquisitions*

- Acquisitions require fundamentally different expertise than scaling an existing business: due diligence, valuation and acquisition integration skills.
- Acquisitions are of high-risk generally.
- What could one buy? Geography expansion, customers, new products or services, new capabilities?

- People confront this question generally when they have experienced high growth and exhausted reasonable scaling alternatives as they currently exist and still want to grow more.

c) *The Five (5) Ps of Growing A Successful Business*

i. *Planning*

How do you plan for the unknown?

“Visualize” what your structure & infrastructure would look like at bigger stages.

➤ What is *structure*?

- Your organization chart-by function/job
- Size inflection Points: 7-9 employees; 20-25 employees; 45-50 employees or 100 employees.

➤ What is *infrastructure*?

- Space needs
- Furniture, equipment
- Phones
- Technology

Do you *outsource*?

- Payroll processing, accounting, taxes
- HR benefits processing
- Manufacturing (QC issues)
- Sales (*Defender Direct*)
- Delivery

ii. *Prioritization*

There are two (2) different kinds of prioritization:

Strategic-The 3 Ws: (What, Whom and Why?)

- **What** Am I Going to Sell?
- To **Whom**?
- **Why** are they going to buy from me? (Marketing Mix & Market Target Segmentation)

Daily—What “fire” do you put out first?

- Critical decision—why?
- Assess the situation and go where you have the most impact—fight the biggest fire.
- How do you know? Life, property, brand, reputation, customers, quality, cash?
- Where is the “bottleneck”?
- “You don’t eat if you don’t sell. You don’t sell if you don’t have a customer. You don’t have a customer unless you offer a good service (product).”
- “Set up 3 or 4 priorities that take precedence over everything else: Manage cash flow; focus on customers and quality service; accelerate revenue growth; and all the rest-unless something is on fire-can wait.”

- Huddles: What is a “huddle”? (Ritz Carlton Hotels)
- Performance Metrics Transparency- posting daily key performance metrics to all employees

iii. *Processes*

- Checklists: Airline pilots
- Instructions: Recipes- step by step how to do something

Why are processes necessary? To ensure: 99% defect-free, on-time delivery to the customer.

iv. *Pacing*

- One of the most important findings of my research
- One entrepreneur who grew his business too fast, losing millions of dollars, reported the following lessons he learned:
 - Have the right people and the right processes in place.
 - Walk before you run.
 - Have clear lines of reporting and authority.
- How could too much growth overwhelm Entrepreneurial Business?
- Many entrepreneurs reported that HR processes, were critical growth processes that they’d overlooked or done badly, which created huge problems:
 - Hiring processes
 - Interviewing processes
 - On boarding processes
 - Review and firing processes

v. *People*

- While strategic focus (**P**lanning and **P**rioritization) and operational excellence (**P**ace and **P**rocesses) are necessary for growth, they are not sufficient.
- Growth also requires the *right kind of people*, culture and leadership. The Entrepreneur Must Grow Too!
- Growth requires the hiring, training and retaining of high performance employees and the building of a high performance management team.

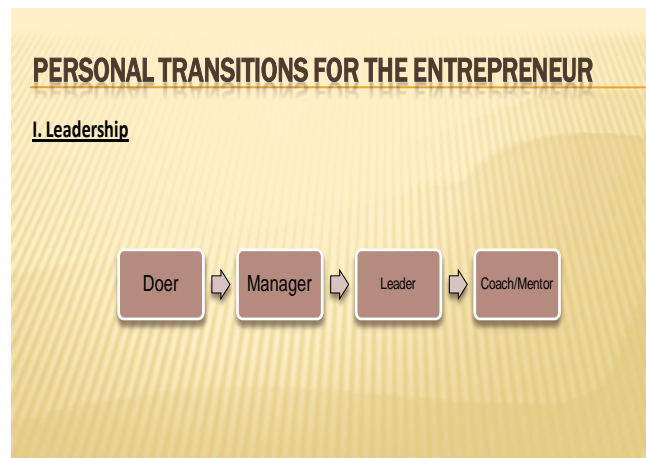


Figure 2 : Personal Leadership Transitions of Entrepreneur

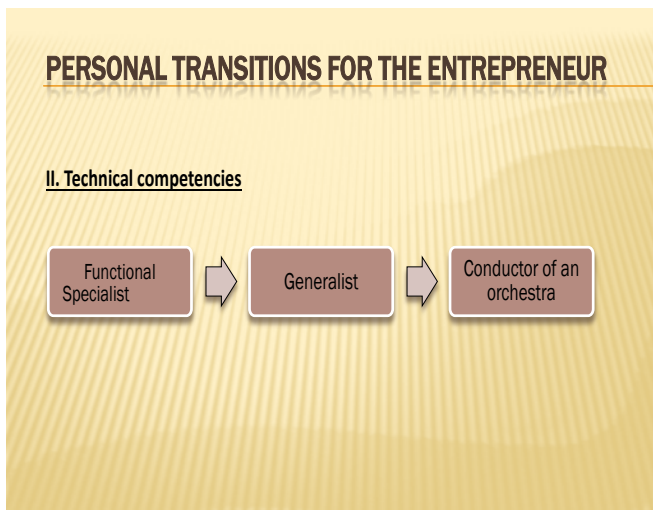


Figure 3 : Personal Technical competencies Transition of Entrepreneur

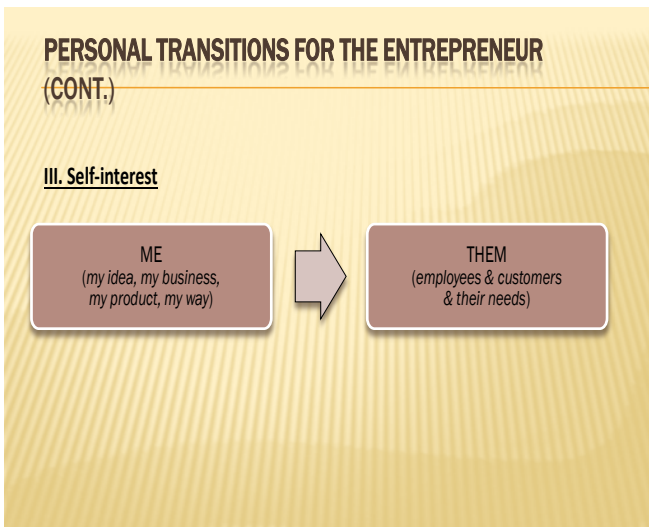


Figure 4 : Personal Self- Interest Transition of Entrepreneur

Each personal growth transition challenges an entrepreneur and raises the following questions:

- Are you still the best person to lead this business?
 - Should you hire someone more qualified to do this?
- ✚ **1st big transition- From doer to manager**
- Growth changes what an entrepreneur does and how he/she does it.
 - Starting out, an entrepreneur's focus is doing; success brings change.
 - In the beginning, most entrepreneurs are "my way or the highway."
 - Most entrepreneurs have to "back off" from that. Why?
 - When do you become a manager?

a. Delegation

Becoming a *manager/teacher*

- Why is delegation necessary? If you want to grow, you HAVE to learn to delegate.

- What do you delegate?
- How do you delegate?
- The power of processes: Processes are how entrepreneurs are able to be in multiple places at the same time.

Delegation is a learned skill; "Delegation is a process and not a natural act."

Why is delegation so hard for many entrepreneurs?

- "Delegation is the most difficult management skill to learn."
- "Delegation is baptism by fire. You start looking at the fact that if you don't let go, you will lose."
- You only have so much time. You can only do so much.

Take note: "I don't think delegation is a linear process. You have to delegate. Then you do delegate, and you find some things fall apart. Then you gather them up, pull them back in towards you, fix them and then start the process all over again."

b. Delegation

The necessity and power of processes

- The power of processes: the recipes or checklists of how to do something.
- Processes reduce delegation risks and mistakes.
- Processes *must* be written down.
- After each mistake is corrected, write a process. Leave a fire extinguisher behind.

c. Delegation

Best practices

- Learning to live with the humanity of employees- mistakes will happen!
- Expect mistakes. Look for them! Find them! Teach and correct!
- As you grow, you need clues, evidence and hints that mistakes are happening.
- You need daily and weekly measurements.
- What do you measure? Start measuring what's most important to you.
- Trust but verify.
- Measure: quality; on-time delivery; customer satisfaction; efficiency; daily costs.
- Engage employees in writing processes.
- Not one single point of failure.
- Engage employees in measuring key indicators.
- Encourage and reward self-reporting of mistakes.
- NEVER delegate writing checks or using credit cards until you get really big, and even then, only with limits and checks and balances.
- First delegate non-critical tasks.
- Delegation is teaching NOT punishing.
- Mistakes WILL happen.
- Don't expect them to do it YOUR way.

✚ **2nd big transition- Becoming a leader (managing managers)**

- When do you need managers? Typically around 7-10 employees.
- Managing managers is a teaching/coaching process.
- Every manager is a different person and you have to learn how that individual learns and responds to feedback, etc.
- You cannot lead unless you have willing followers. Engaging followers takes time and emotional intelligence—a skill that many people lack.
- Learning to have respectful, difficult performance conversations is hard for most people.
- Critique performance, not the person.
- Correct managers in private—not in front of employees.
- A leader can manage, generally, up to 7 managers.
- As a business grows, the structure (organizational chart) has to change. It becomes more complex.

The paradox of growth

- As a business grows, the entrepreneur must learn and grow as an individual.
- Here is the paradox:
- Some entrepreneurs become entrepreneurs because they've grown tired of big company structure, rules and bureaucracy.
- They yearn for simply “doing” their jobs, so they become entrepreneurs.
- And if they are successful...*Guess what!* They have to create structure and rules and go back to managing others (and quit “doing” themselves). Growth changes your job!

✚ *3rd big transition-Becoming a mentor/coach*

- As your business grows to 100+ employees, you will have begun to build a *Senior Management Team*. Now the entrepreneur’s role changes again.
- Now you have to personally mentor/coach each of the people in that team—who, in turn, are managing multiple managers—as they learn to be leaders.
- The challenge is to build a trusting, open relationship while holding people accountable for high performance.
- This role requires even more emotional engagement and time to deal with personal issues and style.

Take note: “As you push decisions down you have to spend more time on alignment and prioritization, making sure people are focused on the right things, that they are communicating well and getting along and that they have the requisite skill sets to do what needs to be done.”

✚ *4th big transition-From specialist to generalist*

- Many entrepreneurs had a business specialty when they worked for someone else—a functional focus (e.g., manufacturing, sales, finance, marketing, etc.).

- Entrepreneurs have to become generalists when they start a business and grow it—they are responsible for everything.
- An entrepreneur becomes a general manager by doing and being responsible for every functional area: Sales, marketing, production, purchasing, finances, accounting, logistics, customer service, HR, etc.
- As a business grows and a good management team is built, many entrepreneurs start to refocus on a functional area they love and excel at (eg., sales or operations or finance).

✚ *5th big transition-From generalist to “conductor”*

As a business grows, the entrepreneur spends more and more time “out of the details” and not “fighting fires,” and more time on:

- Strategy, finance, people and cultural issues; and
- “Conducting the symphony orchestra” so that beautiful music comes together from all the disparate parts of the business.

✚ *6th big transition-From me to them*

- Another way to describe how entrepreneurs change along the growth path is that they have to change from a “me” focus (relying on myself for everything important) to a “them” focus.
- One learns quickly that one’s business success in most cases is dependent on others (employees) and making and keeping others (customers) happy.
- Most businesses are people businesses.
- Learn to teach, listen to, engage with, relate to and inspire people.

• *Intuition: Trial and error approach to business*

Business success is not an intuitive activity—using or basing on what one feels to be true even without conscious reasoning. It is the ability to acquire knowledge without reference and/or the use of reason. It is the rule of thumb or intuitive approach to (business) issues or decisions. Intuition is conceived as a kind of inner perception, sometime regarded as real lucidity or understanding. The process of intuition remains largely unknown psychologically, but they are however opposed to the views of rationality. Intuition provides views, understanding, judgments, or beliefs that we cannot in every case empirically verify or rationality justify. Jung (1971) refers to intuition as ‘irrational function’ that is, the perception via the unconscious. Therefore, business strategies must be fashioned out rationally based on innovation and managed by a process to accomplish positive results and business success.

• *Sierra Leone Business space and Growth*

Sierra Leone has an area of 73,326 square kilometers with a current population of about six(6) million of which 51% are women and over 75% of the people residing in the rural areas highly dependent on subsistence agriculture and micro-

enterprises/household enterprises. This indicates that majority of the rural people are micro entrepreneurs, or small holder farmers or both. The financial system is small comprising the Bank of Sierra Leone (Central Bank), twelve (12) Commercial Banks, six (6) Community Banks, two (2) Discount Houses, fifty-two(52) Foreign Exchange Bureaux, a National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT), seven(7) Insurance Companies, 6(six) Insurance Brokers and a few other Non-banking Financial institutions(NBFIs)- with macro of microfinance institutions(MFIs) and Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The Sierra Leone socio-economic space is characterised by a large agrarian sector, which accounts for about 80-85% of the rural employment and at least 75% of the total population. Most of the people in this sector are self-employed and unpaid family workers. Mining and other non-farm activities are also important rural activities. Cash crop production (mainly cocoa and coffee) is primarily carried out by men, while women dominate food crop production. (Bank of Sierra Leone Newsletter July-August, 2012). There is also a large informal sector whose transactions hardly go through the banking system and getting data on their activities is difficult. (Sierra Leone Government National Micro-finance Policy, 2003). The second largest sector is the urban informal sector, which emerged largely as a result of accelerated rural-urban migration, and the labour surplus generated in the cities. This sector represents over 70% of the urban labour force and at least one-fifth of the total labour force (Sierra Leone Government National Micro-finance Policy,2003). Women accounts for about 65% of the Informal Sector's workforce. The key features of the informal sector are dominance of self-employed individuals (such as small traders, street vendors, carpenters, tailors and taxi drivers). The sector largely relies on labour services provided by owners and families, but occasionally also on paid labour without formal employment contracts. Labour productivity is low, underemployment is high, job security is pervasive, wages are highly flexible and workers do not receive much from employers. Legal minimum wage laws do not apply and unions play very limited role in wage fixing. Perhaps more important is the limited access to credit opportunities for enterprise start-up and expansion. (Sierra Leone Government National Micro-finance Policy, 2003).

The third (3rd) segment of the market is the formal urban sector comprising the public sector (civil service, parastatals, and semi-autonomous institutions) and medium-scale and large-scale enterprises producing both tradable and non-tradable goods and using both skilled and unskilled labour. (Sierra Leone Government National Micro-finance Policy, 2003).

To be a successful business, all the participants in the business- owners (Entrepreneurs, shareholders) managers and other stakeholders must have their various needs or claims satisfied. Fry, Stoner & Hattwick

(1998) state a number of indicators of success to include financial performance, customer needs and values, quality of products and services, innovation and creativity, and employee commitment. Business success is multidimensional in nature and may take into account several factors.

d) *Determinants of Business Growth*

A healthy business, according to Fry, Stoner & Hattwick is the ability of a business to excel over a long period of time. If a business makes a lot of money in the short run but fails far short of its objective later in the course of operation, it is not a successful business. Further a business that makes a lot financial returns but at the expenses of low morale, uncommitted employees, shoddy products, bad services, or unethical behaviour should not be considered a successful business (Dugguh, 2005). Recently Abrams provided the following business success factors for business owners to consider in their business decisions:

- i. *Underserved or new market:* many businesses succeed by bringing a proven product or service to a market for which there is greater demand than competitors can currently satisfy. This is done by establishing a location that has been overlooked by competitors or identifying a market that has not yet been served or dominated by competitors. These can be new markets, insufficient competitors in a new geographical location or when companies abandon or neglect smaller portion of their current customer base. In some cases, an innovative company may lead the way and others follow once the innovator has built or created customer demand. This is often called 'me-too' business that can achieve remarkable success.
- ii. *Lower price:* customers are often tempted by lower prices (lower cost options), and being a low-cost leader is a time-honoured strategy for business success. However, this can only be made possible if the business has some strategic advantages like unique production or distribution method, secret supply sources, or arrangements with particular partners that make costs consistently lower. Lower price strategy can only be attained in the short-run. This is because if the only key differentiation is the provision of cheap product or services, another company can also lower prices thereby 'beating you at your own game'.
- iii. *Higher Quality:* innovation often comes in the form of higher quality. A business may recognize an opportunity because of lack of high quality offerings in a robust market, or may notice customers expressing dissatisfaction with current options. Under such situation, a business that offers high quality product or service is more likely to succeed than one that offers low quality product or service to customers.

- iv. *Service*: a number of highly successful companies seized business opportunities that are made possible by the opportunity in the environment to provide better service than competitors. Better service means giving customers more personal attention: taking care of customers faster, quick response to customer complaints, return policy, dedicated sales staff etc.
- v. *Convenience*: making a product or service in a more convenient way for customers can create a viable business success. Convenience has the potentials to attract and retain more customers. Convenience products are generally small, rather quickly consumed and bought frequently. They are branded, staple in nature, standardized and generally be substituted. Customers expect and demand that convenience products should be nearby and immediate availability heavily influence which brand and businessman and location are chosen. The price per unit of a convenience product is generally low. Examples of convenience products include bread, milk, toothpaste and brush, battery, light bulb, under wears and so on.
- vi. *New delivery system or distribution channel*: some successful companies have been founded by creating or using new sales channels. It is on record that Amazon.com pioneered the possibilities of new delivery system and distribution in the internet as a sales channel for books, academic journals etc and today Amazon.com is a successful company in books distribution and is acclaimed the 'world's largest bookstore'.
- vii. *Increased integration*: integration is a situation where a company controls more steps in the design, production, and sale of its product or service rather than relying on outside supplies. This can create a competitive advantage because it gives the company more power to oversee the quality at every stage of the production process. To gain competitive advantage based on quality, vertical integration is often advocated. In addition, businesses are highly successful when they possess the following characteristics: compelling, executable business idea, large market and potential for high or rapid growth, building a business in a growing industry, creating a business and not just a product, building a strong team and having original ideas but not completely new ones. When these factors are linked to innovation, process management and business process orientation, the success of the business is enhanced.

e) *Growth Risks Assessment Tool*

There are certain questions business practitioners (Entrepreneurs, shareholders, Management of businesses) needs to answer for "a successful growing business" as shown below:

- ❖ Why should we grow?
- ❖ How will we grow?
- ❖ How much should we grow?
- ❖ How much growth can we afford?
- ❖ Do we have enough people?
- ❖ Do we have the right people?
- ❖ Do we have hiring and training processes?
- ❖ Do we have adequate financial controls?
- ❖ Do we have adequate quality controls?
- ❖ How will growth create risks for...
 - a. Culture?
 - b. Customer service?
 - c. Customer experience?
 - d. Cash flow?
 - e. Supply chain, raw materials and suppliers?
 - f. Distribution and delivery?
 - g. Financial safety net?
- ❖ How will we mitigate those risks?
- ❖ Do we have adequate daily information to monitor these risks?
- ❖ Who will help us monitor, manage, and correct such risks or results?
- ❖ Do we need to pace growth?

In the process of answering the various questions in the above business growth assessment tools in a knot shell examine and evaluate how effective and efficient is the business marketing strategy, risk and change management, the Entrepreneur profitability and growth mindset and the agency concept towards maximizing shareholders wealth. There is also need for a continuous assessment and evaluation of policies, procedures of business investment activities looking at models such as; PESTEL, CAMEL, SWOT, and SPAMSAPO analyses in trying to identify the strength, opportunities, deficiencies and finding appropriate measures to catalyze the achievement of Entrepreneurial and Institutional/Organizational goals that is attaining the 'PEES'-that is Profitability, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Sustainable Business Investment.

RISK ASSESSMENT BUSINESS SUCCESS MODELS			
PESTEL	CAMEL	SPAMSAPO	SWOT
P- Political stability st	C- Capital	S- Stewardship	S- Strength
E- Economic status	A- Asset	P- Policy & procedures	W- Weaknesses
S- Social Amenities	M- Management	A- Auditing, Accounting Principle & Standards	O- Opportunities
T- Technology	E- Earnings	M-Management	T- Threat
E- Environment	L- Liquidity	S- Supervision & Monitoring	
L- Legal Issues		A-Accountability & Transparency	
		P-Processes & Controls	
		O- Outsourcing effect	

Figure 5 : Risk Assessment Models

f) *Process Management*

Simply put, process management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, techniques and systems to define, visualize, measure, control, report and improve processes with the goal to meet customer requirements profitably. The objective of process management is to clearly identify and document all steps and action taken to complete a process or work flow. It involves documenting the current process, evaluating time and level of effort as well as analysis of efficiency, bottlenecks, and overall process costs as opposed to the trial and error approach which does not for example, document any process. The benefits of process management cannot be underestimated. For instance, the ISO 9001 (clause 0.2 of ISO 9001:2000) emphasized that:

Process management promotes the adoption of a process approach when developing, implementing and improving the effectiveness of a quality management system, to enhance customer satisfaction by meeting customer requirements.

Closely related to process management is business process orientation. Basing his study on the previous work of researchers like Walton (1986), Drucker (1985), Davenport (1993) on business process orientation, Koblbacher (2009) suggests that companies could enhance their overall performance by adopting a 'process view' of the organisation. Empirical study by McCormark (2000) to explore the relationship between business process orientation and enhanced business performance indicated that business process orientation is critical in reducing conflict and encouraging greater connectedness within an organisation while improving business performance. Another study by Koblbacher (2009) reveals that business process orientation is positively associated with customer satisfaction, product quality, delivery speed and time-to-market speed. Building on this concept requires a new approach and a

new way of thinking about the organisation which will result in dramatic business performance improvements. Companies that have built or centered on business process orientation like Texas Instruments have reported receiving improved business performance within the organisation. (Hammer, 1999 & 2001).

V. GLOBAL INNOVATION INDEX

At this juncture, it important to acknowledge the top 10 countries that make up the list of the most innovative countries of the world with the hope that other nations would benchmarked and benefit from their strategic ideas regarding innovation and creativity. These countries, in a descending order, are: Switzerland, Sweden, U.K, Netherlands, USA, Finland, Hong Kong, Singapore, Denmark and Ireland. The factors used for the ranking include input and output of countries for the ranking.

VI. CONCLUSION

Innovation and creativity are key inputs in attaining business success and growth in any society and economy that is in readiness to grow and progress to economic prosperity as they serve as the bedrock platform with a positive geometric effect on socio-economic growth and development that output sound and quality Intellectual capital service delivery, quality of life sustainability, effectiveness efficiency and productive growth of business entities. Considering the key factors responsible for business success and growth like the underserved markets, low price, high quality, service, increased integration etc. It is therefore necessary for business entities to shift from trial and error (the rule of thumb approach) to a more scientific process in business operations especially for Entrepreneurs who have been in such habit. The research study clearly brings out cogent facts about innovation & creativity, business mindset intuitive business success model, the

“IISS” model, 5ps of growing a successful business, drivers of innovation, innovation process, business success factors and indicators, intuitive behaviour and shows how process management, business process performance and risk assessment business success model may contribute to business innovation and creativity in Sierra Leone.

Key Points To Note For A Successful Business And Growth:

- Employee needs Good body language related to your direct boss.
- Employee needs Good intentions are NOT enough-it's how you behave as a leader.
- Employee wants to be listened to.
- Employee wants to have input into how they do their jobs.
- Employee wants you to care about them as people.
- Employees want you to help them grow and advance.
- Employees want frequent and fair feedback.
- Employees want to be treated with respect.
- Employees are emotionally engaged and personally invested in doing great work.
- Employees view their work as more than a paycheck.
- Employees are proud of where they work.
- Employees find meaning and emotional satisfaction in being part of your business.
- Employees find meaning and emotional satisfaction in the purpose of their work
- As a business grows, the entrepreneur's success becomes more and more dependent on others.
- It's critical to hire the right people.
- It's critical for the entrepreneur to be a "people person," with good people skills.
- Success depends on teaching, motivating and relating, and on a daily basis, engaging employees and managers in the pursuit of excellence and high performance.
- The secrete of high Performance is High Employee Engagement

VII. RECOMMENDATION FOR POLICY IMPLICATION

Intellectual Capital resource is the first and foremost significant resources among all other resources of any Nation and a very good example is Singapore which has been transformed from being a third to first world country as result of efficient and effective innovation and creativity that has lead there business activities in both the public and private sector to a success and ultimately growing their GDP. The reason been a Country can be richly endowed with all

natural resources on Earth but if there is no efficient and quality intellectual capital no creativity and innovation. So For Sierra Leone businesses to be successful there should be improved quality of education and training at all levels. This will foster education, attract talents and also create talents for innovation and creativity to attain business success and growth which will ultimately has a positive functional relationship of growing the economy. Also, other developing countries like China, India, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Uganda, Jordan, Malaysia, Senegal, Hungary, Ghana, Costa Rica etc, have invested in education and today, the quality of education and by extension, innovation has significantly improved for better. With improved education, talents could also be created. According to records, there were only few countries in Africa that are among the list of 142 countries on Global Innovation Index, 2013- Mauritius (#53), South Africa (#58) and Tunisia (#70). In addition, creativity and innovation training skills should be given by innovation experts in dynamic workshop settings, laboratories and so on. Currently, Sierra Leone has three (3) Universities, three (3) Polytechnics and 5 Colleges of education and many secondary as well as primary schools. However, it's imperative for the Government to boost and increase on the budget of the Education Ministry to stimulate, revamp and increase quality, efficient services of intellectual product in the Country and to ensure a ready and timely market place by putting square pegs in square holes and round pegs in round holes which is the platform and incubator of intellects innovative and creative skills to be able to perform well in their various job specifications which will positively impact economic activities and grow the Country's GDP, National Income, safe and sound eco-financial system and better standard of living of citizens in the Country. The current educational budget before the ebola epidemic is grossly inadequate to attract innovative talents and its devastation of the socio-economic space with special reference to the Health sector, business and agriculture which have been seriously affected with increasing impediments than before. Therefore, Government, the Organised private sector and individuals should provide adequate capital for Research and Development (R&D). Research studies and other evidence have proven that developed countries invest more in R&D and are more innovative and creative in meeting the task of Global Competitiveness. Countries like Brazil, Russia, India and China and South Africa (BRICS) are funding R&D projects with positive results. A climate of investment around innovation and creativity should be nurtured. A culture of venture and risk capital to help local investors should be encouraged. In addition, a culture of 'mindset' or awareness creation on innovation, business success and process management should also be encouraged as well as tackling security challenges like social chaos, strikes, frequent unending political to give vote of

confidence to economic players with support and without fear which will stimulate business performance and success. Government should build a strong and dynamic institutional structure of innovation and creativity that should not be neglected and discarded but given all the support needs for winning economic success in the Country. Policies that foster and promote innovation should be reviewed and made new policies and identify priority accorded areas that will yield sustainable growth and development that would address the socio-economic, Climate change and environment as well as community and societal issues that confront Sierra Leone as a nation. There are socio-economic sectors such as; Industrialisation, Health, Transport, Agriculture, Food & Security, Environment, Energy & Power and Management Information technology & System etc, that warrant innovative and creative skills for both the public and the private sector if and only if Sierra Leone as a nation is prepare and ready to grow the economy for prosperity for the betterment of all citizens in the Country.

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