Inspiring **Innovation**, **Creativity** and **Entrepreneurship** in the Workplace

Assigned to you

Let's Go Back to 1986...
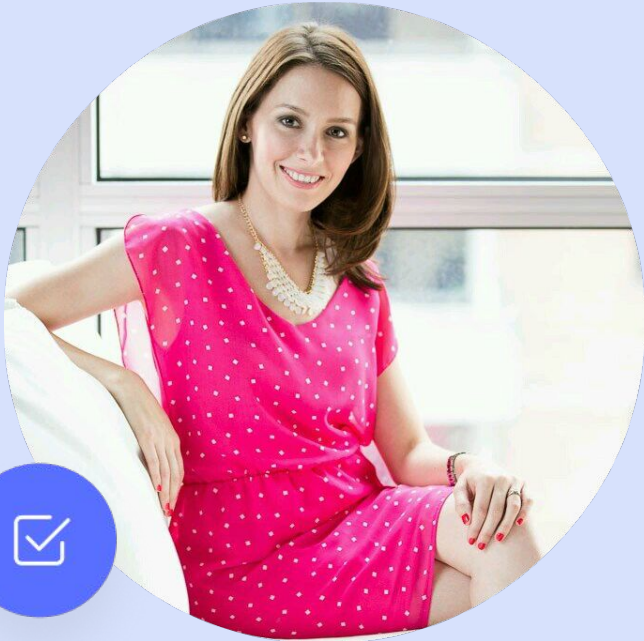
@ErinBlaskie

- Commodore 64

- First company at 21

- Grew the team to 25 with a global roster of clients

- Burnout/depression

- Returned to a 'day job' at a SaaS accelerator

- Joined a SaaS company, Fellow

What We'll Chat About Today...

- **Why innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship at work matters**

- 5 things to put in place at work to inspire innovation

- **5 ways to promote and encourage creativity at work**

- 5 steps to take to build an entrepreneurial workplace

Why Does Innovation, Creativity & Entrepreneurship at Work Matter?

Let's Look to a Giant: Google

- Google encourages all employees to use **20% of their time on passion projects**

- Introduced in 2004, Google's 20 Percent Project led to the invention of AdSense, Gmail and Google Talk (also known as Google Chat)

Let's Look to a Giant: Shopify

- Shopify encourages all of their employees to be entrepreneurs and have side hustles

- In 2018, Atlee Clark said: "A whopping **42% of Shopify's 3,000 plus employees run their own businesses** and <u>are encouraged to do so</u>."

Benefits for the Employer

- Embracing and encouraging creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship can lead to:

  - Unique solutions that cut costs

  - New streams of revenue

  - **Opportunities for business growth**

  - Higher retention rates across your employee base

Benefits for the Employees

- Happier employees who have time to think and be creative

- Diversity in thought and in leadership

- Inclusivity at work

- **Higher employee morale in positive, fulfilling workplaces**

Question to Answer in the Chat
What are other benefits that might arise from encouraging creativity, innovation & entrepreneurship?

# 5 Things to Put in Place at Work to Inspire Innovation

1. Psychological Safety

- Psychological safety is **the belief that you won't be punished when you make a mistake**

- Psychological safety allows for moderate risk-taking, speaking your mind, creativity, and sticking your neck out without fear of having it cut off

- In short: your humans need to feel safe
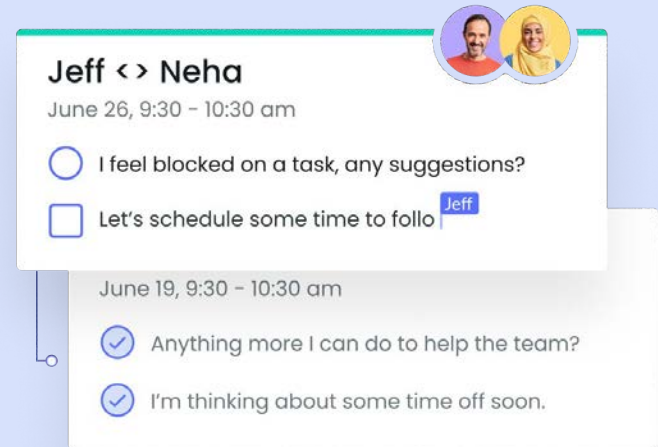
1. Psychological Safety (Continued)

- **How do you promote psychological safety at work?**

  - Approach conflict as a collaborator, not an adversary

  - Speak human to human

  - **Replace blame with curiosity**

  - Ask for feedback on delivery

  - Measure psychological safety
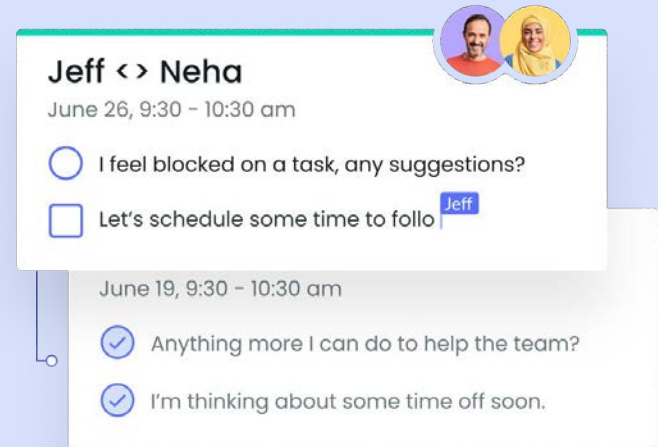
2. Open (and Honest!) Feedback Policy

- **Make feedback a regular part of your workplace culture**

  - **Leverage software/a tool** that encourages and facilitates feedback from your team

  - **Lead by example**: if you show your team what giving and receiving feedback looks like, they'll be more likely to do it

  - **Ask for it, often**: use your 1:1 meetings as an opportunity to get a temperature check on where people are at and what needs to change

Nice job on that presen...
Last Wednesday
Received

★★★★☆
2 weeks ago
Received
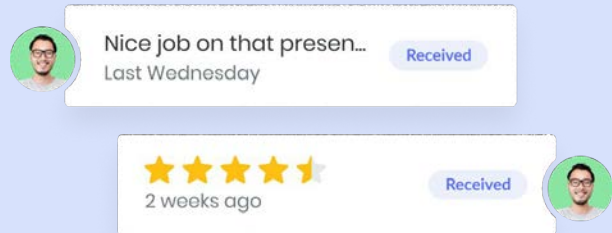
3. Inclusive Workplace Culture

- Diversity of thought, innovation, and creativity can't exist in a homogeneous environment

- Promote an inclusive workplace culture by de-siloing departments to bring employees together

- **Try a 'watercooler' Slack channel and encourage casual conversation**

4a. Office Design (In-Person)

- An inspiring workspace inspires creativity and innovation

- If you can't move furniture, **encourage employees to make their space their own**

- Create spaces where people can share ideas or their work and encourage their use

4b. Office Design (Remote)

- Remote offices are slightly more challenging for creativity and innovation but not impossible

- **Use tools like Miro to host virtual whiteboard/brainstorming sessions**

- Host weekly virtual lunches

- Pair up team members regularly to have casual chats

5. Develop Great Leadership & Management

- Ensure that your managers and leaders have the right resources

- Do 360 feedback reviews and/or skip-level meetings to identify issues

- **Create a culture where micro-management is discouraged**

- Promote empathy and compassion on your leadership team

Quick Check-in
Selected template

Retrospective

Skip-level meeting

Remote one-on-one

Sprint planning

Project Kickoff

Amir <> Sam
Every Mon, 9:30 - 10:30 am

Quick Check-in

○ What's top of mind?

○ Priorities

○ What needs help?

Question to Answer in the Chat

What other things can an organization do to inspire or encourage innovation?

5 Ways to Promote & Encourage Creativity at Work

1. Promote Freedom and Flexibility

- Forcing people to be in a chair from 9am to 5pm every day isn't effective

- **Meet people where they are at**

  ○ Create core working hours but give employees some flex time

  ○ Allow people to work around commutes or family schedules

 ○ Try to reduce stress as less stress = more creativity!

2. Create Knowledge Sharing Opportunities

- **Encourage employees to share knowledge (work-related or not!) with each other**

  - Host show-and-tell events

  - Create monthly lunch-and-learns

  - Encourage an employee to teach others a skill (music, yoga, etc.)

 - Create hobby/skill-related Slack channels

3a. Rethink Your Meetings

- Many meetings are a complete waste of time - temperature check your meetings, ask:

  - Does this meeting REALLY need to exist?

  - **Does everyone around the table have a voice?**

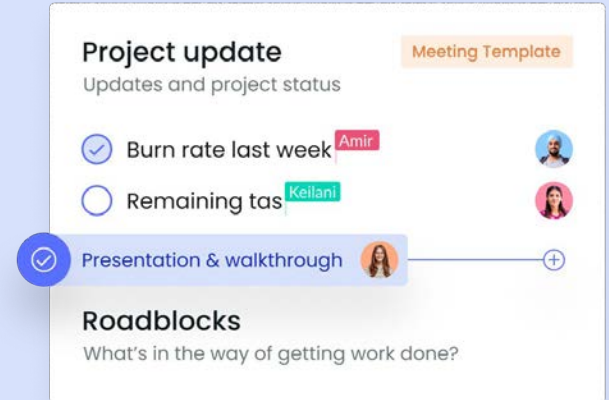 - Are we trying to do too much inside of one meeting?
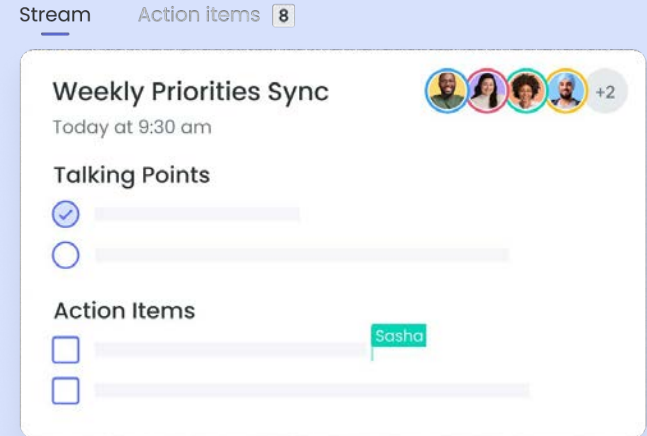
3b. Rethink Your Meetings

- Get creative with your meetings:
  - Change the location from time to time
  - **Ask other team members to lead the meetings and/or present something interesting**
  - Allow for some casual banter and conversation
 - Keep it on-track and on-time
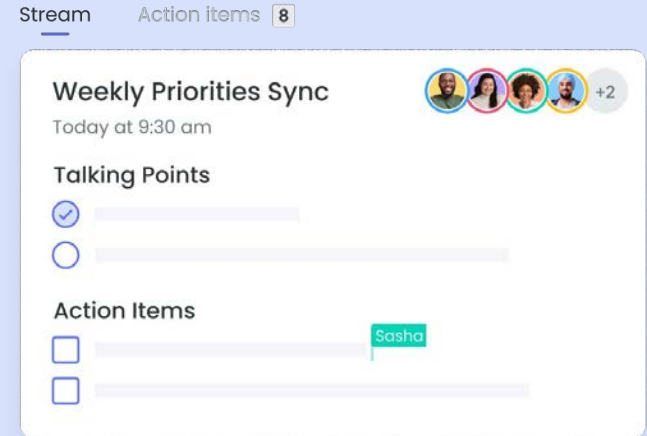
4a. Host 'Hackathons' or Sprints

- Hackathons and sprints are concentrated efforts by your employees, over a period of time, to solve unique challenges

- **Consider hosting a hackathon (if technical) or a sprint (if non-technical) at least 2x per year or once a quarter**

- Encourage cross-departmental teams to foster even more collaboration

Project update
Updates and project status

Meeting Template

- ✓ Burn rate last week Amir
- ○ Remaining tas Keilani
- ✓ Presentation & walkthrough ⊕

Roadblocks
What's in the way of getting work done?

4b. Host 'Hackathons' or Sprints

- For example: let's say you're trying to solve a big problem at work, **you could put that problem statement out to your team as a challenge**

- Teams form around the challenge and the teams are given 1-2 days to work on it

- At the end, presentations are given to present the solutions
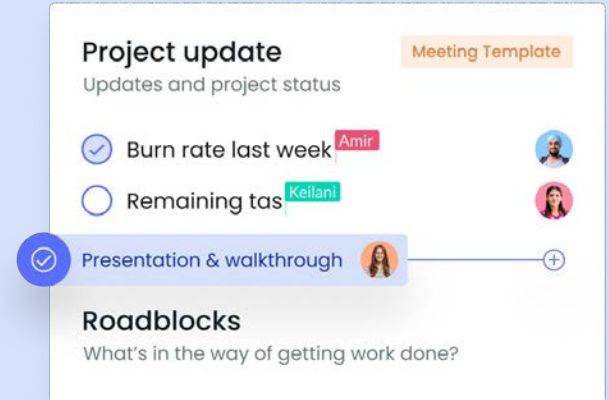
5. Source Mentors for Your Team Members

- Sometimes the best opinions and advice come from outside of our four walls

- **Pair up your team members with mentors that will help them explore new skills and develop existing skills even more**

- Be sure to ask your team member first what they'd find valuable and useful - make them a part of the process!

Question to Answer in the Chat
Thinking about your own team, what is one immediate change you could make to promote creativity?

5 Steps to Take to Build an Entrepreneurial Workplace
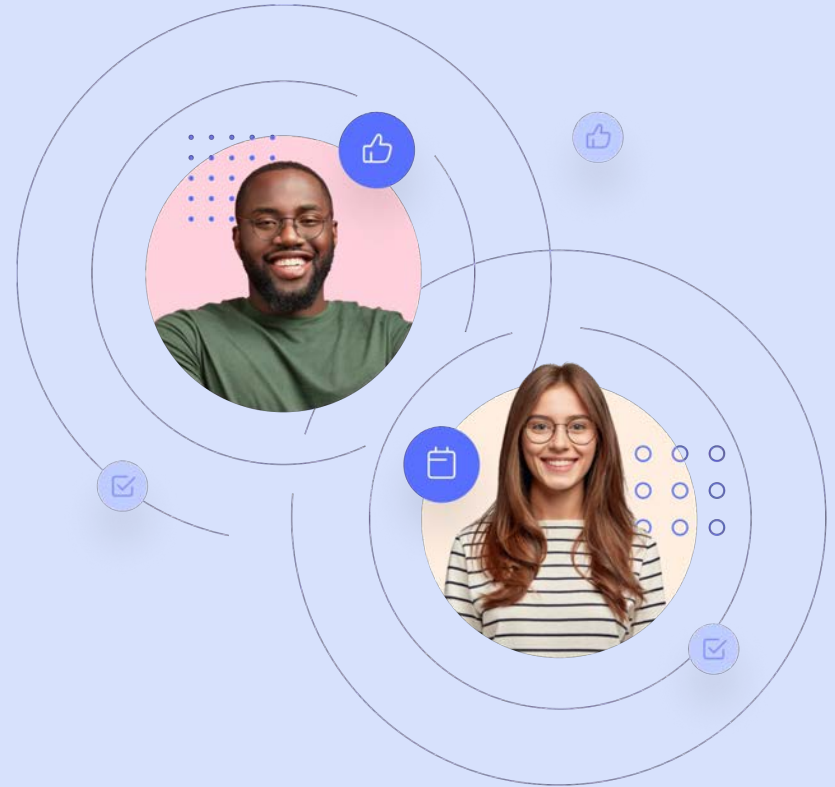
1. Make Your Entrepreneurial Culture Known

- To build a culture of entrepreneurs, you need to make it known that you're interested in doing so

- **Create easy ways for people to submit new ideas and encourage people to do so**

- Embrace failure by sharing mistakes with your team and what the lessons learned were

2. Teach Entrepreneurial Thinking

- Create a library of business and entrepreneurship books and encourage employees to read them

- **Bring in guest speakers to lunch and learn events that are entrepreneurial**

- Ask employees that are already entrepreneurs to share their stories with the rest of the team/company

3. Give Your Employees Autonomy

- **Delegate the end result, not the precise way you'd take to get there**

- Allow employees flexibility in their work environment and schedule

- Recognize that each team member is VERY different and will have a unique working style
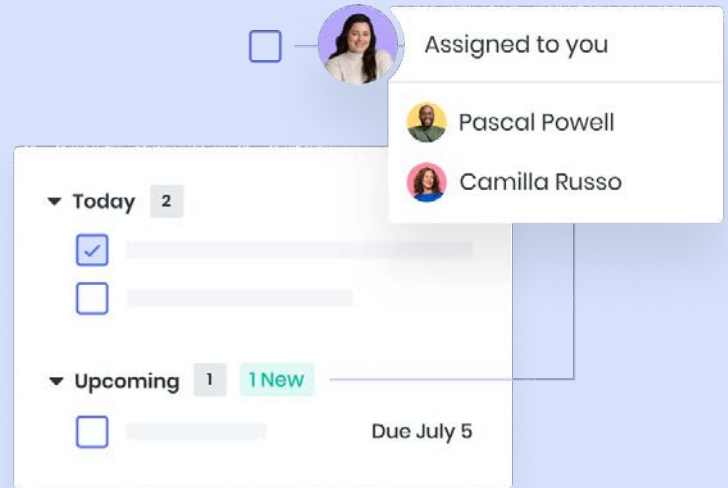
4. Reward Innovation

- Nothing shows your team members that you value innovation more than a reward for the behaviour

- Provide bonuses or time off for great ideas

- **Add shout outs for employee recognition to all-hands or company-wide meetings**

Nice work!
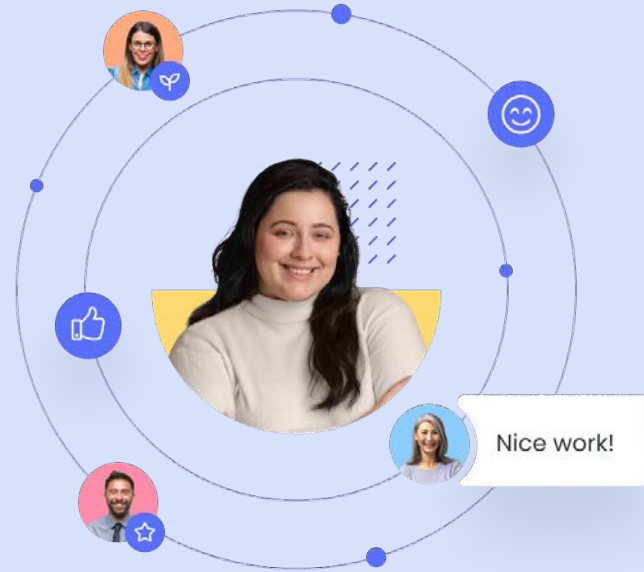
5. Build Experimentation into Goals

- When setting goals and objectives for the year, build in experimentation goals as well

- **Aim to run at least 2-3 new experiments per quarter, per department**

- An experiment could be a tweak to a process, a change to an email that goes out, or a new approach to a very old way of doing things

Question for Self-Reflection

Do you think your organization does a good job at encouraging entrepreneurship today? If not, what can you do to shift that?

Recap

5 Things to Put in Place at Work to Inspire Innovation

1. Psychological Safety

2. Open (and Honest!) Feedback Policy

3. Inclusive Workplace Culture

4. Great Office Design (In-Person or Remote)

5. Great Leadership & Management

5 Ways to Promote & Encourage Creativity at Work

1. Promote Freedom and Flexibility

2. Create Knowledge Sharing Opportunities

3. Rethink Your Meetings

4. Host 'Hackathons' or Sprints

5. Source Mentors for Your Team Members

5 Steps to Take to Build an Entrepreneurial Workplace

1. Make Your Entrepreneurial Culture Known

2. Teach Entrepreneurial Thinking

3. Give Your Employees Autonomy

4. Reward Innovation

5. Build Experimentation into Goals

Question & Answer Time

Thank You!