Foreword

The purpose of this book is to support leaders and managers to build and use organizational creativity for competitive success. Crucially, the lessons in the book apply way beyond creative fields and industries to firms of all sizes and sectors challenged by the need to be both more creative and innovative. Andrés Hatum defines creativity as the generation of new and useful ideas, and innovation as the processes through which new and useful ideas are converted into products and services. The book deals with both creativity and innovation processes and practices and incorporates ideas and concepts from the literatures on individual, team, and organizational creativity. Throughout the book, the central driving question is how organization creativity can be built, sustained, and harnessed in order to improve the competitive performance of the firm.

Andrés Hatum appropriately sees organizational creativity as a multi-dimensional concept with challenges in four main areas of leadership and management. Thus the core arguments and examples in the book are structured around these four areas: attracting, developing, and retaining talent (Chapter 2); new ways of organizing to build creativity (Chapter 3); the role of human resource management practices as facilitators of organizational creativity (Chapter 4); and, finally, the crucial role of creative leadership and culture creation in building and harnessing organizational creativity. These four areas are seen as a system of highly interconnected features and practices that can support creativity in organizations, if applied at the right time and in a manner appropriate to the business and organizational contexts.

The book is written in an open, clear, and accessible style and draws upon much of the available published research on organizational creativity. The general picture is reinforced by clear conceptual diagrams and, most importantly, by moving easily between the general and conceptual, and the particular, through the use of many well-chosen case examples. The busy manager and MBA student will find this interchange between the general concepts and the illustrative examples particularly rewarding.

The examples are presented in two formats. Each of the main thematic chapters (Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5) conclude with a holistic case example that fully illustrates and exemplifies the conceptual arguments in each of the

chapters. The cases are from four industries – entertainment, gastronomy, football, and film production, and include well-known organizations such as Cirque du Soleil in Canada and FC Barcelona in Spain. To give added practical emphasis, additional shorter case vignettes are used chapter by chapter to illustrate a range of talent management practices, organizational and team-building mechanisms, human resources practices, and forms of leadership and cultural change that can be and have been used by notable firms as they have sought to build organizations with higher capacity for creativity. The case vignettes are taken from notable examples of high-creativity firms from the UK, USA, Spain, the Netherlands, China, Austria, and Japan. The international spread of the material in the book is another of its research and educational strengths.

This book, embedded as it is in relevant scholarly literatures and in practice, provides an analytically strong and engaging introduction to one of the most important business and organizational problems of our time. Leaders, managers, and MBA students will find this book interesting and rewarding and of great practical value as they seek to shape how creativity can be built and deployed in their own organizations.

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