

## EVALUATION OF WORKING CREATIVITY OF REAL ESTATE SALES STAFF

**Nguyen Thanh Huyen**

Faculty of Social work, University of Labour and Social Affairs, Vietnam

**Ha Thi Thu Phuong**

Institute of Postgraduate Training, Hanoi University of Business and Technology, Vietnam

**Nguyen Hoan**

Corresponding Author, Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment, Vietnam

### Abstracts

Work creativity increases curiosity and promotes the desire to learn. One method of fostering creativity is by asking questions, which builds ideas with help and insight from others. Managers who understand strategies that encourage creativity and innovation can foster growth among employees and teams. Work creativity becomes very important in ensuring that a workplace functions happily and generates innovative concepts. This study was conducted with the aim of assessing the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces through survey results. The survey subjects are estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces. We use both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are based on literature reviews and expert interviews. Quantitative research methods were carried out with SPSS software, including Cronbach's alpha analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and independent T tests. Research results show that the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces is highly appreciated and meaningful, and there is not a statistically significant difference in the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces between these different family platforms. Based on this result, the study proposes some recommendations for real estate firms and employees.

**Keywords:** human resources, labor economics, work creativity, real estate sales staff, real estate firms

**JEL codes:** C91, J81, M11

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Applying creative thinking in workers' daily work lives will prevent fatigue, and workers will be able to unlock more meaningful results.

Work creativity leads to better teamwork because creativity inspires employees to work together, and the creative process encourages collaboration.

Work creativity contributes to improving the ability to attract and retain employees. When creativity is encouraged by a firm, employees will be more satisfied with their work and committed to continued loyalty to the company.

Work creativity is something that requires employees to make efforts to bring many different values. This is an important factor to help them achieve success and increase performance at work. Work creativity increases curiosity and promotes the desire to learn. One method of fostering creativity is by asking questions, which builds ideas with help and insight from others. Managers who understand strategies that encourage creativity and innovation can foster growth among employees and teams.

Work creativity provides workers with a way to find new and innovative solutions to the problems they encounter. Work creativity also helps workers create new and unique products or services, thereby helping firms compete and develop in the market.

Work creativity is one of the most important factors in the success and development of a job or organization. It helps employees achieve goals, solve problems creatively, and improve performance.

Job characteristics of real estate sales staff include: (i) Regarding legal, social, and business knowledge related to the field of work, business requires understanding legal regulations and policies, understanding the market, and thoroughly learning about the products being delivered to be completely confident in providing quick and accurate answers to customers' questions. (ii) Regarding experiences, skills, and qualifications, it requires good communication skills, negotiation skills, customer care skills, sales skills, product promotion skills, collection skills, information processing, etc. graduated from high school, college, and university, and has a practicing certificate. Must be dynamic, diligent, patient, inquisitive, eager to learn, able to work independently and in groups, and especially must have quite extensive knowledge. You need to put yourself in the customer's position, know clearly the needs of the customer, and know how to benefit the customer. Must have a pleasant personality, honesty, and a trustworthy appearance. Being mature, having the right evaluation and judgment, and being enthusiastic about work are the top requirements.

The article is structured into six main sections. Section 1 introduces the research topic. Section 2 presents a literature review. Section 3 outlines the research methodology. Section 4 analyzes the results of the quantitative analysis. Section 5 discusses the research findings and recommendations, and, finally, Section 6 provides a conclusion.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Amabile (1996), creativity is the creation of new and useful ideas that are valuable and suitable for goals in a certain field. Creativity originates from an individual's accumulated creative thinking, skills, and expertise based on the foundation of education and past experiences (Amabile, 1998). With creativity, employees can contribute to a competitive advantage for the organization; therefore, it is considered one of the most important aspects of organizational climate (Sosik & Megerian, 1999). Creativity can also be due to innate ability, but creativity is also the result of a training process.

To stay competitive, many employers are looking for creative and innovative employees to add value to their organization. However, current models of job performance overlook creative performance as an important criterion to measure in the workplace (Reaves, 2015).

Innovative work behavior (IWB) is considered to be behavior that occurs in the workplace (Ramamoorthy et al., 2005); therefore, it is related to job characteristics (Holman et al., 2012), which have been found to influence employee behavior directly or indirectly through psychological states (Ohly & Fritz, 2010). Job characteristics are explained by Hackman & Oldham (1975) in the job characteristics model (JCM), including seven factors, of which the five main factors are skill variety, task identity, meaningfulness tasks, job autonomy, and feedback from the job itself. Job characteristics are defined as the characteristics or attributes of the job that employees undertake (Tsaur et al., 2011).

The results of previous studies show that employee characteristics such as proactive personality (Chen, 2011), creative cognitive style (such as imagination) (Shalley et al., 2004), positive psychology (such as self-confidence) (Oldham & Cummings, 1996), and deep knowledge (Chang et al., 2011) are more likely to perform innovative behaviors.

The head of human resource management at a real estate firm in Hanoi believes that work creativity is the process of creating new and different things by using imagination and initiative. It can lead to new products or solutions, as well as solve new or more complex problems. Work creativity is an important factor in many fields, from art to technology to business to education.

Inheriting the results of previous studies and the opinions of interviewed experts, we set up observed variables of work creativity of real estate sales staff (see table 1).

**Table 1:** Observed variables: Work creativity of real estate sales staff

<b>Work creativity of real estate sales staff (WC)</b>	
WC1	I feel that I am very good at generating novel ideas in the real estate business.
WC2	I am confident in my ability to creatively solve real estate business problems.
WC3	I feel comfortable trying new ideas about the real estate business.
WC4	I have the opportunity to use my skills and creativity in the real estate business.
WC5	I have the freedom to decide how to complete my job duties.
WC6	My creativity is used to its full potential in the real estate business.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

We used mixed methods, both quantitative and qualitative, to evaluate and explain the differences in the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces.

Using the qualitative approach first, we examined earlier research and interviewed real estate sales personnel in Hanoi and other areas to assess and determine the variations in their creative work. However, because their research was grounded in foreign experience, we attempt to offer an improved framework by combining their ideas, modifying the questions' observation factors, and applying it to the Vietnamese real estate industry.

Then, we use quantitative components, including the use of questionnaires as inputs for the Cronbach's alpha analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and independent T tests, to investigate the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces.

Participants in surveys and interviews are part of the selective sampling process. The number of observation variables in which participants were engaged in their regular work in estate sales firms

served as the basis for selection. As a result, all participants in our sample (100%) work as salespeople for real estate companies in Hanoi and the surrounding regions. The survey findings were more dependable because of the employees' knowledge and abilities (see table 2).

**Table 2.** Respondents by family platforms and marital statuses

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Family platforms</b>			
Have family members who work for real estate firms	81	35.2	35.2
Do not have family members who work for real estate firms.	149	64.8	100.0
<b>Marital statuses</b>			
Married	186	80.9	80.9
Single	44	19.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SPSS software.

Information on the data collected is shown in Table 2. It shows that among the respondents, 35.2% have family members who work for real estate firms, and 64.8% do not have family members who work for real estate firms. Among the respondents, 80.9% of the participants were married, and 19.1% of the participants were single.

## 4. RESULTS

### Cronbach's Alpha

The work creativity of real estate sales staff has been measured by Cronbach's alpha. The results of testing Cronbach's alpha for attributes are presented in Table 3 below. The results also show that attributes of the variables have Cronbach's alpha coefficients that are greater than 0.6, and the correlation coefficients of all attributes are greater than 0.3. So, all the attributes of the variables are statistically significant (Hoang & Chu, 2008; Hair et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2014).

**Table 3.** Results of Cronbach's alpha testing of attributes and item-total statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
.902	6			
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
WC1	19.72	10.245	0.679	0.893
WC2	19.67	10.002	0.709	0.889
WC3	19.95	10.482	0.787	0.879

WC4	19.40	9.893	0.753	0.882
WC5	19.32	9.894	0.740	0.884
WC6	19.28	10.132	0.747	0.883

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SPSS software.

**Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)**

Next, tables 4, 5, and 6 show that exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted through component analysis and variance.

The results of factor analysis in Table 4 show that KMO is 0.831, which is greater than 0.5 but less than 1. Bartlett’s testimony shows sig. = 0.000 < 0.05, which means variables in the whole are interrelated (Hoang & Chu, 2008; Hair et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2014).

After implementing the rotation matrix, six components of the work creativity of real estate sales staff with a factor load factor greater than 0.5 and eigenvalues greater than 1 were identified, and the variance explained was 67.707% (see tables 5 and 6). These statistics demonstrate that research data analysis for factor discovery is appropriate. Through the quality assurance of the scale and the test of the EFA model, we have identified six components of the work creativity of real estate sales staff (Hoang & Chu, 2008; Hair et al., 2009, Hair et al., 2014).

**Table 4: KMO and Bartlett’s Test**

KMO and Bartlett’s Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.831
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	993.711
	Df	3
	Sig.	.000

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SPSS software.

**Table 5: Total Variance Explained**

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.062	67.707	67.707	4.062	67.707	67.707
2	0.914	15.238	82.945			
3	0.381	6.346	89.292			
4	0.298	4.961	94.253			
5	0.192	3.199	97.452			
6	0.153	2.548	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SPSS software.

**Table 6:** Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>

WC	Component
	1
WC3	0.867
WC4	0.841
WC6	0.838
WC5	0.834
WC2	0.789
WC1	0.764

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SPSS software.

### Independent T-test: different family platforms

A comparison of the results of the evaluation of the differences in the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces with participants of different family platforms (the respondents have family members who work for real estate firms and the respondents do not have family members who work for real estate firms) can be seen in Table 7. According to the results shown in Table 7, sig Levene's test is 0.645, which is more than 0.05. The variance between the respondents who have family members who work for real estate firms and the respondents who do not have family members who work for real estate firms is not different. Moreover, the sig value of the t-test is 0.465, which is more than 0.05, which means that there is not a statistically significant difference in the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces between these different family platforms (Hoang & Chu, 2008; Hair et al., 2009, 2014).

**Table 7.** Differences in the work creativity of real estate sales staff in Hanoi and neighboring provinces with participants of different family platforms - Independent Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
WC	Equal variances assumed	0.212	0.645	0.731	228	0.465	0.06363	0.08702	-0.10784	0.23510

Equal variances not assumed			0.72 7	161.5 98	0.46 8	0.0636 3	0.0875 3	- 0.109 22	0.2364 9
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Source: Prepared by the authors (2023) and SPSS software.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Working creatively generally means taking risks, which can make some people hesitant.

Working creatively is one of the most highly valued leadership skills because it creates a positive impact on return on investment, and creative people are independent thinkers and creative in their work problem solving.

In the era of the ongoing 4.0 industrial revolution, the whole society is implementing digital transformation. Firm owners expect employees to not only have professional knowledge and comply with regulations and firm orientations, but also to have the ability to think through constantly changing initiatives.

Employees should turn ideas into action. Employees should not keep ideas only in their thoughts but should present their ideas. Maybe the first idea is not recognized, and you may even be laughed at by your colleagues, but don't let that discourage you.

Employees should change to challenge new fields. Employees should think that changing to become more mature has many opportunities for development and promotion. When workers always strive to discover new initiatives and ideas, it will help eliminate existing boredom. The purpose of work creativity in particular and creativity in general is to find and create new and different things, solve problems, and create value. It can help workers recognize new opportunities, create better solutions to complex problems, and develop better products or services. Therefore, work creativity can contribute to promoting development and progress in many different fields.

Work creativity brings many benefits, including: (i) Increased independence: Creativity helps workers solve problems and find their own solutions, helping to increase independence. (ii) Promoting imagination and initiative: Creativity allows workers to develop their imagination and initiative, helping them demonstrate their capacities and abilities. However, creative work also has disadvantages, including: creativity can require a lot of time and expense to complete; being creative may not guarantee a successful outcome and may lead to failure; and creativity may not fit into the fixed operating model of an organization or job.

Work creativity is one of the most important skills at work, helping workers find new and more effective solutions to problems. This brings positive and extremely new results. To practice creative skills, employees should: (i) use outside thinking, look at the problem from a different angle, or seek the opinions of others to find new solutions, thereby helping to maximize work creativity and bring outstanding efficiency. (ii) Workers should experiment and create new ideas, whether small or large, to find different solutions, and at the same time, they also have more choices for themselves.

According to statistics from the recruitment news site Timviec365.com, the need for human resources in the real estate industry is popular in positions such as: real estate transaction office staff; building management, legal, sales staff, brokers; managing and training sales staff; assistant project director; real estate transaction office management; managing after-sales service and customer care; business planning and development specialists; real estate investment consultants; real estate valuation experts; real estate managers and developers; and real estate investors.

Jones Lang LaSalle Group (JLL) forecasts that there are five future trends that will lead to the development of Vietnam's real estate market, specifically: (i) Urban trends within urban areas or integrated real estate used for large-scale projects; (ii) Working remotely at the office; (iii) E-commerce promotes the logistics and warehousing industry; (iv) Real estate businesses maintain a green and sustainable direction; (v) Investors are focusing on the medical and health care industry. Accordingly, in the period 2021–2025, the real estate market will receive opportunities to accelerate development. Joining the market's development trend is the need for human resources. It is forecasted that the average annual human resource demand of the real estate business in Ho Chi Minh City alone is about 12,400–13,200 people, accounting for about 4% of the total human resource need. Specifically:

Demand for human resources in the real estate industry by technical and professional level: According to survey results in the first 6 months of 2020, the need for trained human resources accounts for 75.39%, of which university or higher accounts for 5.86%, college accounts for 9.17%, intermediate level accounts for 55.91%, primary vocational workers account for 4.45%, and untrained workers account for 24.61%. However, most employers conduct extensive and advanced training for newly recruited workers.

According to the electronic newspaper bmjob.vn, a survey of 100 leading firms in the real estate market shows that management-level personnel in the real estate industry have university and postgraduate degrees, accounting for 87.55% of the industry's human resources. However, quality human resources for the real estate industry are tending to become scarce. The untrained workforce accounts for a large proportion, focusing mainly on real estate brokerage.

Human resources working in the real estate industry are mostly from the wrong industry but are of relatively high quality compared to other industries in the labor market. A survey of 3,000 firms by the Center for Demand Forecasting and Human Resource Development in Ho Chi Minh City in May 2020 showed that employers especially appreciate work ethics, attitude, health, professional knowledge, professional skills, and soft skills. A survey by the General Statistics Office also shows that labor productivity in the real estate industry is 10 times higher than the overall labor productivity of the economy. However, current real estate human resources are relatively young and always fluctuating.

**Table 8:** Summary of real estate human resource needs by salary (%)

Description	2019	Half a year 2020
Less than 5 million VND	4.75	3.37
From 5 to 8 million VND	9.82	6.91



From 8 to 10 million VND	30.64	27.36
From 10 to 15 million VND	22.76	13.94
15 million VND or higher	32.03	48.42

*Source: Hanoi Real Estate Club, 2020*

Demand for recruiting real estate personnel based on work experience: In 2020, according to research by the Ho Chi Minh City Center for Human Resource Forecasting and Development in Ho Chi Minh City, there will be less than 1 human resources real estate business accounting for 40.96%, focusing mainly on the positions of real estate planning and business development specialists and real estate value appraisal specialists. In the first quarter of 2021 alone, personnel with less than 1 year of experience in the real estate industry accounted for 34.47% of the industry's total personnel needs. Personnel with experience of 2 years or more account for 16.24%, concentrated in positions such as assistant real estate project director, real estate sales director, and manager of the management consulting department real estate. In addition, the recruitment demand for workers without work experience is quite high at 42.8%, concentrated in positions such as real estate sales staff, real estate consultants, broker staff, real estate transaction office staff, project-planning department staff, and customer service staff.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Work creativity becomes very important in ensuring that a workplace functions happily and generates innovative concepts. In firms, both employees and managers should use creativity to come up with new, great ways to execute projects and plans.

To be able to promote creativity in themselves, workers should learn and practice to form creative thinking. Workers should pay attention to new and different things, observe, and expand their horizons to find new and different things in everyday life. Workers should look for new connections between different ideas and fields. Employees should focus on imagination and creating new visualizations of ideas or solutions, thereby helping to form creative thinking and ideas at work. Workers should investigate and test new and creative ideas to find new solutions or products. Workers should learn from their own and others' experiences to create better and more creative solutions in the future.

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