

“Move that ping-pong table into the meeting-room please,
and give each one chips and coke instead of a notepad!”

- when an ex-agency Creative becomes a Banker

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Abstract

Design thinking is creative itself and creativity underpins competitive advantage, especially in rapidly growing knowledge-based economies, where ideas and intellectual capital have replaced natural resources and mechanical inventions as the engine of economic growth. In today's globalising world, while implementing design thinking is crucial, the successful implementation is more a question of mentality. Economists from all around the world have acknowledged that economic growth is all about attracting and retaining talented and creative people. Talented and creative people are usually attracted to places that are diverse and rich in resources and opportunities; and opportunities give rise to innovations. Therefore, diversity is in fact the key, and the power to drive creativity, business success, and economic growth; the implementation design thinking in businesses will help to create an 'increasing returns' to abundance. So why can't we have talents coming from different backgrounds, using their own expertise in management, to grow a company and promote creativity instead of insisting on conventional protocols and trying too hard to 'programme' employees into pre-set culture and structure? Manager should have a higher tolerance for divergence, and sometimes it just calls for a more open-mind when recruiting.

The paper, based on a case study, will discuss implementing design thinking in twofold: 1) implementation of design thinking and creativity into a company during different stages of growth in relation to the competitive environment, which will also include a relativity analysis of design thinking cross-over with flexibility and risk management, 2) introduction of the 'D-5' model of implementing Design Thinking which are few reference strategies to help designers, managers and organizations bringing the idea through to implementation.

Keywords

Diversity, Creativity, Permissible Margin, Talent, Force Field, Design Thinking, Implementation Strategies

Introductions

Edward de Bono in his book, 'Why So Stupid? How the Human Race has Never Really Learned to Think', advocated that "*What now matters is the design and delivery of value. That needs design thinking. That needs creative thinking.*" Mark Dzierzk, Senior Vice President of Design at Herbst LaZar Bell (HLB) in Chicago, Illinois, also stated in his article 'Design Thinking ... What is that?' that, "*design thinking is a proven and repeatable problem-solving protocol that any business or profession can employ to achieve extraordinary results*", and "*it is the most powerful tool and when used effectively, can be the foundation for driving a brand or business forward*".

True that Design is gaining more ground in people's life and becoming a philosophical core of many businesses. The power of Design Thinking in business and business models is proven by the numerous publications released lately as well as the overflowing discussions on the Internet amongst designers, entrepreneurs, business consultants and CEO's. But it's even truer that Design Thinking is all about Creativity.

According to the New Growth Theory in economy presented by Joseph Cotright to the U.S Economic Development Administration in 2001, Creativity is the main driver for economic development because it improves labor and capital and extends resources. The theory also suggested that Creativity will ultimately increase the quantity of final goods and some of them in

turn enlarge the Creativity (by abundance – a theory for an increasing returns instead of a diminishing returns of additional quantity)! Undoubtedly Design Thinking/Creativity is an effective tool for solving problems and discovering new opportunities or angles of looking at things, but in a way, it works more like a ‘booster’ in medication that has to be prescribed carefully and to work within a ‘proscribed’ condition; which may not be suitable under some conditions and be able to exert its effectiveness to its fullest at all times, if not used properly. And if Design Thinking is a booster, there must be a person who prescribes the dosage; businesses therefore need to find that person – a ‘designer’, and they may also need a change in mentality and have a higher acknowledgement for talent amongst other incentives. As the Minister of Netherlands commented in his recent presentation on Design Thinking in Business *“that it is about setting the conditions in which talent and creativity can blossom ... it’s all about mentality, ... and we have to build an infrastructure that is more talent-friendly”* (in order for Creativity to thrive).

Put aside the huge manifestation for Design Thinking/Creativity and a growing recognition for their influences, it might still appear that to some businesses that Design Thinking is not that appropriate if Creativity was never quite a part of their operation, and if the business doesn’t really have ‘designers’ in their infrastructure. But if Design Thinking is considered more of a protocol and a booster; so whether truly a ‘designer’ (as literally meaning somebody that designs, and produces design outcomes) exists or not is not important; the thing is that someone is exercising

Design Thinking relevant to the business at that particular point. Design thinking is after all what people do when they pursue their goals; and if Design Thinking implies Creativity and being creative means allowing for flexibility, there are obviously many ways that allow implementation without jeopardizing existing culture or infrastructure. The right talent is the key! Business can either train or recruit Design-thinking talents. Intelligent and talented people should all be able to focus their thinking in order to satisfy wants and needs regarding a particular situation, define information relevant to their purpose, consider alternatives, decide what to do, do it, determine if they are satisfied with the results, and if not, revise their approach until they are successful. All in all, Design Thinking do have a definite role to play in conventional business structure or even 'non design-related' profession or business. It's only a matter of getting the right person with the right mentality, using the right dosage, doing it with the right approach, at the right time, strategically at the right setting; all relative and inclusive.

The models and implementation strategies discussed in this paper were developed from a case that Design Thinking was seen in action within a non design-oriented business environment – a bank. The case well demonstrated how Design Thinking could be used to manipulate conditions within an established system to open up a margin for an external factor to penetrate; and to rearrange existing conditions bringing positive changes, producing business success and generating new product innovations.

Further research will be conducted using the model created on businesses of other nature so as to justify its validity, and to fine-tune the established attributes as well as to evaluate the transferability of the forces established. Strategies developed will also be further tested so that relevant changes will be incorporated to ensure that they are effective for what they are intended for.

Metaphorically Two Different Species

Bankers and Ad agency creative people ('Creatives' in short from here) are two different species, one maybe a mammal and the other an amphibian; quite rarely do you find them living and being kept together. Bankers are generally more solemn and earnest, while Creatives are usually more playful and outgoing. Looking into their habitat, we can trace more of the differences. A bank always gives a good feeling of stability and reliability, everything is neatly ordered and systematically placed; inside a bank, it is very quiet and people are either working in front of the computer or talking business on the phone. But an advertising agency is dynamic, fun and chaotic most of the times. Music is everywhere, and people are always talking (loudly) to each other about ideas and other stuff.

In terms of outlook, Bankers and Creatives are very different too as they usually present themselves in very distinctive ways. Bankers are always dressed in blue, black, white, and

always in suit with neatly-ironed shirt and pants/skirts. In most corporate banks where everything is very institutionalized, such as Citibank and HSBC, dress code applies. Employees have to be in uniform (for front-line staff) or are abided by proper dress code (for senior management) – navy blue, black, low heels, no slippers, no low cut, no sleeveless, no bright colors and funky prints. Grandma's rules apply! (For those who are not talented in fashion, and/or is a fan of Giorgio Armani, working in a bank is ideal.) Creatives are always in jeans, shorts, slogan tees and colorful sweaters; and most of them are close followers of fashion trends, and are very audacious in expressing themselves through what they wear. There is nothing such as dress code that exists in agencies (except for times when big presentation comes up); and Creatives are not abided by (any) rules. Undisciplined! As most people see them.

Having explored into general features of the two species, it seems that they are consistently and reliably distinguishable from each other. And if an individual would like to think oneself slightly creative or 'not just one of the many out there' in terms of personality and style, he/she would never desire to work in a bank or to become a Banker and anything close to one. Vice versa, a Banker would never be able to associate oneself with such undisciplined life and would surely despise the chaos within the work environment of an advertising agency.

Theoretically Two Playing Fields

Given that the two species have quite different habits, style and preferences, there is little chance that similar practices and rules can be sited across their playing fields.

The banking industry is a highly regulated industry with detailed and focused regulators. Each regulatory agency has their own set of rules and regulations to which banks and thrifts must adhere.

Since the first modern bank was founded in Italy at Genoa in 1406, banks all over the world offer similar services and products to the consumers with only slight variations in their portfolio based on the market's situation and their customers' level of sophistication. Given that a bank account

is considered indispensable by most businesses, individuals and governments, there is nothing to

worry that banking industry will one day be obsolete. Looking from a more conventional

perspective, bank is definitely a good starting point for a career as they offer a good remuneration

package (with possibly an alluring year-end bonus), attractive fringe benefits, good long-term

prospects, stable working hours and it is not difficult for one to clearly map out the avenue for

promotion. Quite true to say that when a person is looking for a job in banks, he/she is probably

looking for stability. So 'monolithic' is the word to best describe the life of Bankers and the

environment of their playing fields! On the contrary, advertising is dynamic and is always

evolving. The business model of advertising agency has transformed a lot since David Ogilvy's

time. Advertising now is all about revolution and changes. People move around, and seldom

do you find a creative person staying with one agency for more than two years as changing jobs means prosperity and promotion in the industry. Every agency has its own folio of clients and a unique way of managing the business; there is no common protocol. The dynamic within an agency and the industry changes in response to what's happening in the surroundings, with people, clientele, management style etc.; 9-to-5 office rules don't apply in advertising! People working in the industry must be adaptable and highly flexible because one day he/she may be working on a local brand for a shop around the corner, and on the other, he/she could be handling a big corporate client with a worldwide business. Being proactive and reactive helps agency remain competitive and notorious in the industry. The playing field for Creatives is definitely more exhilarating. So given the above, the two playing fields stand quite separate, each holding its own qualities and bound by its own conditions. There seems to be little chance that a Banker would be able to migrate into the Creatives' world, or the other way round, unless something traumatic happens which alters some of the said conditions.

Fact is that the market situation of the banking industries have remained pretty stable until in recent years but a variety of powerful factors and unanticipated developments have significantly reworked the traditional role, power and influence of financial institutions when they have to compete 'glocally' (both local and global at the same time). The result is a shift in the marketplace, and a change in the conditions that determine its distinctiveness. Although changes

are common, but those were more potent than the players in the industry can usually tolerate as they literally reworked the structural conditions of the field. So from being very 'monolithic', highly regulated and disciplined, banks began to talk about creativity and flexibility in management. The change in the structural conditions has allowed diversity to prevail and called for a more drastic change in ways of managing business. But given that, implementing Design Thinking in banks seems most difficult as Design Thinking is about Creativity and Creativity has somehow a lot to do with 'lateral thinking', 'breaking the rules' and being 'undisciplined' - not in the bank's usual standard, but in a more 'radical' manner.

In Hong Kong, the International Bank of Asia (IBA) started up positioning itself as being rather 'creative and innovative' comparing to other players in the field. But as a bank by nature, it was still pretty much a bank that maintained most of the etiquettes of one; when recruiting employees, seldom do they look for staff that has no direct banking experience. The Bank has always been very reactive to market demands, just that the simultaneous challenges of increasingly competitive marketplace, skyrocketing delinquencies and rising attrition rate has stimulated an excessive amount of dynamics within the playing field. To IBA at that point, being able to change, and making a radical (enough) change is crucial; and being able to map out where to introduce the change was also critical to reposition itself so as to adapt to the new stipulation. IBA's own system and the talent were certainly capable of dealing with routine situations, but to meet the new

challenges, the bank needs somebody who can contribute new insights and know-how to manipulate forces for building the right dynamics within has to be appointed; after careful study and considerations, it seems that somebody has to come from outside.

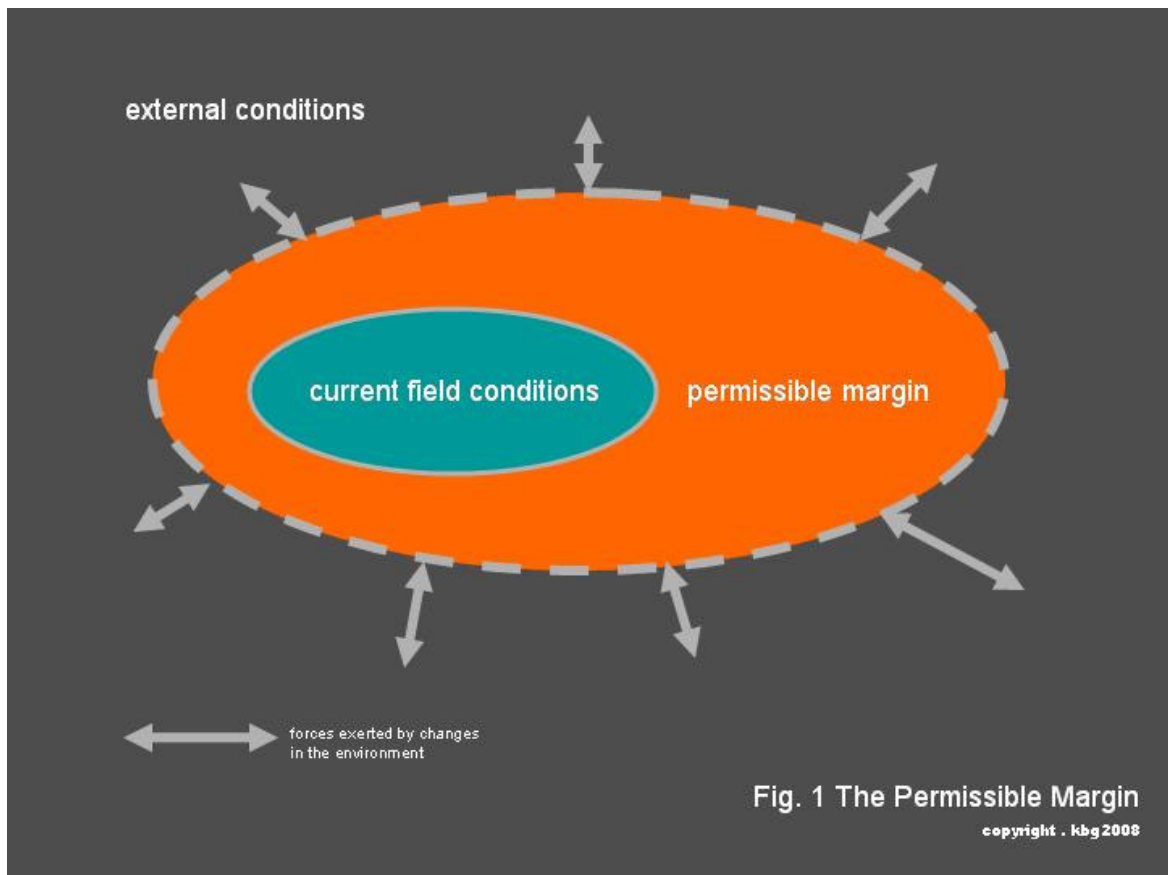
The case illustrated when one of the fields conditionally becomes similar to that of another species, the possibility of a cross-field migration arises; and the migrated species will then help to provoke new conditions that 'reshape' the field ultimately. The case also well demonstrated the importance of Design Thinking for organizations that compete in a robustly competitive environment at a particular stage of growth.

Strategically Two in One

Grace Lau has a 100% creative background, with a higher degree in Visual Communication Design and over eight years of experience working for renowned international advertising agencies. When Grace Lau returned to Hong Kong after obtaining her MBA, she was recruited as Marketing Manager of IBA, leading a team of four people. At that time, it was pretty rare for a bank of international standing to hire somebody without relevant work experience in the finance area. But Grace was acknowledged for her extensive advertising and direct marketing experience, and an MBA from the Forbes Magazine listing (2007), ranking 4th business school - the Schulich School of Business of York University, Ontario. Once on board, Grace has turned the marketing

office upside down by introducing a new research and reporting approach, replaced weekly progress meeting with brainstorming sessions and presentations, asked to have a cooler in the meeting room instead of a distilled-water dispenser, replaced the meeting table with a ping-pong table, and gave her team a bag of chips instead of a notepad during a business review meeting. The result was the successful launch of Hong Kong's first-ever dual Visa-Master card and the introduction of a more customer-relevant loyalty programme, which attracted a lot of applications and reduced attrition rate by 3% annually.

As mentioned in the previous section, it is pretty impossible for cross-field migration between Bankers and Creatives. The possibility of a Creative being able to migrate into the playing field of a Banker was largely the corollary of the changes that happened in the banking environment that then opened up a 'margin' and triggered a rearrangement of conditions, which created certain extent of similarities between two different fields that encouraged possible migration. Fig. 1 visually illustrated the notion of the margin labeled as the 'Permissible Margin'.



Grace as an outside element from another playing field has intruded via the margin, and stirred up ‘creative energy’ that further stimulated the current playing field; may be taken in analogy with that of a bug in a computer programme. Jerry Bank, a retired Professor of School of Industrial and Systems Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology, has presented in his workshop during his visit to City University of Hong Kong in 2004 the ‘Theory of Bug’ - an approach to trigger creativity and a way to foster Design Thinking. So Grace is comparable to the bug in this case, bringing into IBA a different set of beliefs and values, a very different mentality and initiating a twist in the process protocol, which ‘bugs’ the system and the people she works with and induces

diversity and ultimately Creativity.

With traditional management, it is believed that success is created upon eliminating diversity, as diversity is seen as a negative driver that creates problems. So on starting up a new business, it is common to the management to establish a set of 'shared vision' and 'shared values' for the employees to refer to aiming to hopefully create a common ground for growing the business. In modern management, the discipline of shared vision focuses on what thoughts and concepts managers share with their teams. Outlined by Peter Senge's in his book 'The Fifth Discipline', the discipline of shared vision, moves us into the realm of group process. With shared vision it no longer matters what we think but what thoughts and concepts we share with the team. In other words, shared vision is the point where we actually harness the horses so that we can get some work done. It is believed that all organizations have an implicitly shared vision, which manifests itself as what is most often referred to as the corporate culture. In addition, this implicit shared vision influences, at a significant level the ways things are being handled in the company.

Management on recruiting a new staff will always look for candidates that has a close match with the majorities in the company, and will then start to 'indoctrinate' the 'shared vision and values' after they joined, so that they can arrive at an convergence point; believing that the convergence can help with consensus within the organization, and everyone will work towards one common vision for developing the business. It might be right that in the very early start-up stage of a

business, some common ground needs to be established. But it might not be a bad idea to retain a certain level of discrepancy between the management's vision and that of the subordinates when bringing in new staff; believing that diversity can actually help a business to evolve and grow. And as the business develops further, a booster for Design Thinking can be prescribed in view of the kind of lift the business requires.

Grace coming from an advertising background definitely did not share a common vision with her new manager who has had long years of experience in banking. It was indeed a bit risky for IBA on appointing Grace, as the diversity may be a bit too much for the bank at its stage of growth.

The study indicated that the mover was indeed radical, but somehow well-balance the forces exerted from the external environment. In the decision to appoint Grace as the Marketing Manager during that particular time, the management at IBA has actually exercised Design Thinking compelling diversity, which then extensively opened up the Permissible Margin, making it possible for a more diversities which works like a booster for higher level of Design Thinking and Creativity. The diversity was structural, contextual, and intellectual generating a positive effect. Although the result of the bold action brought along positive bearing, IBA has also engaged Flexibility Management and Risk Management along with Design Thinking. The analysis shows that Design Thinking does not work alone and it needs corresponding management actions to ensure that general stability is maintained.

Flexibility is recognized as a complex, multi-dimensional and polymorphous concept, which means different things to different people and is highly context specific. Flexibility Management is currently used by a lot of business for ensuring that they are able to cope with the uncertainty of change effectively and efficiently; and is used in a more proactive manner to enhance the performance of a business to remain competitive in the changing market situation; like in the case of IBA's recruitment exercise. While Risk Management in here is pretty similar to how it is being used for financial investment as Creativity is seen as an investment in this case as well.

Risk Management involved the assessment of potential risk of accelerated changes caused by the after-math of the initial diversity engaged, and by measuring the level of risk, the management can then be able to decide on the amount of diversity desired by adjusting the Permissible Margin.

To further understand the contents of the Permissible Margin, an in-depth study was carried out to diagnose the IBA case so as to investigate into the factors within the context. All the different factors leading to what happened at IBA were listed and concluded as shown in Fig. 2; out of which four main factors to marking the Margin were identified – Powerplay, Product, Positioning, and Protocol.

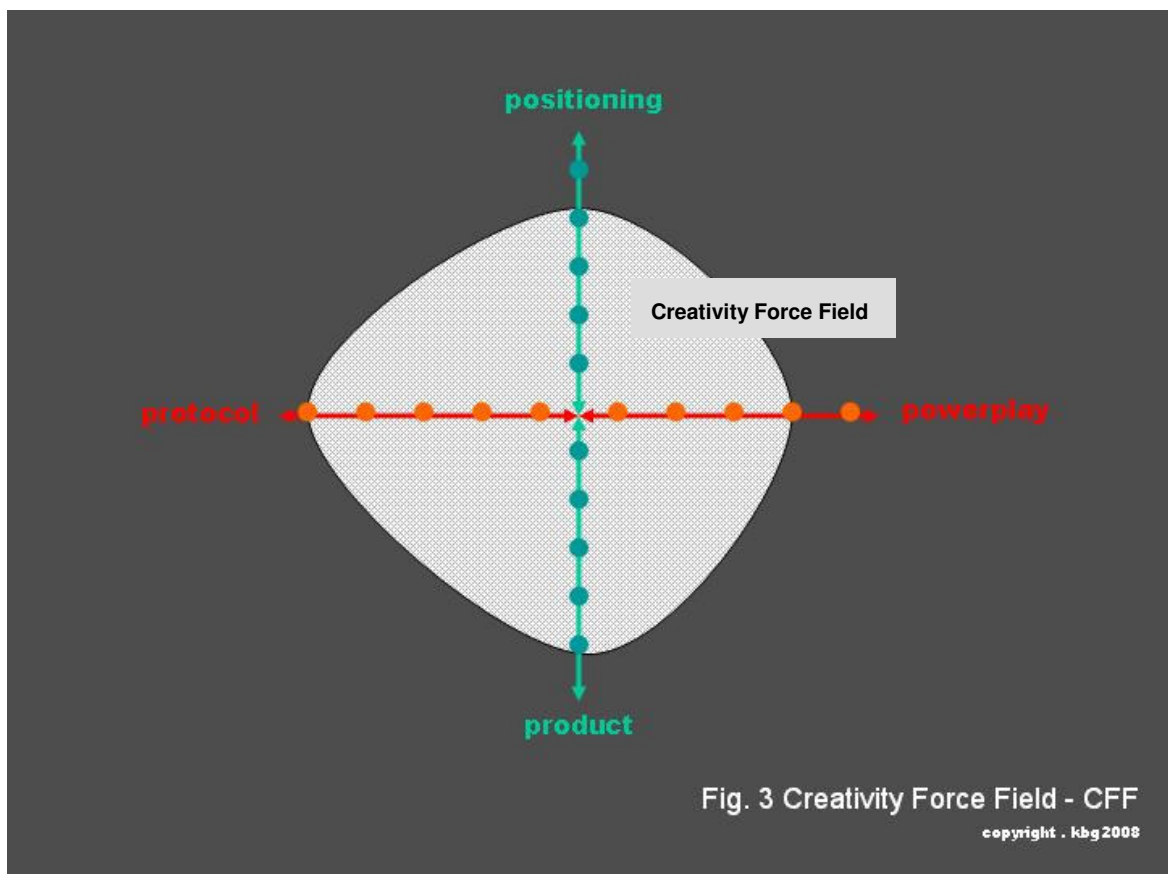
- Competition forces
 - Shift in consumer's preference
 - High attrition rate
 - Competitors launching new products
 - Shift in company's market share
 - Shift in company's focus
 - Change in management
 - New office management
 - The return of HK to China celebrations
 - New computer data entry system
 - Decline of current product success
 - Banks from overseas entering HK
 - Leaving of Marketing Manager
 - New staff in team
- external market dynamics
 - consumer focus: external factor
 - internal system changes
 - management focus: internal factor

Fig. 2 List of Factors Concerned

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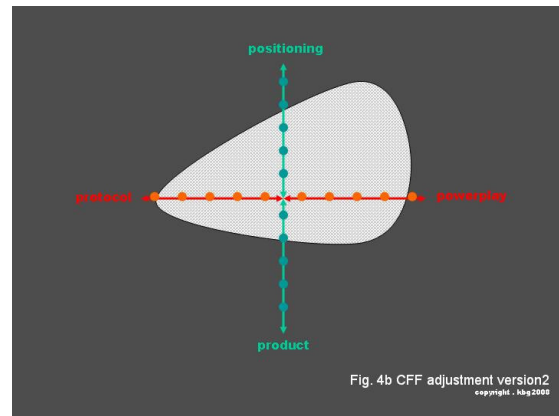
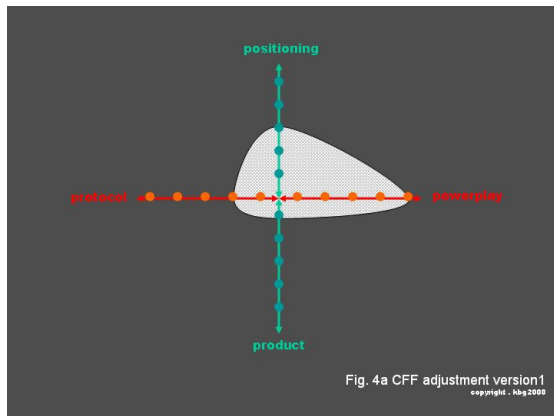
In reference to Professor Richard Florida of Carnegie Mellon University, there are three keys to understanding the creativity landscape: technology, talent, and tolerance, stated in his recently published book 'The Rise of the Creative Class'. Accordingly, each is a necessary but, by itself, insufficient condition; all three must meld harmoniously to achieve creativity. Professor Richard's forces were good indication of the general landscape, but seemed unable to take into considerations of external influences that could contribute to the environment surrounding the landscape. So building on the what Professor Florida has created and with reference to the analysis of the IBA case, a new force field model was developed using the aforementioned four

forces here named the 'Creativity Force Field' - CFF as shown in Fig. 3, that comprises of not only internal forces that defines creativity, but also external forces that exist in the surrounding environment which compels it.



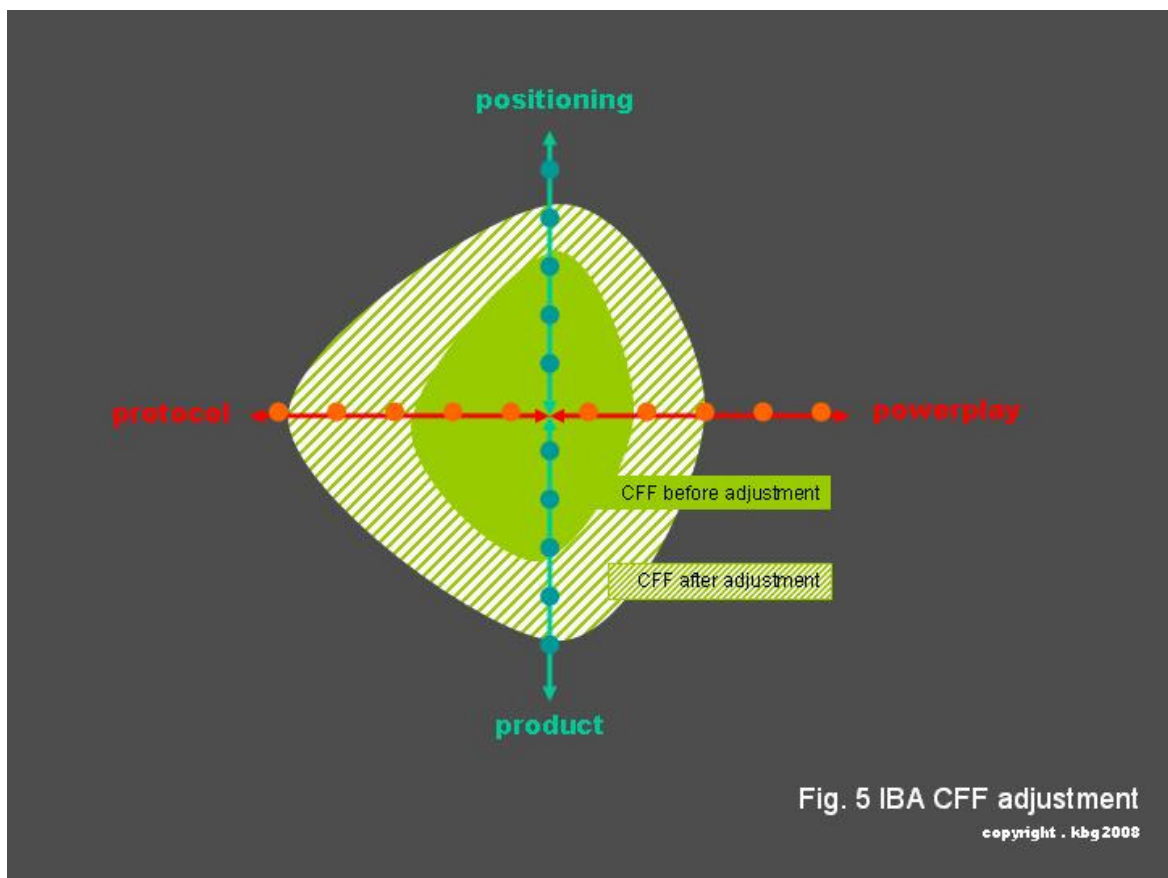
The forces in the new model are not opposing force, but rather, forces that define the border of the force field. The forces mark the border of the field can be adjusted accordingly to create the kind of condition that suits the business, as shown in Fig.4a & 4b. Theoretically speaking, the larger the force field, the bigger the diversity, also calling for more radical moves and the management

can expect higher risk (and with bigger return like investment).



Powerplay and Protocol are both internal forces, while Product and Positioning are more external forces that involve assessing the market conditions and changing competitiveness in the business environment. The Powerplay force refers to the management's level of tolerance for change and how ready they are to release of power control. The Protocol force refers to the degree the company's system and process can be flexed. The Product force refers to how much the business is able to stretch its product line or the existing product within its resources and technological capacity. The Positioning force refers to how capable (and willing) the business can reposition itself or to revamp its identity. So looking back at the case, when the margin appeared, IBA then decided to expand the force field by stretching its protocol force by letting Grace introduce new reporting mechanisms and brainstorming to replace meeting discussion approach. IBA has also stretched its Powerplay force by authorizing Grace to induce the change to the management style.

IBA was also able to stretch a bit of its Positioning force given that IBA's own positioning is comparatively more innovative; which then also incurs a similar extent of stretching in the Product force relatively. The new force field is shown against the old force field in Fig.5 that indicates a much larger field area for Creativity to set off.



The introduction of the new staff is relative to the effect of physically moving the ping-pong table into the meeting room, and replacing note-pads with chips; all performing the role of a launching agent for diversity in an existing environment, bugging an existing condition and creating the

conditions for appropriate Design Thinking to proliferate and excel. Business must be able to evaluate its own conditions carefully so as to be able to implement Design Thinking strategically to get the most out of it. The willingness to consider an applicant with a slightly differing background is actually the first step.

CFF can be used as an analytical model as well as a model for business to evaluate its own standing, so as to better understand its weaknesses and strengths during a particular stage of growth to check on areas that possibly requires external help.

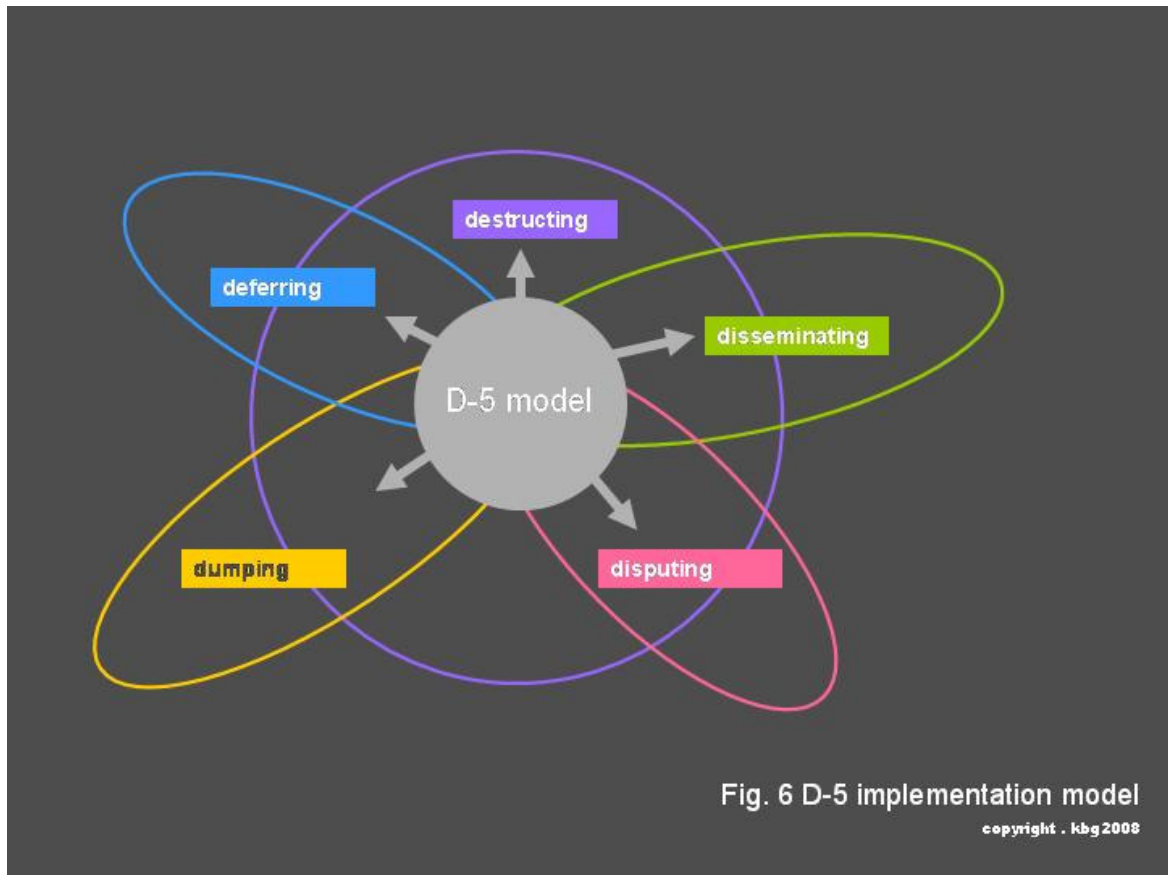
Technically One for the Many

A business at different stages of growth is surrounded by different force fields. With a company at its start-up stage, it has all the freedom to allow for diversity. As discussed earlier, it might not necessary for a company to establish a set of shared vision. The capacity for a start-up company to recruit (any) talent, with abundance resources and high tolerance level can be translated into a CFF diagram showing a large force-field which everything opens up. Cross-referencing to an episode of the TV series Kid Nation - 'job board in fire', by burning the Job Board, all ranking and job specifications and even jobs that used to exist vanished. The kids woke up doing everything they like, robbing candy stores, messing up the city hall etc. There were a certain level of chaos, but ultimately, discipline was restored as a number of kids realized that they still need to survive in

the place, and new rules were created to take into considerations the want of each person, and new system was introduced. It is like letting everything get stretched to its extreme to let them rearrange themselves to a new order. For business in growing stage, it is possible for it to hire an external like IBA. The benefit of which is the new recruitment can actually create a bigger dynamic by doubling the effect of the rearrangement of the conditions within the current field.

While for business that are at its mature stage and of a rather conventional business environment, there could still be rooms to open up the force field, but just that the level that the forces could be stretched might be a little less, and there are limitations to the stretching ability of certain forces.

To further substantiate thinking of how CFF applies, strategies were developed and built into a implementation model – D-5, which comprises of five fundamental strategies that can be deployed in differing environment characteristics as shown in Fig. 6. The D-5 model aims to guide management in identifying the forces that are relevant to their business in creating a force field when Design Thinking is called for.



Dumping

Dumping literally implies dumping. In using dumping, managers are encouraged to give a real free hand to the staff and dump them into the environment with absolutely no supervision. The strategy allows the manager to extract the true potential of the staff, while giving in suitable level of tolerance. The absolute free hand approach opens up the force fields which give rise to a huge ground for all sorts of diversities and creativity to blossom. In using dumping, the management can expect to have new product ideas together with the development of new processes for handling the delivery of the new product idea. It is most suitable for companies that require to open up

new markets and to revitalize the brand so as to be able to tap into new market segments.

Deferring

Deferring calls for the management to allow for a high level of tolerance and to allow employees

to take a longer than usual time for deliberation when making decision. The longer than usual

time in fact introduced uneasiness and slightly intensify the sense of anxiety, which pushes the

Powerplay and Protocol as well as the time force to a higher level. Deferring is an approach that

invites the staff to conduct study and research on his/her own duty by looking around.

Observation and prompt is key in this strategy. The knowledge gained from the observations can

then be turned into new resources. Deferring is like the over-night strategy in doing design work,

ideas are usually let to stand for 24 hours so as to allow the designer to have some time to stay

away from it and give it some more thoughts before any decision is made.

Destructing

Destructing invites destruction of current systems. Destructing is very much like the approach used by the TV series *Kid Nation*, which everything is torn down and recreated. A new system or infrastructure will be born out of this. This strategy can be widely used by organizations looking for a new way of doing business in a current stagnant market. With implementing this strategy, the organization pushes all the forces to its ultimatum so as to redefine the force field. This strategy allows for increasing level of product development, new positioning, alteration of protocol and must be supported by high level of release of power and control. This strategy can be use for companies that had reached optimal growth and are looking for a big change. The strategy calls for a total adjustment of all forces to recreate the force field. Destructing asks everyone involved to take down the current way of dealing with things. It is like 'deconstruction' in design; as seen in Hussein Chalayan's experimental deconstruction fashion.

Disseminating

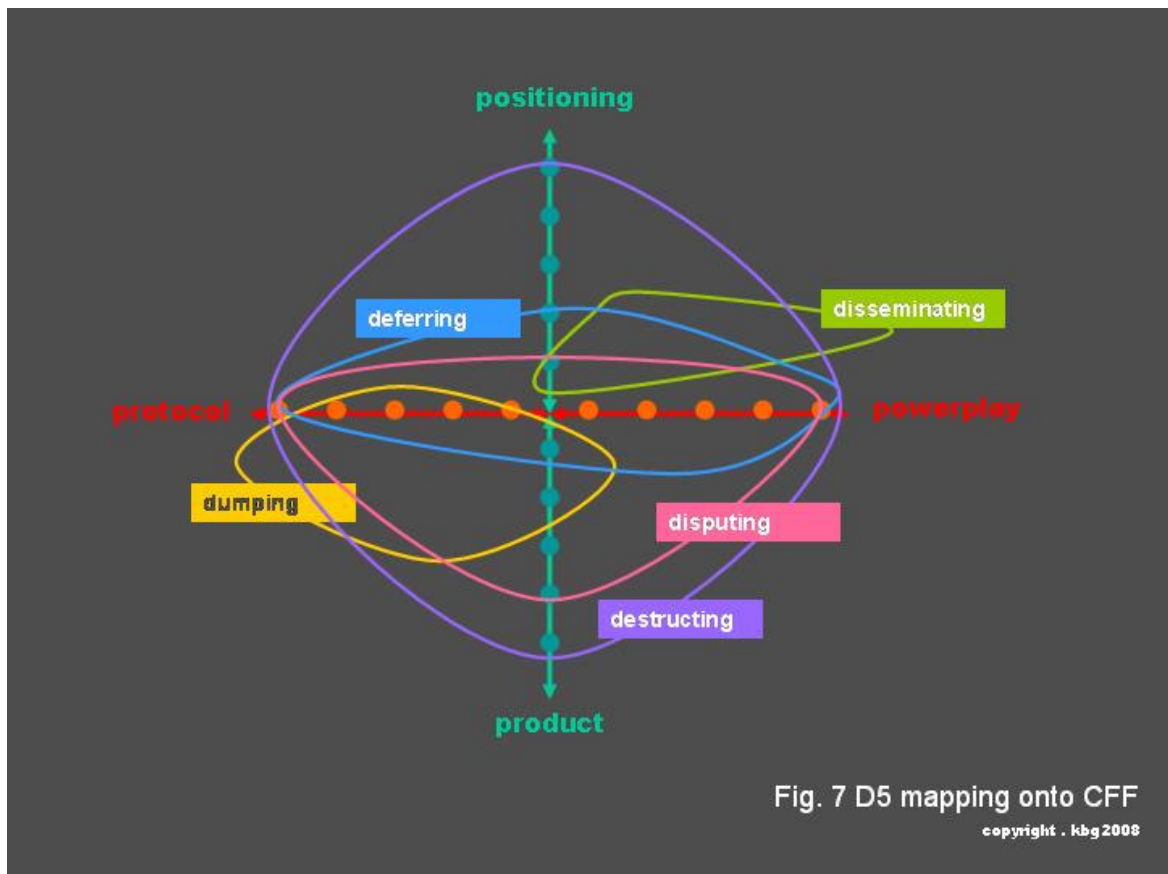
Disseminating calls for chaos. As in advertising agencies, chaos helps to bring about diversity; then creates opportunities. Fixing and piecing things together with also generate new solutions. Disseminating is the introduction of chaos into the system. New ideas that used to be considered not workable are all disseminated into the system and let the employees determine how they can make it work by changing or modifying the concepts. Referencing design work, the

disseminating strategy for business management is like brainstorming, which new ideas and thoughts are being thrown onto the table without any criticism. Disseminating needs release of Powerplay and which can end up with a new positioning and new product ideas.

Disputing

By inviting the staff to challenge, discuss and debate about ideas is disputing. There needs to be a high level of tolerance when this strategy is implemented. Normal process of reflection of comments will be torn down. Disputing is like strategic thinking when working on design, which ideas are being ruthlessly thrown onto the table for criticism and analysis, inviting heavy criticism and have members debating about it ruthlessly. The right environment and setting is crucial for this strategy. It is like when Grace invited the staff to go into a meeting one day with chips instead of a notepad. Rules don't apply anymore; the idea is to get the discussion going.

The strategies of the D-5 model can be mapped back into the Creativity Force Field to create a clearer picture of how they work as shown in Fig. 7.



The mapping helps to indicate the forces that can be stretched or need to be stretched, when a particular strategy is in action. The strategies can be used individually for business when they are encountering different challenges or at different stage of growth. The strategies can also be used in sequence for business to adjust the forces so as to achieve ultimate business success. There is no specific order though, they can be used in any order depending how relevant the particular

strategy is for the company at a particular time.

Hopefully Many More to Come

Charles Burnette in his IDeSIGN curriculum defines design thinking as “*a process of creative and critical thinking that allows information and ideas to be organized, decisions to be made, situations to be improved, and knowledge to be gained*”. Design thinking is about creativity no doubt, and creativity is very much an attitude towards life as a matter of ability created at very early age. It seems interesting that we are talking bringing Design Thinking into management for business corporations and introducing Creativity to managers, but in fact, we could have been more aware of ‘creative energies’ hidden in current staff or new staff when we first spotted them during interview. A new staff is like a little kid, the thing is that we can always witness creativity in young children; but as we try to ‘programme’ the new recruit into the company culture, we are in fact killing and suppressing their own ‘energies’, likewise we see creativity vanishing in older children and adults basically because their creative potential has been suppressed by society and education systems that advocates intellectual conformity. When we hire a new staff, we are in fact making an investment. So if we try to see how we can use Design Thinking to help grow our own company, we can also refer to the psychological theory of the “investment of creativity” by R.J. Sternberg - we invest in something because of its own good value and potential to grow, so

when we hire we are actually investing into the new employee's own potential; betting on a favorable return in leveraging on others assets we have in our 'basket'. We should therefore let them explore into how they can formulate their own strategy and approaches as to be able to fit it and grow; and how we can utilize the Creativity that the individual brings along. Instead of coaching them through sessions about company protocols and reporting procedures, it might be better to have a session simply to tell them the company history and the explain to them the company values and vision and let them see how they can help.

Given that innovation is not about top-down policy and management, senior management's involvement and tolerance is key to the ultimate success of the implementation. So to implement Design Thinking, management's main task is to set the conditions in which knowledge, creativity and innovation can blossom; where diversity can subsist. If creativity is about questioning assumptions, why can't we have a ping-pong table as the meeting-room table? Why can't we have a Creative working as a Banker and vice versa to create new energies and provide new insights.

In conclusion, Design Thinking will be 'the' core attribute for the thinkers and doers who must build and sustain combat power if victory is to be certain.

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