



Creativity in Large-Scale Contexts: Guiding Creative Engagement and Exploration

By Jonathan S. Feinstein

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Jonathan S. Feinstein is the John G. Searle Professor of Economics and Management at the Yale School of Management. He is renowned for his research on creativity and innovation, especially for introducing a new “network model” in his book, *Creativity in Large-Scale Contexts*. His research examines how creative processes are influenced by cultural and social contexts and aims to identify the factors that lead to successful innovation. Specifically, it argues that creativity in large-scale contexts is most effectively realized when actively guided by creative leaders or teams. This book discusses this through three main parts:

The first part focuses on Context. Context serves as the foundation for creative processes, making creative thinking and outcomes significant. For instance, the same idea may have different values or impacts based on varying social, cultural, and historical backgrounds. To be effective, creative solutions and ideas must be appropriately understood and adapted to their environmental and situational contexts. This section emphasizes the importance of context, explores its structure and examples, and introduces formal modeling of contexts. It details the methodology Feinstein uses to generate simulated contexts and presents statistics about contexts generated with this methodology. The differences between models with fewer versus more elements are illustrated with

concrete examples, which is quite fascinating.

The second part is about Guidance. Effective guidance is essential for advancing the creative process. Creativity involves generating new ideas and solutions, but it needs direction and support throughout the process. Feinstein presents a methodology based on his extensive research, with case studies of Hans Krebs, Clifford Possum, Virginia Woolf, and Jack Dorsey. These cases show how guiding concepts led to successful outcomes, enhancing readers’ understanding. Additionally, guiding principles are introduced based on these success stories, which can improve the evaluation and efficiency of creativity and help acquire new elements that contribute to creativity.

The final part addresses Creation. Parts I and II discuss the rich network context of creativity and introduce two crucial forms: guiding concepts and guiding principles. This section demonstrates how these guidance processes collaborate to generate creativity and define the core model of creativity. Based on this model, it covers creative journeys, the modeling of richer creative processes, the development of creative fields, and best practices for supporting creativity.

Applying the insights from Feinstein’s research can lead to more efficient and effective creativity. Therefore, I highly recommend reading this book.