In the past several years, the business world has undergone dramatic changes – including intense global competition, rapidly changing technologies, and the arrival of new market models and market leaders. These changes have created the need for a stronger understanding of the key mechanisms and processes that organizations use to stay innovative and therefore, competitive.

American author and satirist Mark Twain was credited with saying, "Everyone grumbles about the weather—but nothing is done about it."

This seems analogous to the way in which many people approach change. Everyone grumbles about change—"change is inevitable," “change is accelerating,” but no one does anything about it. Or, more to the point, few seem to know what, if anything, they can do about change. Just deal with it, we are told. Put up an umbrella. Wear a heavy coat and weather the storm.

Whatever your attitude is about change, there is no denying the force it has on our lives.

Consider the following phenomena resulting from change:

• *If you are older than 20:* when you were growing up, if you were going to be late coming home, you had to go and find a telephone, and maybe have change in your pocket to make a call. Today, you reach into your pocket and pull out a phone instead of a quarter.
• If you are older than 30: you grew up going to the library to get answers and do research, with a pocketful of dimes for the photocopy machine. Today, you stay at home and open a web browser.

• If you are older than 40: you wrote college papers longhand and then carefully typed them. The arrival of white-out was a kind of miracle. Today, you press the delete key.

• If you are older than 50: you grew up with a black-and-white television (if you had a television), and you had to walk over to the set to change the channel, of which there were only three. You watched programs when they were broadcast. Today, you choose from over a hundred channels, and you watch whenever you want. And you may watch on something that's not a TV.

• If you are older than 60: you heard the world's news on the radio, or read it when the newspaper hit your porch the next morning. Today, you can get the news instantly through your computer, or even on your telephone, the one that's on your wrist!

An Innovative Organization designs, develops, markets, sells and finances its products or services in a way that sets it apart from its competitors. In today’s fast-paced, Internet and telephony-driven world, innovation is both a desired trait and a necessity for survival. But how do organizations capture, develop, embrace, and harness innovation amid rapid change? How do employees (often the founders or leaders) bring creative individualism to the organization while adapting to the impact of change?

Highly differentiated and unique companies are often led by someone who understands how to harness the power of the innovative organization. Conventional wisdom suggests that these people are just born that way and that they develop the necessary traits on their own. Research has shown that in addition to what nature endows, creative problem solving can be taught and the ability to possess the softer traits required to run innovative organizations can and should be nurtured in high performing individuals.

In fact, in a study conducted by the Wall Street Journal among 600 placement counselors, the most desired traits for graduating students in business or with MBA degrees were: Creative problem solving, team building and the ability to communicate.

A recent Bloomberg Business Report shows that Business schools are supposed to produce graduates who have the abilities companies need most. But corporate recruiters say some highly sought-after skills are in short supply among newly minted MBAs. See http://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2015-job-skills-report/ for a summary of the report’s finding.

Here is the most surprising finding: Goizueta Business School ranks far BELOW its peers in the minds of recruiters in terms of our students possessing these important traits. We want to provide Goizueta students with the education they need to develop these desired traits and stronger recruiting outcomes based on what they have learned.
Companies such as Motorola, Frito Lay, 3M, Kodak, Dupont, Google, IBM and others have training programs in place to educate their managers in the use of creative problem solving strategies in business. The processes they use parallel the process developed by The Creative Education Foundation and Synecticsworld. This course is based on the principles taught by these two organizations and practiced by corporations like those mentioned above.

During this course the students will be exposed rigorously to **creative** and **critical** thinking skills, the tools that answer questions like:

- What is the process of generating new and unexpected solutions through *discretionary thinking*?
- What are creativity-based strategies for resolving conflict and building productive teams?
- How to create a culture that supports innovation and makes money for the organization?

**Course Objectives**

- To provide students an understanding of how they, as future leaders of innovative organizations, can recognize and harness opportunities for innovation to stay competitive. How do entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs in the most creative global organizations lead? What can these examples of creative organizations and creative leadership teach us?

- To experience the *creative problem solving process* and provide access to tools which students can use in their future careers for solving innovation dilemmas and increase profits.

- To understand how the functional elements of a business model can be altered using CPS to identify new opportunities for the enterprise.

- To help students capitalize on their own problem-solving preferences using the FourSight profile to strengthen their resumes and secure better jobs.
Course Structure

The course modules address the following areas:

PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF CREATIVITY

- Creativity: separating fact from fiction - intersectional thinking is accelerating change
- A systems approach to creativity: it’s not just about the creative person
- Skills for living and working creatively in the 21st century

PART 2: CREATIVE THINKING

- Divergence/ Convergence guidelines to enhance your innate creativity
- Functional creativity - design as a way to creative thinking. IDEO DVD
- The people element of creativity - FourSight: discover your preferences in problem solving
- Blocks to creativity and how to overcome them
- Clarifying a problem: Learn how to solve the right problem before you engage in creative solution finding
- Ideation - Learn and practice over a dozen tools for ideating
- Developing criteria - Learn DRIVE - A tool for selecting ideas with the greatest promise
- Implementation – Learn how best to think about implementing your solutions

PART 3: CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING: THE THINKING SKILLS MODEL

- Creative Problem Solving: A Deliberate Creative Process
- Applying Creative Problem Solving in the real world
- Digging Deeper: Thinking Skills and Tools for Creative Problem Solving

PART 4: LEADERSHIP IN INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATIONS

- Students will explore their own creative thinking preferences and those of their teams to better understand how creative preferences affect the level of innovation in an organization through the FourSight on line profile
- ABC of innovation – Learn how creative ideas and a well-thought business model lead to innovation
- Using structures as metaphors for prototyping an idea
- Debriefing tools for team-building and consensus reaching
**Course Readings**

In addition to the course text “Creative Thinking Tools: Creativity on Demand Environment” by Harry Vardis, the following short readings will be used for discussion:

1. “Creativity: A Key Link to Entrepreneurial Behavior,” Ko (HBS BH244)
4. “Creativity and the Role of the Leader,” Teresa Amabile (HBR reprint R0810G)
5. “Design Thinking,” Tim Brown, IDEO (HBR reprint R0806E)
6. “Managing for Creativity,” Richard Florida (HBR reprint R0507L)
7. “How to Kill Creativity,” Teresa Amabile (HBR reprint 98501)
8. “Keeping Google Googley” – Wagonfeld (HBS 9-409-039)
9. “Managing for Creativity” – Amabile (HBS 9-396-271)
11. “Your Thinking Profile” (FourSight assessment) – pp. 1-20

**Course Management**

- We will consult with you as to the room selection, size, layout etc.
- We will be in constant communication with you to ensure all logistics are in place to deliver the course with maximum efficiency
- We can provide, if you wish, a presentation to your students regarding the course content and its value
Harry Vardis Bio

Director, Center For Business Innovation  
Coles College of Business, Kennesaw State University

Harry is a professional facilitator, trainer and consultant in the field of innovation and creative thinking. He is a lifetime member and a trainer at the Creative Education Foundation and for the past 6 years he is the Director for the Center for Business Innovation and Creativity at the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State University in Atlanta where he was recently honored with the title “Executive in Residence.” Specific applications of the workshops the center delivers include but are not limited to marketing, sales, strategic planning, project management, architectural design, customer retention and other areas of interest to business managers.

He is the author of two books and numerous papers in innovation and Marketing. His books are “Creative Thinking Tools, How To Ensure A Creativity On Demand Environment in Any Organization or in Your Life” - A text book for MBA classes – and “Potatoes? Not yet! 33 Ways To Grow And Harvest Your Best Ideas” - a book based on the principles of creative thinking.

A recognized expert in innovation and creative thinking, leadership, performance management and change in thinking styles, Harry has spoken at major conferences in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Italy, Brazil, Chile, Greece and Mexico. Some of the topics include: “Creativity and Innovation as a Competitive Advantage”, “Zero to 100! Creativity on demand”, “Upstream/ Downstream positioning”, “Fight, flight or innovate... it’s only your career!” ” One foot out of the box- A case for left/right brain approach to creative thinking in business”, “PISCES - a model for applications of creativity in marketing”

Harry is the founder and principle of Creative Focus, Inc. a Market Research consultancy located in Atlanta. Their clients include FORTUNE 500 companies such as AT&T, Verizon Information Systems, Delta Air Lines, Mohawk Industries, Assurant Solutions, Cox Media, Autotrader.com and others.

His passion is delivering seminars that truly change people’s lives through innovative thinking. Universities where Harry has introduced his course on innovation are: Emory University, Kennesaw State University, Lake Forest Graduate School of Management, University of Illinois, Southern Polytechnic State University, Albany State University, Anahuac University, and Novartis University.

He loves to sail and race sailboats; he indulges in photography and has had 2 exhibitions in Atlanta.

Reshma Shah Bio (you know me but here goes anyway)

Reshma Shah is an Associate Professor in the Practice of Marketing at the Goizueta Business School of Emory University. Professor Shah joined the Goizueta Business School Faculty in 1997, after completing her Ph.D. in Marketing from the Katz Graduate
School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh. She received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Illinois and an MBA from the University of Southern California.

In addition to her education, her background includes work experience in Corporate Component Procurement for IBM Corporation; in Litigation Consulting for Price Waterhouse; in Strategic Brand Planning for Unilever, and in Account Management for Leo Burnett Advertising. She is also the co-founder of Inflexion Point Marketing Group.

Professor Shah’s research interests include processes for implementing successful marketing alliances; brand and category management; marketplace learning and integrated marketing communications. Her research has been published in several academic journals.


Reshma currently teaches Integrated Marketing Communications at both the undergraduate and MBA levels. She has also taught courses in Marketing Management, Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior. In addition to her teaching and research, Professor Shah has been the Faculty Advisor for GMSC (now called Goizueta IMPACT) for the past 20 years. As Faculty Advisor for GMSC, Professor Shah has assisted student teams in completing marketing consulting engagements for such companies as: AT&T, Delta, GE, IBM, Turner, The Coca-Cola Company, and UPS among many others. She has also won several awards for teaching excellence at Emory University and the Goizueta Business School.

Reshma currently lives in Atlanta with her husband, Hitesh, and their two daughters, Maya and Anya.