

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this Research Report I will be covering in PART A 'Empowerment Management' and its successful influence on Pixar Animation Studios' creativity practices. In PART B we will be covering: 'Emotional Intelligence' its contribution to the attitude and emotions on productivity at Pixar. I will also be offering recommendations for action areas that Pixar is finding management challenges with retaining their staff.

Organisational Structure:

Name of Organisation: Pixar Animation Studios

Organisation Structure:

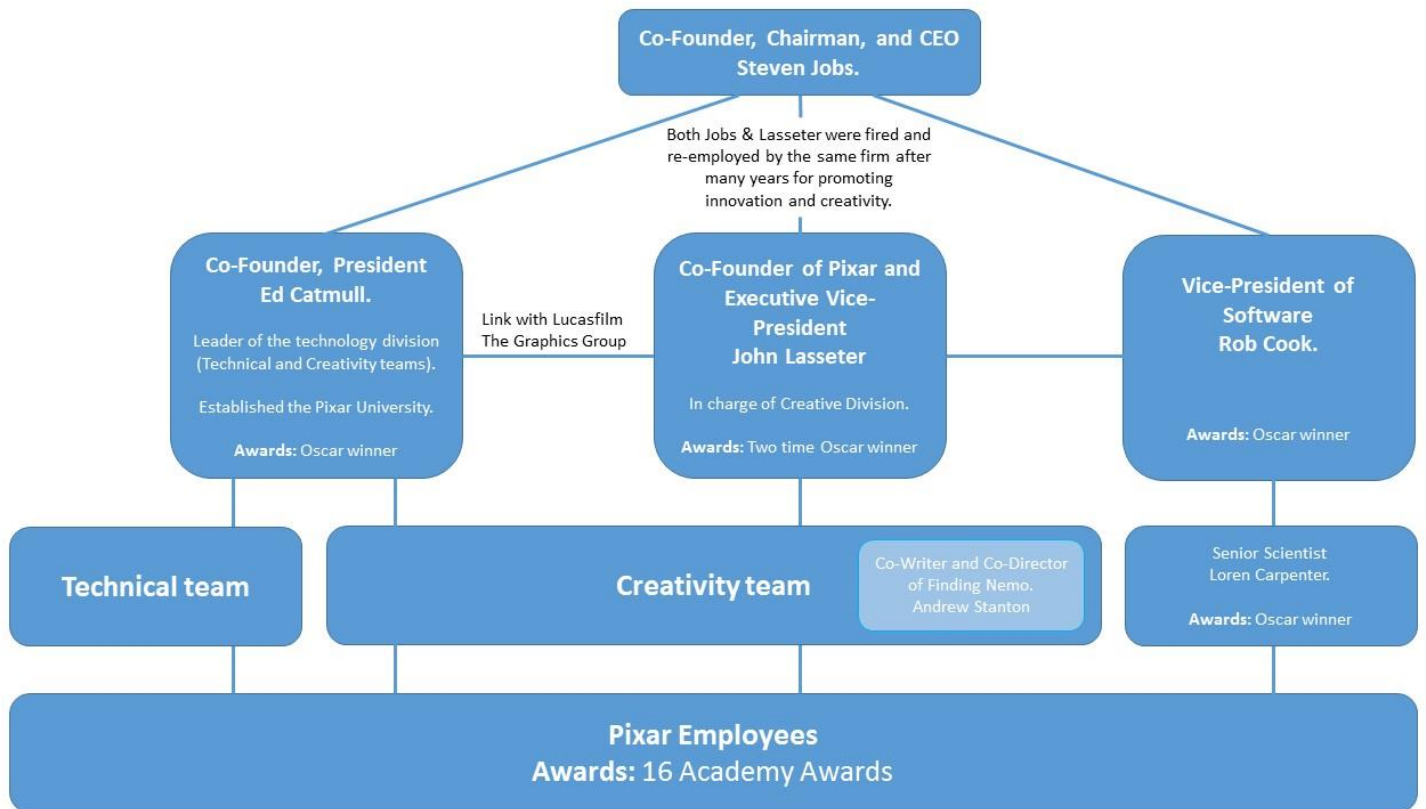


Figure 1.

Background:

Co-Founder & President Ed Catmull leads the technology division and established the Pixar University. Pixar is best known for producing feature films with include Toy Story, Toy Story 2 and Finding Nemo. The key Pixar people include: Co-Founder, Chairman, and CEO the late Steven Jobs; who was best as the co-founder, chairman, and CEO of Apple Inc. Jobs was a board member of Disney in 2006, in that year Disney acquired Pixar. No doubt that Jobs was cross-pollinating (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 218) having diverse teams and Information sessions – creating good business model ideas across his business portfolio with Pixar, Disney & Apple. Co-Founder, President Ed Catmull an Oscar winner, is the Leader of the technology division who established the Pixar University and looks after the Technical and Creativity teams. Vice-President of Software Rob Cook and Senior Scientist Loren Carpenter have both earned Oscars. Co-Founder and Executive Vice-President John Lasseter leads the Creative Division and has earned two Oscars. Lasseter was fired from Disney for promoting computer animation. He joined Lucasfilm The Graphics Group, where he worked on CGI animation with Ed Catmull a pre-existing business relationship (social bonding needs referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 140-141) this bond is very important at management level for trusting your colleagues and developing loyal towards them and the firm. Lucasfilm was sold to Steven Jobs and became Pixar in 1986, which was bought by Disney twenty years later. He experienced how a company can fire you for promoting the skillset that given the industry's highest honour. Steven Jobs was also fired from his own company. Both Jobs & Lasseter had to adopt a business model that encourages creative employees to promote their skills that has led to the success of the Pixar Corporation. The driving force that key staff are granted employees the creative freedom in their environment and in their creative work which had to sixteen Academy Awards, among many other awards and acknowledgments.

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PART A

Empowerment management and its successful influence on Pixar Animation Studios' creativity practices.

Pixar Animation Studios' management has giving its employees environmental autonomy in building hut like workstations – which has given the employees the empowerment at work – giving them a sense of freedom which fosters a creative environment, this also frees management to micro-management teams – that can lead to time consuming tasks – enabling productive and minimum involvement (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 219). Pixar employees are given a degree of decision making – giving them autonomy. Lasseter facilitates the team's decision. I still feel that individual employees can lose a sense of direction with too much autonomy given.

I have always found that communication of brief (decision making) is king, and that with poor communication of brief – there is more gap between management expectations and what employees set out to achieve. (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 204) - Decision making from a management level can be seen as a need to close a gap between a problem that needs to be solved with the help of teams and departments and desired state that management what to achieve by a certain time in the market to stay ahead of the curve.

John Lasseter leads the creative inspiration of Pixar/The Company. He believes that the key to the most successful animated filmmaking of Pixar comes from great storytelling – rather than innovative technology. The company creates movies with great moral storytelling – that makes their viewers laugh and grab their emotions promoting the values of 'friendship' in all the Toy Story movies I have grown to love with my children. The technology helps to convey the story to their target audience; which supports and enhances the creativity and imagination of the success of the animated productions. Under Lasseter's guidance – the company has gathered a "creative brain trust" group of key staff members who are loyal contribute their passionate ideas and suggestions to improve on every pet animation project at hand – i.e. well remembered animation shorts like 'For the Birds'. Lasseter can continue to use Associative play in Creative Activities (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 218) to promote the creative team to use Storytelling.

Pixar Employees

Campus Environment:

Key managers give staff considerable autonomy without centralised controls or micro-manage staff, resulting in high levels of employee 'feeling' of empowerment (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 188). Employees are empowered and are given this trust and sense of freedom and discretion by the autonomy given from management which had led to better decisions and higher satisfaction on the job.

Staff would experience more self-determination, meaningful task-identity; knowing that their work's importance touches the hearts and lives of many viewers around the world, competence relating their own task-engagement and impact; they would feel that their actions are so significant that their work can influence to the success of the business of creating animated movies through storytelling regarding their role at Pixar.

PART B

Emotional Intelligence and its contribution to the attitude and emotions on productivity at Pixar.

We need to understand what are Attitudes are before we are able to access how emotions influence our thought processes and our behaviour in the workplace.

Attitudes in the diagram (Appendix 1) are represented as a group of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions toward i.e. an employee, or event in the workplace over a period of time.

Beliefs are developed set of values about an assertive objective you may have – that you accept to be truthful at the time. Feelings are one's conscious positive or negative judgement of the attitude objectives. Behavioural intentions based on your intended motivations to participating in a particular behavior relating to the attitude objectives.

(Appendix 1) shows how our intentions can be translated into behaviour depends on situational factors and possibly other elements of the MARS model where employees can apply their knowledge to organisational processes in ways that improve Pixar's organisation's effectiveness.

Emotions are a significant correlation in establishing and changing employee attitudes in the workplace. (Appendix 1) conveys this process, which is similar to the cognitive process that also

begins with perceptions of the world around us. We take in sensory information with emotions built on a quick and inaccurate evaluation of whether that information supports or threatens our instinctive motivations. These emotions are not related to the individuals planned intentions; they are involuntary emotional responses connected with minor sensory information. We should adopt effective-listening as an approach on our emotions to help us consciously decide whether to support or oppose an event in the workplace. Listening is one of the most important skills you need in order to be effective in our interactions with others in the workplace.

Both the cognitive reasoning and the emotions on attitudes demonstrate inconsistencies of disagreement when both influence each other. The conflict experienced by the individual indicates one's logical analysis of the situation which cannot be identified with reasons to support an automatic emotional reaction toward an event or another employee. It seems that there is challenge of conflicting experiences with the cognitive reasoning and emotions processes agreeing with each other most of the time. Most the best decisions are achieved when managers spend their time clearly evaluating and assess the situation and problem solving.

The bar and stage for animators after work on Friday nights is a great idea for staff go there to play their music. It's important that employees maintain a healthy level of Work-life balance (Internal – needs based theories) in relation to ERG (Existence, Relatedness and Growth) theory, Three Learned Needs Theory. By having these sorts of activities in the workplace creates synergy within informal work groups and teams.

Some employees have transformed their workstations into bachelor pads / Hawaiian beach huts; some staff skateboard to meetings; Maslow's hierarchy of needs (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 140-141). This created a sense of nurture in the workplace environment from the company towards the employee. This relates to the drives and needs (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 139). With drives and needs in place the employees are motivated to work for Pixar and when employees are free to innovate this creates a sense of Self-actualization in the workplace - Maslow's hierarchy of needs (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 140-141).

Challenges:

- The creative opportunities 'appear' to be unlimited. The truth is that creative opportunities are limited. There seems to be a mixed set of needs to a different person and to a different group.
- Risk of job stress – Workers could be working up to 10 hours a day. This is well over an extra day of workload each week (12 hours extra work – in comparison to other workplaces).
- **Burnout:** The Company seeks to prevent – burnout among its employees; so they can have long, productive careers.

Management needs to avoid Emotional Labour that causes emotional dissonance, chronic stress & burnout – (Appendix 2): Emotional Labour (Hoschild, A. 1983).

Training Programmes:

Offering various artistic endeavours to different types of employees addressing all staff can help building and developing skillsets. These courses help towards fostering creativity, promoting collaboration, and preventing burnout.

Through training, Pixar has developed the employees' enthusiasm, ability and skills, resulting in great animated films and happy employees. Management can continue to use Associative play in Creative Activities (McShane, Olekalns, Travaglione 2010 pp 218) to promote the creative team to use Artistic activities.

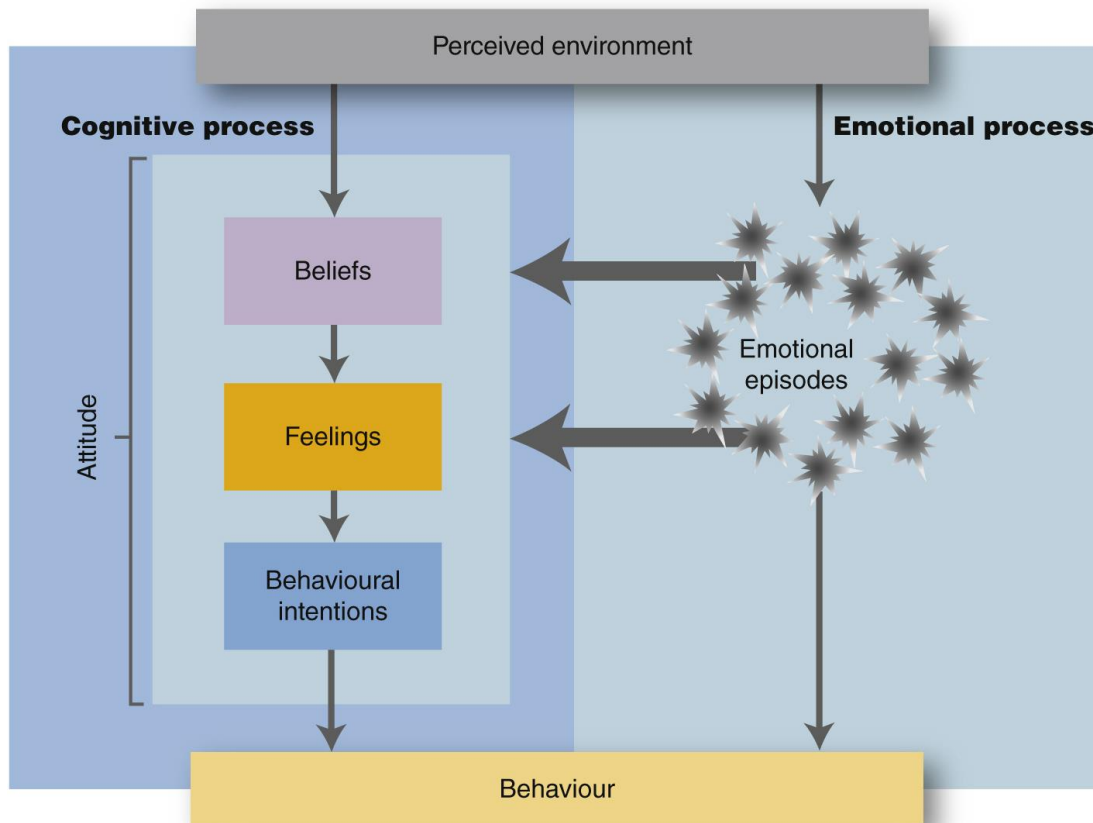
In my own conclusions I have found that by Pixar allowing employees to express their verbal and non- communication in an environment they can freely design, with the antonym in place not only at their workstations but also in their daily workload – creates a great health learning environment – hence improving their own productivity, which keeps employees satisfied, which in turn keeps the business of making animated movies running successfully.

REFERENCE LIST

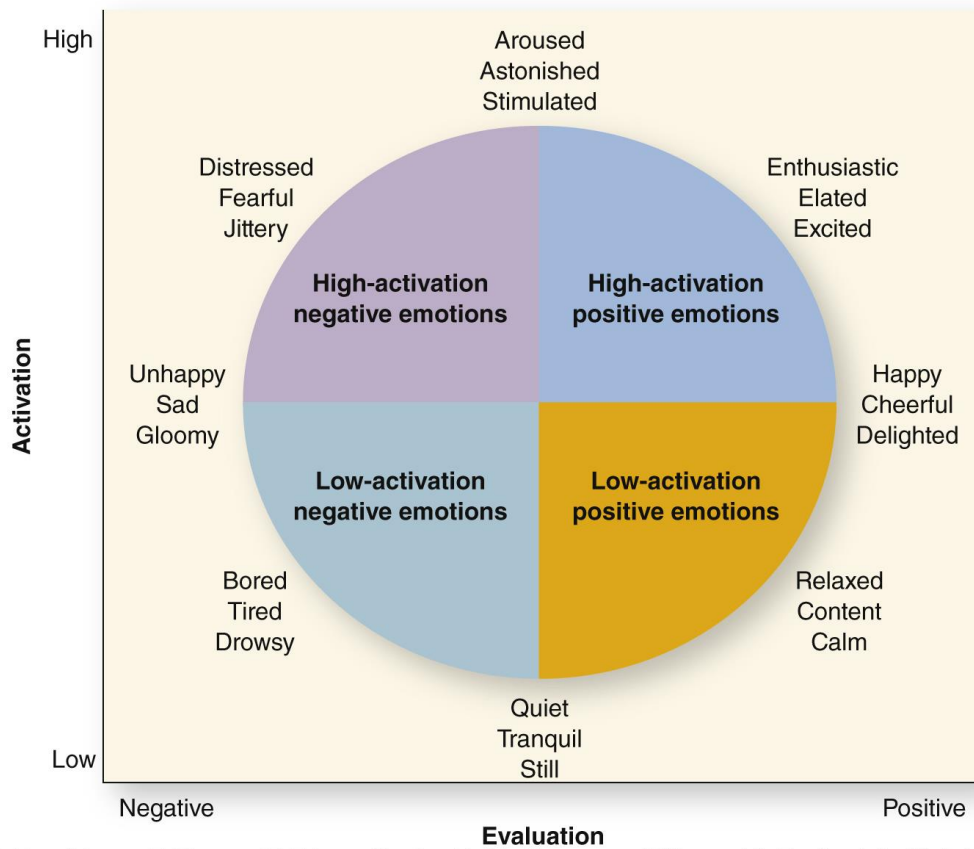
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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Attitudes and behaviour in exhibit 4.2, Emotions and Attitudes: From Beliefs to Behaviour pp 104



Appendix 2: Emotional Labour (Hoschild, A. 1983)



Sources: Adapted from J. Larson, E. Diener and R. E. Lucas, 'Emotion: Models, Measures, and Differences', in *Emotions in the Workplace*, ed. R. G. Lord, R. J. Klimoski and R. Kanfer (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 64–113; J. A. Russell, 'Core Affect and the Psychological Construction of Emotion', *Psychological Review* 110, no. 1 (2003): 145–172