

# General Reading Practice Test 40

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# Instructions for Taking the Test

Read the rules and regulations carefully before the test:

1. Switch off your mobile phone and electronic devices.
2. Manage your time strictly to **20 minutes** per passage, reading questions first to guide your skimming and scanning for answers, always paying close attention to word limits and matching synonyms.
3. Read the instructions thoroughly before answering the questions.
4. Read the questions carefully to avoid silly mistakes.

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## The Psychology of Innovation

Innovation is an essential element in business survival and companies invest significant amounts of resources in their employees to develop novel ideas. As the people find that their environment doesn't make them creative, they work in luxurious and state-of-the-art centres which simulate innovation. And, there are people who don't have that much budget or space, but are still able to innovate.

Professor of Psychology at Arizona State of University Robert B. Cialdini states that innovation must begin with recruitment, without that, companies might struggle to succeed. Research suggests that the fit between a company's values and an employee's values matters. It can tell what contribution they will make in the company. Studies done in Harvard Business school show that although some individuals normally are more creative than others, all individuals can be creative if they are in the right circumstances.

Cialdin's views reflected in one of the most popular photographs in the story of rock and roll. The picture of singers Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash and Jerry Lee Lewis jamming at a piano, which was taken in 1956 in Sun Studios in Memphis tells a hidden story. Sun's 'million dollar quartet' could be a quintet. Roy Orbison, a greater natural singer than Lewis, Perkins or Cash, is the one who is missing in the picture. The owner of the Sun, Sam Philips wanted to transform the popular music with songs - fusion of black and white music and country and blues. Presley, Cash, Perkins and Lewis understood the ambition of the Philips intuitively and believed in it. Orbison wasn't motivated by the goal, and he achieved one hit with Sun Label.

Cialdini says, the value fit is important as innovation is a process of change and as a species, we behave differently when we are under pressure. Then, managers must adopt the counterintuitive approach, they should explain what loss the company will face if they don't capture a particular opportunity. Studies suggest that we are ready to take more gambles when threatened with loss than when offered a reward.

Innovation management is a delicate art. Companies can be pulled easily in conflicting directions such as marketing, product development, and finance departments. Each of them gets different feedback from different sets of people.



And, without a system, collaborative exchanges could happen within the company but small pockets of innovation could also disappear. Innovation is a contact game, in which you can't brief people only by saying, "We're going in this direction and I'm going to take you with me".

Cialdini believes that 'follow the leader syndrome' is problematic, not only because it motivates the bosses to go it alone. Scientific fact says that three people will be better in solving the problems than one person, even if that person is smartest in his or her field. Cialdini mentions the interview with molecular biologist James Watson to prove his point. Watson discovered the DNA structure, the genetic information carrier of all living organisms, along with Francis Crick. When asked how they cracked the code before the highly accomplished rival investigators, the answer Cialdini got stunned him. He said that he and Crick accomplished it because they were aware that they weren't the only intelligent scientists who were pursuing the answer. Watson said that Rosalind Franklin is the smartest scientist and was so brilliant that she rarely seeks advice.

Teamwork triggers one of the basic drives of human behaviour. Cialdini says that the social proof principle is so pervasive that we don't even recognize it. For example, if one's project is being resisted by the veteran employees, one should ask an old-timer to speak up for it. Cialdini is not the only person advocating this strategy. Research shows that more than a boss's speech, using the peer power horizontally rather than vertically is more effective.

The flow of ideas can be stimulated by writing, visualising and prototyping. By taking account of research papers and historical events, Cialdini proves that even simple acts such as writing can increase an individual's engagement with the project. He says, the intent behind the competitions which asks us to write like, 'I like Kellogg's Corn Flakes because.....' is that the act of writing itself makes us likely to believe it.

Authority often interferes with innovation, even though it doesn't have to. The poor leadership could lead us to what Cialdini calls "captainitis" which is the regrettable tendency of team members to opt out team responsibilities that are properly theirs. He mentions it captainitis by saying, "crew members of multi-pilot aircraft exhibit a sometimes deadly passivity when the flight captain makes a clearly wrong-headed decision". This behaviour is not only restricted to air travel, but it can happen in any workplace, where the leader is dominating.

On the other hand, in the 1980s, Memphis design collective, the only rule for the group of young designers is no rule. This environment motivated them to exchange ideas in a free manner, which led them to create more different forms, functions, colours and materials that elevated the attitudes toward furniture design to a different level.





Most of the theorists believe that an ideal boss should possess some of the qualities such as leading from behind, gratified by the collective accomplishment and providing credit where it is due. Cialdini says that leaders should encourage all the individuals to contribute and give importance to every recommendation to make the correct decision and will give full attention.

The annoying thing about innovation is it comprises a variety of approaches, it doesn't have a clear cut formula. Still, by recognising this psychological truth, a manager can make a truly innovative culture which makes their job a lot easier.

## The Psychology Of Innovation IELTS Reading Questions

### Questions 1-7

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the Reading Passage?

Write

- **YES** if the statement agrees with the claims of the writer
  - **NO**, if the statement contradicts the claims of the writer
  - **NOT GIVEN** if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this
1. Innovation is an important component in business survival.
  2. Fit between company's values and employee's values is not necessary.
  3. People take more gambles when they are threatened with loss.
  4. Contacting others and exchanging ideas is important for innovation.
  5. Companies should increase the salary of their employees to encourage them to create new ideas.
  6. One smartest person can outsmart the combination of three people in solving the problems.
  7. Simple act of writing can increase the engagement of the employees with the project.

### Questions 8-11

Choose the correct letter a, b, c or d

8. Who said that innovation should start with recruitment?
- a. James Watson
  - b. Francis Crick
  - c. Robert B. Cialdini
  - d. Robert T. Cialdini



9. Who wasn't motivated by Sam Philips' goal?
- a. Johnny Orbison
  - b. Elvis Presley
  - c. Roy Cash
  - d. Roy Orbison
10. Which principle is so pervasive, according to Cialdini?
- a. Social Proof
  - b. Liking
  - c. Authority
  - d. Scarcity principle
11. Which often interrupts innovation?
- a. Depression
  - b. Authority
  - c. Low creative environment
  - d. Logical thinking

### Questions 12-14

Complete the sentences using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

12. Managing innovation is a \_\_\_\_\_ art.
13. Research suggests that using peer power \_\_\_\_\_ rather than vertically can be much more powerful.
14. Writing, \_\_\_\_\_, visualising can stimulate the flow of ideas.




[Click Here to Check Answers](#)



## Answers for IELTS General Reading Practice Test 40

1. Yes	2. No	3. No	4. Yes
5. Not Given	6. No	7. Yes	8. c. Robert B. Cialdini
9. d. Roy Orbison	10. a. Social Proof	11. b. Authority	12. delicate
13. Horizontally	14. Prototyping		

### How many questions did you get right?

Correct Answers (Out of 14)	Your Next Step
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