

SPACE AND VOICE - PRECONDITIONS FOR EDUCATION AND INNOVATION

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An important precondition for creativity and innovation is the nature of the space in which they take place. "Space" here has to do with both the atmosphere and the educational setting itself and also the quality of the human voice. Here one can rely on a number of studies and empirical observations in order to improve these preconditions for generating an atmosphere where further exercises in creativity and innovation can take place. We know, for instance, that "positive spaces" generate better outcomes, but they also have to offer choices, and stimulating cues as well as "protective" places. We also know that any pre-existing settings encourage or discourage social interaction, and that chance encounters (leading to potential collaborations) can be successfully "engineered".

A real problem today is the incredibly weak or mumbly voices of the students. These students should simply be asked to speak up – one can refer to the class not hearing them. (I do this all the time and it works). This is also true for class presentations - major building block for building student confidence and creative spirit. Meanwhile the teacher can use a more personal voice with students by stepping closer to them in the class. And the class might creatively empower itself by experimenting with distances, audibility, and settings, including completely emptying the class of its furniture...a liberating move.