

The two essentials for crowdsourcing success revealed

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Companies must give both proactive and reactive attention to contributors to make crowdsourcing successful, new research from ESMT Berlin reveals, despite the advice being against natural inclinations.

Professor Linus Dahlander studied the crowdsourcing efforts of over 20,000 companies.

He revealed that whether organisations succeed or fail in crowdsourcing can be explained by two actions they take, these are –

1. Provide proactive attention – give to get

Instead of waiting for ideas to be submitted, organisations post ideas themselves and invite people to discuss them. This proactive attention shows the types of ideas that organisations are interested in, engenders trust by providing a glimpse into potential future innovation, and empowers external contributors to evaluate the company's ideas.

Proactive attention establishes a reciprocal communication style and drives knowledge sharing. Contributors are more motivated to submit their own ideas. This is critical as no contributor wants to be the first to submit a suggestion.

2. Provide reactive attention – show you care

Organisations that respond publicly to suggestions receive many more ideas from external contributors. This validates external contributors, motivating further contributions, and indicates what types of suggestions the organisation values.

Attending to newcomers in particular yields impressive outcomes. If they learn that the organisation cares, they make use of their fresh perspective and share numerous ideas.

“Managers who pursue these actions can increase the odds of success substantially,” says Professor Dahlander. “They seem straightforward, but companies need to fight their natural tendencies to wait to receive ideas before sharing their own and to focus on established contributors when they should focus on new ones instead.”

“Organisations must pay attention to the crowd before the crowd will submit ideas.”

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