

# The impact of routine on employees' creativity and innovation

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## ABSTRACT

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Routines are an integral part of all modern jobs, either as a result of organizational policies which require the employees to follow certain steps or as a result of people's innate tendency towards the creation of habits. The research on the impact of routines on employee's creativity is scant and widely divided. Certain authors argue that work routines are beneficial to creativity and innovation since they free up time for more complex tasks and creative thinking while also raising the employees' perception of self-efficacy and self-confidence. In contrast, other authors view work routines as detrimental to creativity and innovation since they lower the employees' overall work motivation and create barriers to change. Based on the analysis of the results of a web survey completed by 233 Romanian employees, the present study proves that there is a direct negative effect of work routines on employees' ability to generate creative solutions to newly identified problems, either when they are directly asked to do so or when they volunteer. The analysis also shows that holding a managerial position reduces the negative impact that a high level of work routine has on the employees' creativity and innovation, but that the type of job does not mediate or moderate the negative effect of work routines. The results are significant for improvement of job design by showcasing the need of reducing the level of work routines in order to improve the overall organizational creativity.

**Keywords:** routine, creativity, employee driven-innovation, employee's perception.