

July 15, 2008 1:51 PM

"Play" Makes For Creative Companies, Says London Business School

By [Jessica Stillman](#)



Listen Now: [Download Today's Podcast](#)

- **The Find:** According to one professor, the secret sauce that sets today's most innovative companies apart has one key ingredient: play.
- **The Source:** [A podcast](#) from the **London Business School**.



The Takeaway: Assistant professor of organizational behavior **Babis Mainemelis** uses a London Business School podcast to argue that one key factor that sets apart super-creative companies like **Apple**, **Google** and **Pixar** is their ability and willingness to encourage play at work. Mainemelis spoke with over one hundred executives about the link between play and creativity and concludes that "play is nature's way to creativity."

In the podcast, he offers tips on how everyone from heart surgeons to investment banks can nurture a playful mindset. Encouraging play, Mainemelis argues, means making space for flexible thinking, experimentation with means, and exploration of variables that often go unexamined. All of which can add up to valuable new ideas for your company. Besides, Mainemelis says, your team members are probably going to play anyway, even if they have to do it on the sly. So why not take advantage of these natural impulses?

The Question: Does your workplace need more play? Or less?

(Image of the game of Life by [rastfabl](#), CC 2.0)

© 2008 CBS Interactive Inc.. All Rights Reserved.