Are there environments that help cultivate serendipity?

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I think yes. Even though the serendipity moment is unexpected, many scientists advocate that serendipity can be cultivated in some specific environments. Cultural, digital, and physical environments are vital in increasing the chance of encountering the necessary pieces of information that can lead to serendipity moments. Particularly, in a culture that endorses risk-taking, withholding of blame, and openness to new ideas and discussion, people are more likely to interact and share knowledge with each other, which in turn enhances the likelihood of facing unexpected valuable information or events (Cunha et al., 2010; Mendonça et al., 2008). Moreover, when a culture can tolerate a degree of autonomy for experiments, “controlled sloppiness”, and minimal structure, it will also help stimulate serendipity (De Rond, 2014; Dew, 2009; Mendonça et al., 2008).

Apart from the cultural environment, digital and physical environments holding “trigger-rich”, “highlights triggers”, “enables connections”, and “enables capturing” factors are also able to facilitate serendipity processes (McCay-Peet & Toms, 2015). In an experimental study of 47 digital users, Toms (2000) finds that suggestion tools can direct users to useful newspapers and increase serendipitous encounters. Zhang et al. (2012) suggest that the *Auralist* recommendation system can enhance serendipity among users listening to music while balancing it with other conflicting goals, like accuracy, diversity, and novelty. Additionally, the availability and design of physical spaces (e.g., sewing club, public library) for social connections, information sharing, cross contacts, diversity, pointers, imperfections, and explorability also affect serendipity (Björneborn, 2008; Pálsdóttir, 2011).

Apparently, the environment plays a vital role in supporting one to encounter the “missing piece” as well as capitalize on it (Vuong et al., 2022). However, the environment is not the only factor that helps cultivate serendipity, but personal traits, skills, and mindset also do so (Delcourt, 2003; Dew, 2009; Diaz de Chumaceiro, 2004; Gaglio & Katz, 2001; Napier & Vuong, 2013; Vuong, 2016, 2018; Vuong, 2022; Vuong et al., 2022; Vuong & Napier, 2015; Vuong & Napier, 2014).

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