

ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS IN ORGANISATIONS: FINDING EVIDENCE OF VALUES-ADDED**Berthoin Antal, Ariane & Strauß, Anke, 2013**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Managers have discovered that **it makes a lot of sense to use an innovation to generate innovation**. So they are experimenting with the potential of artistic interventions: bringing in people, practices, and products from the arts to help address issues their organizations are facing.
- **Organizations of all sizes and all sectors** in Europe have tried artistic interventions—for many reasons and with all kinds of art forms. There is no such thing as a “typical artistic intervention.”
- **A wide variety of impacts have been documented** although few studies are explicitly designed as evaluations. Most studies use a mix of methods, primarily qualitative. Many include perspectives from different stakeholders (managers, employees, artists and sometimes intermediary organizations that produce artistic interventions).
- **Although employees are often initially skeptical** about engaging with an artist at work, the artist succeeds in engaging them. By the end of an intervention, **people almost always report that the experience was positive**, even if it sometimes entailed going through difficult **phases of irritation and frustration**. (Surveys we have conducted in the Basque country found that 100% of managers, employees and artists who have participated would recommend such a project to their peers.)
- These effects can be found at the individual, group and organisational level, and in fact these levels tend to be interconnected. We have observed that **organizational impacts are usually spill-over effects from benefits that individuals and groups have gained** from an experience with an artistic intervention. The distinction between the categories of impacts and the groups we have put them into is analytically helpful, but it is important to note that in practice the **effects are often interrelated and they reinforce each other**.
- There is evidence that artistic interventions can indeed **contribute to such Strategic and Operational factors as productivity, efficiency, recruitment and reputation**, but this is the area that is mentioned least frequently in the research-based publications.
- Apparently, this is not necessarily what organisation members consider as the most remarkable sphere of impact. Indeed, few companies that have worked with artistic interventions have sought to document such direct impacts. Instead, **managers and employees seem to care more about how artistic interventions impact the factors that underpin the potential for innovation**.
- **Seeing more and differently** and **Activation** are the strongest groups of categories underpinning processes of learning and change from artistic interventions in organizations. **Collaborative ways of working** and **Personal development** are the next two most frequently mentioned.
- **When people discover new ways of seeing and doing things in an artistic intervention**, it is an energizing experience that **activates the will to act and engage in change**. **Working collaboratively**, rather than simply collectively, is an **additional source of potential strength**.
- The power of artistic interventions in organizations resides in the **opening of spaces of possibility**, which we call “**interspaces**” in the formal and informal organization. In these interspaces participants experience new ways of seeing, thinking, and doing things that add value for them personally.
- Artistic interventions are by definition ephemeral phenomena in organizations. They start and they end, so **the responsibility for deriving the benefits for the organization and sustaining the effects lies with managers and the employees**.
- **Policymakers are called to nurture the field** with programs, policies, funding, as well as by creating opportunities to experience artistic interventions in their own organizations. (See also results of the Creative Clash study on funding arrangements, Vondracek 2013).