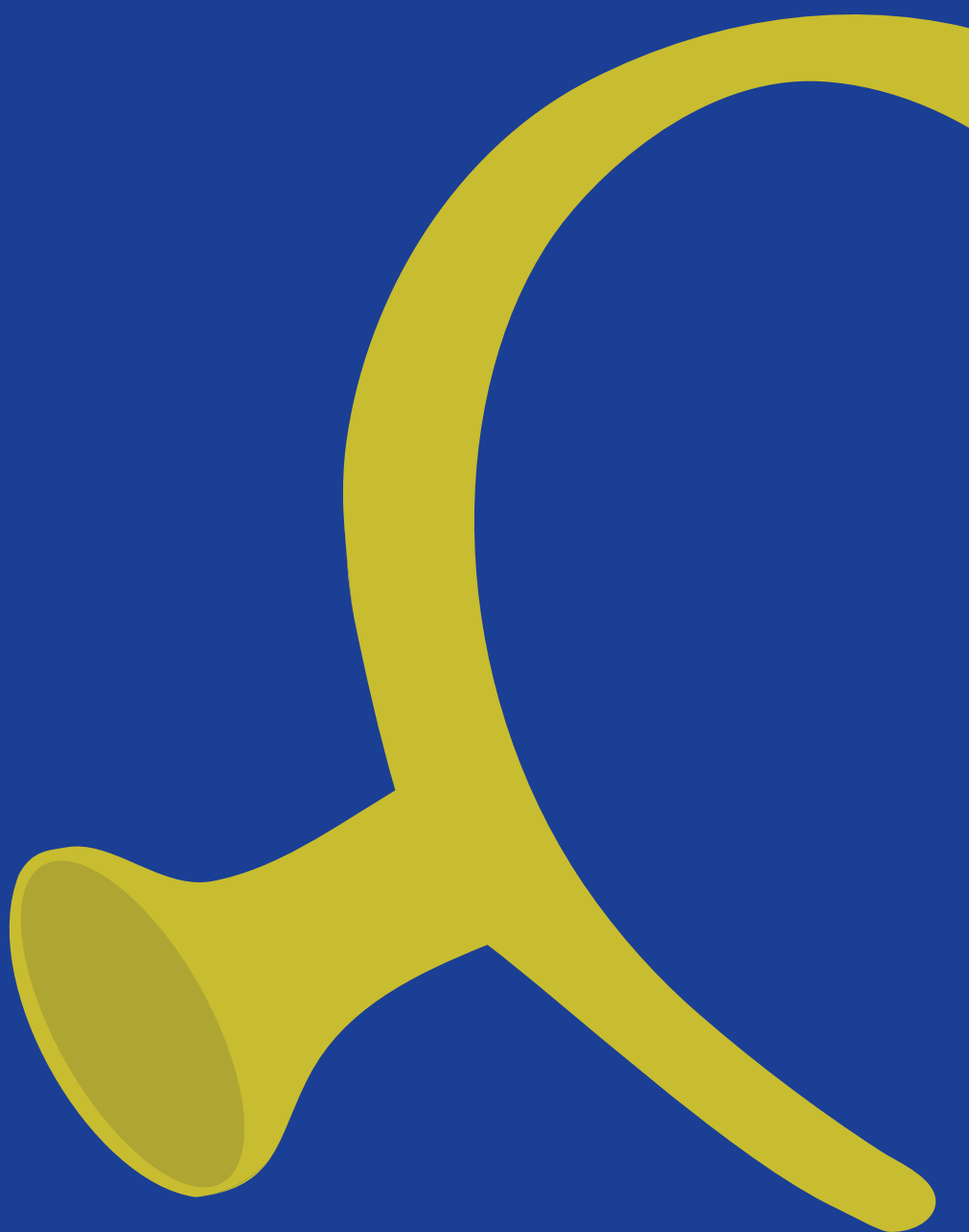


From Silos to Shrek Ears:

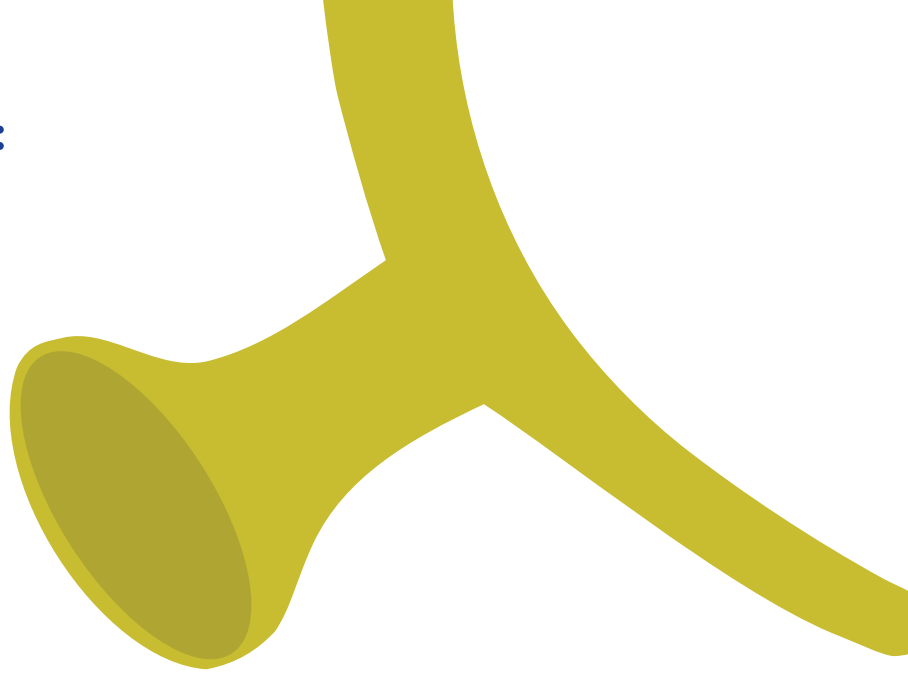
Personalisation and the future of
Successful Cultural Leadership



cultural
leadership
programme

The Cultural Leadership Programme is a joint programme between Arts Council England, Creative & Cultural Skills and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

From Silos to Shrek Ears: Personalisation and the future of Successful Cultural Leadership



Introduction

Mixed Arts Venues (MAVs) have been influential on local, national and international cultural maps, and have become increasingly visible over the last ten years. Venues like Cornerhouse in Manchester, FACT in Liverpool or Watershed in Bristol, for example, present an innovative programme of independent film, digital and non digital arts, and run popular social spaces that serve local communities. Broadway in Nottingham and Showroom in Sheffield also run successful cinema and art exhibition spaces, along with managed workspace for the cultural industries, whilst Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle (the only News Theatre still in operation in Britain) is undergoing an impressive refurbishment that includes an extra screen and dedicated learning spaces.

The MAV network of six venues was successfully awarded funding from the Cultural Leadership Programme under their Networks action learning pilot scheme. The aim of this strand is to consolidate the practice of leadership development through network activity and to support a peer group approach to leadership development. The Chief Executives of these venues each selected a member of their staff (called 'Emerging Leaders' for this report) to take part in this pilot programme.

The research question for this project was

to explore personalisation of audience experiences and its impact on cultural leadership

This dissemination report is part of the evaluation, and one of the outcomes of this project. We would like it to be seen as an ongoing report and hope that it sparks debate and instigates change.

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Emerging Leaders & CEOs: See Appendix 2
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www.culturalleadership.org.uk

Overview of project

“Our argument is that both arts organisations and artists need to embrace more enthusiastically the task of engaging the public. Without strong leadership in these communities personalisation of the arts will be slow.”

John Knell, *Whose Art Is It Anyway?*

The project began by debating what we understood by personalisation and how it worked within our programmes and for audiences. John Knell describes personalisation where a soft ‘P’ is creating new customer experiences by using new channels to reach audiences and increased audience interactivity, and with hard ‘P’ where the audience co-produces the art with artists and organisations, often using open source principles. We felt that many of our venues already ran personalised projects. For example, a soft ‘P’ would be Showroom’s Sensoria festival that ran an audio tour around Sheffield, which people could download to their ipods and then use them to take themselves to (in)famous places in the city. Or a hard ‘P’ example is Cornerhouse’s LiveWire (a young people led programme that co-produces work with artists).

We devised a project with three strands:

1. **Venue Visits** – Visits were carried out to the participating venues, which included frank and detailed interviews with their chief executives and arts professionals working within them. Other staff, in addition to the emerging leaders, were also encouraged to do visits and exchanges.
2. **Outside the Box** – The group carried out case studies outside of, and yet relevant to their immediate experience in the arts, including visits to businesses and arts venues in San Francisco/Silicon Valley, California, visits to members of the Amsterdam Virtual Platform network, visits to other businesses in the UK including HP Labs in Bristol and Sandbox, Centre for Digital And Creative Industries Media Factory, and the University of Central Lancashire.
3. **Consultant** – Two workshops with a consultant in order to investigate larger themes within the national arts industry, and to measure the career development of the emerging leaders as they progressed through the project.

The aim of this three strand approach to the project was to serve a wider arts community as well as developing the current and emerging leaders working within it, in order to shape a model of leadership fit to meet the challenges and opportunities that the industry faces in an increasingly ‘personalised’ and digital age of cultural consumption.

Sessions with leading thinkers

Over the period of the programme the group had the opportunity to hear from three of today's leading thinkers on innovation, creativity and the changing world we live in during a series of workshops.

Charles Leadbeater www.charlesleadbeater.net

Charles Leadbeater is an authority on innovation and creativity. He has advised companies, cities and governments around the world on innovation strategy and drawn on that experience in writing his latest book *We-think: the power of mass creativity*, which charts the rise of mass, participative approaches to innovation from science and open source software, to computer games and political campaigning.

Here are some of his provocations:

'ideas live in the minds of many'

'ideas are animated by sharing, which in turn animates the economy.'

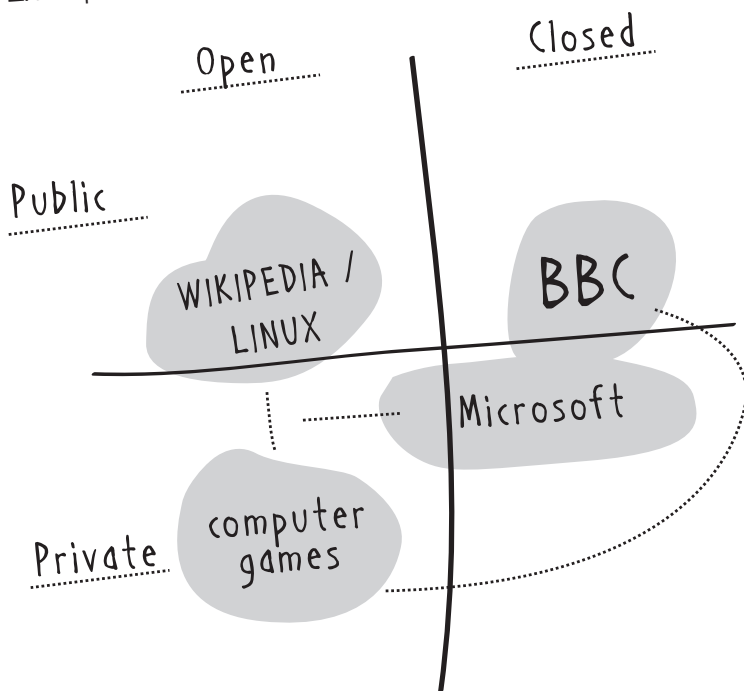
'the more we think together the more we share'

'we think therefore we share'

Key challenge – how can we expand venues in which people can operate?

We are living in a culture of participation – e.g. hacker participation – Wikipedia is a prime example of this culture of participation – as organisations we need to choose whether or not we are open to this model or closed.

Examples of 'closed' and 'open' organisations... which do we want to be?



How does something like Wikipedia work as an organisation?
a bit of anarchy
a bit of meritocracy
a bit of aristocracy = BIT OF EVERYTHING
a bit of democracy
a bit of royalty

Do we want to be 'designers of participation'?

Are our social spaces more important than our screens?

Can we (e.g. MAV venues) become the physical core of the creative community?

Graham Leicester is Director of the International Futures Forum which seeks out difficult, complex, seemingly intractable issues and works to support businesses, governments and communities in addressing them more effectively. Project work focuses on the areas of health, learning, enterprise and governance. IFF's signature publication is Ten Things to do in a Conceptual Emergency.

Graham has been working closely with the Mission, Models, Money (www.missionmodelsmoney.org.uk) programme since 2005 and in his Provocation Paper, Rising to the Occasion: Cultural Leadership in Powerful Times for MMM in 2007, he argues confidently that the competencies needed for growth in the 21st century are latent in the arts and culture sector. The challenge therefore for today's cultural leaders is to support transformation in a way that looks forward rather than back.

Some of his approaches include:

Do not underestimate... 'the value of thinking'

There are three responses to a 'conceptual emergency'...

- the neurotic
- the psychotic
- the transformative

Where are the settings to learn how to take the growth/transformational response rather than entering into the neurotic or psychotic response?

We need to foster the ability to step outside and assess within our organisations as a coping method for change and facing the unexpected.

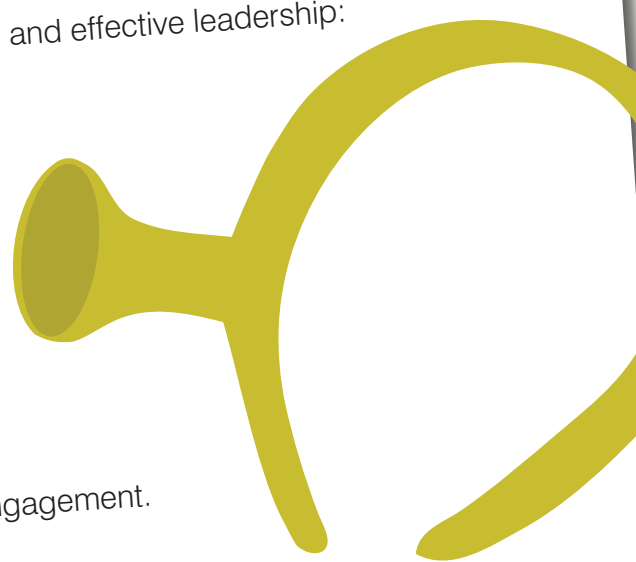
Having a strategic conversation is valuable – it makes you think:

- about the long term
- about how world is changing
- and it's not hidebound by outcomes just a conversation.

Future styles/skills required for an effective organisation and effective leadership:

- a sense of affiliation / association
- Relationship management
- Creative leadership – choice
- Developing people and the team
- Light Touch
- Remaking structures
- Flexibility
- Ability to change roles / swap skills
- Respect
- 'flowing to work'

engage first – then come up with the strategies for engagement.



John Knell

John Knell is one of the UK's leading thinkers on the changing face of work and organisations and is co-founder of Intelligence Agency. Recent and current work includes ongoing intellectual and policy input into Arts Council England's public value inquiry; a think piece commissioned by Mission, Models, Money – entitled *The Art of Living* exploring what a more intelligent arts funding system might look like was published in March 2007.

In 2006 Arts Council England commissioned John's report on personalisation – 'Whose Art Is it Anyway?' – which details how personalisation is going to transform the future trajectory of the arts in the United Kingdom.

John asked us the following question... do we as organisations want to be 'path dependent' or 'path breaking'?

In relation to culture and how we experience it, there's been a huge rise in what has been called 'cultural promiscuity' – e.g. shops in galleries, musicals at the opera house, art displays in department stores.

Another question posed:

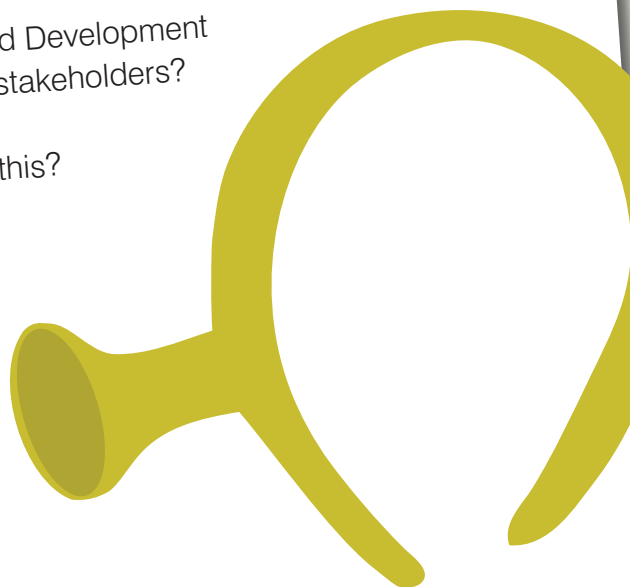
'Which bits of our cultural infrastructure have built leverage and scaleable assets / models? or – how many of us are really planning for the future, for what is round the corner, for what 'might' happen and how ready are we to react to those unknowns?'

Have we built up the expertise within our organisations to manage this? Would a more asset based, intangible evaluation allow us to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of our existing activity more 'imaginatively' than we currently do?

Which of us had the deepest networks and relationships with artists, with our public and why? How can we leverage them more effectively? What would it mean for us to more actively enable the cultural and creative vision of others to take flight?

Challenges for the network...

1. How can we / do we 'do' our business better?
2. Do not underestimate the importance of Research and Development Artists? Public?
3. How can we create opportunities for: ourselves? our stakeholders?
4. What flexible capacity/structure do we need achieve this?



Case Studies

1. Venue Visits

The group thought a valuable approach was to start by 'looking inward' and to visit each others' venues. We have more similarities than differences and should have closer relationships to work smarter.

In addition to meeting a variety of staff, the group also had a confidential meeting with the CEO in order to better understand current leadership models and practices. It also provided an opportunity to share best practice and ideas, and to share concerns and problems. The Emerging Leaders are also looking at ways in which the venues can effectively collaborate as a Network in the future.



Some of the group's observations:

- They are all led by strong, passionate figureheads, the majority of whom have striven to pull their organisation out of financial crisis in recent years.
- Most have been in their position for at least 6 years and have worked through a period of lobbying the UKFC and central government to assert the value and impact that MAV organisations have on regional cultural and creative economies.
- They are all very conscious about establishing a more business focused approach and to shake off old organisational stereotypes and ways of working.



The CEOs have all worked very hard to implement successful strategic change to make their organisations more dynamic, financially sustainable and attractive to a larger audience.

Some examples include:

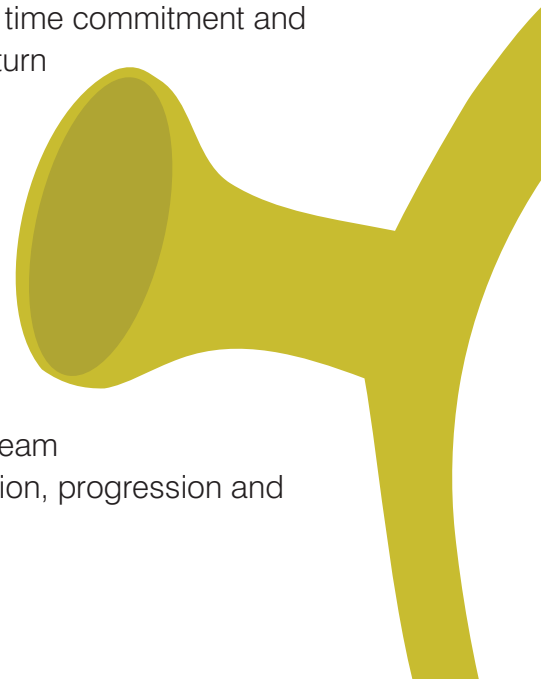
- Watershed – has configured itself in order to realise its vision, meet user demand effectively and maximise its potential. The recent addition of a third company, iShed, to the group has strengthened its position by creating new capacity to meet the challenges and opportunities of emerging new technology in the fast moving

21st century. iShed is a Community Interest Company set up and wholly owned by Watershed Arts Trust, to initiate, enable and support cross-sector collaborations and creative technology projects.

- Cornerhouse – Balances film and digital art with its growing education programme. Recent restructure and plans for a new education space.
- Tyneside – Recent redevelopment which includes an additional screen, heritage exhibition and dedicated learning spaces.
- Broadway – Added 2 new screens. Has taken over the running of its bar/cafe which has dramatically increased revenue. Has decided to incorporate mainstream cinema into the programme.
- Showroom – Manages the Workstation, a space for Creative Industries. Plans are underway to develop the cinema to become a festival centre.
- FACT – Appointment of a commercial manager. To work the organisation to diversify its income streams and develop the commercial activity of FACT and a new Head of Programme to draw together the segmented artistic departments within the organisation of Exhibitions, Collaborations, Education and tenantspin into one coherent programme.

The consequences

- Although several organisations have gone through recent restructures and appointed new members of staff, all organisations still retain the skeleton of a conventional, hierarchical structure that has always been present.
- They are all reasonably resource-poor with staff who work long but not always smart hours. Also, most lack dedicated HR personnel, which may explain the continued traditional ways of operating and managing. Moss Kanter states that it is essential to “ build winners’ habits of responsibility, teamwork, and initiative into routines, processes and practices that perpetuate them”. Due to circumstances, the MAV organisations have not been freely able to invest in building capacity and investing in staff to address the organisational structures and routines that make it confident, innovative and successful in this way.
- Pulling the organisation out of crisis has demanded a huge time commitment and much external networking and focus from the CEO. This in turn has left insufficient time to dedicate to the organisation’s infrastructure and even sometimes isolates them from the rest of the organisation. Furthermore, the goals and values are not always communicated effectively across the entire staff base, leaving many staff feeling undervalued or disenfranchised.
- Despite the restructure of several organisations, it still appears that there are members of staff who do not buy into their organisation’s values and goals and who are not team players. This is ultimately destructive and inhibits collaboration, progression and even success.



Staff Exchanges

A common issue throughout this project has been how do we share and involve the rest of our staff?

You know what it's like when someone returns from a conference and goes on about something new but you don't get it (and aren't interested!)...

So we encouraged other members of staff to also go and visit each other's venues in order to widen the knowledge transfer opportunities. Here are a few of the comments from these exchanges:

"I like the attitude to the front of house recruitment plan – X factor style! Also the desire to recruit for a multi-skilled role – bar, box office and usher fits in with what we do in an informal way – this could be given more focus – help with cross selling and understanding what happens in other departments."



"During the day several key issues were identified that both organisations shared, such as limited resources to deliver an ever-expanding programme of work, the need to re-evaluate staffing structures and the often complex relationship between programming, communications and the audience."



"Both organisations are looking at introducing some form of membership scheme, but the current models on offer may not be fit for purpose. Discussion took place on the two organisations working together in terms of R&D on building a model scheme that would engender our audiences having a higher sense of ownership of the organisations... this joint venture would allow us to think smarter and share resources."



"Watershed have an intranet for staff to share information, which I felt would be very useful for Cornerhouse. Information includes: staff structure (with photos of staff members) and phone list; a bulletin board for announcements (separated into categories including general building announcements, and also a non-work one, for social activities, and competitions); meeting minutes and reports; daily diary and cinema listings."

2. Outside the Box



Silicon Valley / San Francisco

In January 2008, the group visited various arts and business organisations in San Francisco and Silicon Valley, organised through the UK Trade and Investment Office. The group visited innovative creative businesses, such as Linden Labs (makers of Second Life), Pixar, Google and Adobe.



The arts' venues visited included the Yerba Buena Contemporary Arts Center, San Francisco Arts Commission, SFMOMA, 9th Street Film Center and the Rafael Cinema/ California Film Institute in Marin County. We met with leaders in all the organisations, and structured our enquiries around the personalisation, innovation and leadership agendas.

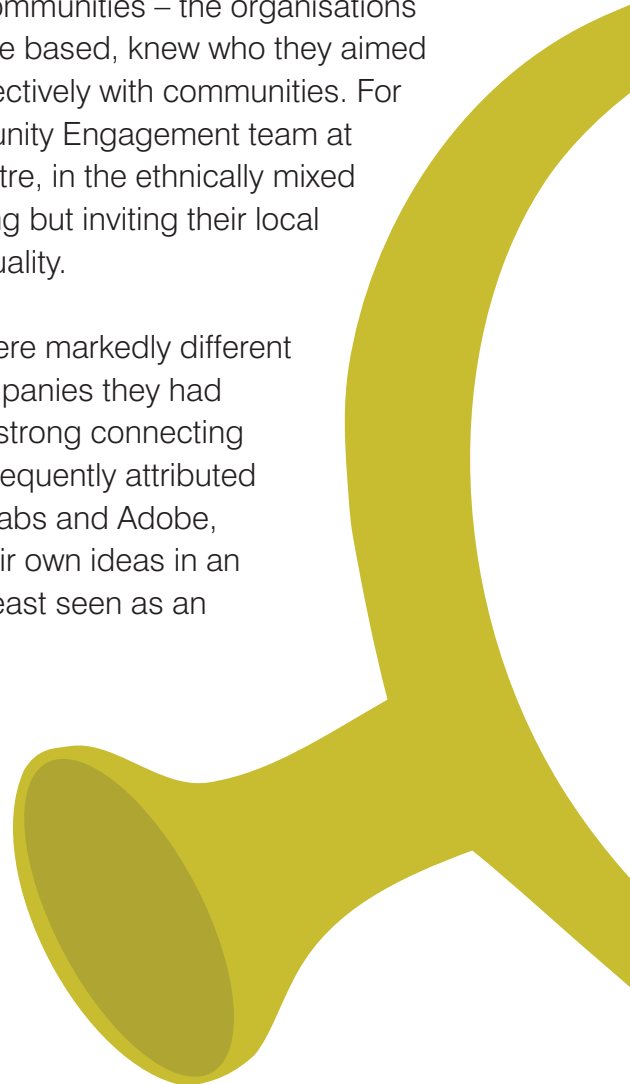


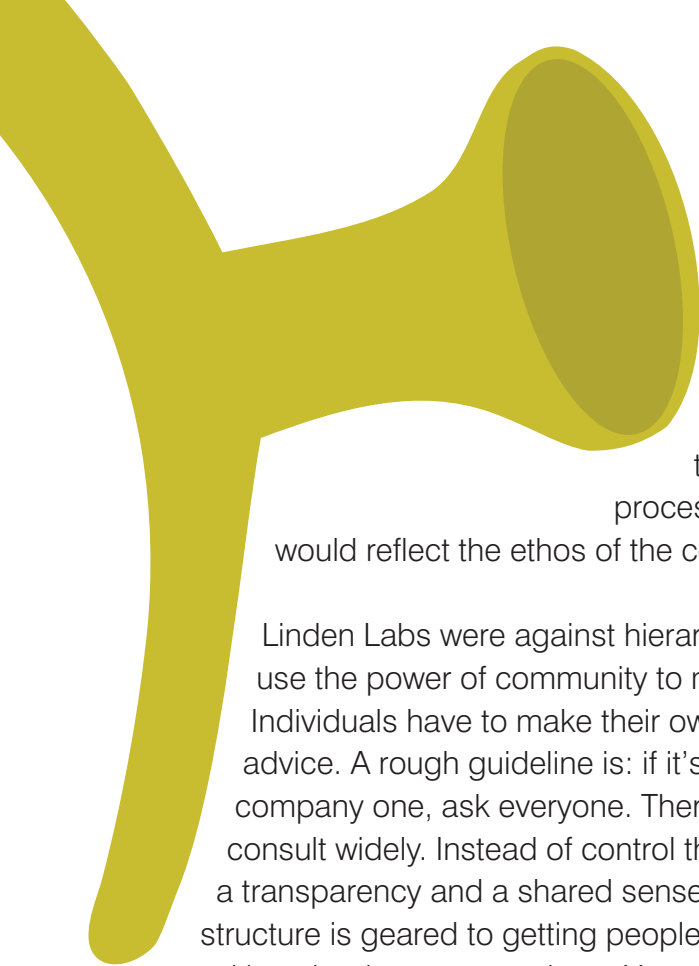
Broadly speaking we felt we learnt the most from the business that were outside of the arts, though we valued the networking opportunities with the latter. In addition, we felt that the most successful projects and institutions were those that engaged with their communities – the organisations who knew where they were based, knew who they aimed to attract, and worked effectively with communities. For example, the new Community Engagement team at the Yerba Buena Arts Centre, in the ethnically mixed

SoMo area, demonstrated a philosophy of not only involving but inviting their local community to curate exhibitions, with no compromise of quality.

The organisational cultures of the creative IT companies were markedly different from our own, and though now medium to large sized companies they had nurtured this from small start ups with a handful of staff. A strong connecting theme that emerged was risk, and a culture of risk that is frequently attributed to organisations in the US. In companies such as Linden Labs and Adobe, employees were encouraged to formulate and develop their own ideas in an atmosphere where failure was (almost) encouraged or at least seen as an inevitable learning curve.

Risk is also a necessary byproduct of innovation and to a lesser extent an enthusiastic, energetic, and autonomous working culture. Adobe in particular had a well resourced and formalised approach to risk, including mentors and a bootcamp for intrapreneurs. However, it has to be stated that these 'risks' were taken in a very structured company environment with strong corporate identities.





The non-arts sector businesses also highlighted recruitment issues within organisations. The sheer amount of time taken to recruit members of staff that were believed to have the potential to fit in within the organisation was a constant – something that (in discussions following the outcomes of the network's US visit) many of our venues simply fail to do. However, another aspect of these selection processes was the need to hire individuals who did and would reflect the ethos of the company.

Linden Labs were against hierarchy – it's too dangerous to have one source. They use the power of community to make decisions instead, see their Tao of Linden. Individuals have to make their own decisions; they can only seek Managers for advice. A rough guideline is: if it's your project then you decide, but, if it's a wider company one, ask everyone. There's more perspective, richness in diversity if you consult widely. Instead of control through withholding information and power, they have a transparency and a shared sense of responsibility. Everything in their development structure is geared to getting people to make better decisions – everyone has a mentor and is trained to mentor others. You wear **Shrek Ears** if you mess up – it makes a joke out of it and avoids a stigma. You set aims and objectives every Monday and review them yourself on Friday – and everyone can see each others.

Famously at Google they have **20%**, the official policy that encourages employees to spend one fifth of their time working on their own projects. Obviously they have to be in some way Googley and supporting the aims of Google, but as everyone buys into this there's no need for managers to police it. This is where much of the innovation comes from, though it's certainly not restricted to this. You don't have to use this 20% of time and nor to do designate it to a day really, just use it when it's best for you and your workload. You could do 2 x 10%ers and its very common for employees to collaborate (they have internal intranet that supports this too). This really is 'baked in' to working life, and Google recognise the mutual benefits – things like gmail and google earth were created this way, and people learn skills and teamwork through it.

Some of our conclusions:

- Make our spaces more **creative**
- A really good **Intranet** – to share information and ideas, though keep it easy to use.
- Set up a simple system to set and **self evaluate** aims and objectives, and eventually make transparent across organisation
- As a MAV network we could set up a best practice **recruitment** procedure, definitely going beyond just an interview...
- Pilot **20%** initiative or create something similar together.
- Develop pathways for people to **innovate** and come up ideas (one of which could be 20%)

- Revise our **staff development** programme to move away from set training and become more about sharing skills and growing together; establish an onboarding induction programme.
- Failure / mistakes – introduce something along the lines of **Shrek ears** to help banish blame culture, though we'd have to decide together or someone would get the blame for it!!
- **Celebrate** things and people.
- Have a **can-do** attitude – 'No time', 'can't do', 'not my job', 'constraints', 'no money' etc – **all banned!**

Virtueel Platform / Amsterdam

We visited 6 'e-culture' organisations who are all partners of the Virtual Platform which was founded 10 years ago to help the organisations talk to Government about developments in media and technology. Their role is to represent the e-culture sector in an official capacity, successfully lobbying high level decision makers about their contribution to the economy. Four years ago, VP was recognised as a knowledge and expertise centre. It began to receive some public subsidy and is now recognised as a 'sector institute'. This funding marks the recognition of the value and importance of the e-culture sector in the Netherlands.
www.virtueelplatform.nl

Organisations visited included the Netherlands Media Arts Institute, supporting media art in three core areas: presentation, research and conservation, and through its facilities provides extensive services for artists and art institutions. Associated with this are educational programmes, which are developed for all activities. Their membership of the Virtual Platform helps to facilitate working in partnership with other venues and it gives them a collective voice to address national agendas of Government. They are situated in an attractive building with very generous, light and spacious offices (a running theme through our entire research – working environment and the culture of the workplace are key to fostering creativity). In the institute there is a large, well-equipped kitchen and every Friday the whole team eat together – taking it in turns to prepare the food which really helps with communication.

Mediamatic host exhibitions, presentations, workshops and much more. It operates as both a commercial and cultural organisation. The commercial arm writes software and makes websites – very successfully! The cultural part is a not for profit foundation. As an organisation Mediamatic do not mind making mistakes, they see everything they do as a prototype – all their events/exhibitions are seen as a means to try things out. Nor do they take themselves too seriously and they are unafraid of being political or cheeky!

There is a real sense of integrity about the organisation, they have vision and passion, they believe they can make a difference and they are not afraid to get stuck into the debates and arguments of modern society.

The Waag Society are the true pioneers in the field of e-Culture – they were part of founding Digital City and were the first organisation in Holland to have a website.

They focus their research and projects on the following four domains: Healthcare, Culture, Society and Education.



Since its inception in 1994 the Waag Society has grown from 3 people to 50 people and so it requires more stringent processes and procedures, the very things creative people hate! They are in the process of creating a new organisational model, which is explicit and meaningful to all. The Waag is definitely the 'big gun' in the group of organisations that we met with, they are very organised, very confident and very established. Again their building is incredibly impressive, and the office spaces were generous, with a focus around the kitchen, refreshment area acting as a meeting point. By having focused domains and ateliers, the organisation is always in control of its activity and has defined specialist areas which are

able to be communicated easily to all staff.

General Observations:

- Nearly everyone in the Netherlands works part time – quite often 3 days in one job and 2 days in another – this has many challenges in terms of communication amongst teams and organisations but seems to be the accepted norm in the country. It does allow staff to develop interests and a specialism in certain areas which can mean that employees bring more to their role within a particular organisation.
- The Virtual Platform has a specific and genuine purpose with buy in from its members, which has led to its success and influence on the government's political and cultural agenda. This is an interesting model and reinforces the need for a network to have a strong focus and ambition, rather than a network for network's sake, which is often the case in the UK.
- The smaller, successful organisations use the expertise and ideas of technical and creative staff to feed into their commercial arm, thus retaining the best team and attracting revenue for the foundation. This is a model we could learn from in order to achieve better financial sustainability and to be able to employ those from more specialised or indeed different backgrounds and sectors for our benefit.

3. Consultant's report

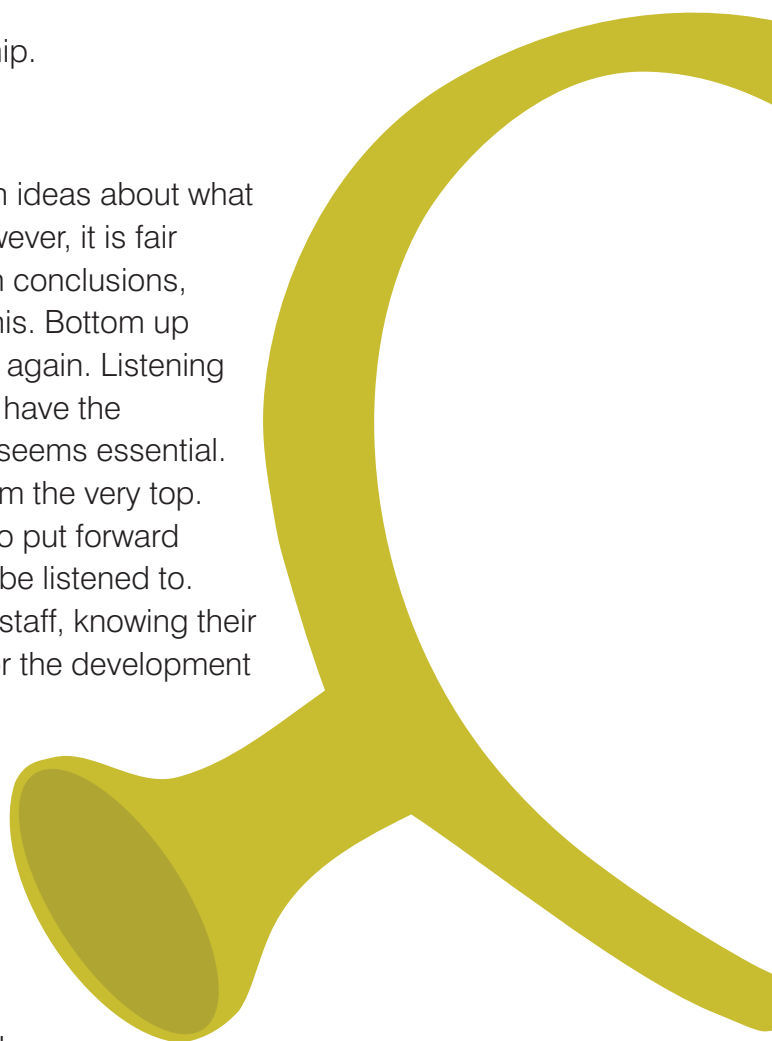
See Appendix 1 – Emerging Models of Leadership.

Conclusions

From the project as a whole, we all have our own ideas about what a successful leader in our sector should be. However, it is fair to say that we have come to a series of common conclusions, and aspects of our programme have informed this. Bottom up innovation was a theme that came up again and again. Listening and allowing staff at all levels of the company to have the chance to be involved in the vision of the venue seems essential. Paradoxically, this change needs to be made from the very top. People need to feel that they have 'permission' to put forward their ideas or authorise things, and that they will be listened to. Bottom up innovation also means knowing your staff, knowing their skills and interests and what both could mean for the development of the company.

Ineffective communication is an age old problem in arts and cultural organisations to the point that it is frequently accepted. By accepting this problem, our organisations will never maximise their potential and silos will be ever present. Throughout the programme, we have seen good examples of meaningful and effective communication, that transcends the usual staff meetings and memos that simply do not reach or involve all staff. Using an intranet, making time for lunch together, initiating dedicated 'extra curricular activities', innovative approaches to staff and management meetings, innovative approaches to sharing what we're all doing, coaching and mentoring, ideas pools... and so on. It's also essential for middle and senior managers to take time out to regularly discuss and debate values, goals, ambitions and ideas, personal and organisational. How else can we inspire our teams? AND we need to start to learn how to be honest with each other – to be allowed to talk more freely and openly, to be allowed to recognise when we're not so good at something and learn from someone or some place else, and to have our strengths recognised and share these too.

Risk taking was another huge theme. In some companies that we visited, the risk was financial, but it was also personal too. We found that being willing to experiment, to make mistakes, was a key to innovation. If people are scared to embark on a new project, say what they think, or propose a new idea for fear that it will simply not be listened to, we will never progress as organisations. Successful leaders should also fight against the blame culture that seems to be very commonplace. From our observations, people blame one another when they feel undervalued, to boost their own worth (since no-one is doing that for them) and for fear of possible consequences.



We admired leaders who listened to their staff, who used knowledge of their audience as a starting point for innovative projects and programming, and who looked for new, interactive ways to involve their public. Personalisation seemed more important at smaller arts venues – it was employed because it was seen as integral to their survival and to their purpose. With the challenges that we are facing from the rise in home and web-based entertainment, it seems essential that a good leader needs to embrace such opportunities.

Our visits enabled us to see many practices that have relevance for our own organisations, from the innovative ways of the training seminars run at Sandbox, to the 20% projects at Google which allow staff to work on their own interests in the company, to the personalised work spaces at Pixar. We do not have to take on the whole ideologies of the companies involved (nor even believe that these schemes work ideally in practice), but they more often act as examples of paths that we could take, and the spirit of the changes that we could make in our organisations. Importantly, they have also acted as spurs for us to see the problems that can occur in our own sector, and have given us a series of possible tools to solve them.

Recommendations for MAV Network future Cultural Leadership development

- For a 'next generation' of MAV emerging leaders to devise and deliver their own programme, mentored by this first group and around a research question that we pose.
- Build on existing strengths in delivering personalised services by each centre creating a relationship with another organisation similarly engaged in wrestling with the issues of innovation or personalisation e.g. an NHS Trust, local authority or a major corporation with headquarters locally.
- Share the knowledge created through discussions and research, in particular about innovation and personalisation, perhaps through common digital publishing, which might, in time, become one of the features of our joint practice and of interest to other arts/cultural/creative industry organisations around the country.
- Investigation of individual research agendas and partnerships with universities across the network to enable specialisations to be identified shared and invested in.

Recommendations for future MAV collaborations

- Creation of a national award which is promoted by the venues, attracts and develops talent and grows profile for the work and the venues.
- An audit of infrastructure that establishes the existing resources, facilities and equipment available to the venues, looks at what resources can be shared, what the future investment needs are and where they can be funded from. A central aspect of the study will be what happens when the Digital Screen Network funding ends for the Digital Cinema Equipment.
- Joint PR and promotional activity for the work of the venues in the MAV network
- Explore setting up a jointly owned digital distribution business, for the express purpose of identifying and bringing to UK audiences 'difficult', 'contemporary', British and international digital moving image.

APPENDIX 1 – Emerging Models of Leadership

APPENDIX 2 – MAV Network information

APPENDIX 3 – The Dissemination Event

Appendix 1

Emerging models of Leadership

Report from Consultant: Sian Prime

Representatives from six Mixed Arts Venues (the MAV Group) have been given an opportunity to research personalisation and new models of leadership.

The organisations involved were:

- Broadway
- Cornerhouse
- FACT
- Showroom
- Tyneside
- Watershed

The subject of personalisation was the starting point of the participants' investigation and this led to us considering what kinds of organisation and leadership styles were needed to support personalisation for their audience.

Key words and phrases emerged from the discussions with them:

- change
- evolution
- Silos
- decentralised organisations
- networks within and beyond organisations
- risk
- enterprise
- opportunity
- communication
- failure
- dealing with success
- mistakes
- celebration
- ownership
- blame

These are of course common and current in most sectors and organisations. In reviewing existing or developing new models of leadership the questions that are simple, but not always easy to answer are:

- **Leading What**
- **For What Reason?**
- **By Who?**
- **How?**

Connection Culture

We have unprecedented levels of choice, complexity and rapid change.

Users and audiences are now well used to making personalised consumer choices in many areas of their lives as evidenced by the growth of social networking, the access to a huge range of cultural experiences online and through digital distribution, and even in their health and education provision. This new environment requires a proactive response from arts organisations, and it also offers many opportunities for developing their audience and their relationship to them.

New, Complex and Powerful Times

“New Times require New Thinking”¹. Research in major companies suggests that today’s managers are expected to have a rare combination of core competencies: creative leadership, self-management, teamwork effectiveness, presentation skills, organisational knowledge, subject specialism understanding, cross-cultural understanding, vision and integrity².

As the demands on organisations grow and also increase in complexity new approaches to change and motivation are needed. Globalisation, the world wide web and environmental awareness have been the driving forces in a move towards resolving problems through systems thinking: looking at the interconnections between the subsystems and larger systems, “webs of mutual responsibility³” are necessary. Leaders need to be comfortable with facilitating others to that position of mutual responsibility.

However, it is important not to underestimate some of the practical difficulties that can be involved in making this kind of transformation in leadership style. It requires leaders of arts organisations to be able to move away from some aspects of their traditional ways of doing things in a hierarchical organisation. In particular, it may require them to recognise that more “junior” staff in the organisation have a greater understanding and confidence at implementing these new ways of working than they themselves do. Their role then becomes one of enabling and facilitating change, through harnessing the talents and knowledge of their own staff, rather than just offering top down directive leadership.

Social scientist and psychologist Chris Cowan identified three capacities to support large scale change and then the evolution of organisations:

1. World Sensing: the use of intuition and non-quantitative market research
2. Sequential plan construction: the ability to order and sequence
3. Complex plan execution: the ability to integrate complex ideas and select options under pressure

1 Spiral Dynamics: Mastering values, leadership and change” Don Edward Beck and Christopher C Cowan

2 “Corporation: Psychological Literacy and the Future of Human Resources” Margaret Hannah and Graham Leicester

3 Mulgan, 1997

People working in the arts often find themselves highly and instinctively competent at the first two, often neglecting the second one to allow the freedom and adrenaline of the complex plan execution to carry them forward. Cowan's research also identified three distinct "Executive Intelligence" patterns:

1. Entrepreneurial Intelligence
2. Translational Intelligence. This intelligence shows patience and tolerance of "sameness", but also being satisfied with incremental improvements, able to reduce uncertainty, tension and internal conflict. The person in this role is often the "Chief Operating Officer", supporting the more entrepreneurial leader.
3. Transformational Intelligence. Using sketches outline blueprints to transform a system or an organisation and do so rapidly and when surrounded by other forces of change⁴.

The combination of all six is not expected in one person, of course. A Leadership Team needs to have all of them, and each need to be valued and rewarded equally. It might be that the second quality in each of the three may be found from outside the arts, although it is also possible to be developed within.

Diversity of skills, intelligences and backgrounds in the Leadership are imperative to an organisation's survival.

Leaders need to show increased levels of trust in their staff's knowledge, and to feel comfortable with risk and the vulnerability that can come when they acknowledge their own lack of knowledge of expertise in new areas. In doing so a stronger collegiate network will be created.

Top Down and Bottom Up

Balancing the opportunities for horizontal, bottom up or networked idea creation and implementation with the need for top down targets and authority is complex and not new. Finding that balance and a balance of accountability can be difficult, but an increasing demand is placed on leaders to be comfortable with it. People who are comfortable in the "Information Age" or are "Knowledge Workers" naturally work through and create networks to link with audiences, clients and colleagues.

The success of an organisation, its creativity and productivity are likely to depend on the quality of the relationships between people; and innovation is strengthened and reliant on collaborations between many people engaged in a variety of activities. The need to find new ways to meet and share knowledge differently becomes key to an organisation's success, to not only ensure that there is an "innovation pipeline" but to ensure that, if staff leave, then knowledge isn't totally lost from the organisation. Simple things like encouraging a blog to share reviews of books, films or to tell the story of a meeting, could encourage new sharing of experience.

⁴ Spiral Dynamics: Mastering values, leadership and change" Don Edward Beck and Christopher C Cowan

An organisation which has developed a business model with the customers at its heart is the social enterprise, The Big Issue. This has a simple model – John Bird, founder calls it **ABV**

- Audience
- Business
- Vendors

He describes how the vendors contact with the audience for the magazine changes the audiences' view of homeless people, but also of the business and then the business learns what the audience wants, expects or needs from the business through the vendors and the business supports the vendors to become better able at understanding and communicating the business' needs. So something that initially could seem like a triangle or a hierarchy is in fact much more interconnected than that, which each element relying on the other to improve the experience and reward from The Big Issue ⁵. Watershed used this when developing their cafe service, through holding an Open Space event for their users.

Each of the organisations have front of house and cafe staff that interact well with their audiences/customers and in each venue there is strong, natural customer care. The level of direct contact with the audiences can provide a rich source of information and support for the organisation, forming its strategy as well as creating a loyal group of audiences and structures such as “skip level meetings” and opportunities to meet directly with the leadership of the organisation may be a useful introduction to the venues.

Leaders need to be able to develop a confidence that they can balance formal authority, accountability, transparency and use this to give direction, leadership and support to the horizontal elements of the organisation and society. This is particularly true in times of change, when internal and external stakeholders might be wanting to make more input or have more communication than the Chief Executive feels able to give; at these times communicating what is not known is important, so that stakeholders do not misinterpret silence for being an indicator of bad news, when it could just be someone is still “sketching or developing the blueprint”.

Linden Lab, creators of Second Life, have clear Company Principles⁶ written to support this systems management approach.

- Work together!
- Your choice is Your Responsibility
- Be Transparent and Open
- Make Weekly Progress
- No Politics!
- Might Makes Right (just kidding)
- Do It With Style

⁵ Interview Sian Prime with John Bird January 2005, information repeated at British Library Business and IP Centre event <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTc2Cq6f2BQ&feature=email>

⁶ <http://lindenlab.com/about/tao>

Many of the MAV representatives found this model of leadership and organisational structure closest to something that they could transfer to their organisation⁷ and that would benefit their organisation and themselves (providing that important balance between the business and the individual's development). The Tao of Linden, which expands on the Linden Lab's principles, is intended to develop an organisation that operates on culture of Action Learning⁸.

Action Learning was originated by Professor Reginald Revans. It was first piloted in hospitals, where he found traditional instruction and leadership as being ineffective "People had to be aware of their lack of relevant knowledge and be prepared to explore the area of their ignorance with suitable questions and help from other people in similar positions"⁹. Action Learning brings together a group of people with varied levels of skills and experience to analyse a work problem and develop an action plan. The group continues to meet as actions are implemented, learning from the process and making corrections to future planned actions. It is a positive way to address complex problems, find solutions to the underlying root causes for problems, to determine a new strategic direction or to maximise new opportunities.

Many creative companies have established imaginative ways of tracking weekly progress, ways that establish accountability rather than feeling mistrusted at worse and monitored at best; these allow for development to be celebrated, for ideas to be discussed in a wider network, and thus enhanced, and to create opportunities for improvement and learning; these can either be just confined to staff or invite the users/audiences to attend some of them. Making time and allocating resources to these are important to developing strong organisations that are able to reflect and evolve.

Pixar¹⁰ was founded on these principles, wanting to move from project culture in the film industry, and to build a team that worked differently, no longer pulled together with a short-term aim and adrenaline driven, to working to a longer term vision. Pixar has a Pixar University which creates connections across the whole organisation, with each employee attending classes that broaden their understanding of animation, the arts, audiences and the employees. The University has a Latin motto: Alienus Non Dieutius (alone no longer). An American bio-tech company: Genentech, recognised by Fortune magazine has been recognised as one of the best employers, has a programme of opportunities for people to meet to celebrate progress with large breakthroughs. All of these provide opportunities to break "silos" and to respect specialism without them becoming negative or divisive.

New ways of meeting to develop and share knowledge need to be developed, these can be real meetings or virtual meetings, blogs etc.

Action Learning opportunities for the staff, and opportunities for the users to sometimes be part of the "learning" or strategy development could be explored.

7 <http://mavsanfran.blogspot.com/2008/01/linden-lab-wows-us.html>

8 Revans 1998

9 Revans, R. 1980. Action learning: New techniques for management. London: Blond & Briggs, Ltd.

10 The Connection Culture A New Source of Competitive Advantage Michael Lee Stallard

Opportunities across the organisation based on celebration or learning can ensure silos don't develop.

Formal accountability and transparency are strong motivators, and at times of change, the need to be clear and to communicate even what is unknown is crucial.

The MAV Motivators

Spiral Dynamics is a development of the work of Clare Graves that provides a framework for transformational change. A representative from each MAV agreed to complete a questionnaire which gave me some insight in to their value systems. Clare Graves identified eight levels of maturity or development:

Beige: if the thinking is automatic, the structures are loose bands, with survival as the focus.

Purple: if the thinking is animistic; the structures will be tribal and the processes circular.

Red: if the thinking is egocentric; the structures are empires; the process is exploitative.

Blue: If the thinking is absolutistic; the structures are pyramidal, the process is authoritarian.

Orange: If the thinking is multiplistic; the structures are delegative, the process is strategic.

Green: If the thinking is relativistic; the structures are interactive; the process is consensual.

Yellow: If the thinking is systemic; the structures are interactive; the process if integrative.

Turquoise: if the thinking is holistic: the structures are global, the process is flowing and ecological ¹¹.

The people who completed the questionnaires have strong preferences in Orange, Green and Yellow. More simplistically it means that they are strongly motivated by:

- Learning – this is a key motivator for them, and they would always seek new opportunities if they felt they weren't learning something new;
- Integrity – they were most inspired by organisations whose organisation's brand values were expressed not only to audiences but dictated the way staff behaved to one another;
- Community – there is a strong need to work in a sociocentric and relativistic way, working to create harmony amongst the close and broader community;
- Systems thinking – enjoying working with complexity and understanding the impact on different sectors.

In addition the participants are all strongly driven by success and autonomy, there is a strong desire to work as "intrepreneurs" they are:

- Tenacious
- Able to identify, understand and seize opportunities;
- Able to learn from failures;

¹¹ Spiral Dynamics: Mastering values, leadership and change" Don Edward Beck and Christopher C Cowan

- Able to respond to change quickly when needed;
- Keen to have their own clear responsibilities and to see the impact of their decisions and work;
- Have a deep passion for the sector, organisation they work for, and for their ideas within it.

Few of them mentioned finance as a reward, but contributing to the financial stability of, and having an opportunity to increase the impact that the organisation or their part of the organisation can act as incentives.

As the “second tier” in the organisation, they are a powerful resource, keen to learn, to apply the learning and to experiment.

A business model that allows, encourages or demands intreprenurial behaviour is unusual in the arts and more complex organisational structures might be needed, Mission, Models, Money is investigating the challenges of developing mission-led, financially and organisationally sustainable businesses and as part of this will be researching new financial, funding and business models ¹². BritDoc is dedicated to securing the creative future of British documentary and developing new funding and distributions models for the new digital age. To ensure the success of this Jess Search, Director of BritDoc, is reviewing the most appropriate legal structures for BritDoc, and is likely to form three inter-related entities to fully support the aims and preferred ways of operating, and Watershed is developing similar structures.

Direction and Autonomy

Binney and Williams (1997) frame the leadership development as two paradoxes: firstly providing a clear sense of direction combined with giving people the autonomy to think and act; and secondly being forthright in action and listening to what is happening inside and outside the organisation. If these are done well then staff will have the opportunity to be creative, innovative and motivated in pursuit of both their own and organisations’ aims. MAV representatives saw clear examples of this in Google, where the Google staff spends 20% of their time developing projects that are directly related to the organisation’s aims, but not part of their given workload or job description. That is the way that Google maps, Gmail and chat have been developed.

The people employed by the MAV, in the main, have great energy and focus, while fully employed, they have made time for this project and are keen to create and own new projects.

The MAV participants are clear that while they are still learning, being rewarded by being able to see the impact of their idea and able to take risks then they will stay as part of the organisation / community they are in. Creating opportunities for more intreprenurial activity may lead to a new model for the organisation, with more risks, activity and potentially more reward being generated.

¹² <http://www.missionmodelsmoney.org.uk/render.aspx?siteID=1&navIDs=712,714>

Optimism and Risk Taking

Moving to a culture that supports risk taking and optimism can be difficult. In many instances Trustees are understandably cautious; they are often used to managing deficits rather than planning for a surplus. Trustees are the guardians of the vision for an organisation, and have a strong focus on the organisation's financial stability. They may need support to adopt a more entrepreneurial attitude to their organisation's methods of operation.

If an organisation wishes to react positively to the challenges of personalisation and networks, then staff and audiences need to be allowed to combine to find, test and run new projects that contribute to achieving the organisation's vision.

Each venue has strong values and a strong vision, Watershed has begun to use these to articulate staff's workplans, this ensures that staff are clear how they are supporting the progression of the organisation and creates a stronger sense of community and value of the individual and their output.

Should I stay or Should You go?

The notion of a ladder of progression through an organisation is not something that is traditionally available in arts organisations. It is seen as natural for people to reach a level of progression and then leave, probably to pursue a career either as Leader of another organisation or to create opportunities as a consultant, often selling the knowledge they have gained back to their original organisation or to its competitors or peers. This loss of talent and knowledge allows for new ideas to enter the organisation, but the cost can be high, not just in terms of recruitment. It is key to an organisation's stability and growth to find new ways of encouraging talented staff to stay; this could be through the development of similar initiatives to Google's 20%, allowing staff to generate new initiatives that are self-financing.

On the opposite side to this, each of the MAV representatives acknowledged that sometimes people who are not contributing fully to the organisation's progression, stay in post. Managing performance, and developing a selection process which is fully aligned to the venue's values is key to this. It would support the promotion of a clear company culture to clearly reference values of the organisation when designing the job specification and any performance management systems clearly; with tasks or responsibilities being aligned to the values. Having clear systems for monitoring staff performance is vitally important.

Conclusion

The questions I posed at the beginning are only beginning to be unpicked. I would pose some more questions rather than answer them at this stage:

- The Chief Executives have responsibility for developing the organisation and the sector: could some of this be delegated or separated?
- People at each level of the organisation may need support to move to a more networked way of working.
- Could some of the people traditionally not given fundraising responsibility be given time to develop projects that would at least break even, or even make a financial contribution to the organisation?

- Giving this freedom could lead to more networked ways of leading which might be more appropriate to the new demands on organisations from the internal and external stakeholders.
- Do new legal structures need to be developed to reflect a more entrepreneurial spirit?
- The creation of job descriptions that are aligned to the organisation's values will support the development of a strong company culture and support performance management.
- New opportunities for staff to contribute to the financial and artistic growth of the organisation are possible.

Books and Articles That Helped

Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership and Change Don Edward Beck and Christopher C Cowan

Leading Change: A Guide to whole systems working Margaret Attwood, Mike Pedlar, Sue Pritchard and David Wilkinson

Confidence: Leadership and the psychology of turnabouts Rosabeth Moss Kanter

Presence: Exploring profound change in people, organisations and society Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, Betty Sue Flowers

The Starfish and the Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organisations

Ori Brafman and Rod A Beckstrom

The Connection Culture: A New Source of Competitive Advantage Michael Lee Stallard

The Enlightened Corporation: Psychological Literacy and the Future of Human Resources Margaret Hannah and Graham Leicester

Personalisation Through Participation: A new script for public services Charles Leadbeater

Personalisation and Digital Technologies: Hannah Green, Keri Facer and Tim Rudd with Patrick Dillon and Peter Humphreys

Karen Stephenson's Quantum Theory of Trust: Companies can analyse, engineer and elevate their own human networks Art Kleiner

We Think: Why mass creativity is the next big thing Charles Leadbeater

The Ties That Lead: A Social Network Approach to Leadership Prasad Balkundi

The New Age of Leadership: The Power and Practices of Maturity Harriet Rubin

People that have helped

Sarah Perks	Karen Hickling
Martin Mills	Laura Sillars
Louise Williams	Louise Gardner
Holli McGuire	Deb Szebecko
John Bird	Eleanor Ford
Andy Chapman	Sarah Bucknall

Appendix 2

MAV Network information

Cornerhouse, Manchester

Cornerhouse is Greater Manchester's international centre for contemporary visual arts and cinema. Since opening in 1985 it has achieved an international reputation for artistic excellence and innovation. With three cinemas, three galleries, bookshop, bar and café, Cornerhouse is a key cultural and social centre for Manchester and the North West.

Cornerhouse presents a unique programme of cinema and contemporary visual arts, that challenges and debates current film, art and cultural practice. Our cross-disciplinary and culturally diverse programme of exhibitions, screenings, commissions, publications and events, that are international in scope, brings together artists, critics, filmmakers and audiences to create a dialogue on contemporary issues in art and culture and celebration.

The CEO from this venue is Dave Moutrey, and the emerging leader from this venue is Sarah Perks, Engagement Director. Cornerhouse is registered as an educational charity, and its education programme includes exposures UK Student Film Festival, informal youth-led project LiveWire and an in-depth annual schools & colleges programme Projector.

www.cornerhouse.org

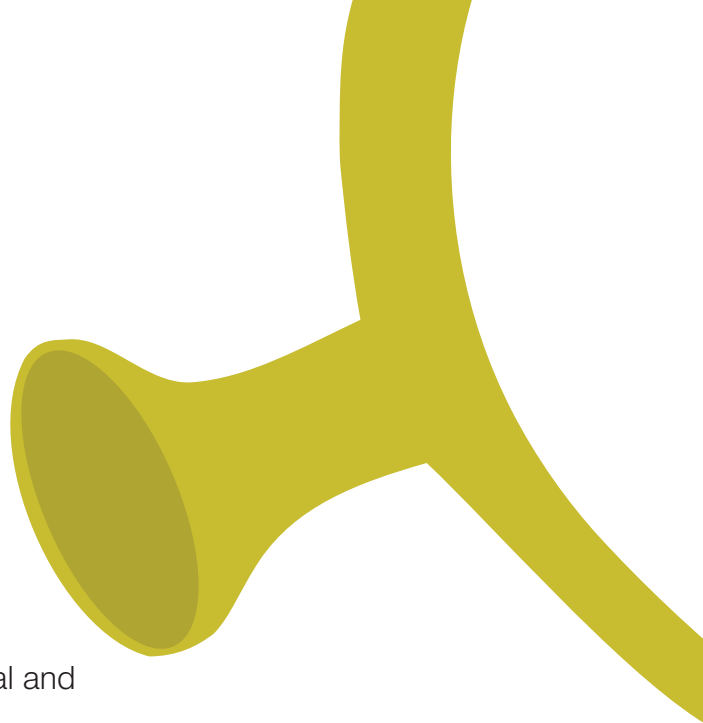
Broadway, Nottingham

Broadway is the East Midlands flagship cinema and media centre with an established national and international reputation for film exhibition, production and festivals. We also offer access to a creative environment for individuals, groups and schools and encourage participation in the region's digital arts and creative community.

In October 2006 Broadway completed a £5.7m development adding two new cinema screens, one of them designed by Nottingham's own Paul Smith, new digital projection equipment, studio space for education and exhibition work and a suite of new offices for film and media companies. Broadway now boasts four cinema screens, two bars, a restaurant and a digital art screen network that includes projections on the glass frontage of the Broadway building.

The CEO from this venue is Laraine Porter and the emerging leader from this venue is Marty Mills, Marketing Officer.

www.broadway.org.uk



Watershed, Bristol

Britain's first dedicated media centre, Watershed opened in 1982. It is housed in former industrial premises (Grade II listed) on Bristol's waterfront and stands at the gateway to Harbourside – a major cultural, commercial and residential regeneration development in the heart of Bristol UK. Watershed fosters cultural exchange and promotes engagement, enjoyment, diversity and participation in film, media arts and the creative economy. Watershed is a group of three companies: Watershed Arts Trust and two wholly owned subsidiaries of the Trust – Watershed Trading and iShed CIC.

Watershed's programme is delivered with the support of a wide range of funders and is created through a network of collaborators. Creativity, innovation and difference are the cornerstones of the Watershed brand – extending choice, diversity and participation – generating enjoyment and celebration, interest and challenge.

The CEO from this venue is Dick Penny, the Emerging Leader is Louise Gardner, Head of Communications & Services.

www.watershed.co.uk

FACT, Liverpool

FACT, the Foundation for Art & Creative Technology is the UK's leading organisation for the commissioning and presentation of film, video and new media art forms. Founded in 1988 (then named Moviola) FACT has commissioned and presented over 100 digital media artworks with artists including Mark Wallinger, Barbara Kruger, Tony Oursler and Isaac Julien. FACT exists to inspire and promote the artistic significance of film, video and new and emerging media.

FACT believes in the ability of individuals and communities to express themselves creatively and in the value of seeing themselves reflected in the world around them. Therefore FACT is an organisation working to champion new and emerging forms of creativity, engaging a wider range of artists and others in the development of new and emerging media forms.

The organisation delivers its artistic policies and objectives through an integrated artistic programme which includes work that is offsite, online and in the building. There is a focus on creative collaboration between artists, collaborators and communities.

Mike Stubbs, Director of FACT, was previously Head of Exhibitions at the world leading and state of the art Australian Centre for Moving Image (ACMI), and before that Senior Research Resident at Dundee University and Founding Director at Hull Time Based Arts. Emerging leader Laura Sillars is Head of Programmes at FACT and Karen Hickling Collaboration and Education Manager at FACT.

www.fact.co.uk

Showroom, Sheffield

The Showroom is Sheffield's independent four screen cinema situated in the heart of the Cultural Industries Quarter, one of the biggest in the UK and voted the best Independent Cinema by Guardian readers. We are committed to providing a diverse range of films and related activity for Sheffield and the surrounding region. New and archive films from around the world – most not available elsewhere in the city. These are presented alongside an extensive education programme and high profile film festivals throughout the year. The Workstation, located just next door, houses some of the country's finest creative, digital and media companies with a wide portfolio of national and international clients.

The Cafe specialises in high quality fresh food, catering for everything you should need. We offer a WI-FI facility free of charge to customers. We also function as an event and conference venue, and as an industry standard preview theatre for filmmakers. Major events staged wholly or partly within the building include: Sheffield Doc/Fest, Lovebytes Festival of Digital Arts, Showcomotion Young People's Film Festival, Sheffield Adventure Film Forum.

The CEO from this venue is Ian Wild and the emerging leader is Louise Williams, Cinema Manager.

www.showroom.org.uk

Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle

Tyneside Cinema, as it's known today, opened as the 'Bijou News-Reel Cinema' on 1st February 1937. In November 2006, Tyneside Cinema began extensive restoration work to their Pilgrim Street site. While the restoration work is being carried out, the cinema has moved, lock, stock and Tyneside Coffee Rooms to a new, temporary home at Old Town Hall, Gateshead and is due to reopen at the end of May 2008. The redeveloped building offers us unprecedented opportunities to extend our programme as the building houses 3 cinema screens, the digital lounge, two dedicated learning spaces and two post production rooms. All are equipped to a high standard, ready to cope with new and emerging technologies. There are also offices available to let to those working in the creative industries, 3 social spaces and an exhibition that interprets the history of the building.

As well as screening all the newest independent films seven day a week, we offer regular courses and events at Tyneside Cinema for people who want to learn more about film, filmmaking and the moving image. We also develop film-related projects and events in partnership with a range of organisations throughout the north east region.

CEO is Mark Dobson and EL is Holli McGuire, Head of Learning, Engagement and Development.

www.tynesidecinema.co.uk

The MAV emerging leaders team would like to thank everyone that has helped and supported us with this project including Nicola Turner at the Cultural Leadership Programme, Sian Prime, Will Daniel and the UK Trade & Investment Office in San Francisco, all the people who kindly gave us their time on visits (we will especially remember Rick at Adobe and Sandy at Linden Lab J), the Thinkers, Charlotte the cat lady, Lynda Booth, Cesar Millan (hee hee!), our CEOs, our teams and all our venue staff, and Stefania Epega and Darren Balcombe at NESTA.



broadway

CORNERHOUSE
ARTFILMBOOKSFOODDRINK

FACT 

FOUNDATION FOR ART AND
CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY

T Y N E S I D E
C I N E M A



**SHOWROOM
WORKSTATION**

WATERSHED

Thanks to NESTA for their support with our dissemination event on 28th April 2008

NESTA Making
Innovation
Flourish



The Cultural Leadership Programme is a joint programme between Arts Council England, Creative & Cultural Skills and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

Appendix 3

The Dissemination Event

Below is a visual and written account of the dissemination day held at NESTA on 28th April 2008, attended by 30 colleagues from our venues, other mixed art venues and stakeholders. The day was facilitated through Open Space Technology, a concept developed by Harrison Owen to create open discussion. Taking time out and sharing is often the most useful bit of a conference – similar to one long coffee break. This process is about facilitating the kinds of interaction that occur in a coffee break.

Rules of Open Space:

- Whoever comes are the 'right people': whatever and whoever will be will be.
- Open and flexible approach to the structure of the day including outcomes and timings.

We can play any of the following roles during the day:

1. Host: sets agenda / discussion. Announces theme and question then takes responsibility for hosting the discussion and feeding back action points.
2. Participant: make commitment for whole of discussion
3. Bumblebee: stays whilst it's interesting and then cross-pollinate when you've got what you need. Just get up and go.
4. Butterfly: just be beautiful – take a rest or find another butterfly to speak to. Take time out.
5. Giraffe: Don't be one of these! Not engaging in current discussion and eavesdropping on another (but not actively engaging in either)

Conversation topics last as long as they need to.

The debate opened with the following question:

**“HOW CAN WE EMBED CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION
THROUGHOUT THE ORGANISATION?”**

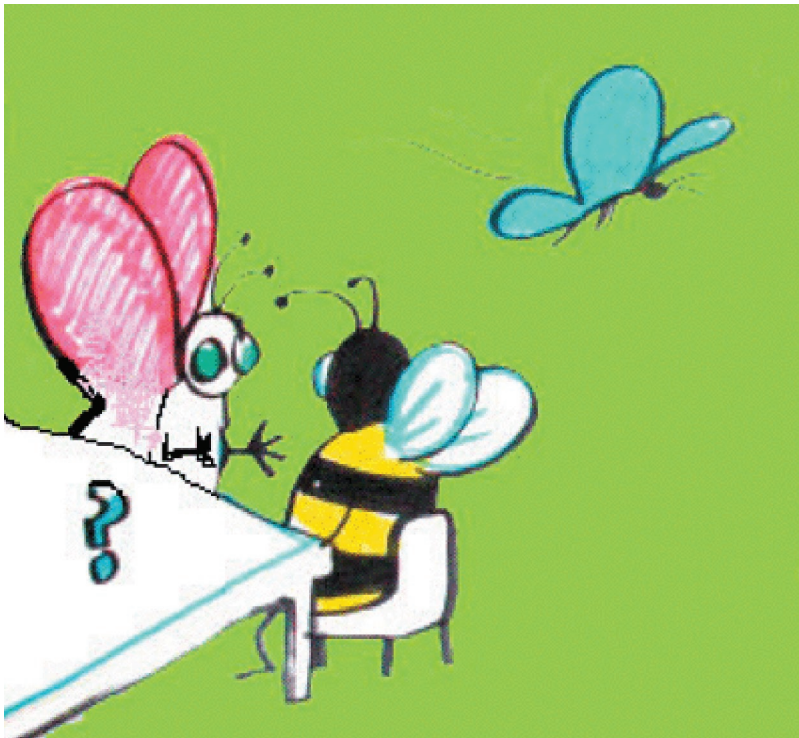
Issues that came up:

- What does risk mean for organisations?
- The need to continue to learn
- Second bounce of the ball (an open, honest dialogue)
- Dealing with success (and failure)
- Need to learn to evolve in constant evolution
- Respond to physical and ambient environment
 - Individual snapshots of how people work
- Collaboration
 - How do you manage the way people are beginning to make social networks?

Challenges for leaders:

- Networked ways of working, e.g. blogs
- Managing Intrapreneurs
- People deal in recognition and reward as well as financial reward
- New legal structures: new ways of creating and communicating across networks

Discussions



What are the barriers to innovation and creativity within organisations?

Hosted by Maureen

Motivation factors should be identified for individuals. Using spiral dynamics, for example, might help to identify what the rewards are for individual people.

If you invite ideas you might get some negativity that needs an outlet. Potential outlets might include a dedicated HR team, mentors and places to say what is on your mind. Having a clear idea of drivers and motivations can absorb negativity.

Individuals should fully understand how their role impacts on the organisation's mission, and further to that understand how the organisation impact on the wider environment – what the role of the organisation is in the world. For example, organisations can get wrapped up in baseline, 'operational' activities or 'hygiene factors' and these are barriers to creativity.

Organisational governance may conflict with open structures. People should be encouraged to focus on the 'bigger picture' rather than being overly focused on the 'day-to-day', operational, inward aspects of work.

The business plan should be available in one, clear executive summary. Decisions that are grounded in reality have the potential to change the organisational culture. People are more likely to be committed when they fully understand how they are impacting on the wider goals of the organisation.

The pressure of work and lack of fun in the workplace may also stifle creativity.

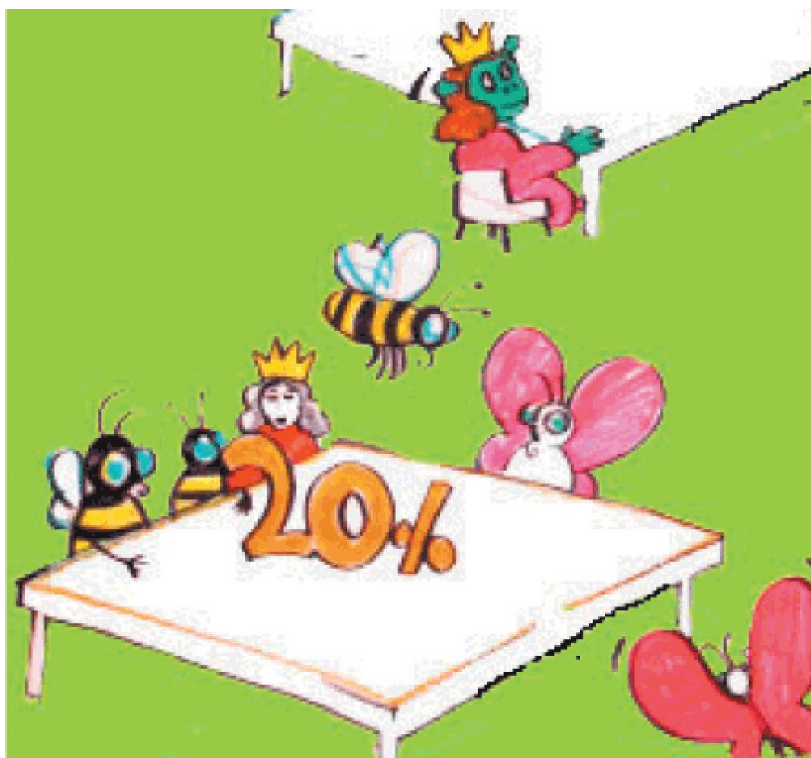
Communication needs to be encouraged in a way that is semi-structured. An arena could be provided where individuals could voice dissatisfaction in a range of ways. These arenas would be easy to access and possibly anonymous to give people the confidence to utilise this. The arena might be a physical space, for instance, a bar. There might be a perception of managers as the enemy – but no outlet in which to voice dissatisfaction with their actions / policy.

Culture is crucial in facilitating change: 'this is how we do things around here...!'. In order to effectively bring change about in an organisation, decisions must be jointly owned – and must result in real actions (rather than paying lip service to ideas).

Decisions and actions must be meaningful for everyone.

Does the Google 20% method develop creativity and/or skills?

Hosted by Rebecca



Whilst the 20% method might not always be practical for most organisations, certain processes and tactics could be introduced. The key focus is about encouraging creativity and managed risk.

Departments could be scrapped to encourage cross-team communication and a culture of openness. This has worked at Google.

Time could be allocated each week for sharing.

Organisations may struggle with a culture of discouragement and / or a lack of trust. The introduction of greater freedom in organisations may have contractual / legal implications.

Pressure from colleagues and a sense of individual responsibility or guilt may be a barrier. In order to combat workload related restrictions, time should be allocated each week, for example, a morning could be allocated for discussion time. This wouldn't be seen as 'time out' but valuable in the context of the organisation.

This may already be happening informally, for example, artist support or research time. Staff should be empowered to talk about their needs. They must feel that their views can influence the way in which the organisation works.

LEARNING SHOULD HAPPEN AT ALL LEVELS – FROM THE CEO DOWNWARDS.

Space should be allocated for interaction within organisations / venues. This might be a place to have lunch – an informal discussion space.

There may well be a gap between theory and reality – consideration would need to be given on how to implement change beyond the policy level.

This approach should include all staff at all areas, not leaving out people working in cafes, box office, etc.

People should be encouraged to share through networking. This could be facilitated through technology, for example, through specialist software or through the use of an internal intranet and shared diary.

CEOs may need to shift their focus on to internal rather than external dialogues in order to nurture a shared vision.

Sharing may be facilitated internally through learning about other departments and externally through work shadowing or mentoring.

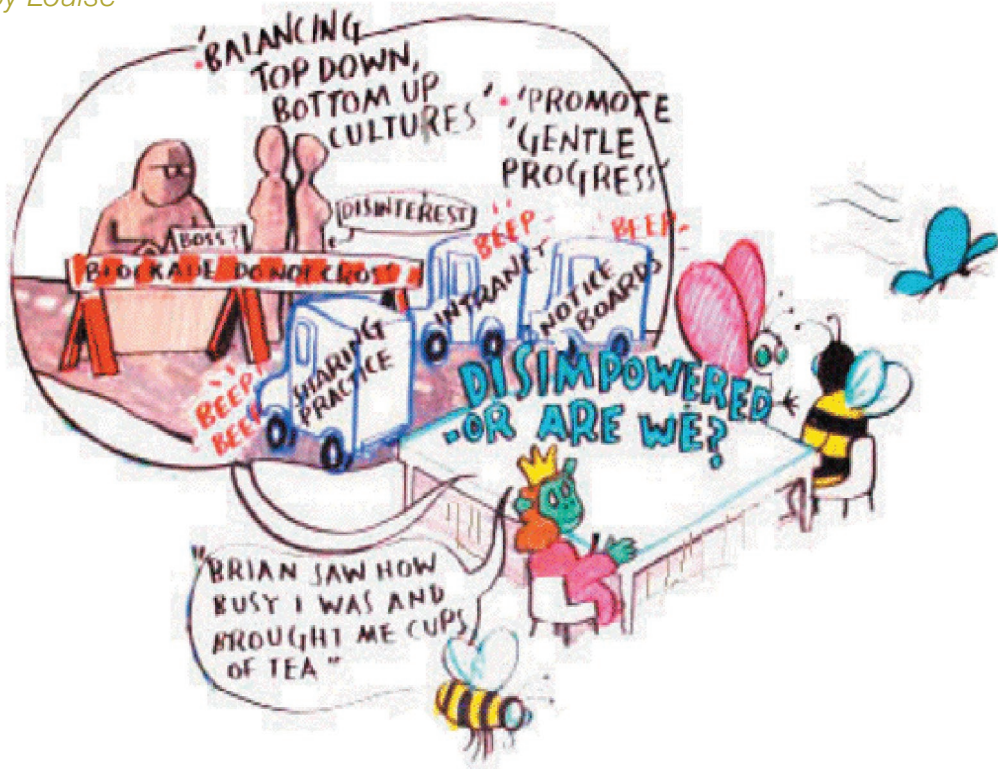
The absence of dedicated HR in many arts organisations may arise in issues, especially when HR roles lie with a general management role.

Smart ways of working should be encouraged – 'speed up to slow down'.

Dialogue should be bottom up and cross-departmental.

Why (or Do) people feel disempowered in our sector? How do we empower them?

Hosted by Louise



- Disempowerment is inherent in a 'blame culture'.
- Departmental separation is also an issue.

Communication should be encouraged – people should have the ability to feedback. Everyone should feel they have the ability to contribute.

Innovation can be 'circular' or top down.

PERSPECTIVE IS KEY

Identify simple ways for people to express what they think about anything – a variety of methodologies to fit the different personalities of people.

Recruitment is important – getting the right people in the job helps to create the right atmosphere, which in turn, helps people to feel empowered

A culture of positivity and openness should be nurtured. Individuals should have accountability.

Rather than always working top down, people should be encouraged to do things bottom up. This is an organic way of changing things.

Can you really change people? Will they just carry on regardless?

How do we move from soft P to hard P?

Hosted by Michelle

What about the artist? We need to challenge the artist to think about the audience.

Arts programme vs the community programme: time consuming to maintain both simultaneously

Artists also part of communities but still misuse language

Is personalisation the same as education work? Does it need a venue?

Do we know our audiences?

Arts Council research stats – is personalisation the answer?

Lifestyle choices – do the arts adequately connect to changes?

We need to know how to communicate in a way that audiences want us too.

A DIFFERENT LEVEL OF AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT IS NEEDED

Perhaps physically taking art to audiences is a solution, in the form of mobile venues.

How do we talk to new audiences? We could try making links with commercial and amateur touring networks.

Who decides on the art that is taken to whom?

Can we give access to archives – especially in a heritage context?

Young audiences communicate in different ways – new pathways should be set up to accommodate for young people.

Social technology and the arts: *how to do it well?*

- We talk about using technology but don't use it ourselves
- Work in layered way so still use print but also use Facebook, etc.
- Don't make assumptions about young people and their use of technology (i.e. they might prefer phone)
- We make assumptions and send out unclear messages to audiences, which might result in them feeling patronised.



There should be a maintenance programme and a 'curated' programme.

Not much that we can throw open?!

Is personalisation a red herring given low levels of overall participation in the arts?

Personalisation can retain existing audiences.

Personalisation is not embedded in arts organisations – *if we're not part of it does that mean we can't use it?*

As sector we don't have the language to talk about audiences.

We can adapt existing models for young people for use with adults.

Audiences can respond and build knowledge base via education programmes.

We need fixed prices and open hours for venues – we can't personalise that part of the experience. Late opening hours come with issues around staffing costs.

Important role of social spaces – having broader cultural offer, for instance, music nights

Late shows at the venue may entail late gallery openings. Talking to audiences regarding specific demands, for example, talking to those from specific ethnic communities about what opening times suit them most.

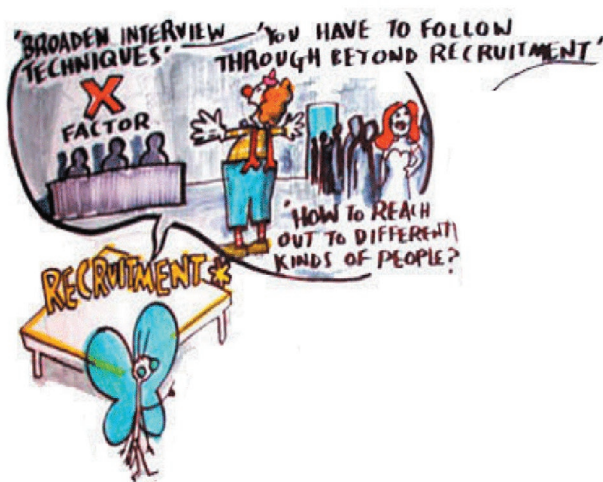
A major cultural shift is needed.

Audiences are often happy the venue is there but don't visit.

We don't know how to cross-reference audiences within venue, for instance, visitors to bookshop may not visit the gallery, etc.

Recruitment

Hosted by Louisa



Recruiting a brand new team – consider the 'how, why and where'?

The classic route to recruitment is probably the 'least worst approach', but it is hit and miss. Is there an alternative?

The job description and person specification are slotted in with the organisation's way of working.

They need to clearly convey both the vision of the organisation and the tasks to be undertaken by that person.

Roles in arts organisation are multi-faceted. Departments are interdependent. The finance manager role would specifically be a finance manager 'in an arts venue', and the marketing role is around articulating intangible experiences and managing the fact that the product is constantly changing.

Looking at Silicon Valley companies as an example, you have to follow through with a diverse process whilst recruiting. Recruiting the right person might involve:

- interviews
- social interaction
- lunch
- written tests
- one-to-one conversations

The process isn't just around interview techniques. Some people have a fear of making presentations, and sometimes the person to get the job is the person who has a strong interview technique, which doesn't always mean they are the best candidates for the job.

Recruiters need to consider how to reach out to different kinds of people from a range of backgrounds. This might be through contacting community organisations and arranging a recruitment day instead of interviews. For example, at Tyneside they hosted an 'X-Factor' style recruitment day where people queued up outside and were gradually filtered down and short-listed.

Arts organisations are often guilty of under-resourcing recruitment – once the ad is placed in the Guardian, no budget is left!

Some kind of scoring system is important for accountability.

Different kinds of interviewer should be considered – for example, young people could sit on interview panels. Sitting in on other people's recruitment processes could be valuable, as might bringing in external people to sit in on our own. If peers are on an interview panel you can set up an awkward dynamic for future working.

The process should include informal aspects to allow people with different strengths to shine. There should be space for instinct and intuition within the process.

Recruitment should be a longer process than it is currently, but not as long as 4 days! It should test whether someone will fit into a team – whether they have good people skills, and are able to challenge whilst co-existing with their teammates.

At FACT managers sat in on a presentation made as part of interviews for a new CEO.

It was acknowledged that you need different leadership styles at different phases of the organisation.

A probationary period and inductions should happen, but they should be made very structured.

An 'on-boarding plan' should:

- include a tour of the space
- include a mentor from a different part of the organisation
- include going out for lunch with the team
- be devised internally

People must gain an understanding of where they fit. This is easier in smaller organisations. It could be useful to understand the kinds of learning styles employed by the candidate – this may also indicate what kind of team player they are. They could be an activist, pragmatist, reflector or innovator.

Recruitment shouldn't be a response to panic. In difficult times it is more advisable to pull together and recruit for short-term contracts. Reactive, knee-jerk decisions cost money.

It was also noted that appraisals often don't work.

The job description itself could be appraised.

Need to gain an understanding of how things happen?

Time away from desk shouldn't necessary be seen as having a break.

PEOPLE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO ONE JOB

The function of an area or team should be appraised, rather than appraising the performance of individuals. Peer led appraisal could be valuable. A non-judgmental review of projects and processes may have more value, or a 360-degree approach. The correct kind of constructed space would make that possible.

Arts organisations should accept that they are generally 'bad' employers!

What is the future of the venue?

Hosted by Holli

Arts venues should learn to work smarter.

They could consider sharing expertise within the city, or build on networks.

How can venues maximise opportunities?

Is sense of place reinforced through the web and does it enhance the social and cultural

experience? Technology should certainly be used to exploit opportunities.

How do we strengthen the organisation's future? Through featuring blockbusters, through increasing diversity of content, through programming with other partners and being open to other producers. Outreach may also be key.

Investment in staff is crucial to the venues development.

Thinking outside of conventional use of spaces.

Positioning at the centre rather than on the edges.

Equipment and venue hire should be done in a smart way taking sustainability and resource management into consideration.

Programmes can be taken out to different audiences, rather than the audiences coming to them.

How do venues continue to be the 'village halls' of the industry without being corporate?

Local and global relations need to be considered, as does the digital and physical footprint of the organisation.

Real Space / Virtual Space: Audience and Participation

Rhetoric and language = 'digital footprint'

How is the online content managed? Where open submission of content is available, how is the content quality controlled?

How is audience participation managed on websites? ~This could include forum, film ratings and comments.

It could include a 'post-box' of ideas, questions, etc. – these could be posted and answered on a public board within the venue in order to boost a sense of involvement and dialogue between audience and venue.

The cinema should offer opportunities for debate and comment, perhaps through a similar medium to IMDB (Internet Movie Database).

The online programme should offer an archive and a source of information.

What is the best way to make content easy to find? E.g. click or scroll down menus

Who delivers internal and external specific post?

An online exhibition space could be provided. This might tie in with education programmes. Myspace and FaceBook pages could be set up, as could a blog. This might be facilitated further through a computer placed in the venue with which the public could make entries.

A comic book of the gallery could be created compiling sketches made by gallery invigilators and / or box office staff. This would generate dialogue and debate.

Working with the Creativity of Part-time workers

Hosted by Iain

How do we overcome the challenges around getting part-time staff involved and contributing? How committed are they? How much resource can you really give them if you have 20 part-time users? Staff might feel under-valued, as their pay may well be low.

They may feel like things are about 'them and us'. How do we make people feel they have a 'say'?

They're just a 'body' – give them responsibility.

Communications are a big problem / issue, therefore vital information is often missing. It could be discussed widely with 'front-line' staff, for example, catering. There is a definite tendency to miss out on information.

There could well be a disconnection between staff teams – some kind of 'weird class system' within organisations. ~This might build resentment, especially when people are told what to do, with no consultation.

Part-time, front-line staff are often seen by some as 'temporary'.

It is important to make space for their ideas. This may begin with finding a structure to get them all consulted. For example, away-days for front-line staff are an opportunity to ask for their advice and opinion.

How much do they buy in to the organisation?

Finding out people's capabilities, identifying them and getting them to use them to get more involved in the organisation.

Creativity should be recognised and brought to the table.

New roles should be advertised on the intranet.

Staff should be encouraged and enabled to inform the decision making process as a team. A structured space should be provided for their ideas and an open door policy implemented whereby ideas can be actioned.

Cross-departmental exchanges should be encouraged/facilitated.

Perhaps staff could be shared between MAV organisations in order to enable them to see the 'bigger picture'.

Physical barriers should be taken into consideration, for example the box office is normally in a different place to the main offices. *One social centre could be provided to remedy this?*

A forum for communications may enable creative problem solving. Value comes from asking questions, listening to the answers and then acting.

Watershed has had a staff exhibition – all the artists and invigilators exhibiting get the chance to ask and answer the question 'what do you do?'

Invigilators could Q+A the artists they are invigilating for.

Organisations should stop equating people with their jobs so much – avoid saying 'I'm just a...!'

Skills swaps are often useful, practical exchanges and facilitate the recognition of people who are experts in their field, or passionate about something.

A biography of each person in the organisation should be made available so skills can be acknowledged – people are 'who they are' not 'what they do'.

Staff turnover costs money.

Mypublic.com allows individuals in one organisation to see what they each are doing and what they do.

Experimental exchanges could be trailed, for instance, the ability to make anonymous comments on the intranet, or a notice board of ideas. Staff could interview each other on film, footage of which could subsequently be posted on the Internet.

Chatting, and being sociable should be encouraged to disperse with the culture of 'being too busy'. This is part and parcel of valuing people.

Lateral Leadership

Hosted by Laura

Does being LATERAL equate to thinking out of the box?

Expertise will naturally draw out a set of answers – lateral thinking allows you to get across it.
Ticketing systems = decision making

- Working group
- Project shift....@Mac

Use the ticketing system to resolve issues. There might be resistance from people in organisations who are cynical – *they may ask 'this is how we get empowered?'*

Lateral leadership involved asking open-ended questions and open systems. People must be given permission to communicate.

As a lateral leader, whenever you can make a process open, you must be open.



A good leader is not just someone who can say, 'I don't have the answer', but someone who has good questions and systems.

Lateral leadership may eventually result in the emergence of soft organisations.

The organisation might develop in a way resembling slime mold – always evolving, and being autocratic / changing form. The organisation would be self-regenerating / go through autopoiesis. Similar to a flock of birds. The lateral leader would be like a gardener or mechanic.

RECOGNISE / IDENTIFY PROBLEMS THINKING ABOUT = THEN DOING

Conclusion

ACTIONS:

- Blogs are a powerful tool and this medium should be explored for sharing and communicating
- Find a structure for people to explore other departments. Iain will share ideas via email.
- Find an outlet for staff work – identify a way to celebrate our creativity internally. Could put together a proposal to continue this via the Cultural Leadership Programme.
- Do more of these kind of events in order to continue dialogue. See if momentum will build and tour different venues.
- Try to make a visual representation of what came out of the group, e.g. permeable structures

- Knowledge structure / skills swap – share what we can do online (via Facebook for instance) – start something off.
- Siân will send around principles of action learning – good framework for keeping discussions going.
- Those interested can check the Cultural Leadership Programme website (www.culturalleadership.org.uk) for an opportunity to train as an Action Learning Facilitator.

People contributed to the day's event with honesty and authority. For the suggestions, ideas and models that have emerged not to go any further felt wrong. Attendees each have a set of action points on what could and should be done differently, and should take personal responsibility to disseminate and action this learning in their organisations.