

DESIGN THINKING TOOLS FOR TO ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS

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Artistic intervention - a shift of perspective

The term *artistic intervention* can mean a search for new ways of expressing different fields of art to broaden their limits and scope.

- The concept of artistic interventions roughly represents processes in which people, products, and/or practices from the art world enter organizations with the aim to support or trigger development. Interventions come in many different shapes – Creative Clash's focus is in artistic interventions where artists enter organizations and bring their artistic practices (and possibly products) into organizational development of any kind. (Grzelec and Prata, 2013)
- Art enters into a non-artistic context in an attempt to instigate change. (Lehikoinen, 2014)

Artistic intervention - a shift of perspective

Many projects of artistic intervention aim at influencing social processes, and creating change in politics, social issues, or the fields of healthcare and welfare.

Cooperation between arts and business is often quite complicated because there is a certain inherent misunderstanding programmed into the discussion. When entrepreneurs target profit and results or pre-defined goals, then creatives often see more value in the process itself, the journey. (Staines, 2010).

Artistic intervention - a shift of perspective

Creativity and innovation expert Lotte Darsø was one of the first to study the intersections between arts and business. In „Artful Creation: Learning-Tales of Arts-in-Business“ (2004) she posed questions that challenged the traditional relationship between arts and business:

“In what ways can business learn from artists?”, “What can be learned?” and “What kind of learning takes place?”

Darsø came to 4 conclusions:

4 conclusions by Darsø

1. Business uses the arts for decoration;
2. Business uses the arts for entertainment, either by giving the employees benefits such as tickets for selected shows, performances, and arts exhibitions in their leisure time, or they invite artists into the company for performances at annual meetings, customer events, or special occasions;
3. Business applies the arts as instruments for teambuilding, communication training, leadership development, problem-solving and innovation processes;
4. Business integrates the arts in a strategic process of transformation, involving personal development and leadership, culture, and identity, creativity and innovation, as well as customer relations and marketing.

Approaches for Arts-in-Business

Business-centered

- The arts are applied as an instrument for team building, communication training, leadership development, problem-solving, and innovation;
- The arts are integrated as a strategic process of organizational transformation.

Artist-centered

- The artist is not a consultant in the company;
- Working with the economy is an opportunity for the artists to further develop themselves and their creative process;
- The challenge and the confrontation with the unknown business world can invite the artist to experiment.

Organising artistic intervention projects

The organizations that implement artistic intervention projects should consider the following aspects:

- A deep understanding of the value of an artist and her creative work, and the skill to present this value to different target groups. Giving rise to discussions about values in society.
- As an intermediary between two different stakeholders, learning the „language“ of both parties, building bridges and enhancing the level of mutual understanding, introducing the interests of both parties to the other.
- Educating and training artists to communicate with businesses and other sectors.
- Carrying out research and gathering information to measure the results of creative projects and interventions. Establishing a new, quality-orientated measuring system to evaluate artistic intervention projects.
- Developing a new vocabulary to describe values that come up as a result of artistic intervention.
- Encouraging creative professionals as well as organizations to start new projects.

Description of the process of artistic interventions

The artistic intervention projects can start after a clear understanding of the needs of the partners – a company interested in artistic intervention and the artist or producer who is ready to work with the company.

Once these preparations are completed, the artistic intervention runs through four phases:

1. Anchoring: activities to ensure the organization's involvement;
2. Research: the artist researches the organization and creates contacts with the co-workers to jointly formulate an action plan for the project;
3. Action plan implementation: the artist works with the co-workers in the organization to develop activities, events, or workshops to implement the action plan;
4. Follow-up: includes activities at which all participating artists and companies report their experiences and what they have learned.
5. Evaluation: to measure and understand the value of the intervention on participants, expected outcomes, and improvement of the method to better reach its goals.

Design thinking tools for artistic interventions

The steps of the design thinking methodology

1. EMPATHIZE - To create meaningful artistic interventions, you need to know your customers and care about their challenges
1. DEFINE – Framing the right problem is the only way to create the basis for the right solution
3. IDEATE - It's not about coming up with the 'right' idea, it's about generating the broadest range of possibilities and readiness for failure
4. PROTOTYPE – Use creative ways for prototyping in order to learn what is missing
5. TEST - Testing is an opportunity to learn about your solution and your user

EMPATHIZE

To empathize, you:

- Observe. View users and their behavior in the context of their lives. As much as possible do observations in relevant contexts in addition to interviews. Some of the most powerful realizations come from noticing a disconnect between what someone says and what he does.
- Engage. Use the technique called 'interviewing' but make it feel more like a conversation. Prepare some questions you'd like to ask, but expect to let the conversation deviate from them. Keep asking "Why?" to uncover deeper meaning. Engagement can come through both short 'intercept' encounters and longer scheduled conversations.
- Watch and Listen. Certainly, you can, and should, combine observation and engagement. Ask someone to show you how they complete a task. Have them physically go through the steps, and talk you through why they are doing what they do. Ask them to vocalize what's going through their mind as they perform a task or interact with an object. Have a conversation in the context of someone's home or workplace – so many stories are embodied in artifacts. Use the environment to prompt deeper questions.

Tools for EMPATHIZE step – coaching questions

Asking questions or a challenge. Here are sample questions for various scenarios that may be usual in an organizational environment.

1. What are you working on? This question helps to immediately focus on what is important at this moment. This question can be accompanied by one which is going deeper: What else are you working on?
2. What are you worried about right now? Who and how can help or support you?
3. Where are you now in relation to your goals or where you want to be? It can be a question both to an individual person as well as to company leaders.
4. What drains your energy? What drains energy in your team/organization/process?
5. What does your dream life look like? What does your vision for the future look like? Where would you like to be in 3-5-10 years?
6. What would reaching your goal make possible? Who can help you? What else do you need to make your dreams/the vision of the company to come true?
7. How would your life be better? What do you need for the organization to make the culture better?
8. What options and opportunities are available – for the leadres/team members/ organisation/individuals?
9. 14. What is exciting to you about this process/activity/relationship/work/challenge/partnership...?

DEFINE

Consider what stood out to you when talking and observing people. What patterns emerge when you look at the set? If you noticed something interesting ask yourself (and your team) why that might be. In asking why someone had a certain behavior or feeling you are making connections from that person to the larger context.

Synthesize and select a limited set of NEEDS that you think are important to fulfill; you may in fact express just one single salient need to address. Work to express INSIGHTS you developed through the synthesis of the information you have gathered through empathy and research work. Then articulate a point-of-view by combining these three elements – user, need, and insight – as an actionable problem statement that will drive the rest of the artistic intervention work.

A good point-of-view is one that:

- Provides focus and frames the problem
- Inspires both the artist and the organization that needs artistic intervention
- Saves you from the impossible task of developing concepts or actions that are all things to all people

Tools for DEFINE step to understand the needs

Understanding the hidden needs of either the organization or the people working in it can help you to understand the focus of the intervention.

Observe what people say and do	Make a Guess-insight
SAY	THINK
DO	FEEL

IDEATE

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Tools for IDEATE step to create ideas - Brainstorming

99% of times the first ideas do not produce innovations but are only product extensions or otherwise improvements to existing product lines. Brainstorming has four steps

1) Framing the problem

- Use open-ended questions, how many different ways we can....? How might we...?
- Do not be too abstract e.g. How to solve global warming?

2) Warming up

- Move from a critical/analytical focus to a non-judgemental focus

3) Brainstorming

- Write ideas on post-it-notes, defer judgment, lots of ideas, one conversation at a time, be visual, build on the ideas of others, encourage wild ideas, stay on the topic

4) Grouping and selecting ideas

- Take time to the group and select ideas for further development

Tools for IDEATE step to create ideas – Reversed Brainstorming

In the following cases, it can be better to use reverse brainstorming instead of traditional brainstorming.

- When people have trouble coming up with good ideas quickly
- When people are stumped on how to solve a problem
- When you want people to let go of their pre-conceived ideas about a topic
- When you want people to step out of their comfort zone and find new ways to problem-solve

Like a traditional brainstorming session, reverse brainstorming typically starts with some sort of problem. Where it differs though, is that you then take that problem and reverse it to focus on the opposite of what you want to do. For example, a problem can be: We need to work better as a team in this project. And the reversed question can be the following: How can we completely fail in working as a team in this project?

From there, you and your team brainstorm ways to solve that reversed problem. Once you have a list of ideas, you then reverse those as well.

PROTOTYPE

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a prototype is worth a thousand pictures. Your interactions with users are often richer when centered around a conversation piece. A prototype is an opportunity to have another, directed conversation with a user. To fail quickly and cheaply. Committing as few resources as possible to each idea means less time and money invested upfront. To test possibilities. Staying low-res allows you to pursue many different ideas without committing to a direction too early on. To manage the solution-building process. Identifying a variable also encourages you to break a large problem down into smaller, testable chunks.

While building the prototype, do not spend a too long time on one. Let go before you find yourself getting too emotionally attached to any one prototype.

Be sure that the prototype answers a particular question when tested. That said, don't be blind to the other tangential understanding you can gain as someone responds to a prototype. Build with the user in mind. What do you hope to test with the user? What sorts of behavior do you expect? Answering these questions will help focus your prototyping and help you receive meaningful feedback in the testing phase.

Tools for PROTOTYPE step – Desktop Walkthrough

Desktop walkthroughs can be seen as interactive mini-theater plays that simulate end-to-end customer experiences.

A desktop walkthrough helps to quickly simulate any experience using simple props like toy figurines on a small-scale stage (often built from LEGO bricks or cardboard), and test and explore common scenarios and alternatives. The critical deliverable is not the model of the map/stage but the experience of playing through the experience step by step. This method especially helps:

- To get a shared understanding within a team about the experience
- To identify the critical steps
- To identify any other key elements or problem areas that need to be addressed

Tools for PROTOTYPE step – Desktop Walkthrough, Step-by-step guide

1 Clarify prototyping questions: What do you want to learn from this prototyping activity?

2 Prepare workspace and materials: Pick up your desktop walkthrough materials and sheets of flipchart paper and set it up on a table. Make sure everybody can stand around it and contribute at the same time.

3 Brainstorm: Select a customer/persona and do a brief brainstorm: looking at your challenge, create possible steps of the solution or the journey. Then, quickly sort your sticky notes in chronological order.

4 Create maps and stages: Based on the initial question, design a road map to your possible solution. What locations are important that journey? Start by creating a big overview map that contains all the relevant locations of the service experience. Then, decide if and where you need to zoom in and create a detailed stage plan for each of these locations.

5 Create roles, set, and props: Which roles need to be cast? What needs to be built? Pick a figurine for each of the roles/key stakeholders in your service and quickly build the essential set and props, using paper, cardboard, plasticine, or LEGO bricks to set the stage.

6 Set up roles: Find your actors. Who is going to play which role? Also, it can be helpful to assign someone to keep track of the bugs, insights, and ideas queue during the walkthrough.

NOTES: 1. Keep a list of bugs, insights, and ideas: After each run-through, take a few moments to reflect on what worked, what didn't work, what you would like to change or try next.

Try having at least one observer for each walkthrough to balance judgment and counter the bias of the active players.

TEST

Testing informs the next iterations of prototypes. Sometimes this means going back to the drawing board or prototyping phase in order to learn more about your user. Testing is another opportunity to build empathy through observation and engagement—it often yields unexpected insights. Sometimes testing reveals that not only did you not get the solution right, but also that you failed to frame the problem correctly

Testing means that you put your prototype in the user's hands – or your user within an experience. The tester has to interpret the prototype. It is important to watch how the users use (and misuse!) what you have given them, and how they handle and interact with it; then listen to what they say about it, and the questions they have.

Here are some sample questions, that help you to understand the user's experience: Ask questions such as "What do you mean when you say ___?", "How did that make you feel?", "What did you expect would happen?" and, most importantly, "Why?".

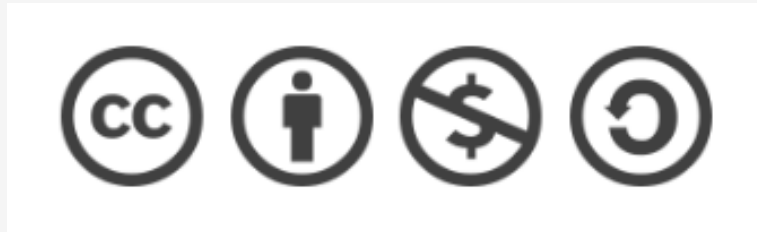
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE

An Introduction to Design Thinking PROCESS GUIDE – Institute of Design at Stanford

Artistic Interventions Projects: Definition, Background, and Suggestions for Implementation. Hansen, Külli (2018)

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