





TOWARD *curated*
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT,
USING *art* AND *design*.

«GOING BANANAS VERSUS SLIPPING ON A BANANA PEEL»

ACKNOWLEDGE MENTS

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ABSTRACT

I don't really like bananas or slipping on a banana peel. But I do like to go bananas sometimes. Yet, what has this banana talk to do with curating business development using art and design?

In this research project I investigate *how artists and designer involved in strategic projects in companies and organisations act and think*. How can their perspectives and competences affect business development and management? Are there any differences and similarities to be found?

Utilizing findings of this research study, I propose a *curator role* in such business development processes. This curator is a type of generalist, speaking the language of both the business and design / art world and having an understanding of when and where it is best to apply an artist's or designer's mindset. In other words, a professional that knows and communicates when it is helpful for a company and its employees to «*go bananas*» (hence, organising artistic interventions) to unleash everyone's intrinsic creativity and when designer can assist to reveal underlying challenges of a company to see the big picture in order «*not to slip on a banana peel*» (and therefore utilising design thinking methods as what they are rather than using them as a «fashionable label» only).

KEYWORDS

Artistic interventions, design thinking, arts management, design management, curating.

PREFACE

To be honest, I do not really like bananas but I do like to go bananas sometimes. I also like design. Being a trained graphic designer, *seeing design as a way of thinking and working* is what I value most. But treating design – as the word was and to a certain extend still is understood and interpreted – merely as a tool to make something «look beautiful» limits the potential of design and narrows it down to a rather limited understanding of the concept. *Design is a process* and – according to Krippendorff (1989) – can be understood as *meaning making* – which is an understanding that resonates with my personal experience and opinion.

Therefore, I started getting interested in how my way of thinking as a designer can be used strategically in organisational processes rather than being applied to an outcome alone.

I stumbled upon an interesting project that attracted my attention. A collaboration between two very different companies – UNIONEN, one of the Swedish labour unions¹, and TILLT, a company that works with artistic interventions. I got curious about this unusual connection and wanted to find out where my interest of design as a process could be utilised in this context. I was invited to join this project as a researcher. This was my personal starting point for this report.

1
Swedish labour unions: According to the ICTWSS Database from 2010 (Visser, 2010) the level of union membership in Sweden is at 71% - although it has fallen from its peak of 86% in 1995. In January 2007 the Swedish centre-right government in office since September 2006 raised considerably fees for union unemployment funds. (Kjellberg, 2009) Union membership (fund membership included) therefore suddenly became much more expensive. (Ibid.) Trade unions lost 8% of their members over two years and union density fell by 6%. (Ibid.) Since 1993/1994, Swedish union density has again declined, particularly among young workers. A contributory factor in this

respect is that every second worker aged 16 to 24 today has a temporary job, which has loosened their links both to the individual workplaces and to the labour market as a whole. (Ibid.) This trend is unique in Sweden's history and represents a substantial shift in Sweden's union affiliation and workforce. It shows, that the massive membership loss is amongst others a product of political negotiations and policy changes (increased fees) but also an effect of transformations in society.

part 1 – THE BASIS

06	1. Introduction
08	2. Outline
09	3. Overview
10	4. Background
10	4.1 The problem with the economy
11	4.2 The problem with creativity and innovation
13	5. Purpose and relevance
15	6. Research questions
15	6.1 Limitations

part 2 – THE THEORY

17	7. Theoretical framework
17	7.1 Mindset
18	7.2 Creativity
19	7.3 Innovation
21	7.4 Arts management
22	7.5 Artistic interventions
	Background
	Approach
	Outcome
25	7.6 Design management
27	7.7 Design thinking
	Background
	Approach
	Outcome
34	8. Methodology
34	8.1 Research approach
	Qualitative research
35	8.2 Research methods
	Case study
	Interview
	Participatory observation
38	8.3 Analysis methods
38	8.4 Reliability and validity

part 3 – THE PRAXIS

40	9. Empirical study
40	9.1 Design thinking in practise (InnovaTeam) Background Approach Observations Conclusion
44	9.2 Artistic interventions in practise (UNIONEN Lindholmen) Background Approach Observations Conclusion

part 4 – INTERPRETATION

57	10. Analysis
57	10.1 Theory versus practise
58	10.2 Similarities
58	10.3 Differences
61	11. Discussion
63	11.1 Background
64	11.2 Approach
65	11.3 Outcome
66	11.4 Further research
67	12. Conclusion

part 5 – THE END

69	13. Appendices Interviews Pictures and illustrations
70	14. References

1. INTRODUCTION

Artistic interventions and design thinking seem to be buzzwords (Carlgren, 2009) when it comes to management strategies. An increasing number of 21st-century organisations are now turning to the world of arts for creative partnerships. (Biehl-Missal, Berthoin Antal, 2011) Hence, consulting artists² and designer³ in non-cultural or non-design related enterprises appear to be a way to go or at least a marketing strategy when things are getting tough on the market.

Certainly, *corporations are faced with manifold challenges today* in order to stay competitive and profitable. Adler (2006) argues that increasing global connectedness, increasing domination of market forces, an increasingly complex and chaotic environment, decrease in the cost of experimentation and yearning for significance are challenges for many corporations. Dated and lugubrious business models that no longer fit the market demands of today and cheap labour competition from overseas are other issues that require many companies to look for ways of handling this. Essentially, they often try to alter their way of working – or their way of thinking business – in their strive to survive. Therefore, *a number of firms reach out to creatives⁴*, ask for creative and innovative solutions, try to exploit their skills and exotic mindsets to generate economic profit, foster some sort of creativity to stimulate idea generation amongst employees or at least attract public attention and hence raise the fiscal value of the company. Norman (2010) claims for example, that design thinking is a powerful *public relations term* that changes

2

Artists:

To simplify, I use the word «artist» as a general term neglecting different disciplines in art (such as painter, sculptor, ...) and assume that artists have similar working methods and basically comparable mindsets, ways how to approach problems and see the world.

3

Designer:

To simplify, I use the word «designer» as a general term neglecting different disciplines in design (such as graphic design, interior design, furniture design, product design, fashion design, ...) and assume that designer have similar working methods and basically comparable mindsets, ways how to approach problems and see the world.

4

Creatives:

This is how professional artists and trained designer are called in this paper.

the way in which firms are viewed. Therefore, some companies use design thinking rather as PR tools than actual working methods. Even if this notion can be seen critically, *re-labelling creativity* on the other hand is also a good marketing tool for creatives and consultancies. It potentially attracts attention and positive PR for the organisation and creates new job titles and possibilities for creatives at the same time.

DESIGN THINKING IS A *powerful* PR TERM.

But asking for innovation from artistic invaders and design thinkers is something else. It might be questionable if artistic competences and design methods have been proven to be able to deliver just that? Actually, what creatives do for businesses today has existed for a while but has been called different names. «*We have had breakthrough ideas and creative thinking throughout recorded history, long before designer entered the scene*», says Norman (2010, online).

It is tricky to define the concepts design thinking and artistic interventions and analyse what consequences they effectively have on businesses. However, *managers often ask for hard evidence* for such approaches in an attempt to prove that their investment produces revenue. But actually, *it is problematic to measure and evaluate the impact of creative initiatives because they are complex in nature, interact with other influential factors and have outcomes that do not always fall within a clear*

time frame. (Biehl-Missal, Berthoin Antal, 2011) For art to «work» its results cannot be pinned down in advance, claim Barry and Meisiek (2010). Therefore – and here I agree with the mentioned researchers – I see a need and benefit in offering an understanding of a creative process to highlight what creatives can contribute to business strategies and management tactics in order to reclaim the buzzwords and turn them into meaningful concepts.

The lack of research in this field is problematic because not only do we know little, what we think we know is quite biased towards a positive view of the phenomenon and towards managerial interests. (Berthoin Antal, 2011a) Thus, I am trying to critically evaluate creative approaches in business development.

The *UNIONEN Lindholmen project* (being an early-stage project having been involving artistic interventions for around three months) serves as an in-depth study for this investigation. The case of the *InnovaTeam* (concerned with design thinking for about 1,5 years) is a secondary research source.

It is hoped that this comparative study *highlights ideas and useful insights* for those who work with creative methods in business development. I am about to *contribute* a basis for further academic discussions and research originating from my theoretical and empirical findings and personal conclusions.

2. OUTLINE

This thesis draws attention to a special role in a business development process. A type of curator facilitating creative approaches – practice-based artistic interventions and method-oriented design thinking strategies – within an organisation.

First, the *background* provides a reasoning for the thesis and concludes in several *research questions*:

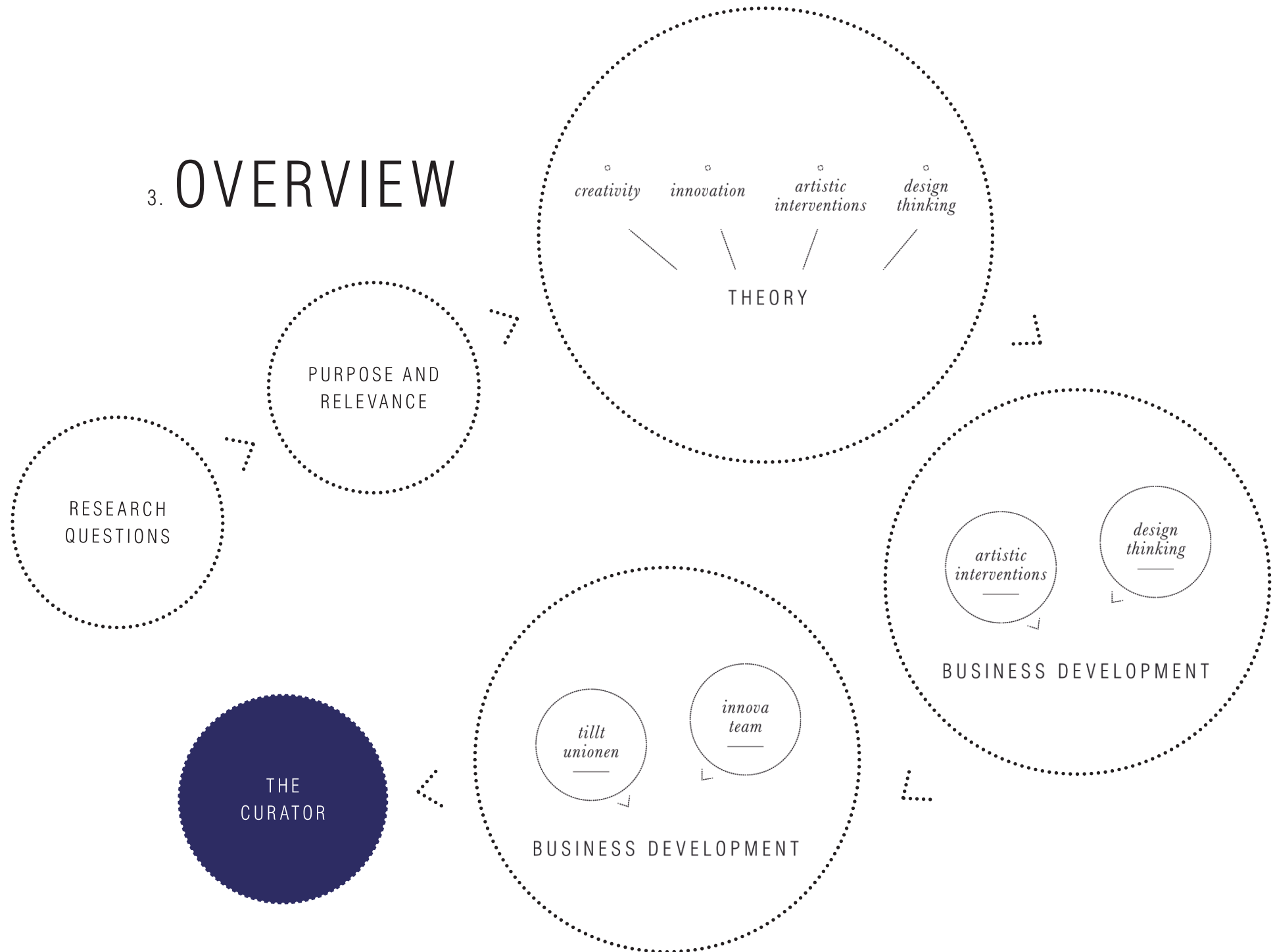
1. «*What differences and similarities of artistic interventions and design thinking can be found in a business development process?*»

2. «*What can be learned from such approaches?*»

3. «*What is needed to support these efforts?*»

The *theory* part backs up the research questions and is drawn from previous research and existing literature in the relevant fields such as creativity, innovation, design management, design thinking, arts management and artistic interventions. The *methodology* acts as a framework for the *empirical* part of this study, which is partly informed by gathered insights from the «InnovaTeam» case study and to a greater extend from the «UNIONEN Lindholmen project». Personal observations and secondary case studies provide examples for the mentioned concepts. Later, the *analysis* highlights the most important discoveries and learnings in this context. In this chapter, I juxtapose design thinking methods and artistic interventions on the basis of personal reflections and theory. In the *discussion*, an approach for creative strategies in organisations will be presented. The *conclusion* summarises the thesis to act as a basis for *further research*.

3. OVERVIEW



4. BACKGROUND

4.1

the problem with the economy

5

IDEO:

IDEO is an US-based design and innovation company, which made the term «design thinking» popular and is regarded as one of the first and biggest firms working with this approach. (IDEO, 2013) Its practical experience makes it trustworthy and the cooperation with Stanford University provided academic credentials. (Johansson, Woodilla, Çetinkaya, 2013)

As mentioned earlier, organisations often see the need to transform in these days. Especially in a society, which is – amongst others – characterised by quick changes, new ways of working, new needs and demands of employees and customers evoked by modern forms of society. Moreover, society is marked by an ever-increasing technological development, global legal and financial issues and emerging virtual networks and identities. Companies see a need to adapt to these altered situations.

This development implies that companies often are required to rethink and refocus. They feel the need to innovate and sometimes even redesign their business models and organisational structures to stay competitive. The radical financial changes sweeping Europe, for example, will not be answered by process improvements alone, rather they will require rethinking and redesign. (Boyer, Cook, Steinberg, 2011) *Therefore, the call for new, and hopefully economically*

sustainable solutions is loud and clear in all European countries, all sectors of the economy and all kinds of organisations. (Berthoin Antal, Strauß, 2013)

Brown, design thinker and one of the founders of IDEO⁵, suggests that creativity might be part of a solution: *«The question being, how do companies and countries weather the increasing volatility of markets, society, and climate? One obvious conclusion is that resilience requires the ability to rapidly react and innovate in changing circumstances. Creativity and design can help make organisations more resilient.» (Brown, 2013)*

This might be one possible explanation why companies more and more turn to creatives in order to cope with these new economical challenges. But can creativity be a way to help solve this problem? Or is this development yet another temporary management hype or fashion bound to be replaced with something else in the future? (Jahnke, 2013)

the problem with innovation and creativity

PERHAPS, IT IS JUST
A WELL-MARKETED MYTH,
THAT DESIGNER POSSESS
SOME MYSTICAL,
CREATIVE THOUGHT
PROCESS THAT PLACES
THEM ABOVE ALL
OTHERS IN THEIR
SKILLS AT CREATIVE,
GROUNDBREAKING
THINKING.

As mentioned, Brown (2013) talks about creativity and the need for innovation. Some CEOs and managers generally have high expectations that the creative's way of thinking can be utilised to – for example – make employees more effective and hence generate financial profit. In this situation, industry has increasingly turned to creativity-intense professions like design and art in search of clues on how to revitalise innovation. (Jahnke, 2009)

«Art and design are associated with creativity, so the 'obvious' connection is that creativity generates new ideas. Hence, bringing employees into contact with the arts should develop their creativity. This is an attractively simple solution, based on the assumption that once the creativity of employees is stimulated, it will then automatically be at the service of the organisation», concludes Berthoin Antal (2011b, p. 2). Design is being pulled inside business as a benevolent Trojan horse with hope of innovation and growth based on design processes, culture and work methods. (Jahnke, 2009)

But as Berthoin Antal (2011a) and Jahnke (2009) hint, benefiting from artists and designer economically, is perhaps not as simple as it seems. Since the business world measures in numbers and figures, uses statistics and excel charts, is steered to improve profitability on the spot to reduce dispensable costs, praises the manifest of «time is money» and is geared to defend every taken decision, it proves hard to understand that artists or designer cannot magically deliver to all these expectations. *Perhaps, it is just a well-marketed myth, that designer possess some mystical, creative thought process that places them above all others in their skills at creative, groundbreaking thinking.* (Norman, 2010, online) Creatives might not even comprehend how the company's goals and their own work are related when their skills are taken out of context and applied to unfitting parts of a process or just seen as a *fashionable trend*. Managers and creatives might not even speak the «same language». Hence, a smooth collaboration cannot be guaranteed if the different parties do not understand and respect each other's knowledge, skills and responsibilities.

If managers and CEOs scale down their expectations for quick, quantitative results, artists and designer might have a greater impact on business development in the long-run.

Working creatively means (among other things) not knowing the outcome or result from the beginning, having time to work co-creationally and interdisciplinary and making space for trial and error. Because sometimes not having the instant answer is what leads to success. (Berthoin Antal, 2011a) Or as Dearing (2013, online) puts it: *«If you stop worrying about the outcomes, you will achieve a better outcome.»* This statement works on many levels. When not worrying about the outcome, one might let go of the fear of failure, which in turn allows to focus on the here and now. Being in the moment and being freed from fear enhances personal courage and ends up giving a much better chance of succeeding in the end. (Rodriguez, 2013, online)

This notion is generally seen as a more creative mindset and therefore arguably essentially different to a typical managerial viewpoint.

5. PURPOSE AND RELEVANCE

Following Berthoin Antal's (2011a) notion of «not having the instant answer» – in other words *appreciating an open process rather than aiming for the breakthrough idea that solves all problems at once* – is what I argue should be communicated clearer, understood and implemented in management strategies. Since *«design thinking isn't fairy dust. It's a tool to be used appropriately. It might help to illuminate an answer but it is not the answer in and of itself.»* (Walters, 2013, online)

6

Designerly:

The designerly way of thinking is a scholarly expression that is rooted in the academic field of design and refers to the academic construction of the professional designer's practice and theoretical reflections around how to interpret and characterise this nonverbal competence of the designer. (Johansson, Woodilla, Çetinkaya, 2013)

I agree with this statement but also think that this can be applied to artistic approaches. Thus, I conclude that *creativity in general should more often be considered relative to how it works rather than what it can produce.*

Hence, the first purpose of this study is to raise appreciation for creative approaches through contextually understanding artistic interventions and design thinking. Clues of where artistic or designerly⁶ skills have an impact on business development without the pressure of delivering the impossible should be found.

Art and design belong to two different traditions. (Johansson, Woodilla, 2012) Consequently, there has been little cross-disciplinary research. (Ibid.) Artists have a general way of thinking and therefore doing things. So have designer. This relation has

seldom been discussed or mentioned. But what sets artists and designer apart from each other and what unites them?

In order to leave the buzzwords of design thinking and artistic intervention behind, it is important to look beyond these concepts. This will help to sustain existence in the long-run, since business trends tend to go out of fashion, get replaced with new trends and basically fade because the essence of these waves are hardly considered or understood. But they should be. Only when creatives and managers understand each other, business people, artists and designer have a chance to work strategically together to better support business development.

Consequently, the second purpose of this report is to reduce the notion of artistic interventions and design thinking as plain marketing instruments or «creative testimonials» for companies acting as easy-to-stick-on labels only.

Thirdly, a lot has been written about the two fields of artistic interventions and design thinking in academia in recent years. However, it remains questionable if these writings reflect the real world or are primarily theoretical concepts sometimes too focused on positive effects and outcomes and therefore almost «too good to be true». Is there an actual gap between theory and practise?

Is the academic view convertible to day-to-day work live? Are assumptions made in theory true for real?

Another reason for this investigation is to immerse in this gap between theory and practise to find possible mismatches and overlaps. Thereby a presumably clearer and more realistic picture of these approaches can be drawn helping practitioners working with these methods in the actual implementation of these theoretical concepts.

These three main reasons can be illustrated by the banana metaphor. Bananas are often harvested unripe and green, transported to different countries and sold as perfectly «nature-packaged» healthy fruits.

This is a bit like companies buying the good-looking, trendy and very-well marketed «package» of any kind of creative approaches in business development, assuming that this is a good choice and hopefully leading to some kind of innovation. But the company itself might just not be ready for these approaches yet.

Furthermore, the «packaging» of the banana might not hold previous promises and expectations when peeled. It can taste different as assumed, be rotten inside or infested. Anyhow, the texture of the banana itself is vastly different to the banana as a whole and therefore misleading when not accustomed to it.

This means, that companies often buy in to something that they have no knowledge about. They often just buy the package. This controversy can also be seen in academia. All these concepts look

nice and appealing from a general perspective but get fuzzy in the real world.

Just like there are many different types of bananas in the world and even more ways to prepare them, so exist many types of creative approaches. Artistic interventions and design thinking are just two examples. Further, not even these approaches can be generalised in a good way since they are rather depended on what kind of designer or artist interacts with a company and what intentions they have. There is no «one-process», no «on-way» how to do things. Much rather, tendencies in working methods or practises can be observed.

6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The introduced thoughts and notions lead to the main research questions of this study:

«What differences and similarities of artistic interventions and design thinking can be found in a business development process (on the example of the UNIONEN Lindholmen project)?»

«What can be learned from such approaches?»

«What is needed to support these efforts?»

6.1

limitations

According to Maxfield (1930), a researcher is always biased, subjective to a certain degree and it is a practical impossibility to record every aspect of a case. *Completeness is relative and absolute completeness is unattainable.* (Ibid.) Therefore, it feels worth noting that this paper is limited to my acquired knowledge, understanding and interpretation and hence should not be treated as an all-embracing truth or considered as complete. I take as many aspects as possible and necessary into consideration to draw a comprehensive picture of the related topics and make suggestions to help and support rather than to criticise.

part 2 – THE THEORY

17	7. Theoretical framework	34	8. Methodology
17	7.1 Mindset	34	8.1 Research approach
18	7.2 Creativity		Qualitative research
19	7.3 Innovation	35	8.2 Research methods
21	7.4 Arts management		Case study
22	7.5 Artistic interventions		Interview
	Background		Participatory observation
	Approach	38	8.3 Analysis methods
	Outcome	38	8.4 Reliability and validity
25	7.6 Design management		
27	7.7 Design thinking		
	Background		
	Approach		
	Outcome		

7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To find valid answers to the main research questions from the previous chapter – «What differences and similarities of artistic interventions and design thinking methods can be found in a business development process (on the example of the UNIONEN Lindholmen project)?» and «What can be learned from such a process and what is needed to support these efforts?» – and to pinpoint meaningful outcomes, conclusions or suggestions, several topics need to be investigated further on a theoretical level. When talking about highly complex matters such as creativity, innovation, artistic interventions and design thinking, it seems important to start at the bottom. I will focus on design thinking and artistic intervention theory explicitly. This understanding will then provide credibility to develop a relevant discussion of the project issues.

7.1 mindset

The word «mindset» has been mentioned frequently. Hence, it is time to provide a general definition to create a common understanding of this term.

The Oxford Dictionary describes mindset as «the established set of attitudes held by someone.» (Oxford Dictionary, 2013) Therefore it can be said, that *mindset is a set of assumptions, methods or notations held by one or more people or groups of people.* (Dahlan, 2012) These are so established that it creates a powerful incentive within these people or groups to continue to adopt or accept prior behaviours, choices, or tools. (Ibid.) This phenomenon is also sometimes referred to as mental inertia, groupthink, world view or paradigm. Different mindsets – like growth, fixed, collective or entrepreneurial mindset – have been described.

It can be discussed that the basic mindsets of designer and artists might be similar. Both mindsets can partly be concerned with *aesthetics, specific ways of working and engaging in an open working process.* Since both professions are rather crafts oriented, it can be argued that this is a quality they share. More similarities and differences regarding mindsets will be highlighted throughout this paper.

7.2

creativity

What artists and designer are definitely supposed to have in common is a degree of creativity. Since creativity is one of «the deliverables» creatives should bring to businesses when involved in artistic interventions or design thinking, defining this fluffy word, seems necessary.

It can be argued that creativity is a rather difficult concept to define. According to the Oxford Dictionary, creativity is «relating to or involving the use of imagination or original ideas to create something» or «having good imagination or original ideas.» (Oxford Dictionary, 2013) Hence, one could say that creativity deals with having ideas. Regarding ideas, again the Oxford Dictionary notes, «ideas are thoughts or suggestions as to a possible course of action.» (Oxford Dictionary, 2013) Descartes says: «*I am*

certain that I can have no knowledge of what is outside me except by means of the ideas I have within me.» (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2013) This can mean that knowledge is a factor when talking about ideas and consequently creativity. It seems important to have experience and knowledge to be able to come up with new ideas or being creative.

Creativity as a noun is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as follows: «A person whose job involves creative work: the most important people in the mix will be creatives and direct marketing specialists.» (Oxford Dictionary, 2013) This does not include the rather negative connotation of irregularity or impropriety, associated with creative, when combined with different words, e.g. creative accountancy, which is a euphemism for activity that is almost illegal.

Creativity also involves the ability to *see the unusual context and find new solutions.* (Englund, 2010, online) Heins (2013) defines *creativity as the solution of a problem that could not be described as a problem before it has been solved.* Hein furthers states, that the shaping of the question is part of the answer. (Ibid.) This statement implies that creativity has to do with problem solving and this is what often is expected from designer – not only in the business world. But if creativity is defined as the ability to solve problems, then it could also be

creativity IS AN
EFFECTIVE AND IMPORTANT
TOOL FOR *innovation.*

Social innovation:

Naturally, this type of innovation deals with new strategies and concepts around social matters such as health care, education, politics, working conditions, infrastructure, public policy, community development, social entrepreneurship and others. Social innovations are activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting a social need and are predominantly developed and diffused through organisations whose primary purposes are of course social – contrasting business innovations which are generally motivated by profit maximisation. (Mulgan, 2007)

argued that *everyone is almost equally creative because everyone solves problems every day*. Kirton (1989) even claims that the capacity to think creatively is common to all people – the major differences lie in the preferred style of expressing it.

Creativity also deals with creation and creators. Hence, creative thinking often occurs as soon as people interact – interact with machines or technique but also with objects, entities and socially. This is possibly why *designer often work in teams* (sometimes interdisciplinary) to boost creative outcomes. Thus, creativity can be a product of interaction based on cultural, social and economic factors and is not only an individual activity.

One of the world's leading researchers on creativity is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. He proposes that creativity is the ability to form an opinion and dare to trust it. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997)

Creativity is also about *possibility thinking* – it generates associations. Daring to think that everything is possible favours a constant flow of ideas, of which the imagination is an important part. (Englund, 2010, online)

Shalley and Gilson (2004) speak of creativity accordingly: Creativity relevant skills can be defined as the ability to think creatively, generate alternatives, engage in *divergent thinking*, or suspend judgment. These skills are necessary because creativity requires a cognitive perceptual style that involves the collection and application of diverse information, an accurate memory, use

of effective heuristics and the ability and inclination to engage in deep concentration for long periods of time.

This excursion into the field of creativity highlights a few aspects how creativity is seen and defined today.

7.3

innovation

The concept of innovation is a huge topic and it can be argued that it can be critical to even mention or write about this issue when the focus of this report rests on design thinking and artistic interventions. But since I came across this word numerous times during the theoretical and empirical research phases, I want to comment on it here anyway.

It can be discussed, that more than a correlation between creativity and innovation exists. *«Creativity is an effective and important tool for innovation. One could say that when creative ideas are translated and applied in the right way, they can become innovations. Further, if a person uses and benefits from this innovation, creativity is said to have been profitable.»* (Englund, 2010, online)

Both creative approaches – design thinking and artistic interventions – often ask for or want to lead to some sort of innovation and therefore it should be questioned what innovation can mean, especially in this context.

Schumpeter:
Schumpeter typically distinguishes between invention – an idea made manifest – and innovation – ideas applied successfully in practice. Moreover, he developed a theory of how innovations create so-called business cycles – a kind of cyclical periods of growth and decline. In these processes, both pioneers and entrepreneurs with different kinds of creative properties are needed. Together they create a productivity that is favourable for growth and profitability. (Englund, 2010, online)

The word innovation comes from Latin «innovare», meaning «making something new». Therefore, the term innovation refers to the creation and application of a new idea to create value in a certain context. (Dutta, Lanvin, Singh, Green, Berthelon, Bindra, 2009) Innovation does not only need to be product specific – or inventions – but can also be social⁷, for example.

Already in 1934, Schumpeter⁸ mentioned that innovation and entrepreneurship drive economic development forward and he made the distinction between incremental⁹ and radical / disruptive¹⁰ innovation. (Schumpeter, 1934) The «ultimate» goal of innovation is positive change, mostly leading to value creation, increased productivity and therefore increasing wealth in economy. (Dutta, Lanvin, Singh, Green, Berthelon, Bindra, 2009)

Following World War II, another innovation discourse appeared and is still growing. This discourse aims to codify the sources, goals, measures and diffusion of product and service innovations. (Abernathy, Utterback, 1978) Around the millennium, the discussion of innovation gained new prestige; it was linked to business strategy and became the hallmark of companies in the forefront of the global economy. (Johansson, Woodilla, 2009) The terms design-driven innovation¹¹ and open innovation¹² were born.

Connecting this analysis to artistic interventions and design thinking, not all types of innovation might occur in this context – taken that one can even speak of innovation in such a sense.

Incremental innovation:
Christensen (1997) observed that some firms had success with products or services that were not as good as those already used in established markets, but had simplicity or low cost that appealed to a new set of customers – which can be seen as another type of innovation – so called incremental innovation. To cite Norman and Verganti (2012), incremental innovation describes improvements within a given frame of solutions (doing better what we already do). Incremental innovation refers to small changes that help improve its performance, lower its costs, enhance its desirability or simply to announce a new model release. (Ibid.) This can, for instance, be the introduction of additional features in a consumer product. This, by far, is the dominant form of innovation, say Norman and Verganti. (Ibid.)

Radical, disruptive or breakthrough innovation:
According to Norman and Verganti (2012), radical innovation can be described as a „change of frame“ (doing what we did not do before). But these radical or even revolutionary changes are surprisingly rare. An estimated 96% of all radical innovation attempts fail. (Keeley, 2005)

Design-driven innovation:
A design-driven innovation takes designerly thinking into consideration. It is said that the designer has a more holistic perspective and departs from the user's point of view. (Jahnke, 2009) This adds a new level to innovation since various aspects of product or service development are included that might have been overlooked in other innovation models. Design-driven innovations tend to question the status quo and their outcomes might be different than intended. Verganti (2009) proposes that design-driven innovation is radical innovation of meaning.

arts management

12

Open innovation:

Henry Chesbrough (2003) defines open innovation as a paradigm that assumes that firms can and should use external ideas as well as internal ideas, and internal and external paths to market, as the firms look to advance their technology. This means that collaboration between internal business units or between companies and external parties are essential for open innovation attempts to generate new ideas. Needless to say, to foster open innovation, companies need to be very open with their own ideas, strategies and developments, which requires a lot of trust between the partners.

When defining artistic interventions (see next chapter) as a business development tool, then arts management might be their origin and strategic method on an organisational, economical level.

Since it is not quite easy to make money with art or culture – Walter Gropius (1919) even said that «art is not a profession» – artists have been arts managers for a long time – long before they were called arts managers. Consider William Shakespeare, for example. Not only did he write plays, he also ran rehearsals, wrote playbills and distributed them throughout London, designed the Globe theatre, recruited and contracted actors. Quite possibly because he was passionate for his art and wanted to make a living out of it. But not every artist has such an entrepreneurial spirit and the commercial reality of art should not be confused with its romantic characteristics.

Generally, the USA of the 1960s is said to be the popular starting point of today's understanding of arts management. But in fact, the Arts Council of Great Britain – founded in 1945 – and individuals such as Peggy Guggenheim (creating a noted art collection between 1938 and 1946) already started publically supporting arts and art management related topics. (Chong, 2010) Since the production of and basically the business with art has become an

international multi-billion dollar industry (Björkegren, 1993) the role of the art manager became increasingly important.

Nowadays, arts management can be regarded as the alignment – to oversee – and to handle the complicities of creating, producing and presenting art. (Brindle, DeVereaux, 2011) Arts management is now even a topic of business administration and management studies. (Kirchberg, Zembylas, 2009)

The arts manager itself serves the art production *by accompanying the process on the level of material recourse and equipment and at the same time by ensuring economically reasonable utilisation of them.* (Bendixen, 2010) In addition, the arts manager plays a decisive role in cultivating contacts to the public. (Ibid.) For Kirchberg and Zembylas (2009), arts management encompasses tasks of leading, financing, planning, as well as organising, distributing and marketing cultural services and goods. Matthews from the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater, describes arts management as an existing field that allows people to combine *business, artistic and organisational skills* with activities that make a difference in the lives of individuals and communities. (Chong, 2010)

7.5

artistic interventions

BACKGROUND

According to Berthoin Antal (2011), artistic interventions in organisations – sometimes also called arts-based initiatives – bring people, processes and products from the world of arts into the workplace, are a relatively new trend and a consequence of wide-ranging economic and social developments. Some economic factors that provoke these kinds of interventions have already been mentioned and in fact, one of the earlier examples of artistic interventions commonly cited is the Artist Placement Group in the UK, which started already in 1970. (Ibid.) In the opinion of Grzelec and Prata (2013) the general idea behind artistic interventions is that when *the two contrasting logics (the logic of the artist and the logic of the organisation) clash, energy is released in the form of new ideas, new visions and deeper understanding for what the organisation is doing on an existential or meta-level.*

Biehl-Missal and Berthoin Antal (2012) claim that, companies often long for these co-operations because arts-based methods, thanks to their «otherness», are seen as stimuli for new ways of thinking and doing things in the business world. In the corporate world, knowledge often is considered as the most important attribute for success, but for artists, not-knowing the corporate world in general and the host organisation in particular is their primary resource. This kind of not-knowing may appear antithetical to management because at first glance the concept is equated with doubt and inaction but for the artists engaging with a company this is the most distinctive and valuable feature. Artists are said to be more capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries and doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. This is maybe why initial communication between managers and artists is prone to be difficult.

APPROACH

An artistic intervention is established when an organisation enters into a collaboration with an artist, such as an actor / director / playwright, visual artist / painter / photographer, dancer / choreographer, writer / poet, composer / musician or a conceptual artist. The interventions can range from the use of theatrical presentation workshops to develop employees' confidence, poetry workshops to improve reading and writing skills, sculpture sessions to stimulate curiosity and imagination, storytelling activities to encourage knowledge sharing and to improve overall

13

Soft-skills:

Soft-skills are skills that are not easily measured or taught since they relate to emotional intelligence (EQ), personality traits, social graces, communication abilities, language and personal habits.

14

Tacit knowledge:

According to Polanyi (1966), we should start from the fact that we can know more than we can tell. Polanyi terms this pre-logical phase of knowing as tacit knowledge. He argues that tacit knowledge – tradition, inherited practices, implied values and prejudices – is a crucial part of scientific knowledge. (Ibid.) Therefore, tacit knowledge deals with intuition and subconscious knowledge stemming from experiences and inheritance.

15

Intuition:

Intuition is the combination of thought and feeling. (Larsson, 1892)

communication within and between work groups, photography sessions to encourage teambuilding, filmmaking to visualise a group's development, choreographic training to improve specific parts in the workflow and many more. (Biehl-Missal, Berthoin Antal, 2011)

OUTCOME

AT WORST, artistic methods can act as the «*flavour of the month*» or the «*creative afternoon*», adding something new and engaging to managerial development activities with little idea of what that something is. (Biehl-Missal, Berthoin Antal, 2011) It is hoped that these types of interactions help employees from different levels of the organisation to develop certain competences, such as creativity, presentation, communication and leadership skills or the capacity to generate new ideas. (Berthoin Antal, 2012) Even such rather low-expectancy projects can have a high impact in the long-run (which is hard to predict and therefore sometimes difficult to appreciate from a management perspective) if they vary in nature over time and manage to keep everyone engaged, otherwise the risk of disinterest could rise. But for such projects to be «successful» the participants need to be very open and develop a high level of trust in the performing artist. *Because first and foremost, artistic interventions – by the very nature of art – require freedom and trust.* (Biehl-Missal, Berthoin Antal, 2011) This is a very important statement, which cannot be mentioned often enough. Building trust through effective communication is an absolute essential (Schroeder-

Saulnier, 2010) and good relationships within the team should not be underestimated. Trust is a prerequisite to engagement. It is the very basis animating employees to truly partake in the artists offering. Freedom has to do with open space and time – basically the willingness of the company to ensure financial and resource support – but also with the company's tolerance towards the artist to cross boundaries, step outside comfort zones, provoke and sometimes even to go over the top. These activities are said to be catalysts supporting the discovery of the «hidden» creative potential that resides within all individuals.

«The artist is a catalyst for my own creativity. It is in the meetings / conversation with her when it happens.» (Direct quote from a team member of the UNIONEN Lindholmen project)

This is also when soft-skills¹³ or tacit knowledge¹⁴ surface – subjects that are hard to evaluate and be taken into serious consideration in a world dominated by quantitative measurable results. Soft-skills deal with emotions, feelings and intuition¹⁵. For artists, these attributes are essential in their way of working since they often determine their decision-making processes.

Taylor and Ladkin (2009) identify four different parts – which exist on their own or in combinations – of artistic interventions regarding soft-skills. (1) *Skills transfer*. Arts-based methods can facilitate the development of artistic skills. (2) *Projective technique*. The output of artistic endeavours allows participants to reveal inner thoughts and feelings that may not be accessible through more conventional developmental modes. (3) *Illustration of essence*. Arts-

based methods can enable participants to apprehend the «essence» of a concept, situation or tacit knowledge in a particular way, revealing depths and connections. (4) *Making*. The very making of art can foster a deeper experience of personal presence and connection.

«not-knowing» IS A PRIMARY RESOURCE.

Berthoin Antal (2012) declares that, art and artists stimulate us to see more, hear more and experience more of what is going on within us and around us.

It can be argued that artistic interventions, since led by artists, centre around an aesthetic experience. All senses (tactile, visual, audio, taste and smell) are often included in the artists work and constitute a big part in these approaches.

But artistic methods do not only open the access to these subconsciously existing skills and tacit knowledge. AT BEST, skilled practitioners use art-based methods to help achieve well-defined economic objectives. However, they provide little articulation of how and why these methods work differently than conventional approaches. (Biehl-Missal, Berthoin Antal, 2011) Artistic interventions often are part of larger planned change processes. *Obviously, many other things happen in and around organisations*

during these projects so it is impossible to isolate effects directly due to the introduction of people or products. (Berthoin Antal, 2011b) This is a factor that makes it hard to measure or evaluate artistic efforts. They cannot be seen as separated endeavours but since it is the very nature and requirement of the artist to act jointly with the organisation, boundaries of why, where and what happens between whom become blurry. Therefore, the skill of communicating why and for what artistic interventions may be useful, is crucial.

A study by Berthoin Antal and Strauß (2013) provides research evidence for these BEST and WORST outcomes. The study explores the actual impacts of artistic intervention. Berthoin Antal and Strauß (Ibid.) examined 205 academic, practitioner and policy publications on arts and business, social impacts of the arts in organisations of different sizes and in diverse sectors and society. Interestingly but perhaps not surprisingly, the majority of these cases report impacts of artistic interventions in activation (positive experience, emotion, stimulation, energy), seeing more and differently (reflection, widen perspectives, awareness of present conditions), personal development (discovery of self, personal growth, skills, tools) and collaborative ways of working (working together quality, communication quality, communication quantity). Only the fewest saw strategic and operational (profitability / turnover, marketing / PR, strategy, product development, product / service quality, efficiency / productivity, HR development / recruitment) impacts.

This illustrates first clues in what respect practice-based artistic interventions might be useful.

design management

To analyse design thinking in greater depth, the design management practice and notion should be considered first.

Design management tends to refer to the management of design whereas design thinking tends to mean the use of design for management. Further, design management, relating to activities concerned with managing the design process within a company (Johansson, Woodilla, 2012) was first concerned with the industrial design process (Farr, 1966), then with the strategic role of design within a company (Cooper, 2011) and most recently with innovation. (Kelley, 2001, 2005) Academically, the subject became of interest in the late 1970s with Gorb (1990), for example.

In the 1980s, several managers started to realise the economic effects of design in companies, which increased the demand for design in the notion of design management. For instance, Robert Blaich – senior managing director of design at Philips – introduced a design management system that regarded design, production and marketing as single units in 1980. (Blaich, 1993) This was an important contribution to the definition of design as a core element in business. (Ibid.) Hence, it can be said that, design management is the implementation of design as a formal program of activity within a corporation by communicating the relevance of design to long-term corporate goals and coordinate design resources at all levels

of corporate activity to achieve the objectives of the corporation. (Ibid.)

The Design Management Institute (DMI) explains design management as follows: «*Design management encompasses the ongoing processes, business decisions and strategies that enable innovation and create effectively designed products, services, communications, environments and brands. On a deeper level, design management seeks to link design, innovation, technology, management and customers to provide competitive advantage. It is the art and science of empowering design to enhance collaboration and synergy between <design> and <business> to improve design effectiveness. The scope of design management ranges from the tactical management of corporate design functions and design agencies, including design operations, staff, methods and processes – to the strategic advocacy of design across the organisation as a key differentiator and driver of organisational success.*» (DMI, 2013, online)

Knošková (2011) is giving another definition: The concept of design management relates to certain management activities, methods and skills that are required to optimise and manage design processes. As a professional field, design management focuses on a complex of all visual manifestations of companies, brands and products, as well as on non-visual aspects relating to the design process as such, or to processes for product development, production, distribution, sales, delivery or service.

Design:

There are a lot of definitions and interpretations for the word design. The etymology of design goes back to the Latin «de + signare» and means «making something, distinguishing it by a sign, giving it significance, designating its relation to other things, owners, users or gods». Based on this original meaning, one could say: design is making sense (of things). (Krippendorff, 1989) According to Johansson and Woodilla, design can be understood in different ways:

- as an open process that is individual for every designer, yet with common characteristics that focus on the designer's specific awareness and ability of «designerly ways of knowing» (Cross, 2011) (Lawson, 2006/1980)

As soon as design management moves into more conceptual spheres of design – thus using a design process as mentioned by Knošková – and expands its scope to not only product development, production, distribution, sales and delivery, design thinking becomes relevant as a concept. As indicated, design thinking describes the use of design for management and therefore it can certainly be argued that design management can include the use of design thinking – or using design processes to solve general business problems. (DMI, 2013)

Consequently, design management can be understood as the organisational strategy of design¹⁶ whereas design thinking is the used methodology and a design tool might be the concrete method used in a design thinking process.

- as the creation and re-creation of meaning (Krippendorff, 1989) (Verganti, 2006)
- as a framework of problem formulation followed by finding a solution (Simon, 1996)
- as «reflection in action» – a way of reflecting both during and after the designing process (Schön, 1983)
- as a profession concerned with «wicked» problem solving (Buchanan, 1992)

Design can also be viewed as a management function, a cultural phenomenon and as an industry on its own right – It is a means of adding value and a vehicle for social or political change. (Cooper, Press, 1995) Cooper continues by saying that design can be conceived from being an individual activity to a corporate planning process that regulates innovation. (Ibid.) Its

disciplinary boundaries range from engineering on the one side to fine art on the other (Ibid.) For me – being educated in the graphic design field – other aspects of design are aesthetics, emotions and communication. Whatever the designed communication material, object or service might be, it is essential that it fits its purpose and speaks to its audience. Only then a design is successful in my point of view.

7.7

design thinking

BACKGROUND

Design thinking itself is a phrase difficult to pin down exactly. On the one hand, because the term consists of two ambiguous words that are hard to define themselves. On the other hand, because this expression has become so popular but has hardly ever been clearly defined so that some divergent notions and opinions regarding its meaning exist.

The term design thinking is generally referred to as applying a designer's sensibility and methods to problem solving, no matter what the problem is (Lockwood, 2010) and got broadly known around 2000 after a collaboration of Procter & Gamble and IDEO. (Tischler, 2009) The concept itself became an increasingly popular topic in the management press after that. (Rylander, 2009) But Kotler (1984) already mentioned design as a strategic tool in 1984. Within the academic fields of design, art and architecture, the discourse of design thinking has even been around for more than 30 years with forerunners such as Schön (1983) in education and Lawson (2006/1980) in architecture, who both in their respective ways describe how designer think. This way of designerly thinking

is now supposed to be applied strategically in the business world. Indeed, one of the first documents to mention design and its strategic importance might be the Bauhaus manifesto from 1919. Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus school, wrote that the goal of Bauhaus was to create a new guild of craftsmen, without the class distinctions, which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist. (Frampton, 1992)

At companies using design as a business strategy, design and designer have moved beyond roles as stylists to catalyse innovation as a core competency. (Sato, 2009) Hence, when talking about design thinking, *it is crucial to make a clear differentiation between design as practice (more traditional notion of design resulting in a product or service) and design as method (design thinking)*. Design thinking can be seen as the abstracted form of practise-based design. As defined by Kimbell (2009) design thinking reduces design to an immaterial, intellectual problem solving technique. In fact, it is described as *design minus the material practice*. (Ibid.) For Tonkinswise (2011) design thinking is *design minus aesthetics*. (Noppeney, Endrissat, Lzicar, 2013) Brown (2008) states that the former role of design was tactical and results in limited value creation, whereas the latter is strategic and leads to dramatic new forms of value. According to him, design thinking helps in the transformation of design from the world of form and style to that of function and structure.

It is worth noticing that design thinking is principally developed and introduced by design consultancies like IDEO for examples.

APPROACH

Design thinker

In a report from 1999, the Design Council stresses the design thinker's *strategic and tacit skills, such as creative thinking, decision-making, risk taking and user focus*. A good design thinker has the ability to *integrate, interpret and conceptualise solutions* and this is of value to the business. (Design Council, 2002)

Design process

One of the ground rules of design thinking is to apply a design process¹⁷ to a more strategic process. This means that *iterative, non-linear practices* – which are one of the fundamentals of a design process – are utilised for business, product or service development. Therefore, design thinking – with its process focus – is more related to the verb, the process of designing. (Liedtka, Mintzberg, 2006) Design thinkers try to engage the business world into an open process¹⁸, which is sometimes difficult to achieve since designer start with the problem rather than the outcome and do not worry too much about results, constraints or limitations because they trust in the fact to always figure out a way around them. «*Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties*», says Erich Fromm. Regardless of limited resources, financial cutbacks or short time frames, ideas are constantly put to the test as they evolve. (Rylander, 2009) Ideas are improved, abandoned or used differently throughout the process. Consequently, there is no one-best way to solve a problem but a variety of options are considered for the best appropriate solution. The end result remains unclear for a rather long time.

17

Design process:

There is no ONE design process, because every process is adapted to the client's / user's / company's needs and is individual to the designer or group of designer that carry it out. Many factors have to be taken into consideration and influence the process; therefore a design process is a rather complex matter. Such a process always is iterative, produces usually many ideas that are rejected, changes, enhanced and modified. A classical, simplified design process might look like this: briefing, re-briefing, research / observations, define, ideate, test, implement.

18

Open process:

This is a process without a definitive or pre-defined outcome. Creatives usually work like this, which makes it sometimes difficult for them to cooperate with non-creatives who tend to think more normative and straightforward with a clear goal in mind.

IT IS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM AND THE COMPLEX SYSTEM

Finding the problem

Another basic ingredient of design thinking is the *re-definition* of the initial problem or brief¹⁹ – which commonly is part of the professional skill of a designer. The *holistic* viewpoint of a designer – more based on qualities of the right-brain half²⁰ and a 360-degree understanding of the problem – should be used in a strategic way. This is when the design thinker starts with questioning the problem – rather than working on the company's specific request directly, including considering customer's needs (explicit and tactic), the end-user's environment, social factors, market adjacencies, emerging trends and other relevant factors. (Norman, 2010) It means stepping back from the immediate issue and taking a broader look. Design thinkers are supposed to look at the organisation as a whole, regarding all its facets. «*It requires systems thinking: realising that any problem is part of a larger whole and that the solution is likely to require understanding the entire system. It requires deep immersion into the topic, often involving observation and analysis.*» (Norman, 2010, online) Mulgan (2009) describes this systems thinking as asking the right question rather than taking questions at face value; getting the questions sharply focused is the necessary condition for getting the answers right, and, in general, the more one can think systemically rather than in institutional and disciplinary silos, the more likely it is that one will achieve results.

In other words, the design thinker strives to *find the relevant question first*, since it is essential to understand the problem and the complex system behind it to design experiments to answer the question in a good way. Design thinking looks beyond the immediate boundaries of the problem to ensure the right question is being addressed.

19

Brief:

A brief is a document (mostly from the client to the designer) that should define the client's demand and the designer's scope of work. It traditionally contains a time frame, financial or legal issues, the project background and envisioned outcomes. Often a re-brief (document from the designer to the client) is laid out afterwards. This document questions the initial brief, re-defines it after first investigations and describes what problem / issue the designer found and what the designer is said to deliver. Thus, the re-brief reframes the problem and arrives at an initial understanding of it. (Vianna, Adler, Lucena, Russo, 2012)

20

Right-brain half:

The right half of the human's brain is connected with feelings, fantasy, intuition, creativity, spatial perception, imagination and speech and therefore typical creatives (right-brain thinkers) are said to be more aware of this side of the brain. But also the best mathematicians or scientists are seen as whole-minded, if not very right-brain people, because they are incredibly holistic. (Bloom, 2006) These people learn and think visually.

21

Market research:

Unlike market research, design research optimises for insights about customers towards designing a better offering. (Sato, 2009) Market research is frequently focused on collecting quantitative data (Cooper, Press, 1995) to reach objective arguments whereas design research concentrates on qualitative methods, empathy, implicit knowledge and instincts.

22

Design tools:

These are methods and techniques used – principally – by designer in the idea generation phase of a design process. Tools basically are the material components, which are used in different design related activities. (Sanders, Brandt, Binder, 2010)

(Holloway, 2009) Another definition that brings the topic of design thinking into focus and fits with the statements made here, comes from Boland and Collopy (2004). They state that, a good design solution solves many problems, often ones that were not envisioned in its development.

User-centred

As a next step of a design thinking process, *the user of the intended product or service is put in the centre of the approach*. The user perspective is the point of departure. (Rylander, 2009) For Brown (2009), design thinking even is «human-centred innovation». Norman and Verganti (2012) say, that human- or user-centred design is a philosophy, not a precise set of methods. This means that the design thinker creates situations where he / she can act as the user and is therefore able to get more useful insights rather than by questioning the target group only. Having empathy, being authentic and generating personal insights are at the very basics of this experience centred design approach, which is significantly different to classical market research²¹.

Design thinkers tempt to use a set of design tools²² (given or developed accordingly – actually often borrowed methods from social science, anthropology and sociology (Merholz, 2009)) – to carry out these analyses. According to Brown (2009), this type of analysis is the mission of design thinking. It is to *translate observations into insights and insights into products and services* that will improve lives. (Ibid.)

DESIGN THINKING
LOOKS *beyond*
THE IMMEDIATE
boundaries OF
THE PROBLEM TO
ENSURE THE RIGHT
question IS
BEING ADDRESSED.

Examples for tools used in various design disciplines:

Co-creation:

This is a method that incorporates techniques that engage users in the process of generating, developing and testing new ideas together with the designer. (Liedtka, 2013) The stakeholders should be part of the designing process to enhance the value creation and design a more meaningful outcome.

Immersion:

The design team approaches the context of the problem from the client's and the user's point of view. The main objective is to reframe the problem and arrive at an initial understanding of it and later to identify the needs and opportunities that will lead to a solution. (Liedtka, 2013)

Personas:

These are archetypes or fictional characters conceived from a synthesis of observed behaviour of consumers.

(Vianna, Adler, Lucena, Russo, 2012) Personas represent a target group and are used to adjust a design to this stereotypical group of users.

Customer journey:

Is a graphic representation of the stages of the client's relationship with a product or service that describes the key steps taken before, during and after purchase or use. (Vianna, Adler, Lucena, Russo, 2012) Sensations, feelings and emotional levels are explicitly important in a customer journey.

Blueprint:

This basically is a service design tool and a matrix that visually represents in a schematic and straightforward fashion the complex system of interactions of a service. (Vianna,

Adler, Lucena, Russo, 2012)

Touchpoints on different interaction levels are identified and illustrated to create an overview of their relations to each other and to spot weaknesses and opportunities.

Storyboard:

A visual representation of a story through static frames composed of drawings, collages, photos or any other available technique. (Vianna, Adler, Lucena, Russo, 2012)

Ideation

In the ideation phase the design thinkers play with the gathered insights and visualise them.

This often happens in multi-disciplinary teams and should include various members of the organisation in which a design thinking project is carried out. The process of working in such interdisciplinary groups – where participants might come from fields like design, product development, finance, accounting, law, quality assurance, management and other parts of a company – can create creative conflict, cultural misunderstandings, linguistic misinterpretations and intellectual tensions. These should be used as positive and constructive triggers to abandon certain thinking models or stereotypes to develop new ideas influenced by numerous opinions. According to Walton (1991), teams should compromise little hierarchical or bureaucratic procedures but emphasis should be placed on shared responsibility and decision-making. It is important that the design thinker acts as a kind of guide in these groups to support the development but also to establish basic rules to filter out thoughts and ideas. (Sato, 2009) Guiding a multi-disciplinary team through innovation requires designer to acquire some knowledge of marketing, finance and business management, as well as skills in facilitation, negotiation and consulting. (Ibid.) The findings or new perceptions arising in these joint projects – comprising very open discussions – often are highly valuable because they look at problems from different angles and include various aspects and viewpoints. In other words, the outcomes of these group efforts are holistic, design-driven, creative and knowledge based. Eriksson-Zetterquist (2011) points

out that, increasingly, multidisciplinary teams are seen as the best way to unearth creative possibilities in innovation. Methods such as brainstorming²³, association games and visualisation²⁴ are used in the idea generation phase.

Prototyping

To use the developed ideas, design thinkers make and test without a clear goal yet. This is said to be another core skill of a trained designer. Neumaier (2009) says, that the industrial age processes emphasise two main activities: «knowing and doing». *«You analyse a problem relative to a standard box of options, then execute the solution... Yet designer don't actually 'solve' problems. They 'work through' them... They operate in the space between knowing and doing.»* (Neumaier, 2009, online)

In fact, all design disciplines have sets of tools for this phase of *making and doing*. According to the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1962), we merge with our tools when we use them.

Therefore, designer and design thinker prototype new solutions that arise from their four strengths of empathy, intuition, imagination and idealism. (Neumaier, 2009) Prototyping²⁵ is a popular and cheap way to test first ideas. In the opinion of Brown (2008), prototypes should command only as much time, effort and investment as are needed to generate useful feedback and evolve an idea. Prototypes are a good way to visualise ideas and helpful as conversation starters. As soon as one starts to play with the prototype, improvements for it usually are formulated. (Resnick, Myers, Nakakoji, Shneiderman, Pausch, Selker, Eisenberg, 2005) This process requires both the right tools (to support rapid development of new prototypes) and

25

Prototyping:

This is a visualising method commonly used in design where 3-dimensional models out of paper, clay, plastic, wood or other given materials are made. Prototyping techniques also include approaches such as storyboarding, user scenarios, experience journeys and business concept illustrations. (Liedtka, 2013) The prototyping phase is about bringing the ideas selected from brainstorming into a more physical setting. (D. School, 2010) Prototyping is the act of making an idea more tangible. (Vianna, Adler, Lucena, Russo, 2012)

23

Brainstorming:

In 1952, Alex F. Osborn was seen as one of the godfathers of brainstorming, (Badke-Schaub, Roozenburg, Cardoso, 2012) It is a technique to stimulate the generation of a large number of ideas in a short time and is usually done in groups. (Vianna, Adler, Lucena, Russo, 2012) A moderator and specific brainstorming rules are important in such sessions to make the outcomes as valuable as possible.

24

Visualisation:

Visualisation involves the use of imagery, either visual or narrative. In addition to traditional charts and graphs, it includes such specific tools as the use of metaphor, stories, and photography. (Liedtka, 2013)

DESIGN THINKING OCCURS AT THE MERGER OF BUSINESS AND DESIGN

the right mindset (to be willing to throw out a prototype soon after creating it). (Ibid.) But rapid prototyping is just one way of visualising. Sketching, acting out, collageing, drawing, videotaping and photographing are other methods to communicate and test ideas.

Failing

Failure is another significant feature of design thinking. *Fail early and often to succeed sooner*, is Tim Brown's mantra. (Brown, 2009)

Though, failing and starting over again are commonly not very much appreciated characteristics in conventional management strategies. Malins and Grant (2010) state, that many of us are naturally risk averse and have a fear of failure or embarrassment. Overcoming the self-imposed constraints requires a context in which psychological safety is assured, recognition that all complex problems require an interdisciplinary approach to solving them and that judgment should be suspended. (Ibid.) This statement highlights that the organisational culture of a company needs to allow the freedom to fail. Judgmental, negative, deconstructive and competitive attitudes harm the design thinking notion and hinder it to prosper. Because great ideas do simply not come out of the blue as Edison (1903) famously stated: «*None of my inventions came by accident. I see a worthwhile need to be met and I make trial after trial until it comes. What it boils down to is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.*» Therefore, a culture that rewards people for success (offering a good incentive system) and grants them permission to fail can remove one of the main obstacles to the formation of new ideas. (Brown, 2009)

In a design thinking culture, support from top management is needed to anchor the mindset in the heart of the enterprise. But this is where actual, long-term implementation of design thinking comes into the picture and this is still a weak point. Design thinking needs to be communicated in an attractive way to top management and other organisation levels to be breathed and lived by the whole company.

OUTCOME

Design thinking occurs at the merger of business and design, say Johansson and Woodilla (2009). In other words, *design thinking strives to understand the character of designer's sense making* (Ibid.) and its practices aim to improve innovation capability. (Jahnke, 2009) *Thus, some sort of innovation seems to be one of the key goals of design thinking since it emphasises design as a problem solving approach to innovation.* (Ibid.) It has even been mentioned that the primary goal of design thinking is disruptive innovation to gain competitive advantage on the global market. (Badke-Schaub, Roozenburg, Cardoso, 2012) As such, design thinking really is presented as an approach to problem solving and innovation, argued to be more suitable to the vast and complex economic, social and ecological problems of today than traditional «scientific» approaches to problem solving. (Rylander, 2009)

8. METHODOLOGY

8.1

research approach

Basically, research can be seen as an activity of collection and analysis of data for a better understanding of a topic. (Norman, Verganti, 2012)

This understanding of research is used by research practitioners, for instance in the field of ethnographic research, to indicate their activities and observations on people's activities. Like Hatch (2006) suggests, I use a descriptive and symbolic-interpretive perspective from my designer's point of view in this study.

It turns out that my designerly way of thinking influences everything I do. Hence, even writing a paper very much relies on an iterative process. This means that I did not use a classical, objective research methodology only, whilst writing and researching. My work is rather directed by constantly emerging inputs, insights, ideas and thoughts evoked by observations I made and discussions I had and so I changed direction and focus several times. I can definitely see parts that can be compared to an iterative design process – ranging from briefing, re-briefing, testing, analysing, re-defining, idea generation, brainstorming, researching and designing to visualising, ideation, refining, communicating

and prototyping – in my project. A lot of gathered insights were abandoned or needed to be neglected in order to focus.

As can be assumed by this introduction, I use mainly qualitative research in this study.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The qualitative research methods came into broader acceptance in the 1980s. Qualitative research – broadly defined – means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. (Strauss, Corbin, 1990) Hence, qualitative research does not necessarily seek to provide generalisable results but answer the outlined research questions. This type of research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to *understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest*. (Patton, 2001)

Qualitative research involves an *interpretive approach* to the world. This means that qualitative researchers studies things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin, Lincoln, 2005) The research method focuses on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives and thoughts of participants — that is, qualitative research explores meaning, purpose, or reality. (Hiatt, 1986)

These definitions justify why I favour the qualitative research method for my empiricism.

8.2

research methods

In my study I use an abductive research method like suggested by Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009). They view the abductive research approach as a combination of inductive and deductive approaches. In the abductive research approach, the researcher goes from empiricism to theory to empiricism. The original framework of the research might be subject to change due to unanticipated findings in the empirical analysis and theoretical insights. Saunders (2009) describes this method as an approach where first you make the observation, then devise theory as a result of the data analysis.

The chosen research design can be divided into two groups. On the one hand, secondary research sources such as case studies from existing literature (*for example the InnovaTeam material*) are drawn on to be able to benchmark already existing approaches to support comprehension of specific topics like design thinking.

On the other hand, qualitative data collection methods inspired by ethnography, such as interviews, participatory observations in cross-disciplinary settings, workshops, discussions and idea generation session are utilised in the *UNIONEN Lindholmen project*.

CASE STUDY

Case studies have been in common use since at least 1930. Maxfield (1930) mentions, that it is becoming generally recognised that in dealing in any practical way with human relationships and adjustments there is considerable advantage in developing a case study technique. A case study, as defined by Yin (2003), is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. Case study research consists of a detailed investigation that attempts to provide an analysis of the context and processes in the phenomenon under study. (Johnston, Leach, Liu, 1999)

Hartley (2004) notes that the case study approach is widely used in social sciences and there is a growing confidence in its applicability as a rigorous research strategy in its own right. Hartley (Ibid.) also says that this method provides considerable insightful information into organisational behaviours, it also offers a particular richness of detail of processes in context — providing an opportunity to analyse how behaviours and / or processes influence context and context influence behaviours and / or processes. (Ibid.)

Understandably, the case study method seems appropriate to be used in my investigated case. Stake (2005) notes that the «instrumental» case study has the aim of providing insight into issues or to refine theory. The case is looked at in considerable depth, but the case itself plays a secondary role in that it facilitates an understanding of something else. (Ibid.)

Further, I decided to use a comparative method (comparing the InnovaTeam case and the UNIONEN Lindholmen project) to create a better image of the two concepts artistic intervention and design thinking.

Again, Stake (Ibid.) writes that the «collective» case involves a study of multiple instrumental cases. Multiple cases are not chosen because more means a better «sample», but because understanding the cases will lead to better understanding, perhaps better theorizing. (Ibid.)

INTERVIEW

The main source of data collection of the UNIONEN Lindholmen project is qualitative research in form of in-depth, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. The interview is one of the key tools for the qualitative researcher and the most widely used research format. (DiCicco-Bloom, Crabtree, 2006) According to Kvale (1996), the qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, to uncover their lived world. Further, qualitative research interviews enable a researcher to see the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee. (King, 2004)

Bryman (2008) describes the semi-structured interview as a relatively free interview where the questionnaire need not be strictly followed. Furthermore, Bryman (Ibid.) says that the questions tend to be formulated in a more general way in

comparison with structured interviews. In a semi-structured interview, there is also space to set spontaneous follow-up questions that do not follow the questionnaire. (Bryman, 2008)

This applies to all interviews I made. They were scheduled in advance, held in private or public places – each time for about 60 minutes – tape-recorded and transcribed in full. They were conducted in Swedish, although translated into English for this version. The conversations with the interviewees were meant to be open and free (therefore anonymous) and hence only a couple of pre-determined questions were laid out, whereas in the course of the interview the conversation could take different routes. A total of 14 interviews have been conducted. All the participants of the UNIONEN Lindholmen case project were interviewed during the process. These eight people are working together in a team and thus keeping the interviews anonymous seemed sensitive. Their occupations range from project leader, sales person and promoter to communicator. The regional manager of the case organisation was interviewed as well. So were the involved artist, process and project leader from TILLT. To get a better overview of the topic, other artists and project leaders of artistic interventions have been questioned as well. The concluding insights and findings from these interviews are analysed and used in the empirical part of this study but not highlight individually since separate statements or answers are not inevitable – much rather should the interviews provide general opinions.

Additional to secondary research material, two interviews regarding the InnovaTeam case have been conducted as well. Again, general thoughts and notions are mentioned in the empirical part.

PARTICIPATORY OBSERVATION

Observations were a constant research tool in this project. During the course of the UNIONEN Lindholmen project interactions were documented through writing, audio material and photography. For me it was particularly interesting to be able to switch roles during workshops and different types of artistic interventions. I could act as a participant engaging myself in the workshops or have a more observing role, comparing different workshop groups and investigating how they worked together. This experience provided me with broader, in-depth understanding and knowledge.

8.3

analysis method

Interpreting evidence from qualitative research always needs to be done carefully. To analyse interviews, case studies and observations, I took a *qualitative and interpretive approach* (Alvesson, Sköldbberg, 2009) where pre-understandings from previous research and personal experience play an important role. As Miles and Huberman (1994) state, differentiating and combining data and then reflecting on that data, is «the stuff of analysis».

The examination and evaluation of the collected data was undertaken in multiple ways. Since qualitative data analysis ideally occurs concurrently with data collection (DiCicco-Bloom, Crabtree, 2006, p. 317), a constant documentation of the process, its main events and learnings, were summarised by me in an online blog (Haselwanter, 2013). Important findings from the literature review were highlighted and later reassessed if they still seemed reasonable, necessary and valuable in the context.

8.4

reliability and validity

To ensure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is crucial. *Constant feedback* from tutors and discussions with fellow students helped the analysis process to figure out which data was crucial and which could be neglected. Thus, the results of this research are likely due to this constant feedback from several parties involved in the process and cross-checking with available literature resources.

Joppe (2000) provides the following explanation for validity in quantitative research: Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions and will often look for the answers in the research of others. (Ibid.)

Further, Joppe (Ibid.) defines reliability as: The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. (Ibid.)

part 3 – THE PRAXIS

40	9. Empirical study
40	9.1 Design thinking in practise (InnovaTeam) Background Approach Observations Conclusion
44	9.2 Artistic interventions in practise (UNIONEN Lindholmen) Background Approach Observations Conclusion

9. EMPIRICAL STUDY

The comparative study of actual cases working with artistic interventions (the UNIONEN Lindholmen project) respectively design thinking (the InnovaTeam) should highlight differences and similarities of these approaches.

9.1

design thinking in practise

To introduce a design thinking project in more detail and to be able to use insights to juxtapose them with artistic approaches, a current case study (Van den Broek, Villem, 2013) conjoined with personally conducted interviews is demonstrated here briefly. This case study is a secondary research source and depends mostly on Van den Broek's and Villem's material, therefore the exploration is kept rather short.

BACKGROUND

Currently, design thinking approaches are attempted to be implemented in a number of companies around the globe. From my personal research in this field, mostly middle sized to large companies aspire to realise such methods. In this regard, the investigated enterprise is a large, international, technology based corporation rooted in Sweden. The company was founded in 1876 and has 110.255 employees around the globe. The company's vision is to be the prime driver in an all-communicating world and words like respect, professionalism and perseverance are seen as the core values. (Van den Broek, Villem, 2013) Due to such a big scale and its long history, the organisational structure is very hierarchical. The company has an ownership of 30.000 patents.

Together with IDEO, a global innovation project was established there in 2010 since *«the speed of the internet industry with emerging new applications and services demanded to ... reconsider ways of working to be more responsive, faster paced, and more innovative across the board.»* (Broner, 2013, online) The company's aspired goal with this project is to achieve organisational change and transform the enterprise into a more responsive entity in relation to market, users and customers and thus become more innovative in the long run. Basically, the company wants to implement design thinking to stimulate innovation.

Therefore, innovation squads – in this text referred to as *InnovaTeams* – were set up at different locations of the company. At the firm's location in Sweden, a team of three international innovation specialists / design thinking experts was hired in 2011 to carry out design thinking efforts, to implement, guide, audit, facilitate, enable and maintain the project. The team consists for two men and one woman, functions as internal consultants and are the main drivers for design thinking methods to spread and communicate.

APPROACH

Currently, the Swedish InnovaTeam is creating projects and workshops concerning topics the organisation as a whole or a specific unit is struggling with. When a new project is initiated, an inter-disciplinary team is formed to work together. The projects are typically carried out under a longer time period to create a better understanding and depths of the subject. The different types of workshops of the InnovaTeam together with the project team should provide knowledge, new methods and ways of working influenced my design thinking. These methods are meant to be adapted to the company culture in order to be practically used in the daily working routine. Due to the nature of the company, the design thinking projects mostly involve some sort of product or technology related issue. The projects are initiated, monitored and supported by the InnovaTeam but should become independent «self-runners» in the long-run.

The InnovaTeam's working method is divided into three phases – inspiration, ideation and action. In the «*inspiration phase*», empathy for the user should be developed. Here the team gathers insights from end-users and other stakeholders that would benefit the project. The «*ideation stage*» combines analysing gathered insights to develop new ideas. In the «*action phase*» some ideas are chosen and prototyped. The prototypes are used as learning tools to gain more specific insights on the real problem. This three phase cycle would be repeated several times before the team would come up with one final solution. Inn

OBSERVATIONS

The observations from the case study and interviews with two of the InnovaTeam project members, revealed that implementing design thinking in daily routines is more challenging than initially assumed.

The case study uncovers that during and after the work with the InnovaTeam, employees seem to be excited about the new ways of working and the learned approach but the struggle occurred when they actually wanted to execute those methods on a day-to-day basis. It seemed difficult to spot opportunities where the techniques could be applied. Other challenges concerning getting the managers interest and their acceptance for the use of those tools and methods arose. Hence, the first enthusiasm often diminished and people fall back into old working patterns and routines.

Braun:

The German company Braun employed Dieter Rams, trained architect and designer, as Head of Design from 1961 until 1995. His Bauhaus-inspired way of working – using prototyping and multi-disciplinary teams – influenced the whole company well beyond his department. He reported directly to the two owners of Braun. (Heiman, Burnett, 2009)

Typical problems of implementing new ways of working have also been observed. These are amongst others challenges around *trust, misunderstanding and miscommunication, questionable appreciation from the top manager level, lack of appropriate incentive systems, internal marketing issues, insufficient visibility and transparency and misinterpretation of a creative process (normative mindset versus iterative way)*. Since most of these points touch upon the internal culture and operative system of the company, they are rather interminable to influence.

The interview with the InnovaTeam members pointed out challenges encountered in the daily attempts to implement their methods. To summarise the interviews, the biggest learnings and insights gathered over the last years, were as follows:

Storytelling

Explaining design thinking in general and in individual projects in specific seemed to be working best through storytelling. Also within a project, storytelling appeared to be a good and effective tool to use. *Storytelling made it easier to empathise with the issue and imagine what a design thinking project could comprise.*

Baby steps

The members of the InnovaTeam expressed that they feel that a gentle approach is needed to implement and advertise their methods. Trying to push the design thinking mentality onto the company culture might have converse effects. If they (the two InnovaTeam members) were too explicit about the methods the «antibodies» in the organisation would be awoken. Therefore, baby steps in education employees achieved better results.

Ambassadors

Finding more design thinking ambassadors in the company that *spread the word* and function as role models, helps to create a broader and better understanding of the concept. Personal recommendations and experiences that travel effortlessly by word-of-mouth might be the most natural and comfortable way to increase awareness, curiosity and appreciation for the InnovaTeam's work. This could be one of the key factors to implement the approaches in the long-run since the responsibility is slowly given to the personnel and does not rest on the InnovaTeam alone. This empowers the employees and lets them experience the project as their own. Hence, new methods can develop gradually rather than be seen as something that is purely predetermined by superiors and therefore forced upon the employees.

Recruitment

Recruiting the right personnel (more logic than analytic oriented thinkers) was another crucial element for the InnovaTeam. They said that they wanted to see *more «creative» people* in top-management positions that not necessarily have strong business backgrounds. A better mixture of these different mindsets (right- and left-brain oriented) in leading / strategic positions and the board would quite naturally create a better comprehension of the design thinking mentality and consequently increase awareness and appreciation for the concept. The German company Braun²⁶ functions as a positive example for this.

Respect

The InnovaTeam regarded it as essential to express respect for the current work of the people. If the employees felt appreciated and honoured, they might trust new thinking concepts more easily and quickly. Again, the issue of trust can be discovered. An atmosphere or culture of improving and trying-out playfully («no fear of failure») rather than changing or fixing, supports the design thinking notion and its implementation.

needed to make these efforts worthwhile. Understanding and hence trusting these creative approaches are key factors. *This confirms the notion that design thinking – when used as its essence rather than a superficial vogue term – is a mentality or philosophy and not an identity.* And of course, influencing or even changing one's mindset does not come without pain. But overcoming this struggle promises positive business effects, innovation and economic survival in the long-run.

CONCLUSION

In general, the InnovaTeam noticed small changes and positive effects after working together in the company for over 1,5 years. But they did not know for sure if these efforts would be successful in the long-run. They constantly need to push, educate and motivate people to keep them active and engaged to confirm that their attempts in working with design thinking are meaningful and effective. They themselves need to question and re-frame the problem they are trying to solve time and time again.

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There is only a small team of three fully employed people working with design thinking approaches at this big company in Gothenburg at the moment. Apparently, the senior managers of the enterprise do not even know that their team exists. Several learnings from the first years of implementation show that design thinking methods take first and foremost a lot of time to implement and constant engagement, promotion and communication is

UNIONEN:

UNIONEN is a result of a fusion. In 2008 former trade unions HTF (Handelstjänstemannaförbundet) and SIF (Svenska industritjänstemannaförbundet) joint their businesses and founded UNIONEN. Today UNIONEN claims to be the largest labour union in the private sector in Sweden and has 27 offices and 35.000 elected representatives at over 65.000 workplaces throughout 18 regions of the country. They count 500.000 members who come from every branch from the private sector. Their core values are based on their three focal points: success, safety and happiness in working life – which is also reflected in their tagline: “Together we are UNIONEN - the leading force to create success, happiness and safety in the workplace.” (Unionen, 2013) They are a part of TCO (The Swedish Confederation of Professional Employees). TCO is one of the big umbrella unions in Sweden with 1.2 million members working in all parts of the labour market, for example in schools, healthcare, trade,

9.2

artistic interventions in practise

Inviting an artist to work in an organisation is like walking over a bridge shrouded in fog, says Berthoin Antal (2013). Nevertheless, organisations try this walk in the fog hoping to step over the bridge and come out to a clear and sunny sky.

BACKGROUND

As already noted, the elaborate case for this practical investigation part of the report is a collaborative project between two quite different organisations – UNIONEN²⁷ (a Swedish trade union) and TILLT²⁸ (a creative agency working with artistic interventions).

Here, this venture is referred to as the «UNIONEN Lindholmen project». I was able to monitor the early phases of TILLT’s artistic intervention (called the AIRIS project) and conducted interviews with all participants and related stakeholders. It can be argued that this case cannot be considered as a whole but the constant findings in the early stages already led to in-depth insights.

media, police, industry, IT and telecom. (Tco, 2013) UNIONEN’S membership offers amongst others: negotiating wages, carrier advise services, courses, seminars, lectures and activities, discounts, consultancy services, study grants, support and information in legal and financial matters, insurance offers and political independency. UNIONEN has a clear visual corporate brand identity and wants to attract and help members from a variety of branches. (Unionen, 2013)

28

TILLT:

TILLT was originally a non-profit organisation working in the cultural sector. Their current business model developed over time and is rather unique. TILLT believes in artistic competence as a tool to stimulate creativity, innovation, human development, and more. (Tillt, 2013) They built their business model around connecting artists and companies and act as matchmakers in that sense. They claim to be an agency creating new and competent products, services and strategies through “out-of-the-box” thinking

and artistic innovations. They use a specific working method called AIRIS (Artists in Residence) where they place an artist at a company for mostly one day a week during at least one year. During this time the artist interacts with the employees. AIRIS consist of three main phases – research, implementation and evaluation – and builds on co-creational working methods. TILLT has a long history in their field, works a lot with research and European collaborations, established a big network of associated artists, has a member organisation and 15 constant employees at the moment who work mostly as project / process leaders or creative coordinators. Their collaboration with companies and organisations lasts from short creativity workshops to three-year projects. Some of their clients are Västtrafik, Paroc, Volvo Trucks, Volvo Technology, White Architects, AstraZeneca and Ericsson. (Tillt, 2013)

Lindholmen:

This is a geographical area North of Gothenburg. It is a rather recently developed location that comprises a lot of big Swedish and international companies from different sectors, newly established housing areas, hotels and more.

On the 1st of February 2013, UNIONEN opened a new office at Lindholmen²⁹ and recruited a small team of eight people. Five of them were working for UNIONEN in other roles and functions before, whilst the new employees come from different backgrounds such as consulting and service design. The team members vary in age, sex and work experience. This group is supposed to focus on working on a two-year innovation project. The main goal and reason for the existence of this project is set by UNIONEN's board. The aim is to «*attract 8.000 new members within two years. In this context the development of new stadiums and functions of UNIONEN Gothenburg should be supported. It is hoped that the fruits of this innovation work can be used within UNIONEN on a national level later on.*» (Liinason, 2012)

During this project, UNIONEN is supported by TILLT to help the team reach their goals. A project leader, a process leader, a researcher and a photography artist provided by TILLT are constantly following and / or steering the process. Artistic interventions are planned over a course of two years, take place every Monday and can come in different formats – workshops, brainstorming, activities, discussions, updates and more – and time periods – from five minutes up to four hours. The first nine weeks are seen as an introduction and warm-up phase. Thereafter, an action plan is created to outline the coming collaboration more specifically. This schedule illustrates a typical AIRIS project.

APPROACH

In a nutshell, I want to describe especially four touchpoints of creative approaches in this project. The introducing 24-hour-lab, the kick-on workshop, the designer workshop and the action plan formulation.

24-hour-lab

The first actual encounter between UNIONEN and TILLT was a 24-hour-lab held on 17th and 18th of January 2013. UNIONEN promoted this lab as a creative innovation workshop where the new UNIONEN Lindholmen team met people from other backgrounds and disciplines to work on ideas, methods and services for UNIONEN's future. The lab was organised by TILLT, led by a project leader and an artist and took place at Lindholmen Science Park.

The first workshop of the joint 24 hours got going on Friday after lunch, with a more physical task for the participants. The session was called «*Mission 1 – Silent walk*». The participants were supposed to fulfil a specific task outside the building by communicating without words whilst being tied to each other with a big, red, rubber band.

In «*Mission 2 – Undercover friends*» the participants were expected to interview strangers / people passing by in smaller groups by using made-up interview methods and topics. They were provided with yellow yoga balls.

After these two playful missions, a reflection and brainstorming phase kicked in. The concluding session of the day was held at a different location in the evening. The prototyping theme was revealed and ideation techniques presented.

After breakfast on the next morning «*Mission 3 – Analysis, immersion and packaging of results*» brought more brainstorming and prototyping. During the rest of the day, TILLT'S artists and project leader assisted the different teams to focus on one idea and get to the essence of it, helped to develop presentable prototypes and gave advice on presentation techniques. The prototype, together with the group's concept, was then presented in front of a bigger UNIONEN audience.

FIND CLUES IF *art* AND
design IN THIS RESPECT
ARE *interchangeable*

Kick-on

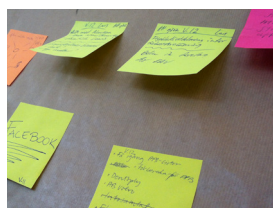
The 13th of February was the kick-on date for the UNIONEN Lindholmen project. TILLT'S artist, who is steering the whole process, started her first «getting-to-know» workshop at the UNIONEN Lindholmen office.

After a short and general introduction of AIRIS and a presentation of the artist's previous photographic work and involved art projects, the UNIONEN Lindholmen team was asked to cut out six images from provided newspapers and magazines to represent their personalities and glue them on to a plastic cube. This assignment lasted for about 20 minutes. In the reflection phase, the participants were supposed to talk about their cubes.

In the afternoon, everybody went to a nearby photo studio and the team was divided into two smaller groups. The two teams were then asked to come up with ideas of how to physically visualise «strength» and «togetherness» via the medium of photography for the other team respectively. The teams did not have a lot of props (just a few cables and wires that were available) and was supposed to work rather physically.

Designer workshop

The designer workshop was a reaction to the project development at that stage. The UNIONEN Lindholmen team seemed to be stuck in the fuzzy phase of a creative process and constantly asked for clarification, validation and documentation.





I proposed a designer workshop led by a fellow Business & Design master student with a background in illustration. By organising this one-hour-workshop, I wanted to *research the possible overlap and contrast between artistic and design intervention*. Assumingly, design-as-intervention varies quite significantly to design thinking. My intention was to find out what a workshop based on tools stemming from design as a practise-based method could contribute in such a stage. In that case, *I indented to find clues or answers if art and design in this respect are interchangeable* or not. Moreover, I hoped to discover if design tools – said to be more concrete, targeted, instrumental, predicable and apparent – could support the group in understanding and documenting their learning process until now. Furthermore, I aspired to supply them with some concrete working tools before they started the formulation of the action plan as a next step in the AIRIS project plan. This should help the team members to comprehend and appreciate the AIRIS project.

The goal of the workshop was to inspire the participants to use creative techniques to document their learnings, reflections and experiences during the innovation process. Further to stimulate them to find their personal tools of documentation and motivate them to perform little tasks every week to support their creative development. A follow-up and an analysis should take place weekly every Monday.

Together with my colleague, I developed the content and structure for the workshop, but I wanted to keep my observing role and not interfere too much. This is way I did not lead the workshop myself.

First, my colleague engaged the UNIONEN Lindholmen team in an icebreaker game (the «*sound ball game*») to stimulate communication and create a relaxed atmosphere. After that, everybody was invited to share a positive and private story from his or her life – again to establish an open atmosphere. In the coming brainstorming session the team was supposed to generate ideas for different tools and tasks how to visualise and document their learning process. A lot of ideas from «airplanes» to «baking» were assembled. To show them that these generated ideas could actually be used, the «*A letter to ...*» assignment was presented. All the participants should collect one idea of a tool and one idea of a task. The tool respectively task post-it notes were put in small envelopes. The function of the envelopes should be revealed in a later stage of the project. At some point the envelopes were supposed to circle within the group, contain fun but secret contents, facilitate internal communication and support creative thinking. But for this time, the participants chose task and tool for themselves, were asked to combine them and work on a playful, easy and creative application of the new connection during the week and shortly present it via whatever media they wanted the coming Monday.

Furthermore, three empty posters were set up on the walls at the still quite sterile and corporate looking UNIONEN office, hoping that these would get filled with inputs and thoughts from the team. This again should help the team to observe and document their process and support the understanding of a creative, interactive, co-creational project. The posters comprised the themes «*previous learnings*», «*current inspiration*» and «*future vision*».

Action plan

The formulation of an action plan for the coming integration of the artist's interventions was again led by my TILLT'S artist and a part of AIRIS. It was broken down into three parts that took place over three weeks. *The introduction and first brainstorming, the follow-up session and the presentation of the action plan in front of UNIONEN Gothenburg.*

The first task for the group was to come up with activity related ideas and have them developed further by other members of the group. The team members were sitting in a circle and the brainstormed ideas were laid out on the ground. The ideas were then reviewed and the most popular ones developed even further in groups of two (the team partners had been chosen randomly). In the end, all groups presented their concrete ideas, which circled around activities to acquire new members. These events had in common that they were quite effective, rather low in cost and easy to organise, should create a lot of attention and be unorthodox.

In the second session, the initial suggestions were developed further and one week later presented at UNIONEN's main office in Gothenburg.

OBSERVATIONS

Since this was the focus project of my investigation, numerous revelations, insights and personal learnings could be collected. A lot of these findings touch upon various related aspects but cannot be considered here any further. Only such observations and interview parts, relevant to the topic of this study, are explored in greater detail. Individual statements from different parties involved, grant a more personal access to these observations.

24-hour-lab

The missions in the 24-hour-lab created the effect that the participants got very quickly and playfully acquainted with each other. Certainly, they did not consciously know why it was important to engage in these «games» without any clear goal or purpose and felt insecure and uneasy at times. But the *positive effect* was that they opened up in the ensuing brainstorming sessions. Hence, these creativity tools had an effect that could only be valued later in the process.

«It is easy to fall back in the traditional way of working if the results of the workshop are not taken forward», stated one of the UNIONEN team members after the 24 hours.

Very true, but as a kick-starter for a project, as a tool to bring people together and stimulate them to collaborate, as a way to inspire employees and make them receptive for new working methods and as a method to introduce people to creative working

techniques and test them, the 24-hour-lab served its function very well. In fact, a developed idea from the lab was realised later on.

Kick-on

Interestingly, the team mostly chose images representing hobbies and interests rather than personalities for the first task of the afternoon. Does this mean that it is easier to talk about oneself by presenting hobbies and interests? Would this task have different outcomes when the team would have known each other better and was more confident to share personal things?

A statement of a participant was: *«I'm not so affected. I liked that the artist presented her work. This touched me somehow and is certainly something I will remember.»* This evidences a first clue for the important emotional aspect of artistic interventions. Everything that triggers feelings and emotions, impacts the addressee of such ventures.

The photoshooting – since very physical in its nature – led to a lot of engagement and cooperation amongst the participants. They seemed to have fun, came up with many ideas and *learned that ideas can also emerge along the way and do not necessarily need to be determined at the beginning of a process only.* Interactions, communication, a change of setting and available props were helpful and well utilised in this process.

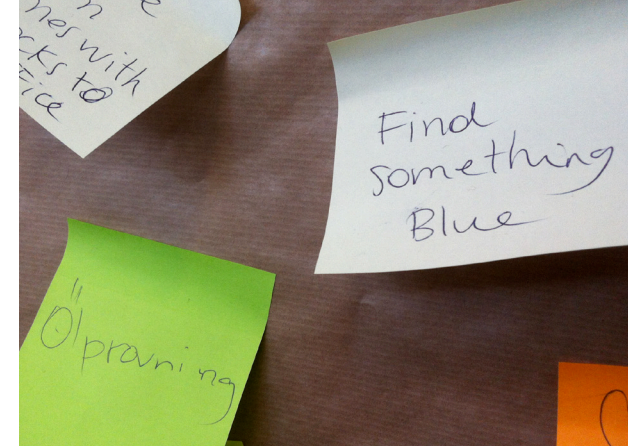
Designer workshop

The workshop assignments were meant to be clear but open enough to trigger a free flow of ideas. But this proved to be the most difficult part. My study-colleague had to give examples of ideas

for the brainstorming to kick in. She had to motivate the team and tried to *answer questions* around what these exercises should lead to. As soon as she explained that ideas could be quite random and playful, the team started to loosen up a bit and have fun.

The presentation of the homework results the following week brought fun stories and first good revelations. Although not everybody was able to show something, the learning from this task was beneficial for whole the group. The participants started to realise that *the outcome was actually not as important as the creative process itself*. A statement from one of the participants illustrates this fact very well: *«I got a task today but I did not understand what to do with IT. I got two notes: <the theatre> and <bring a pet / child>. Apparently, I could do whatever I want with it. But what? Is this too open? I got caught up in performance anxiety. I did nothing. I learned afterwards that I could really have done exactly what I wanted. No requirements whatsoever. Nothing could be <wrong>. That was a lesson learned.»*

Surprisingly, the ones who portrait themselves as non-creative earlier, had the most fun and came up with many ideas during the designer workshop, whereas people who stated that they feel creative and want to work creatively, seemed to have a hard time with the given tasks. This might be due to the fact that some preconceptions of creativity existed and that the ones who considered themselves as non-creative could act much freer and therefore really engage in the tasks without the fear of losing their face. The ones that saw themselves as very creative might have used the word creativity rather as an identity than a tool and could not to cope well with the pressure of performing.



WORKSHOP-BASED
INTERACTIONS REQUIRE
«CREATIVE TECHNIQUES»
USING PRACTISE-BASED
ARTISTIC OR
DESIGNER TOOLS.

Basically, the designer workshop was primarily held because the UNIONEN Lindholmen team wanted to know what the differences between artist's and designer's work methods were. This was a bit difficult to live up to since designer and artists do not engage in workshops alone and hence a workshop provides only a very limited view of the arguably different but at the same time similar approaches.

This reflection led to the insight that these kind of workshop-based interactions require first and foremost «creative techniques» (refer to the theory of creativity) using practise-based artistic or designer tools (see theory chapter). And in this sense, artists and designer might not be that different. Principally, both use creative ways. Therefore, the tasks that the artist designed for the UNIONEN Lindholmen group were not significantly different to the designer workshop. *Both mainly worked with communication games, brainstorming and visualisations. Probably, the artist worked more with soft-skills, emotions, reflections and feelings and used her art background for the interventions whereas the designer's assignments were slightly more goal- or purpose-oriented incorporating more concrete tools.* But as a matter of fact, one can learn from this observation, that artists and designer use rather similar tools and techniques when it comes to practise-based methods.

This is why I see a bigger difference between art and design when looking at their application in such a process. Artistic interventions – from their very nature – are practise-based methods that might have long-term personal, social, aesthetic, cultural or organisational impacts. Whereas design thinking is an abstracted form of design-as-practise. Therefore, one can rather speak of

DESIGN PRACTISE IN THAT SENSE IS *different* TO DESIGN THINKING

design-as-practise in the context of the designer workshop. Design practise in that sense is different to design thinking (as mentioned in the theoretical part). *Design thinking describes how a designer's mindset can be used strategically and therefore I doubt that design thinking can really be used in a workshop alone, for example.* This observation concludes in the assumption that artistic interventions and design-as-practise have similar sources (which are creativity and the available techniques) but artistic interventions and design thinking might be remarkable different in their complexion and consequently different in their outcomes.

Action plan

The first workshop of the action plan formulation immediately raised the question what an action plan was, how it could be understood and what it should lead to. It proved to be a bit tricky to make a clear distinction between the AIRIS action plan and another action plan the project group received from the head office in Stockholm, laying out the business related focal points for the company for the next quarter. So questions about content and focus arose. Later, again a control question from the project leader about the meaning of the brainstorm came up. The question was if the ideas should be linked to concrete and practical applicable proposals of how to meet potential UNIONEN members (the core goal of this project) or focus around things that seem fun to do?

This evidences an ongoing confusion about the AIRIS project compared to UNIONEN's business strategy. A statement from one of the workshop participants underlines this notion: *«I do not understand the structure. I certainly have not rooted AIRIS properly. I need structure and an overall project plan.»*

Consequently, rather concrete actions and events were presented that not necessarily were connected to the AIRIS project.

Generally, a few key topics or challenges became apparent during this process:

Team

Since this was such a new team, people were rarely acquainted with each other, occupied with other practical issues and felt the need to

prove themselves. This made it hard for the artist to create trust in her work.

Structure versus openness

During the study phase, it became quite clear that engaging in an open creative process seemed challenging for the participants since they were new to this type of working and doing. Everyone was used to a well-organised and structured working routine. From the very beginning, the participants – and especially the project leader – asked for *rules, set goals, to-do lists, tasks and frameworks* from the artists. This was hard to provide due to the nature of an artistic intervention, which rests upon *co-creational approaches* rather than set frames and guidelines. Even after three months of working with the artist, the participants still wanted these types of instructions. Interestingly, an instruction could also be that there were no instructions. This apparently already made it easier for the project team, since they had something they can hold on to. *«I need to mentally decide to prioritise on customer visits – then comes creativity»*, said one team member.

Expectations

It can be argued that the UNIONEN Lindholmen group had different expectations and viewpoints of what an artistic intervention was, compared to the involved artist. Contrasting *interpretations of goals and deliverables* appeared all the time. Is the set goal to reach 8.000 new UNIONEN members really the goal that should be achieved through AIRIS? These and other discrepancies often dealt with mismatching notions about definition and understanding of the AIRIS process, time issues, questions about

WE WANT TO CREATE
POSITIVE ENERGY
TOGETHER AND HAVE TIME
TO TRY NEW THINGS AND
DARE TO FAIL.

documentation, work effectively, credibility, measuring and visualising creativity and the pressure of performing and justifying the financial investment for this project.

Furthermore, artists are usually not keen on goals and outcomes. They live for the process and can hardly make promises of what the result of their work is going to be. Therefore, having clear, *corporate, measurable goals might be counter-productive for their processes.*

A phrase from the artist summarises and exactly points out this struggle: *«We would achieve things much faster when they would trust me (the artist) and don't think about numbers and goals all the time.»*

Communication

Communication, coordination and administration challenges of various parties in the project have also been observed. Due to the fact, that a lot of people were involved in the process (UNIONEN Lindholmen group, UNIONEN project leader, regional UNIONEN manager, artist, two researchers, TILLT project and process leader) and different levels of responsibilities existed, communication between all the actors was not always easy. Hence, misunderstandings arose and sometimes led to tense situations. The project team learned, that regular meetings to *discuss basic development* and current frustrations were necessary.

Acknowledgement

Positive affirmations appeared to be important. Everyone at the UNIONEN Lindholmen team seemed to need to feel that they achieved something, that they were efficient in one or another

way at the end of the day. This helped them to feel good about their work and stay motivated. Not being *effective* and not having something to show in the end of the day still was a frustrating venture. It was important to see the result of every effort.

Practice-based versus methods-oriented design

Artistic methods and design techniques when used as practise might be quite similar when only studied on one single occasion. But regarding the artist's or design thinkers' mindset, differences can be pinned down. The overlaps and contradictories will be further discussed in the analysis chapter.

CONCLUSION

It was apparent that *structure, good preparation and planning, rules, explanations, simple and uncomplicated tasks, positive affirmation, examples, easy language and communication* are the ingredients for a successful process. It was very important to introduce the intention of every planned «artistic or design» action – even if the intention was just to have fun. People took certain roles in teams and were generally a bit hesitant to things they did not know anything about.

«I am feeling a little locked. We are supposed to test new things, but don't do anything new. More brainstorming does not take us in the direction I want to. I would rather work focused.» This was a statement of a UNIONEN Lindholmen employee. This demonstrates just how hard it was for the artist to create an understanding for her work.

But as soon as the fun part took over and the over-thinking stopped, everybody was much more engaged and open. This is illustrated by a statement from the involved artist: *«Everything takes time. We need to work with creative exercises that stimulate and are not necessarily goal-oriented. This is what we need, I think.»*

Another declaration highlights just how much TILLT's notion is linked to this view: *«We want that AIRIS is undemanding and leads to openness, creativity and joy. In order to subsequently implement new ideas and approaches in daily work. We want to create positive energy together and have time to try new things and dare to fail.»* (direct quote from one of the organisational planning meeting between the TILLT and UNIONE project leaders)

This statement touches upon the core of the artistic intervention and summarises this approach very well. Only at that point in time when the project group realises this reality, the artistic intervention can bloom and live up to its full potential. Because this means that the artist's efforts have been understood. The realisation of one of the basic aspects of the artistic intervention, evidences a first success and step in the right direction because *«AIRIS presents a clear framework to question, discuss and process the mentality and habits here at UNION.»* (direct quote for a structure meeting) Nothing else – nothing more (at least in the first stages of the project process).

WE NEED TO WORK WITH *creative*
EXERCISES THAT *stimulate* AND ARE
not NECESSARILY *goal-oriented*

part 4 – INTERPRETATION

57	10. Analysis
57	10.1 Theory versus practise
58	10.2 Similarities
58	10.3 Differences
61	11. Discussion
63	11.1 Background
64	11.2 Approach
65	11.3 Outcome
66	11.4 Further research
67	12. Conclusion

10. ANALYSIS

The knowledge, the comparison of the InnovaTeam and the UNIONEN Lindholmen case produced is that both – artists and designer – can affect organisational culture and work processes, even if their work is not explicitly directed towards those areas: rather, *the value of design and artistic interventions may be the side-effects of the artistic work done.* (Johansson, Woodilla, 2012) This should be internalised by managers and employees engaging with artists and designer to be able to see and appreciate the value of the creative work and scale down the need for measurable expectations.

10.1

theory versus practise

As has been observed, the theory cannot be as easily applied to the practise as desired. Since implementation of theoretical models always involves people, outcomes and processes tend to become complicated and sometimes unpredictable. Especially issues of communication and understanding can be seen as crucial but problematic elements in these processes.

As was presented now, the *InnovaTeam* experienced difficulties in *implementing* design thinking methods when it came to *understanding* and further working with these approaches. The team identified that *storytelling, making baby steps, finding design thinking ambassadors (to spread an understanding of the process), recruiting the right personnel and respecting the current work of the staff as crucial matters* in that respect.

Similar challenges – but maybe differently phrased – were also observed in the *UNIONEN Lindholmen* project. Again, the topics of *understanding a creative process (earlier referred to as expectations), trusting in such attempts (structure versus openness), communicating effectively and decreasing misunderstandings, acknowledging and respecting the personnel and building functioning teams*, came about.

Hence, it seems that design thinking approaches and artistic interventions struggle with similar issues when it comes to *implementation and facilitation*. This might be due to the fact that a general resistance towards *change* and a lack of *trust* exists. Change always has to do with the unknown and is therefore *uncomfortable and connected to effort*. To motivate employees and make them more receptive to change, they first need to understand why to change and then trust in the process rather than expect results or effects immediately. *Trust can only developed over time* and needs an organisational culture that provides a good social climate and a non-competitive working atmosphere.

10.2

similarities

Johannson and Woodilla (2012) state, that the discourse of artistic interventions and design thinking should be regarded as intellectual siblings. Engaging both introduces a more general creativity to individuals, thereby enhancing the creative culture of the organisation. (Ibid.) Both are *process oriented*, working with a combination of open and structured processes and give organisations an experience of *how to handle an open process*, something that may be taken for granted in the artistic world but alien for many technicians and managers. (Ibid.) Both introduce new activities (tools) and new ways of working / thinking / approaching problems by *focusing more on opportunities* than on analysis. (Ibid.)

Design-as-practise – as used in the designer workshop – showed parallels to artistic interventions in an early stage of a longer project. In that sense, design might not be seen as a mindset, more as a practical problem solving approach in a temporary activity. Slightly more goal-oriented than artistic interventions but using similar techniques. Artistic interventions are also practise-based attempts. Principally, *both use creative ways*, which are not significantly different from each other. But their general notion and purpose might vary.

10.3

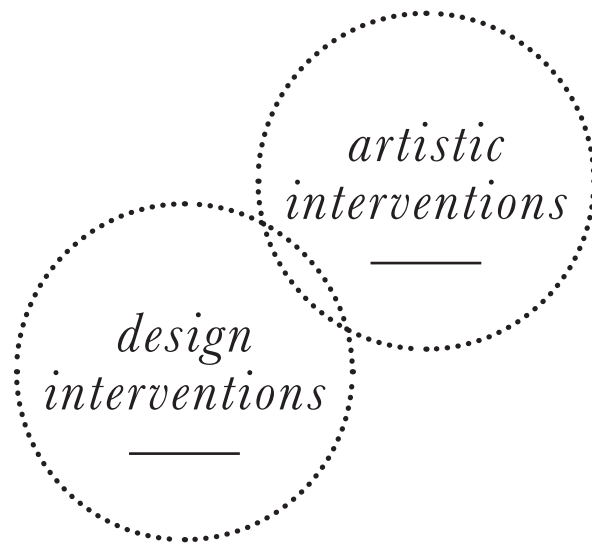
differences

I conclude that artistic interventions and design-as-practise have similar sources (which are creativity and the available techniques) but might be remarkable *different in their complexion, their approach and consequently different in their outcomes. Hence, artistic interventions and design thinking differ in their very nature.* The first one is a *practise-based* whereas the latter a *methods-oriented* approach. This is a noteworthy – and probably the main – contradiction between these two concepts. Accordingly, the differentiation should rather be made between *the different concepts of inventions / integrations than between art and design per se.*

BACKGROUND

An artist works through emotions to create an experience, while a designer communicates that something exists for a purpose. (Johansson, Woodilla, 2012) Or in other words, designer create solutions – whereas artists create questions. (Maeda, 2012)

The tools that are at the artist's disposal are not too general and more depending on the artist and his / her background itself. The type of intervention is therefore dependent on these skills – sculpture sessions are arguably different to theatrical workshops and not every artist can offer both. Therefore, it can be assumed that the artist's work in this respect is more «personally»



PRACTISE-
BASED



METHODS-
ORIENTED

steared. The artist often has personal agendas or goals with the intervention and in the end of the artist's collaboration with a company the artist often produces an artefact jointly with the employees or project participants. TILLT additionally states on their website that they work for increasing the field of work for artists. (Tillt, 2013)

The background of the designer (weather product designer, graphic designer or fashion designer) is not as significant since the design process stays almost the same. Slight variances might occur but do not affect the process in itself. Consequently, one can say that design thinkers are more general and neutral in such processes.

APPROACH

It can be said that *artistic interventions* rather deal with a variety of *soft-skills, social patterns, culture, human growth, disruptive thinking, mentality, organisational change, creative processes, empathy, reflections and emotions*. The appreciation for general creativity and open processes without any normative direction or measurable result is crucial. This has also been observed in the UNIONEN Lindholmen project and can be illustrated by these statements: «*We want that AIRIS is undemanding and leads to openness, creativity and joy... We want to create positive energy together and have time to try new things and dare to fail. AIRIS presents a clear framework to question, discuss and process mentality and habits ...*» This means that artistic

DESIGN THINKING HELPS
EMPLOYEES TO IMPROVE
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PER SE AND MIGHT IN
FACT BE A GOOD STARTING
POINT FOR DESIGN
THINKING PROJECTS.

interventions are much concerned with what is going on between people rather than economically in a company. The aesthetic quality is another major characteristic. Just like Berthoin Antal (2012) says, artists stimulate us to see more, hear more and experience more of what is going on within us and around us.

Design thinking (design-as-method or the abstracted form of design-as-practise) is more *purpose-oriented*. Design in this respect is rather *practicable, concrete, pragmatic, predictable, goal-oriented and instrumental*. This can be found in the empiricism as well. The InnovaTeam seemed to be *more focused on teaching and establishing somewhat precisely structured working methods* (as described in the design thinking chapter) to accomplish relatively predictable outcomes. Therefore, their design perspective is fairly result-focused. The tools and techniques for these process-oriented working methods are to some degree clearly defined, adjusted to context and stem from a specified toolbox and the general designerly mindset.

Design thinking in this case is a longer process, preferably affecting both staff and the business of the company and how this connection can be improved or positively influenced.

OUTCOME

The «outcomes» of artistic interventions are more concerned with *social innovation or change management* within the company (therefore, the branch of business of the company is *less important*).

Thus, artistic interventions can rather be understood to *inspire creative thinking* but speaking of achieving economic goals might be a bit too far-fetched. It is assumed that the aspired openness and creativity then leads to some sort of innovation since the organisational culture ideally is affected, but the empiricism showed that innovation itself – other than social innovation – can and should not be the primary goal of artistic interventions.

One can say that design thinking (to some extent) – as can also be concluded from theory – can lead to some kind of incremental innovation concerning work ethics and products or services the respective company offers. Since *design thinking approaches are closer connected to economic processes* than artistic interventions, they might have a bigger impact on *measurable financial and economical goals* of the company. The methods are designed and set up to reach and even outperform company's objectives.

Summarising, analysing and reflecting upon these two ventures, it can be argued that artistic and design thinking approaches in business development differ in the way that design thinking is more purpose oriented and thereby could be seen more as applied art than as art in itself. (Johansson, Woodilla, 2012) Or, art inspires while design motivates. (Cartman, 2013)

Design thinking helps employees to improve their collaboration and cooperation to work on clearly defined tasks, whereas artistic interventions help to trigger creativity per se and might in fact be a good starting point for design thinking projects.

11. DISCUSSION

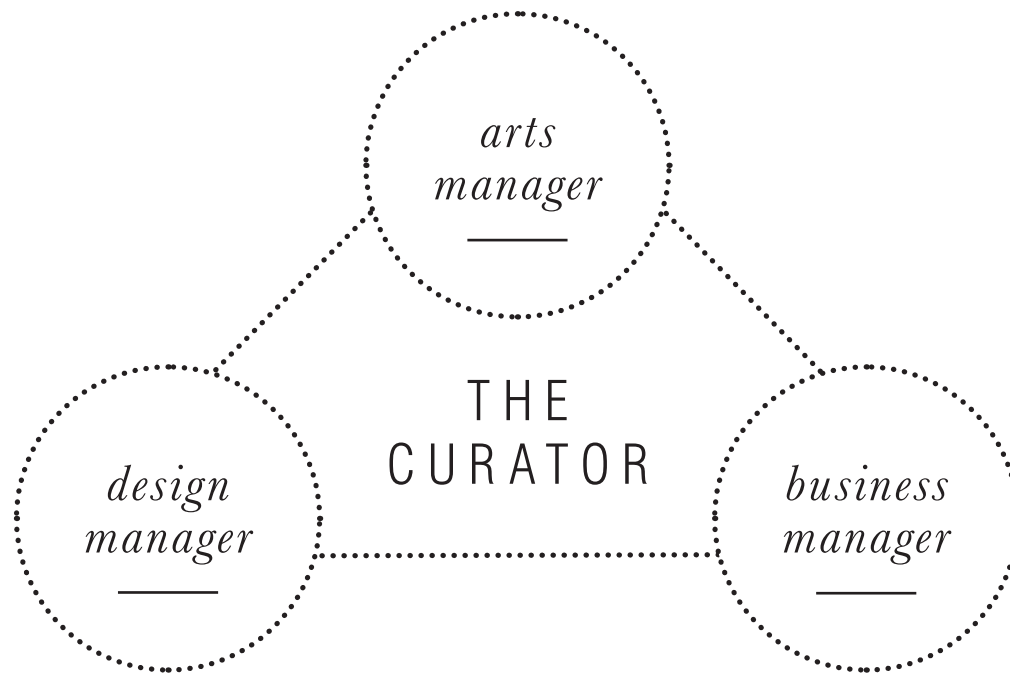
In this chapter I want to work with the findings the empirical and theoretical study produced and discuss them on the example of the UNIONEN Lindholmen project to contribute with a proposal how art and design can be used in business development processes.

Similarities and differences between the discourses of design thinking and artistic interventions have been indicated. (Johansson, Woodilla, 2012) In this context, it is necessary to mention the distinction between *practise-based* interventions (art or design practise) and *methods-oriented* or abstracted design integration (design thinking).

It can be assumed that design thinking and artistic interventions (in their nature of influencing company culture and organisational development) are in need of some sort of managerial strategy. This can partly be concluded from the fact that even after three months of working with artistic interventions, the UNIONEN Lindholmen team were still asking for *clarification and definition* of the AIRIS project. Although, TILLT provided project and process leaders the confusion about the intention and goal of the artistic intervention still remained unclear or at least misunderstood. The economic objectives of UNIONEN as a company are vastly *different* to the goals of the artistic interventions – at least in the early stages of the process. This is quite significant and calls for some kind of solution, from my point of view. This is why a managerial position in this context, steering and overseeing these attempts might be useful.

Possibly, this is not an entirely new idea and similar roles already exist. As mentioned, TILLT offers process facilitators and project coordinates. But they are not «inside» the company and might lack some crucial insights. *Therefore, I want to discuss an arguably different role in this respect that could be developed further. This role should allow a companies to safely «go bananas» when necessary and appropriate – thus exploiting artistic or design interventions – and ergo not to «slip on a banana peel» – meaning using design thinking as a contextual principle of working rather than a buzzword or marketing slogan.*

In my point of view, the function of a *«curator»* can be beneficial in this context. For that reason, I want to propose and at the same time promote this position and encourage further research for this rather new role for creatives. Actually, similar concepts have already been described by others but provide limited empirical material. Berthoin Antal (2011a) mentions that, the role of the intermediary is very significant and Lester, Piore and Malek (1998) introduce a so-called interpretive management. In their text, they speak about the interpretative manager, *who is able to bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps between different organisational units and act as interpreter.* (Ibid.) They compare these alloy people with hosts of cocktail parties. *«Acting much like the host of a party, they introduce new people into groups where conversation seems to be flagging, intervene to suggest a new tonic when the people don't seem to be able to discover what they have in common, break up groups that are headed for an unpleasant argument and guide the conversations in a general direction without seeming (or wanting) to dictate the outcome ... these are difficult skills to master.»* (Ibid.)



My idea of the curator is comparable to this to some extent and ties to Chong's (2010) definition of the arts manager who *combines business, artistic and organisational skills* but takes it a bit further than that and expands it to the *design field* as well.

A curator in this regard is a manager or overseer, an agent or mediator, a communicator and negotiator, a generalist. The curator interprets and facilitates, filters, administers, coordinates and makes decisions. The curator translates and catalyses. The curator also is a change manager. In its broadest terms, the curator is an active producer of meaning. (Bank, 2008)

In the context of business development, it is beneficial if this curator is an outsider at first. «*Outsiders bring a fresh perspective, particularly if they are willing to question everything, especially that which seems obvious to everyone else. It helps to be an outsider, where tradition and existing corporate policies do not apply, where it is ok to break with the standard way of doing things and where one's promotion or bonus is not in jeopardy.*» (Norman, 2010, online) But in a later development, the curator should rather act as a stakeholder of the concerning company than a consultant, since consultants do not have an unlimited number of options to offer, because it always has to be profitable, it has to generate money. (Berthoin Antal, 2012) If the curator functions as a stakeholder, even personal ties are at risk and the emotional investment is higher.

background

When starting working with business development, this curator is supposed to first and foremost have an *overview* of ongoing concerns in the company. S(he) needs to study the firm's *background* and make sure that all voices are heard and interpreted properly. (S)he gets to know the existing *skills* in the *organisation*, is conscious about how different departments work together and familiar with business, art and design related issues.

in the organisation and understands business related fields such as accounting, finance, law, business development, human relations, management, branding and marketing. *At the same time this curator needs to be educated in the fields of design management / design thinking, arts management / artistic interventions and possess know-how of creative thinking in general.* (S)he needs to be aware of the mentioned differences and similarities regarding artistic and designerly skills.

30

Some universities and business schools that are working with design schools on new collaborative courses: Rotman School of Management – University of Toronto; College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning – University of Cincinnati; d. school – Institute of Design at Stanford; Aalto University in Helsinki; Delft University of Technology; Middlesex University of London; Lancaster Institute of the Contemporary Arts; Politecnico Di Milano.

In the UNIONEN Lindholmen case this would be helpful to establish a basic understanding of the company's long-term ambition and avoid the confusion of different intentions in the beginning of the business development process.

The curator sits exactly on the *intersection of business manager, arts manager and design manager* and comprises all of them. Thus, the creative manager or curator needs to understand the business side of the organisation (s)he interacts with and speak its language. Creatives, who are looking to take this more strategic role in the organisation, who should really be the figures one would think of to drive initiatives, need to ensure that they are well versed in the language of business. (Walters, 2013) Therefore, it seems important that s(he) has a general knowledge of ongoing processes

Having business knowledge and understanding creatives at the same time, might seem like an almost impossible combination. But in fact, an increasing number of higher education institutions offer such educations. In a time where design is more and more used as a strategic tool, these types of educations become more relevant. The Business & Design master at the School of Design and Crafts in Gothenburg is just one of many examples³⁰ where students learn how to combine these fields, acquire skills from both worlds and «speak» the languages respectively.

11.2

approach

The curator is supposed to work closely together with the CEO, the board and the employees of the involved organisation. It seems necessary that the strategic decision to incorporate this curator is made at the highest possible level of an organisation and likewise communicated throughout the company. Only then employees feel that these efforts are for the best for the company and reach an initial level of trust towards upcoming changes.

For UNIONEN Lindholmen this approach might also be beneficial. Right now, their small team needs to «sell» or at least «present» their work regularly at the main office to show and at the same time justify their doings due to the fact that financial and resource

issues are certainly a concern of the company. The company is aware of this team and partly of their working methods but the board does not really see an incorporation of their approach in the whole organisation yet. So far, the UNIONEN Lindholmen project remains a test ground for creativity and is recognised but perhaps not very highly valued in the company as a whole until now. Here the curator can be of use.

Together with the board – or representatives of it – the curator needs to identify the problems and challenges the organisation faces at the moment and what kind of *goals or changes* they want to reach. This requires a great deal of *communicational and interpretational* skills, intuition and experience, since the expressed goals might not always be the solution for the company's struggle or the anticipated outcome. Underlying challenges and the very source of the problem might only be discovered when the company is investigated *holistically* and employees from all organisational levels have a say. (Compare design thinking chapter.) When the mostly complex challenges start to be revealed and getting clearer for the curator, (s)he can move forward.

In the UNIONEN Lindholmen case, the curator might even find contrasting intentions or achievements than set by the company's board itself. These identified goals should fit to the company's culture and organisational values. Even if they might be less obvious in the beginning, they might have impact in the long-run on the whole organisation.

THE *curator* SITS ON THE
intersection OF
 BUSINESS-, ARTS- AND
 DESIGN *manager.*

Next, the curator can give suggestions *where and when to conduct an artist or designer respectively design thinker* according to observations and learnings from the first phase. (S)he translates the identified challenges into tasks for creatives and functions as agent and mediator in order to serve the company with the best possible competences to assure a smooth change / development process. *Practise-based as well as methods-oriented design and art approaches should be utilised in this phase.* Thus, the curator needs to identify various touchpoints³¹ to introduce a specific artist, designer or design thinker in the development process. Constant overseeing, tweaking, reflecting, evaluating and improving this process is obvious.

For UNIONEN Lindholmen this could imply that artistic interventions might only be partly applied in UNIONEN's general change venture. This becomes rather obvious when regarding the initial controversy of the «goal» again. UNIONEN's main ambition for their business development – at least the one stated clearly by the company itself - is to attract 8.000 new members within two years. This is a very clear and quantitative measurable target and therefore arguably more appropriate for a design thinking project due to its more result-oriented nature. The intended outcome for artistic interventions could then be phrased differently but be still in great demand and of significant value as well.

11.3

outcome

When the curator is committed, has the right skills and knows how to perform his / her tasks, a change process is envisioned to develop smoothly and almost naturally with the help of art and design. The curator should be able to convey a feeling of an effortless procedure. He / she uses the advantages of practise-based interventions and methods-oriented integration.

The top management as well as the employees should be positively surprised by the result – informed my adjustments to the original business strategy and by the infusion of creativity into the company.

If the curator can capitalise the position between business management, arts management and design management and has the freedom to consolidate management, employees, artists, designers and design thinkers at the right moment and to the right extend, *a business development process should benefit considerably from it.*

Following the UNIONEN Lindholmen project again, separating the objectives (business-oriented and organisational culture-focused aims) and identifying sub-goals, the main business target should hopefully be achieved easier or at least with less misunderstandings and misinterpretations. *Then – artists, designers and designer thinkers – can contribute with their knowledge and mindsets to business development and their skills might hopefully be appreciated by managers and better understood in general.*

11.4

further research

To prove this theory, research and *actual cases* of implementation attempts are needed. It is hoped, that these ideas impact further discussions so that artistic interventions and design thinking approaches survive in the business world and open up strategic practices for artists and designer alike.

Due to the different qualities of artistic interventions and design thinking another possible research area surfaces. As mentioned earlier, artistic interventions and design thinking differ in their practise-based versus methods-oriented nature. Consequently, it is questionable what the imaginary concept of «*artistic thinking*» would look like. This might be an interesting realm for deeper reflection and investigation.

THEIR EXPERTISE AND
MINDSET SHOULD
BE APPLIED ACCORDING
TO CONTEXT.

12. CONCLUSION

As discovered in the theoretical and empirical research of this study, designer, design thinkers and artists have slightly differing approaches and bring different skills to the table when it comes to business development. *In general, art and design differ in the way that design as design thinking is more purpose-oriented* and thereby could be seen more as applied art than as art in itself. (Johansson, Woodilla, 2012) The artist needs to understand the «truth» that lies at the bottom of an enigma; the designer needs to know the actual problem. (Maeda, 2012) This might take one backward and sideways to reveal which way «forward» actually is. (Ibid.)

I can draw conclusions based on my study of artistic interventions and design thinking integration in two cases. One of my study projects was a practise-based intervention (the UNIONEN Lindholmen project) whereas the other one was a methods-oriented integration (the InnovaTeam). I argue, that artistic interventions and design thinking differ in their very nature. *It can be said that the first one rather deals with soft-skills, social innovation and emotions whereas the latter is more goal-focused.* Moreover, artistic interventions are practise-based (hence these can also be design interventions) but design thinking is a methods-oriented approach.

This reality led to the conclusion that it might be a good idea to reduce the distinction and polarisation between design and art approaches in business development per se but focus more on the type of intervention or integration since both – art and design – might come in forms of practise- and methods-based approaches.

To make business development using art and design meaningful, I argue that artists, designer and design thinkers should be conducted in appropriate stages and to a different extends in business development processes. *Their expertise and mindset should be applied according to context.*

Therefore, a type of *curator* – existing in the intersection of business management, arts management and design management – is needed to interpret, consult, communicate, guide, facilitate and implement the appropriate perspectives and skill sets in the right way and at the right time. *If managers, employees and curators work jointly together on such ventures, the buzzwords of artistic interventions and design thinking can be left behind and businesses can benefit from «going bananas» sometimes, without «slipping on a banana peel».*

part 5 – THE END

69	13. Appendices
	Interviews
	Pictures and illustrations
70	14. References

13. APPENDICES

As already indicated, the exact content of all interviews is meant to be anonymous, therefore only rough research questions and the research partners are going to be mentioned here.

INTERVIEWS FOCUS GROUP UNIONEN LINHDOLMEN

Ulrika Rydén, 06.02.13

Martin Andersson, 12.02.13

Pierre Svensson, 18.02.13

Nina Hagman, 28.02.13

Asamrisson Soodad, 26.02.13

Dahllöf Sofia, 05.03.13

Edmar Lars, 05.03.13

Pernilla Laurin, 11.03.13

Yvonne Lo-Alfredsson, 04.04.13

Related questions: What is creativity for you? When / How do you consider yourself as being creative? What supports / limits your creativity? What kind of expectations do you have concerning this project?

INTERVIEWS TILLT

Jeanette Frank, 13.03.13

Nina Kjällquist, 14.03.13

Johan Lundbladh, 15.03.13

Related questions: “What is creativity for you? When / How do you consider yourself as being creative? What supports / limits your creativity? What are your job responsibilities? In what artistic intervention projects have you been involved in? What is artistic intervention for you? What is the aim of such approaches? Why, how and for whom are they helpful? What are your goals?

INTERVIEWS INNOVATEAM

Karl-Magnus Möller, 05.03.13

Allen Smith, 08.03.13

Related questions: What is creativity for you? When / How do you consider yourself as being creative? What supports / limits your creativity? What type of design thinking projects have you been involved in within Ericsson? What is design thinking for you? What is the aim of such approaches? Can you see behavioural patterns or give suggestions / recommendations for design thinking projects? What kind of insights / learning can you share? What are your goals?

PICTURES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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