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Arts & Business *working together*

Mapping Arts-Based Initiatives

Assessing the organisational value of the arts

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In today's global economy, organisations are searching for new and innovative strategic and managerial approaches in order to compete and create value. The complexity of today's competition requires organisations to build up new competencies capable of driving business growth and new business solutions. The successful 21st century organisations will be those able to develop competencies to manage their energy and emotional states in order to govern the value creation dynamics (Boyatzis et al., 2002; Bruch and Ghoshal, 2003; Cross et al., 2003; Gratton, 2007; Steers et al., 2004). Dimensions such as passion, emotions, hope, moral, imagination, aspirations, and creativity are now being established as the new strategic organisational value drivers.

According to Harvard Business Professor Rob Austin, "The economy of the future will be about creating value and appropriate forms, and no one knows more about the processes for doing that than artists" (reported by Adler, 2006: 487).

Arts in business can be a powerful means to develop an organisation and to increase its capacity to create value. The role of arts within an organisation can be interpreted as a catalyst, a lever, and a trigger to support and drive organisational changes, to increase the competencies of an organisation and to develop its potential and latent energy. As a consequence, artists and businesses are discovering the benefits of developing partnerships. Artists are increasingly recognising and utilising the transformational power of the arts and artistic processes. Consequently, they are learning to reflect on their own artistic processes, outputs and outcomes, to sell them to businesses in order to address organisational change management issues, to support the development of new creative and innovative capabilities, and more generally to enable personal and organisational development. Businesses are in tandem discovering the benefit of bringing in artists, artistic processes and works of arts, in order to support organisational development mechanisms and impact upon organisational energy. But the arts are not only a mechanism to spur and develop emotional and energetic states within an organisation; they can play a range of instrumental functions generally related to the development and transformation of an organisation. The set of the possible involvements are grouped in and represented by the concept of Arts-Based-Initiatives (ABIs).

The Arts-Based Initiative

In order to explore the adoption of arts within organisations, we will look at and analyse the concept of the Arts-Based Initiative (ABI). An ABI can be defined as any organisational and management intervention using one or more art forms to enable people to undergo an art experience within an organisational context, as well as to embed the arts as a business asset. **It is primarily and fundamentally an experience-based process involving and engaging people both rationally and emotionally through either active or passive participation.** The participation is active in nature when it takes place through people's direct hands-on involvement in an arts experience. In this case, people are actors of the construction of tangible or intangible works of art. On the other hand, the experience is passive when people just witness or 'consume' a work of art. In this case, people's involvement takes the form of observation, contemplation, appreciation and/or understanding, though they do not take part in the production of the artwork. The two different experiences of the arts provide different beneficial outcomes. In arts education literature, hands-on participation is considered more effective to achieve a variety of advantages, from attitudinal and behavioural benefits to cognitive and pro-social benefits (Fiske, 1999). Indeed, a direct participation and involvement in an arts experience encourages learning through a trial-and-error process, which represents powerful experiential mechanisms to develop skills as well as to engage people in conversation and team working.

The focus of an ABI is not the work of art in itself, which can be a painting, a poem, a film, a dance, a musical or a theatrical performance, but the arts experience instead. An ABI is intended to use works of art and arts as media to trigger, catalyse, drive, harness and govern the emotional and energetic dimensions of an organisation which can have an impact on people and/or on the organisational infrastructure of tangible and intangible assets.

ABIs are neither intended to transform people into artists nor make them 'art literate', endowing them with intricate knowledge and understanding of the technical, aesthetic or historical contents related to a form of art; these are the main goals of arts education. An ABI is proposed within an organisation with the aim to create the space and time to undergo an arts experience which encourages the evocation, expression and reaction of emotions and energy, with an impact upon individuals, groups and the

organisation itself. It serves as **an alternative means or ground to address issues related to business, but which require intuitive thinking, emotional arousal, aesthetic understanding, social intelligence and more generally creative capabilities, such as imagination, improvisation, perception, empathy and flexibility**, to name a few. ABIs share several approaches and tools with arts education and training, although their goals are fundamentally different. Though ABIs revolve around business goals, they may also have some educational effects once implemented, albeit unintentionally.

Personal and collective benefits

ABIs are primarily rewarding at a personal level. These benefits can consequently diffuse from the individual person to the organisation's internal and external components. The impact of an ABI on people is achieved by means of a sensorial experience, which leverages mainly on those forms of intelligences which are different from the mathematical and logical ones driving most of the day-to-day rational thinking. The aesthetic experience people achieve through ABIs touches emotions and rationality. Indeed, ABIs are unconventional and are capable of engaging people both emotionally and intellectually. They have the power to put people in a different context, forcing them to give away their comfort zone and to explore new perspectives and ways of seeing the reality around and within them. **They are thought-provoking and capable of engaging people into reflection, self-assessment and development of a new and different knowledge of the organisational issues.** An ABI is offered as an experience-based model, which provides a different perspective of analysis of the organisational issues and problems, by means of the construction of analogies and metaphors. This allows people to rationalise the experience in order to discover and gather insights and new understandings.

Although we fundamentally assume that ABIs start their impact at the individual level, engaging a person emotionally and intellectually, it is important to highlight that ABIs also play a fundamental role in stirring social intelligence which has an impact on collective and social processes. **An ABI can be a social experience, which involves a group of people to build and share emotions and energy states which are the result of the interactions between individuals.** We thus recognise the power of ABIs to create the conditions to move people towards the creation of a social experience. However it is assumed that the individual experience is the building block on which the social experience is built, therefore subordinating the construction of a social experience to an individual one. This is equivalent to the notion that no social experience can exist without an individual experience.

ABIs can also have a direct impact on the organisational infrastructure by changing the tangible and intangible organisational environment by means, for instance, of the use of colours, music broadcasting, forms and design of the workplaces as well as of the furniture and facilities. Moreover, even if it is not the main focus of ABIs, they can be conceived as economic activities, aimed as organisations' investments or to develop products and services by incorporating artistic or design elements, increasing their value.

Forms of ABIs

There are three main forms of ABIs, namely: intervention, project, and programme. They are differentiated in terms of length and management goals.

- An *intervention* is the kind of ABI performed within a limited time frame, usually between 2-3 days, and it works towards a specific operative goal. This kind of initiative tends to take the form and function of arts-based workshops or courses. However, it can be recognised in other forms, for example through attendance at art performances or through the purchase of a work of art.
- An ABI takes the form of a *project* when the duration of an initiative is longer than 2-3 days and is characterised by a set of integrated and coordinated interventions, planned and programmed over a period of time usually ranging from one to six months to achieve a business performance objective. The focus of a project tends to be the production of an output; that is, the realisation of a work of art either tangible or intangible in nature, with related organisational and managerial outcomes.
- Finally, when the initiative has a plurality of objectives and considers a set of different projects, although ascribable to the same strategic goal, the ABI presents the nature of a *programme*. This is usually related either to the definition or the renewal of the business model or to developing organisational performance in line with strategic direction.

The different forms of ABIs have a diverse impact on an organisation. The literature review, especially the studies on arts education, suggests that significant and long-lasting benefits derive from a sustained involvement in the arts (McCarthy et al., 2004). This perspective also emerges from many interviews, suggesting that isolated ABIs are useful, but greater value is captured when organisations develop a sustained involvement in arts. The following section describes in more details the potential beneficiaries and effects of different kinds of ABIs.

The organisational beneficiaries of ABIs

The beneficiaries of ABIs can be distinguished at three levels: the individual; the team, group or community¹; and the organisation. In any case, however, benefits tend to spill-over to all levels. The three levels of ABIs' impact are interconnected. Indeed, one of the distinctive features of ABIs is their ability to operate at these multiple levels. In addition, ABIs can also have an impact on the public domain in which businesses operate or are located.

The relationships linking the different levels of the organisational beneficiaries of ABIs can be described and represented with a concentric logic (see Figure 2). The individual has a central position: any work of art, whatever form or medium it adopts, is fundamentally a rewarding and fulfilling experience at the individual level. This represents the private benefit dimension of an art experience, which is usually used in the literature to distinguish those benefits which are related to the realm of the personal from those which have an impact on the public sphere. The value of any art experience originates or ends with benefits generated for an individual.

Within an organisation the individual benefits related to an ABI can be propagated at group level and subsequently at organisational level, with benefits also linked to the public domain external to the organisation. **The underlying assumption is that the organisational impact of an ABI can move from the inside to the outside of the concentric model or vice versa.** Usually, most initiatives start with an impact on the individual level, whose benefits gradually spread outwards to finally reach the organisational system. However, some initiatives can first have an impact on the organisation or a group and eventually involve the other dimensions. This is the case of types of ABIs that are defined and implemented with a focus on collective effects and social processes or on organisational infrastructure components.

The impact of the benefits generated by organisational ABIs takes place in the context of the public domain, which is incidentally the last receiver of the benefits. Therefore, **the benefits created by ABIs tend to diffuse between the four categories of beneficiaries, namely individual, group, organisation and public domain.** Continuous conversations take place between and amongst these categories allowing for the generation and exchange of benefits.

¹ Even if we recognise that teams need necessarily to be focused on a specific task and can be a sub-set of groups and/or communities within an organisational system, for the purposes of our research, we consider teams, groups and organisational communities to be synonymous.

² One possible approach to characterise the nature of ABIs is to distinguish arts process from arts product. This equals to recognise that an art experience can be product-oriented, i.e. centred around an artwork, or

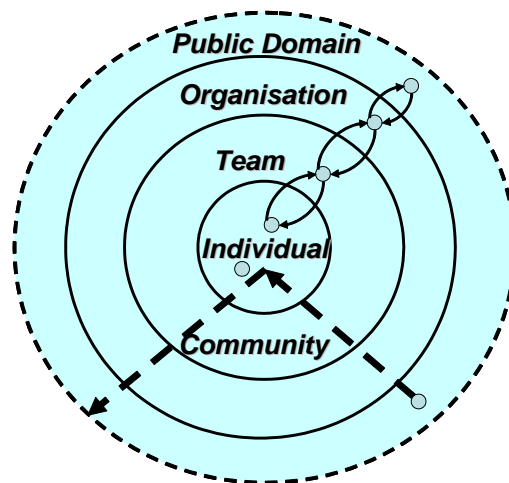


Figure 2. Spill-over effects linking the different possible beneficiaries of ABIs.

The organisational value of ABIs

Arts experiences are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate using money as a measurement unit. This is due to the fact that any arts experience tends to meet different needs which are subjective, idiosyncratic, context- and time-related. Commercial transactions, such as commercialisation or sponsorship, represent just a proxy of the value of arts. In this view, the assessment of the value of ABIs within an organisation cannot be performed merely by measuring the economic returns of the investments on arts. However, we recognise that artworks can also represent investments and that their value can be measured through the price put on them by the market.

The analysis of the adoption of ABIs within organisations has led to the definition of two fundamental implications which represent two essential assumptions for the assessment of the organisational value of ABIs.

- Our first assumption is that ABIs do not have a clear and direct link to the bottom line. Except those cases in which ABIs either correspond to specific business activities in the cultural sector aimed to generate cash flow, or equal to real estate investments, it is extremely difficult if not impossible to draw a direct link between arts initiatives and economic returns.
- Our second assumption is that the benefits of ABIs will be fundamentally found within the positive impacts that they have on organisational behaviour and on developing business value drivers. These mainly refer to intangible and knowledge-based assets, grounding business competencies and affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of business processes.

ABIs can be adopted as leverage instruments to spark and sustain both people change and organisational infrastructure development. This can have enormous benefits on organisational performances improving the factors driving and affecting value creation dynamics.

The Arts Value Matrix

The implementation of an ABI can have an impact on two fundamental dimensions of a business: (1) the organisation's human resources (namely its people), and potentially any other organisational stakeholder; and (2) the infrastructure, or overall tangible and intangible structural assets grounding the working mechanisms of the business model. Therefore, the assessment as well as the definition of an ABI has to take both of these elements into consideration.

At a human resource level comes the benefits of an ABI for an individual and/or group. Meanwhile, the organisational infrastructure level contemplates the benefits that an ABI can generate in terms of acquisition or development of tangible assets, such as the physical workplace, properties and the working facilities, and particularly of the intangible assets, such as culture, values, identity, brand recognition and reputation, morale, motivation, and organisational atmosphere.

A work of art can play different roles within an organisation and can be adopted for diverse business purposes, with direct and indirect impacts on organisational performance. In order to assess the potential value of ABIs for an organisation, we have devised the Arts Value Matrix. It allows users to identify, classify and analyse the potential benefits of ABIs and to understand the role and the relevance that an initiative can play to achieve organisation's business strategic and managerial goals.

The model identifies nine purposes for adopting an ABI within an organisation, defining the fundamental conceptual categories in order to assess the organisational value of arts.

The main goal of the Arts Value Matrix is to help managers and arts providers assess and contextualise the role of a particular ABI. It allows for a deeper understanding of how to design and implement quality ABIs to drive organisational development and business performance improvements. Adopting works of art or artistic processes can create product and services for internal and external use of organisations, can stir social processes and facilitate collective interactions, and can influence people by leveraging individual's emotional and energetic sphere. All this affects people change and/or organisational infrastructure development.

The Arts Value Matrix maps the potential impacts of ABIs within an organisation and identifies the possible organisational value or benefits dimensions of an ABI. It has been built on the dimensions of people change and organisational infrastructure development. Accordingly, the categories of the matrix identify the possible impacts that an ABI can have in terms of benefits related to people change and/or of the benefits linked to an organisational infrastructure development (Figure 3).

Degree of Organisational Infrastructure Development	High	INVESTMENT	BONDING	TRANSFORMATION
	Medium	SPONSORSHIP	ENVIRONMENT	TRAINING & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
	Low	ENTERTAINMENT	GALVANISING	INSPIRATIONAL
		Low	Medium	High

Degree of People Change

Figure 3. The Arts Value Matrix.

People change can be analysed from different perspectives, but for sake of simplicity, we are using simple ‘low’, ‘medium’, and ‘high’ measures. In general, ABIs can be used by organisations as a powerful instrument to induce transformation in people both at the individual and group level. The nature and intensity of the ABI determines the effect on people change².

- A low-level people change occurs when people transformation is time and space constrained, and has a *transient impact* on the individual and their social emotional and energetic state. For the time during which the people experience an ABI they feel engaged, emotionally and energetically aroused, but the ABI’s effects fundamentally disappear after the experience and people generally maintain just a short memory of their temporary transformation.
- A medium-level people change is realised when the experience has an influence on *participants’ attitudes*. In this case an ABI does not only stimulate feelings, but is able to touch the inner (particularly emotional) dimensions of the mind, in a such a way that they feel mentally energised for some time after having experienced the ABI. This energetic state affects the people’s way of seeing and approaching the reality around them for a longer period of time. If this energy is properly channelled, it can result in (short-term) behavioural change.
- Finally a high-level people change involves self-reflection and self-evaluation, which brings people to analyse and eventually challenge their beliefs and values, deeply modifying their attitudes that in turn drive the *emergence of new behaviours*. In this case, ABIs play the role of trigger and

² One possible approach to characterise the nature of ABIs is to distinguish arts process from arts product. This equals to recognise that an art experience can be product-oriented, i.e. centred around an artwork, or process-oriented, in which case the experience is the result of an involvement in the artistic creative process. The intensity of an ABI is affected by different variables, such as level of exposition to arts, previous positive experiences with arts, level of education particularly in arts, and forms of participation in arts experiences. It is generally recognised that a hand-on approach, which involves active participation in the process-oriented and/or product-oriented experience, has a bigger impact than a hands-off or passive participation.

catalyser to the rational and emotional mind, leading people to differently understand themselves and the world around them.

By infrastructure of an organisation, we mean the group of tangible and intangible assets which define the operative context in which processes take place. Even if people, as employees, can be considered as an integrated part of an organisational infrastructure, we distinguish the actors of an organisation from the tangible and intangible infrastructure components, which are left in the organisation when people go home at night. The continuous development of the organisational infrastructure affects the efficiency and effectiveness of business activities and more generally the capacity to create value. To denote the possible levels of organisational infrastructure development, again, we have identified three measures 'low', 'medium', and 'high'.

- A low level of organisational infrastructure development guarantees the functioning of the components of an organisational system maintains positive without changing the components and features of the operative platform remain unchanged. At this level ABIs have a low level of impact on organisations' infrastructural components and are mainly addressed to people.
- A medium development of the organisational infrastructure involves a partial change, although restricted by some components of the organisation's infrastructure. In this case an ABI can be adopted as an instrument to restore, renew and modify some characteristics of the infrastructural components of an organisation, such as for instance the design and setting of workplaces.
- Finally, a high level of organisational infrastructure development is realised when new components are introduced in the organisation or the existing components are deeply modified. In this case, the ABIs can operate as change vectors of organisational infrastructure affecting for example the organisation's culture features, the property stock, the characteristics of the products and the services produced by the organisation.

Depending on what organisations seek to achieve through the implementation of ABIs, whether they are focusing on people development, on organisational transformation, or on both, it can be expressed as one of the nine impacts in the Arts Value Matrix. Each position of the matrix identifies and classifies the potential organisational value of an ABI and defines the kind of benefits an organisation can achieve by the ABI implementation. On the base of the above three levels of assessment of people change and organisational infrastructure development the following nine categories of benefits are labelled: : Entertainment (L:L); Galvanising (M:L); Inspirational (H:L); Sponsorship (L:M); Environment (M:M); Training and personal development (M:H); Investment (H:L); Bonding (H:M); Transformation (H:H).

Entertainment – the main goal is to release adrenalin and give pleasure.

Implementing ABIs as entertainment, means people's participation in the arts tends to be limited in time and space. As a consequence the benefit effects of the arts experiences are merely related to stimulation and an awakening of feelings. The direct contact with arts or artists can be fun and pleasurable.

In this case, a work of art or the artistic process can be adopted by an organisation as an entertainment means to offer people an opportunity for fun and enjoyment. The work of art or the artistic process is used as a means to release adrenalin. The organisation can offer the employees the opportunity to visit, see and enjoy a work of art in-situ, like for example in a museum, a gallery, a theatre and so on. Attending cultural events such as concerts or exhibitions tends to reduce blood pressure and creates hormonal benefits (Konlaan et al., 2000). Furthermore an organisation can invite artists in-house and create recreational time and space within the organisation. After having experienced and internalised the art, a person is left with a pleasant memory of the experience itself, without however involving any behavioural mindset change. Therefore the impact of ABIs implemented with the goal of entertainment is transient and ephemeral. In such instances, after being involved with the arts experience, people usually go back to their life as usual with no change in their mental energy and attitudes or ways of seeing the reality and the world around them.

Clifford Chance, one of the world's largest law firms, which used to invite to the company the London Musici as a 'chamber orchestra in residence' to play concerts in the workplace (reported by Darsø, 2004, p. 16).

Galvanising – the main goal is to provoke a mood change or a tension for action by creating an emotional state and mental energy.

An ABI has a galvanising effect when it is able to involve people into an intense, revealing and meaningful experience in such a way that produces a deep feeling of emotional and mental energy. In this case, the arts are able not only induce a sense of satisfaction, but also to create a frame of mind. Through the arts experience, people can feel stimulated and passionate, with high levels of intensity and concentration. The ABIs implemented with a galvanising purpose tend to create a psychological and social tension towards actions and changes. To translate this stimulation into action it is important that the direct contact with arts or with the artistic process creation is put into context and followed up by a process of reflection. This will allow the release of the energy to be translated into the performance of business activities.

Our research suggests that galvanising is rarely sought after and achieved by organisations as an isolated benefit. Galvanising is therefore often integrated with other benefits, such as inspiration and skills/personal development. It appears particularly useful in cases where an organisation wants to stimulate people's imagination and creativity by creating a 'spirit of innovation'.

Looking for innovative approaches to enhance creativity as well as to develop communication skills and collaboration in terms of sharing ideas and expertise, *Nestle's* marketing team worked on an initiative, mixing TV shows the *Dragons Den* and the *Apprentice* with tradeseecret consultancy. The team were taken to the venue where the original TV series was filmed. The marketing team's members were spurred to develop ideas for generating new products with a combination of industry outsiders and brand specialists acting as facilitators. Participants were coached on their presentation style and then had to pitch to a panel of five 'dragons', made up of entrepreneurs and actors. The teams were allowed to view each other's presentation on monitors in a specially designed studio in the basement to learn from each other's successes and failures. The initiative was overall energising: Natalie Bentley, Beverage Innovation Manager

at Nestle UK, commented: 'The team were still buzzing about the event and I had numerous visits from people keen to share their thoughts about the day and to say how much they loved it and got out of it.'

Inspirational – the main goal is self-reflection which can drive mindset and behavioural changes.

Arts and the artistic process represent a powerful inspirational lever. ABIs provoke people to question the way they act. They encourage self-assessment, self-discipline, self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-esteem and reflection on life, which in turn drive the development of personal attitudes and behaviours towards organisation and work activities. They are therefore able to generate mechanisms of self-awareness, critical thinking and reflection, whilst simultaneously driving assessment and understanding of other people's behaviours and actions; in turn, this can induce change in mindsets and behaviours.

The relationship between art and inspiration is two-fold. An artist needs to be inspired and stimulated in order to create a work of art. At the same time, art has the power of inspiring and deeply touching the emotional dimensions of the receiver. It can drive self-assessment and can make people question their daily life, as they reflect on who they are and who they would like to be. Through a profound consciousness we are able to see the world and ourselves differently, consequently rethinking our assumptions, concerns, values and beliefs, and changing our behaviours accordingly. Inspiration leads to aspiration and consequently transformation, through engagement and the desire to do something worthwhile.

The studies on attitudinal and behavioural stimulations of arts stress that the process of individual change first affects beliefs and attitudes followed by intentions and behaviour (Stone et al., 1997; 1999). The possible benefits associated to an attitudinal and behavioural change can cover a wide range of aspects from motivation and critical thinking to pro-social actions.

The inspirational impact is rarely obtained as an isolated benefit, unless the ABI is specifically intended to have an effect just on people transformation. Usually it is strongly tied to other impacts identified by the Arts Value Matrix, particularly with those associated with bonding and personal development. As it involves people's inner-dimensions, it is quite difficult to assess and detach from other organisational benefits related to the adoption of ABIs within an organisation. Fundamentally, it is manifested by a change in people's behaviour.

A case example of inspirational effect is reported by Terry Willie, CEO of *Hall and Partners*, who recognised as one of the most important impacts of their theatre-based training programme the change in people's behaviour and approach towards clients: "One of most brilliant folks in New York was struggling to understand how she could make the next step. She was young, super smart, confident, articulate - but more concerned about herself rather than the client, and talked rather than listened. The walking in other's shoes bit was a revelation for her - she came out of Actor's Studio absolutely understanding it was smarter to make her clients successful."

Sponsorship – the main goal is to display an attention and an interest.

Through sponsorship an organisation can assume the role of patron to an artist, an artwork and/or an artistic process. This can be done for multiple reasons, including ethical and cultural motivations, getting the attention of institutions, strengthening ties with the local community, creating an opinion and an

identity of the organisation both internally and externally, and for increasing brand awareness and enhancing reputation.

Arts production sponsorship and co-sponsorship can take different formats. Usually organisations sponsoring arts productions and events get marketing benefits, such as credit on television and print advertising as well as credit on all arts event related materials including banners, posters, performance programmes, and ticketing options. Sponsorship is a traditional and quite common approach of interaction between arts and business, with mutually beneficial outcomes.

Environment – the main goal is to decorate and ‘beautify’ the work environment.

The workplace design is recognised as one of the major factors affecting the performance of knowledge workers and knowledge-based organisations (Davemport et a., 2002; Whitley, 1994). The physical setting and workplace environment have measurable effects on building a relational capital, social life and organisational context which in turn influence knowledge work (Davemport and Beers, 1996). Knowledge workers are therefore more productive when working within a positive, stimulating and enjoyable environment.

The employment of arts as a means of decoration probably represents the most traditional form using works of art. In this case, through its aesthetic qualities, art becomes an element of the beauty of an organisation. The adoption of arts as a decorative instrument fundamentally addresses the ‘beautification’ of the spaces of the buildings in which the organisational activities take place. In this case staff can read, talk or hear about arts and the artistic process, but fundamentally have no direct interaction with the artists. Decoration of the environment presupposes the use of arts as an instrumental means to create a physical entity and an intangible aura within and around the organisation, which can have a positive impact on its assets and particularly on its people, by stimulating a constructive emotional and energetic state. The use of arts to increase the value incorporated into buildings, facilities and products through, for example, design is a benefit mapped in the investment area. The goal of decorating the environment is to exercise an influence, primarily on the internal perception of the organisation, but eventually also on the external perception of the organisation. Therefore, through its symbols and expressions, the art can be adopted within an organisation as an instrument to define a physical space and an environment capable of affecting people’s attitudes and behaviours as well as their level of satisfaction. Indeed by adopting works of art, the organisational environment will be one in which people feel creative and comfortable, and are spurred to express themselves and communicate with others.

Conducting her investigation of case studies of applications of arts in businesses, Darsø (2004) reported the case example of *Novo Nordisk*, a pharmaceutical company, which had used painting and other art pieces with a decorative goal. This represents an example of the use of arts to get an environmental benefit with the aim to build workplaces able to transfer and/or create positive emotional and energetic states. The use of visual arts, according to Mads Øvlisen, Novo Nordisk’s CEO, clearly signals managerial intent to employees. By bringing in young artists and displaying their works of art, the organisation aimed to create an environment that allow people to think differently, to take risks, to accept mistakes, to ask questions and reflect, and learn to learn.

Training and personal development – the main goal is to develop specific skills, competencies and personal capacity.

Most of the ABIs implemented by organisations address this benefit area. The underlying assumption is that many artistic capabilities and skills are important for business, such as presentation and communication, listening, storytelling, improvisation and the use of body language. These skills can be taught by artists. The fundamental idea is that by exposing people to arts and to the artistic process creation, people's skills can grow, particularly in domains such as design, creativity and imagination, personal communication and improvisation. In today's complex and fast-changing business context these competences are becoming increasingly important as essential features of knowledge workers' capabilities. For example, improvisation is a managerial skill that is acknowledged as an important factor, grounding the ability to respond spontaneously and under pressure to problems and opportunities as they arise (Crossan, 1997). More recently, arts and the artistic process have been used to address the development of more complex capabilities such as, in particular, leadership and self management. Leaders can learn a lot from artists and the artistic process, like for example, "the courage to see the reality as it actually is [..]; the courage to envision previously unimagined and unimaginable possibilities; and the courage to inspire others to bring possibility back to reality" (Adelr, 2006: 494).

Among other competences, ABIs have a particularly powerful impact on communication skills. In today's businesses, this is a critical competence for everyone within an organisation. But it is particularly important for chief executives and managers who continuously stand in the spotlight and have to be able to communicate effectively and at a very high standard. Being a good communicator is the result of a variety of factors, which are related both to the technical communication skills, such as the use of voice and body language, and to personal attitudes, such as confidence, self-consciousness, passion and personal energy. These factors can be developed by exposing people to arts experiences.

Training in arts and arts creation processes is not meant to make people within an organisation artists, but to develop some specific professional skills and capabilities. The focus can be on different competence domains such as creative writing, advertising, journalism, reading, storytelling, listening, seeing, presenting and improvising and they can be aimed to develop people's abilities such as the use of voice, the control of posture, body language and gesture. With ABIs, people can learn techniques to better perform specific activities which require particular artistic abilities. In this case, an ABI works essentially as an instruction guideline. For example, ABIs can be valuable to: develop people's breathing in a way that enhances their presentation style; structure and articulate messages in a way that brings them to life; identify people's unique tone of voice and how to vary their intonation to best effect; inject more energy into people's performance; improve the choice of words to get a better impact of people's work; manage and organise people's thoughts for mutual benefit.

Evidence about the positive impact of art-based training is reported by a number of studies conducted with regard to the links between arts and health practitioners. Some of the main topics emerging from these studies are reported by Staricoff (2004) who has effectively argued that arts experiences produce beneficial outcomes in terms of mental task performances in surgeons, in terms of development of observational skills, development of the ability in drawing, stereo vision and three-dimensional thinking. Dolev et al. (2001) reported that the use of art history seminars, to be integrated into the clinical tutorial sessions together with the use of photographs for describing dermatological lesions, improves medical students' diagnostic skills. This is because the medical students become better equipped to see the details of paintings and photographs, which seem to drive them to better analyse the constellation of symptoms manifested by patients they examine. The use of works of art also has a role in encouraging medical practitioners to be more humane, understanding and sympathetic. The exposure of medical and nursing

students to visual arts, music, dance and literature have proved to be beneficial for improving professional decision-making, communication skills and understanding of the relationships between the doctor and the patient (Jeffrey et al., 2001; Kottow and Kottow, 2002; Podrug, 2003; Skelton et al., 2000). The evidence gathered from the studies from the health care organisations can potentially be generalised and extended to other public and private sectors.

Investigating the cognitive benefits and the relevance of the arts to develop learning skills and academic performance, arts education literature has shown that the arts experiences produce positive learning and social effects. More specifically, according to the literature **art has three main cognitive benefits: improvement of academic performance, improvement of basic skills, and improvement of attitudes promoting the learning process itself** (Deasy, 2002; 2004; Fiske, 1999; McCarthy et al., 2004). Arts play a fundamental role in the development of cognitive capacities, including perception, elaboration, problem solving, and creative thinking. Literacy- interpreted as the process used to acquire and express meaning in symbolic form- can be benefited by arts education (Deasy, 2002; 2004; Eisner, 2002). Finally, arts learning experiences stimulate and develop group and collaborative learning. This is the case particularly of experiences based on ensemble arts which push people to feel a sense of responsibility to a group and/or to a project (Fiske, 1999). Indeed, theatre productions, music ensembles, dance presentations, collaborative creative writing and group paintings are all examples of group activities involving group members' learning process.

Learning in the arts encourages the development of cognitive capacity and the ability to learn in other domains (Deasy, 2002; Fiske, 1999). In this light, even if there are some empirical difficulties to prove from a quantitative perspective the existence of transferring knowledge from arts to other fields, qualitative and theoretical implications show that skills learnt through art education can benefit other capabilities and professional skills (Perkins, 1994).

The relevance of ABIs for supporting training processes is highlighted by their ever-increasing adoption in the curricula of many business schools, such as the INSEAD Business School, Warwick Business School, University of Glasgow Business School, the IMD Business School Lausanne, the Cranfield School of Management and the F.W. Olin Graduate School of Business at Babson College, to name a few. These Business Schools have integrated the use of ABIs in their MBA's, Masters' and Executive courses' curriculum. For example, at Babson College, students during their first year take arts lessons under the guide of a creative consultant, who is an artist. Students are taught to use their senses in order to better grasp things happening around them as well as to react to them. While at Cranfield School of Management, students learn how to become more receptive by relaxation in order to be able to let their imagination run free. By exposing students to the arts and art processes, through a hands-on approach, they learn to be more in touch with their senses, feelings, emotions and thoughts. Students take classes of puppetry, dance and movement, music, fiction, writing, theatrical improvisation, painting and poetry in order to learn how to handle ambiguity, be more adept in discovering new things and seeing things from different perspectives, take risks, communicate more efficiently and improve problem-solving capabilities. Arts are therefore recognised as powerful means to develop students' imagination and creativity.

Furthermore, the technical skills attained through exposure to the arts are transferable and can be applied in the workplace and within a business context. Both at Babson College and at Cranfield School of Management, ABIs are used not only in the MBA curriculum, but they are also integrated in the executive education. For example, Cranfield School of Management uses selected plays by William Shakespeare to teach lessons to business people in leadership classes. The plays are used as analogical frameworks,

encouraging people to reflect on their own leadership and think about alternative approaches. Arts help executives to develop an aesthetic perspective of the things, situations and problems, which they have to deal with, and in which they are immersed. **Arts also endorse and develop emotional sensitivities, allowing people to make balanced decision informed by logical and linear thinking and grounded on emotions and intuition.**

Hall and Partners, a successful advertising research agency expanding rapidly in America, needed its key personnel to develop the strength and confidence to win and keep clients and businesses such as Microsoft, at entry level. Terry Willie, CEO, recognised that their people needed to develop and maintain the skills and experience to handle the strenuous situations that arise when dealing with these clients. Looking for innovative approaches for training and developing people, Hall and Partners identified ABIs as a way to speed up the process through which their people could become adept at handling difficult situations, difficult clients and negotiating. To address these issues, Dramatic Resources was brought in to design a theatre-based programme, aimed enabling employees to handle unexpected situations. Different scenarios were created and diverse roles were played in order to improve their improvisational skills, and equip them with the expertise to handle demanding situations. According to Terry Willie “there were some fantastic skills we could draw from in theatre – especially the ability to walk in other people’s shoes and be able to read and understand roles, characters and plots. We also loved the idea that it was learning by doing, not just telling – and using acting/theatre approach got people to relax and try new things. It is proved to be just a lovely fresh perspective”.

Hall and Partners was voted as one of the top small businesses to work for by the Sunday Times. This can be considered as a consequence, among other factors, of the adoption of innovative training approaches for people development, such as the theatre-based programme. Terry Willy stressed that “we passionately believe the reason why the business has been successful is because we care so much about not just attracting the best and most creative talent, but keeping and developing them. And to that end we have developed an extensive 'curriculum' for training people at every level in the place... [this] work is by far the most influential work we do - people universally came out of it raving about how much they got out of it; you could immediately see the change in their day to day work.”

Investment – the main goal is the achievement of economic-financial benefits.

The involvement of a business in the arts can trigger a variety of direct and indirect economic-financial benefits. The direct benefits are those related to the use of arts as an economic activity in which case arts are a source of income. Works of art can be seen as commodities that have their value determined by the interplay between demand and supply in the marketplace. Consequently, from an economic perspective, the price of a work of art can be considered as the best indicator of its aesthetic value. However, in today’s knowledge economy the attention is paid on the role of arts both as an industry and as a value added vector. The former represents the so-called business arena of the creative industries, such as film and music businesses, design, architecture, and more generally the arts businesses, in which case arts are converted into products and/or services to be sold in the market. The latter, referring to arts as a ‘valued added vector’, considers those organisations that are discovering the relevance of arts as an economic activity in terms of their use to increase the value incorporated into products and services. The attention is focused on the use of art principles, contents and processes to increase the economic value of a product and/or service by incorporating aesthetic dimensions. As a result in today’s highly competitive business context, many

companies are starting to position themselves at the intersection of commerce and arts (Bangle, 2001). Increasingly the competitiveness and the economic value of many products and services are strongly related to a company's capacity to incorporate into these the quality and features which characterise and underpin works of art. From a business perspective the idea is not to create artworks, but to infuse the artful energy which distinguishes works of art into their products/services.

A number of examples can be provided from diverse industries. For instance car manufacturers such as Ferrari, Lamborghini, Maserati and Aston Martin, pay great attention to artistic components of their products from design to colour-and-materials and to any other components, which as a work of art can affect clients' experiences. Chris Bangle (2001), global chief of design for BMW, considers his company's products as "moving works of art that express the driver's love of quality" (p.48, 2001) and considers his job as director to oversee 220 artists, mediating the corporate pragmatism and the artistic passion and mind-sets within the company. On a similar note, Robert Lutz from General Motors pointed out: "I see us being in the art business. Art, entertainment and mobile sculpture, which, coincidentally, also happens to provide transportation" (Hakim, 2004).

Arts can also be considered as a fundamental component of the success of Italian home-furnishings companies, such as Alessi, Artemide, Cassina, Flos, B&B Italia, Cappellini and many others. Indeed, at the heart of the success of these companies' products is their artistic nature. The products leveraging aesthetic dimensions are able to interpret and communicate emotional states, which appeal to consumers. These products can be considered the result of a free-floating community of architects, suppliers, photographers, critics, curators, publishers, designers, artists and craftsmen (Verganti, 2006), who implicitly use art principles, contents and processes as media to develop new and existing products. A further example of the use of arts to develop products and services is of Unilever's Innovation Center, where Sean Gogarty, the head of the business unit, brought in a poet-in-residence, with the goal of spurring the creativity of his group (Darsø, 2004). Bringing in a poet and using words as a powerful way to expand people's viewpoint was recognised as a means to develop new thinking and approaches to product development.

However, the arts can not only drive the creation of new products and services for the end user, but can also support the tangible and intangible development of organisational infrastructure components useful for organisations' operations. This is the case, for example, of McKann Erickson, a communication company, which was interested to communicate a new way of information sharing throughout the company. For this reason tradeseecret was involved in organising the annual company conference in an innovative and imaginative way, different from the traditional adopted approach. They set the annual company conference in a constantly evolving garden with aspects of creativity represented by different key inspirational characters that inhabited the space. This was aimed to help stimulate change within the organisation. The garden grew over the course of the three day conference, representing key aspects of the creative and challenging delegates. Through this process the company built and still maintain a very effective intranet structure that allows them to communicate creatively across the globe.

Bonding – the main goal is to create a relational capital and a common ground for conversation and collaboration.

A direct involvement in the artistic process as well as the interaction between business people and artists can define common ground, which promotes and facilitates high quality interaction among people within a business. This supports the process of giving and receiving feedback as well as questioning and having conversations around important organisational issues. The arts create a unique context in which people can interact in ways that make them feel connected and involved. Through the arts, social

boundaries collapse and the members of a group can be integrated and co-inspired. This brings people together, creating bonds between them, driving teambuilding and encouraging collaboration. ABIs implemented with this purpose are therefore able to generate collective effects, namely a positive impact on organisational groups and communities and an arts social experience. The arts and the art processes force people to interact, to share their point of views, beliefs, values, and ways of seeing the world, to break-down their social barriers, to give away their comfort zones and to encourage people to get in touch with each other.

ABIs can help to look at the individual's role in the group and to understand what part people play for the ongoing success of the group. They provide means for conversation, which in turn helps create relationships, and represent the building blocks for structuring teams and the organisation. Moreover conversations and the creation of bonds among and between people drives the high morale of an organisation and the creation of a positive sense of identity, contributing at the same time to the organisation's relational capital.

ABIs can be used to promote social interaction among community members and to create interpersonal bonds (Griffiths, 1993; Lowe, 2000; Stern and Seifert, 2000). They can promote greater understanding, tolerance, respect for diversity, and trust between people, building cohesion and an ethic of solidarity (Wali et al., 2002). Indeed, art activities help people to bridge interpersonal and social boundaries of age, gender, race/ethnicity, and hierarchical status. This not only supports the creation of a team building culture and orientation within an organisation, but also encourages inter-group cooperation and partnership. In this respect, the arts affect people's social behaviours, promoting, facilitating and developing social interactions amongst the organisational members. Therefore ABIs contribute to people's sense of connectedness and belonging by generating organisation community pride and prestige (Jackson, 1998).

On the basis of the above principles, ABIs are particularly powerful in supporting and driving the creation and absorption of new values and culture. ABIs can give a social expression to the values and traditions of the organisation, developing and sustaining a cultural heritage, for both internal and external purposes (Lowe, 2000; Stern, 2000). Tim Stockil, a professional artist at Ci: Creative intelligence, stresses that, "Most of the time organisational values are conceptual and people cannot get a handle on them. So talking about words like respect, leadership, transparency, mutuality, trust and so on, they do not practically mean anything to people. A forum theatre workshop [for example] aims to let people really understand what values mean when they are lived or particularly not lived in the company." ABIs support organisations in creating and sharing organisational culture, involving all of company's staff in the process of understanding organisational behaviours and how to translate key organisational values into day-to-day actions.

Undergoing a takeover process from the French group Lafarge, *Blue Circle Industries* adopted percussion workshops as a team-building exercise and as a means to get ready for the merging with a company with a very different culture. A percussion symphony was used as a metaphor for how different parts of the organisation could work together. All the participants needed to learn to play in time together, working up to a grand finale. Rick Haythornthwaite, who was chief executive at that time, recalls that "You can get across the message and create a new vocabulary incredibly quickly when people are playing the same drumbeat, for example. It had a very profound effect. And you get 100% participation, even from those who have made a career out of sitting on the sidelines. Once you have photographed them in eager anticipation, waiting to hit their triangle, they never look back."

He adds: "There was a moment when people had performed something very powerful, and we said they had an hour to go away and do what they wanted with their parts. They came back and this very powerful piece of music had descended into chaos; they all went away to complicate it. If ever there was a metaphor for trouble in business, that's it. From there on, people would refer to this moment when they realised they were complicating life. It was fantastic, irreplaceable. And this was a team that not long after fought off and won the first successful defence against a cash bid in 15 years. It tells you what esprit de corps it produces." (2008).

Sam Bond of tradesecrets played the role of a fictitious symphony orchestra conductor Gregor Timeriovich, who had an enormous ego and was obsessed with individuals. This subverted the whole procedure and he was eventually thrown out of the room. Rick then took up conducting himself. The percussion workshop helped to look at the individual's role in the whole and what part they play for the ongoing success of the group. Employees got the message across: "you couldn't demonstrate the basic elements of teamwork better." Everyone was aligned and focused towards a common goal and this was particularly effective as everybody started from the same base and came together.

Saxton Bampfylde, a leading executive search company in the UK, was interested in examining and discussing the moral influence of the company since they had acquired part of KPMG who had a less intricate culture and set of rules. They used a series of workshops incorporating visual arts, delivered by tradesecrets, to help articulate and embed the mission and the strong Christian values of the company. They wanted to investigate whether everyone on the programme had the same values – whether everyone was genuinely subscribing to these values or just wanted a job. A manager reported that "The ABI format showed it was fine to be different in the company, and helped us to feel 'one firm'." This resulted in streamlining people's views and feelings about the company and changed the atmosphere of the office, bringing people together.

Transformation – the main goal is to open up the organisation and its people to a new consciousness and drive organisation towards change.

The use of art within an organisation can create a new consciousness. It drives the creation of a new culture, involves the transformation of organisational infrastructure components and supports change management. Transformation occurs when people change their beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in their day-to-day working activities as well as when the organisational infrastructure components, such as workplace, culture, environment, furniture, procedures and routines, are modified. At this level people are profoundly touched and involved with an inner transformation, which is aligned with the needs and wants of the organisation in terms of strategic and performance objectives. Through the arts, people are inspired and energised in order to accept and prompt changes both in their behaviours and in the reality around them. This drives organisational renewal. Thus at this level of the Arts Value Matrix there is a convergence of people change and organisational infrastructure development.

Rick Haythornthwaite, non-Executive Director at Land Securities, Chairman of Mastercard and London's Southbank Centre, and partner at Star Capital Partners, is convinced that ABIs can play a fundamental role in business growth and transformation. According to Haythornthwaite "Business is in a continual state of flux" and "The arts can accelerate change; help bring home messages in safe ways. It can use the power of

metaphor to bring difficult concepts to bear. Change is about holding different conversations and seeing things in different ways, and the arts have played an extraordinary role in doing that and getting it done a lot quicker than it would have been otherwise." (2008).

Transforming corporate culture at Merger

How can we effectively create a new culture based on accepted, understood and absorbed values and related shared behaviours, and achieve consistency throughout the company? This was the issue dealt with by *Merger* (name changed by the authors to preserve anonymity) and solved by adopting ABIs.

Merger had recently grown considerably in size as the result of a merger of a number of different companies, each with their own cultures and different ways of doing things. As a result, *Merger* was looking to build a new corporate culture. It needed to create a common vision about the companies within the company in order to establish shared new values and behaviours. It was evident that the behaviours of all staff should fit the values of the company and that the workforce should buy-into and understand these values, whilst accepting the related behaviours. They developed a set of values and established a common vision through questionnaires and focus groups at all levels of the company. However, *Merger* recognised that simply talking about the new company values would be quite meaningless to people on a day-to-day basis and that they should make sure that the new values affected the way people actually behaved. *Merger's* objective was to look for a new culture and a shared approach to work, which would remain consistent throughout the company. The technical skills of *Merger's* staff were second-to-none, but a culture had developed where staff relied on that alone and hid behind their technical expertise ignoring the need for good relationships with colleagues. There was therefore an awareness that a common standard of behaviour and internal relationships should be developed, in order to create a better working environment and a better quality of work.

Merger was very thorough in producing a set of organisational values. Moreover, the training and development manager liaised with heads of departments and their staff, asking them to write short reports containing examples of 'bad behaviour' between employees and between employers and staff. A great deal of material was produced, with examples of 'bad behaviour' ranging from mild to very serious. Starting from this material *Merger* decided to use the approach of the forum theatre workshops to force people to reflect on the organisations' behaviours and to absorb and apply on day-to-day activities the new set of values. Ci: Creative intelligence was brought in with the task of designing and implementing the Values Roadshow, a programme of forum theatre workshops to be run throughout the organisation. Starting from *Merger's* reports on values and behaviours, Ci: Creative intelligence conducted thorough research to better understand the organisational context, interviewing staff, witnessing them at work, viewing their finished products and so on. They then wrote a play, with three scenes incorporating many of the behaviours which had come out of the research. The play was rehearsed using actors which had an understanding of the corporate sector and the cultural and behavioural issues companies faced. The scenes illustrated familiar situations and issues with which people could relate. During the forum theatre workshops the audience was asked to correct the behaviours played in the scenes. The workshops were interactive with the actors responding to suggestions from the participants and re-

performing the scene. By representing all of the behaviours found in the research into three short scenes as well as slightly exaggerating behaviours, they avoided stigmatising participants as perpetrators of bad behaviour and instead allowed them to discuss behaviour through proxies, without individuals having to confront each other. The play was first presented to senior management at two levels prior to the running of 21 further workshops around the country, ultimately rolled out to the whole organisation.

The response from the organisation was hugely positive. Some responses included: “No one likes to have to think about what we do. It is quite an uncomfortable process to analyse yourself; analyse other people that is easy, analyse yourself is quite hard; a lot of people went away from the forum theatre workshop thinking and commenting ‘do I do that’ and “You recognised a lot of other people in the actors and even of yourself and then you realise how you can face somebody and be so wrong”.

The Values Roadshow provided great benefits in terms of bonding and inspiring people. People could identify what was going on in their company. During the workshops they could suggest alternatives and instantly see what impact a change of behaviour would have. Merger’s people were really engaged. Reports from the company have confirmed that behaviour had changed and relationships between colleagues had improved. It was also reported that some quite dramatic changes had occurred, and once behavioural norms were established, the senior management felt legitimate in reacting strongly to inappropriate behaviour.

The Merger case study represents an example of ABIs driving and supporting organisational transformation. Using forum theatre workshops to play organisational scenarios and real situations through a humorous and exaggerated platform, with engaging and inclusive acting, Merger enabled people change and development of organisational infrastructure development. From the interviews carried out by the Ci: Creative intelligence to evaluate the impact and quality of their ABIs, some of the staff’s opinion about the process was gathered: “The process was well-thought out and implemented – the way it was presented was funny and thought-provoking and the character-types were easily identifiable.”... “The way the Roadshow worked, the scenarios were plausible and fun. The values weren’t pushed but characters were highly recognisable, you saw your own failures and other people’s too.”... “The acting was hilarious and very inclusive. Everyone talked about stuff together – the Forum Theatre approach was very engaging”.

The qualitative evaluation of the impact of the Values Roadshow, collected through questionnaires and interviews with managers and a random selection of staff, highlighted that the forum theatre workshops generated a number of benefits. These cover two main areas of the Arts Value Matrix: the bonding category and the inspirational category, though spill-over effects were also recognised from other categories. In particular, in the bonding category the following benefits were reported:

- (I) translation into action of a new organisational culture, through the definition, understanding, awareness, sharing and assessment of the organisation’s values;
- (II) opening and development of a conversation among staff members about some fundamental cultural issues;
- (III) enhancement of the communication processes and progress of collaboration through the building of better relationships between colleagues. In response to this, one of the managers at

Merger stated, “We have a Values Group - It’s a fantastic group – they talk of behaviour in a values context. So collaboration has improved, people work more together. It touched the whole team.” Another manager from Merger sales stated that “Cross-departmental communication has improved, it’s a lot more collaborative. External came to present to Internal at the end of last year, there’s more training on other departments’ work. Weekly meetings with senior managers were triggered by the workshops. Regional sales relationships have improved – they came down and mingled, and presented. It’s more of a team.”

(IV) definition of organisational standards for acceptable behaviours;

(V) reduction of staff turnover and improvement of customer relationships management. In response to this a manager reported that “Staff will say, on the phone [to a difficult customer]: “Don’t talk to me like that”. Very professionally. In the past it would have escalated, there would have been a row. There was one occasion when a buyer rang to apologise for his behaviour.”

In the inspirational category the forum theatre workshops had played a fundamental role in encouraging people’s self-reflection and self-evaluation about their attitudes and behaviours. Interviewees reported: “It was very important to step back and look at the implications of your behaviour.”; “Acting it out helped people understand the consequences of their behaviour.”; “There’s a lot more awareness, a lot more treating people as you would wish to be treated.” The Values Roadshow inspired people to identify, reflect on, analyse and comprehend the consequences of their own behaviours. This resulted in a change of people’s attitudes and behaviours.

The polyvalent nature of ABIs

Which impact, or combination of impacts, is best for an organisation? That depends on the strategic, managerial and operative objectives spurring an organisation to adopt ABIs. Ideally, starting from the origin of the Arts Value Matrix’s axes and moving along its two sides, the impact of an ABI on people and on the organisational infrastructure tends to be more intense and broad.

The analysis of the literature and of the empirical evidence collected throughout our research highlights the polyvalent nature of the potential impact of an ABI on the components of an organisation system. Though the adoption of an ABI within an organisation can be essentially focused on a specific objective, it tends to generate multiple spill-over benefits. Moreover, the benefits related to people and to the organisational infrastructure are likely to converge. In that instance, an ABI will primarily benefit the organisational infrastructure, and subsequently will have an impact on people; vice versa it can generate at the beginning a benefit for the people and then have an impact on the tangible and/or intangible organisational infrastructure components.

The Arts Value Matrix takes into account the polyvalent nature of the impacts on the different organisational dimensions, identifying nine possible ABI’s business value categories against which the assessment of the ABI must be mapped. The categories are not mutually exclusive.

An example of the polyvalent nature of the impact of ABIs is provided by 'RE:creation', an arts programme launched by *Price Waterhouse Coopers* (PwC), addressing 750 staff of PwC FS Assurance Southwark Towers base. The company wanted to ensure that they were creating an environment in which they could recruit and retain the right people. They wanted to unlock their employees' creative energy and inspire and challenge people to think and act differently, during a period when accounting regulations were changing and staff were required to adapt to new working practices. They wanted to build a climate of communication that was open and honest. The arts were identified as a means to offer relevant skills and tools.

The ABI providers, the MAP Consortium was brought in to devise up to 20 different arts-based projects. One project aimed to change their approach to client team meetings. The goal was to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the meetings, which up to 50 people attended. With a crowded agenda, PwC wanted to ensure that everyone's contribution was heard and that the event remained positive and forward looking. MAP used rehearsal room techniques to encourage collaboration and concise expression and the team was also taken 'off-site' and into an arts environment. One of PwC's partners commented, 'I know it sounds strange but I think the significant thing is that we have become more human with each other. We spend most of our daily lives in each other's company; it's very powerful to begin to have a sense of the full resource of the team in human terms.' Another project aimed to create a sense of identity. PwC operates a Group system to connect people on an administrative, social and support level. The aim was to create cohesive units of these Groups whose members have busy schedules and are often out at client offices. For this reason, artists created bespoke programmes using methods such as conducting visual arts projects, film making and visits to galleries to aid communication and strengthen connections within the Group. Other initiatives were focused on training and personal development and particularly on leadership awareness.

The Four ABIs' Value Zones

One of the differentiating features of ABIs is the intensity of the impact they have upon people and organisational infrastructure. Intensity refers to the strength, capacity and depth of advantages and functional characters of an impact, at the level of both people change and satisfaction, and of the organisational infrastructure development. Different intensity levels of an ABI's impact are manifested by a diverse utilitarian role and relevance for people and organisation. The intersection of the impact's intensity on people and on organisation's infrastructure determines the strategic intent of an ABI, which falls into one of four categories: igniting zone, intrinsic zone, instrumental zone, and artful zone. (See "The Four ABIs' Value Zones." – Figure 4)

The four value zones overlap with the Arts Value Matrix, though they offer a different kind of assessment. While the Arts Value Matrix provides a classification of ABIs' potential benefits, the Four Value Zones define the nature of these benefits and particularly their strategic purpose. Each zone denotes the main strategic focus of an ABI.

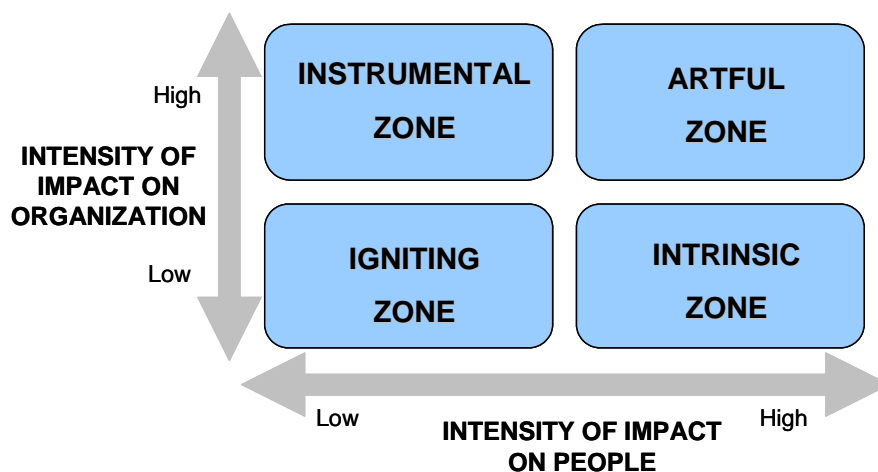


Figure 4. The Four ABIs' Value Zones.

Igniting zone. ABIs in the igniting zone have a low level of impact both on people and on the organisation. Their strategic goal is to activate an organisation's interest around an issue or simply to entertain the organisation's staff members. ABIs mapped in this zone are able to spur feelings and energy in people, but they do not produce lasting and profound advantages for either the people or the organisation. This zone basically corresponds to the entertainment area of the Arts Value Matrix. It is important to highlight that the impact of ABIs in this zone usually ignites feelings and energy states, which are fundamentally positive, such as enthusiasm, passion, joy and happiness, rather than negative, such as apprehension, disappointment and sadness. However, ABIs are unconventional and the involvement of audiences throughout an arts experience can put them in a new and different context, encouraging them to leave their comfort zone.

Our research suggests that ABIs that are generally successful are enjoyable experiences, which have the power to engage people primarily at an emotional, but also an intellectual level. All the ABIs we have investigated show this common denominator. Ignition is therefore a starting point from which to progress and move people's experiences towards the intrinsic and/or artful zone.

At the basis of the people's engagement at Merger for absorbing new values and building a new culture, energy was ignited through the creation of arts experiences. Indeed, the theatre workshop forum implemented to create and share a new culture was able to capture people's interest and attention because it was, as underlined by all the participants, first and foremost pleasant and enjoyable. Employees reported "the acting was hilarious and very inclusive. The Forum Theatre approach was very engaging. The way it was presented was funny and thought-provoking."

A further example of the ignition power of ABIs is the use of the percussion symphony workshop at Blue Circle Industries. Although the ABI was aimed to support teambuilding and communication, participants found it different, unusual and unique, with a fundamental underlying feature: the percussion sessions were fun, humorous, invigorating, enjoyable, lively, physical and active. As stated by a participant: "I really liked the metaphorical use of the arts to convey a message, it was fun, it was engaging."

Intrinsic zone. ABIs in this zone have a high intensity impact on people, while their influence on an organisational infrastructure development is marginal. The strategic intent of these kinds of initiatives is to engage people and channel their emotions and energy in order to achieve specific organisational objectives. At this level ABIs leverage personal pleasure, a sense of satisfaction and inner value. They are able to arouse personal emotional energy, which modifies people's perception of reality, in turn galvanising and inspiring them.

An arts-based project at Unilever named 'Stimulating Reflection' aimed to raise the awareness of behaviours by tracking staff moods. People were asked to choose between statements related to their daily business behaviours (such as: having fun; you have let a colleague down; this is the place to be; you have taken a risk; bureaucracy got in your way; you have passion for winning) by landing on mats, that had the statements written on them. These mats incorporated sensors, which made it possible to record the number of landings. This not only provided an assessment of the organisational atmosphere, but supported a self-reflection about behaviours, and developed within the organisation a better atmosphere.

Instrumental zone. ABIs in the instrumental zone have a high level of impact on the organisation, while the influence on its people is low. This zone mainly denotes the pragmatic benefits which can be achieved directly and/or indirectly by the use of a work of art or an artistic process. In this case the ABIs are a tool to develop tangible and intangible components of the organisational infrastructure, such as brand recognition and awareness both within the organisation and externally, improve the settings of workplaces, increase the real estate assets, enhance the products' and services' added value, and so on. The benefits related to the adoption of ABIs for sponsorship and investment goals, as identified in the Arts value Matrix, fall in this value zone.

Unilever wanted to strengthen brand awareness and celebrate the new brand phrase 'Vitality'. People were first involved with physical exercises animated by professional artists, and then they performed the

phrase on a football pitch filmed by a helicopter. This highlighted for them the power of their brand proposition, which was visually demonstrated to their clients.

Artful zone. ABIs in the artful zone have a high intensity impact on both people and organisational infrastructure. In this zone the generated benefits are the result of a convergence of the art experiences' impact on people and on the organisational infrastructure. This zone denotes the impacts of those ABIs which allow an organisation to absorb and show arts features through its tangible and intangible structural components. In addition, it encourages people to open up to, and expand on, a new awareness and understanding of themselves and of the reality around them on the basis of a deep personal experience grounded on the arousal and development of emotional and energetic states. ABIs mapped in the artful zone are able to integrate people change and the organisation's infrastructure development, which drives the organisation's transformation. The benefits related to environment, training and personal development, bonding and transformation are included in the artful zone. Among others, some of the effects of ABIs mapped in the artful zone are: change in the organisational environment and atmosphere; enhancement of people's skills and attitudes; modification and improvement of people's behaviours; development of relationships and of a networking approach; recognition, absorption and sharing of an organisation's new values and ethics; development of social processes; and more generally an evolution of the organisation.

With the aim of expanding consciousness, to affect both people and organisational context at Lever Fabergé, they exhibited an art collection throughout the main staircase in the building. Alongside the pictures, large, colourful quotations from employees were displayed recording their reactions to arts, giving them the opportunity to express their feelings and opinions, and creating an organisational atmosphere of inclusiveness.

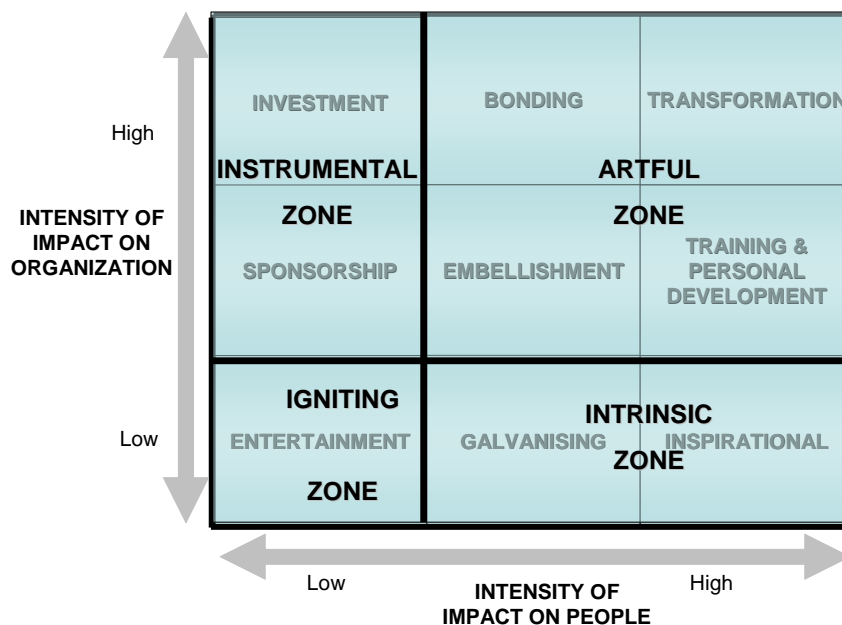


Figure 5. Overlapping the Four ABIs' Value Zone with the Arts Value Matrix.

Defining Arts-based Strategies

ABIs can be adopted by organisations for different strategic goals. Our research suggests that the organisations that succeed at implementing arts-based management initiatives have a clear understanding of the strategic objectives related to the adoption of ABIs.

The integration of the Arts Value Matrix and of the Four Value Zones of ABIs provides an interpretative framework to delineate the strategic intent of the implementation of arts-based management initiatives. It is possible to distinguish three main types of arts-based strategies on the basis of the attention which is paid on the development of people, rather than on the improvement of the organisational infrastructure. Most of the ABIs start from the igniting zone and usually move towards the intrinsic zone or the instrumental zone.

As the initiatives move from the igniting to the intrinsic zone and progress from the entertainment to the inspirational, in accordance with the Arts Value Matrix, they respond to a people development management strategy: namely the *“engaging people energy”* strategy. In this case, the ABIs are implemented with a focus on people and with the strategic intent to engage their energy to provoke a personal change in order to turn an intension into an action. ABIs implemented with the ‘engaging people energy’ strategy are aimed to bring to the organisation energy, imagination and inspiration. They aim to do this by challenging people’s way of seeing and feeling reality, teaching them to question their values, changing their perspective, stimulating reflection and observation, enhancing emotional and intuitive response, and injecting passion in their activities and actions. This kind of strategy is particularly effective in the cases where it is necessary to motivate and energise human resources, keeping basically unchanged the organisational infrastructure. Considering this, Bruch and Ghoshal (2003) identify two strategies for unleashing organisational energy: the *“slaying the dragon”* strategy and the *“winning the princess”* strategy. Although the authors adopt this distinction to identify different leadership styles to unleash the energy of organisations, it is also particularly useful for understanding how ABIs can be used as tools to spark, channel, nurture, drive, and manage people’s organisational energy. The first strategy is aimed to focus and channel people’s attention, emotions and efforts on an imminent threat, such as bankruptcy, a new winning competitor’s solution or a disruptive technology. The second strategy seeks to engage people’s dreams, emotions and energy to challenge the organisation’s objectives (the princess), which require passion to be achieved.

ABIs defined with the strategic intention to generate effects related to the instrumental zone respond to an organisational infrastructure management strategy: the *“building arts capital”* strategy. This kind of arts-based strategy is particularly useful in cases where it is necessary to increase an organisation’s value and the value creation capacity, by leveraging on the organisation’s instrumental and infrastructure development. Some examples of strategic objectives related to this strategy include: an improvement of the identity of an organisation’s brand; the development of links with the external communities; a better management of the organisation’s socio-cultural impression at intra-industry and inter-industry level; the adoption of alternative marketing approaches; an increase of the real estate assets; and an increase of the products’ and services’ value.

Generally the most successful ABIs move into the artful zone and respond to an organisation’s development management strategy by leveraging a balanced integration of the engagement of people’s energy and of the building of arts capital: the *“artful organisational development”* strategy. In this case, the achievement of value from the implementation of ABIs is linked to the integration of the development of

both the organisation's infrastructure – tangible and intangible – and its people. Organisations can improve their value creation capacity by developing selected key value assets of the organisation, affecting performances such as values, culture, skills, workplace setting, routines, procedures, internal and external relationships, and products and services. Through the development of people-related and of infrastructure-related assets, organisations are generally able to improve their competencies, which in turn have a positive impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of organisation and business processes.

An excellent example of artful organisational development strategy occurred at *Unilever* through the programme named Catalyst. It was originally created in 1999 by Alastair Creamer for Lever Brothers and Elida Fabergé during their merger to become Lever Fabergé, and later moved into a second Unilever operating company, Unilever Ice Cream and Frozen Foods (UICFF). It was designed to use artistic process as a channel to explore business issues. Catalyst involved the use of an integrated set of ABIs aimed to support corporate change in order to develop a new organisational culture, which would encourage creativity and entrepreneurship among employees. Different issues related both to people and to the organisational infrastructure were addressed, which can be summarised in four main areas: mindsets and behaviours change; communication and coordination enhancement; organisational creativity development; and improvement of organisational atmosphere. For this reason, the arts programme was based on many different ABIs, involving a wide ecology of artists and art organisations. A number of artists, including teams of actors, writers and directors were brought together to perform arts-based workshops, actor placements, one-to-one coaching, performances, debates, installations, workbooks and accompanied workshops, and so on.

In particular, in order to change the feedback culture at Unilever, the artful project named 'Live + Direct' was conceived in partnership with The MAP Consortium, which also involved writer Julie Batty, artist and filmmaker Martin Gent and arts consultant Andrew McIlroy. The MAP Consortium worked in residence for three months with Lever Fabergé and Unilever Ice Cream and Frozen Foods (UICFF), at all levels, but in particular with Unilever HR training Managers and Unilever HR professionals. With the implementation of this ABI, the two companies wished to embed a more positive culture of giving and receiving feedback, influencing the traditional business methods of being top-down and target orientated. The MAP Consortium identified recurring feedback themes to be addressed within both companies, such as short term thinking, constant need for increased delivery, an emphasis on quick answers rather than questions, overlooked feelings and a focus on winning.

Unilever wanted to introduce a language of possibilities that would make feedback more accessible to all levels of staff, to deliver tangible tools for improving performance and to get Catalyst and the two Human Resource departments to work more closely together. In order to raise awareness of the project several interventions were staged at UICFF, including live theatre in the courtyards at lunchtimes. Workshops were then attended by business teams from UICFF and Lever Fabergé, and were tailored to some extent to their specific needs. A 'Feedback Caretaker' was appointed by each team for follow-up meetings after the workshops and to report evaluation feedbacks. A member of The MAP team, an Arts Associate, was then assigned to seven of the teams. They helped to disseminate the knowledge gathered during the workshops, sat in on team meetings and held one-to-one surgeries to develop the teams communication culture.

In the theatrical plays the staff took over the roles of director and actor. This way, people acting on the base of the theatrical scripts were immersed into an analogical model to observe and reflect on their feedback behaviours.

At the end of the project The MAP wrote and performed a piece of theatre, The Live Result, based on their experiences of working with both companies. This was followed by a debate between staff, actors and the directors around the issues raised and the performances acted as pieces of three-dimensional feedback, which were deliberately challenging.

As a result of the project, the feedback culture within and between teams was improved. Large numbers of staff from both companies were involved in sharing and comparing knowledge and experiences as well as communicating and giving feedback, resulting in the formation of new relationships. Keith Weed, Chairman at Lever Fabergé, reported that: ‘Live + Direct helped people learn techniques, practice giving and receiving feedback and appreciate the power of conversations that can make a difference, whether they are comfortable or uncomfortable. Live + Direct helped us reclaim a little bit of the child within us.’ The original business feedback culture of being primarily top-down and target-focused was influenced by one based on process and geared to creative and collaborative approaches. Sarah Sturton, Training Manager at UICFF, stressed that: ‘Whether a direct correlation or not, there appears to be a big focus on team building involving ‘transformational’ activities. So perhaps having opened up the debate, L+D gave people some reflection time and has led them into taking action.’

UICFF and Lever Fabergé developed a shared language on the subject of giving and receiving feedback. For four months the business highlighted the importance of feedback in the context of doing better business, making it a core value and simultaneously more accessible and positive for all levels of staff. The project pushed boundaries in terms of length, scale, participation, inclusiveness and the balance struck between arts-based activity and tools for business. James Hill, Chairman at UICFF, stated that: ‘The Live Reports, and the debates that followed were eye-opening for people. It was a risky thing to do as they could have flattened the energy in the business. Instead they focussed our minds to do more. Since Live + Direct, the Board has been challenged to re-consider our role in sustaining cultural change.’ The ‘Live + Direct’ project was followed by other ABIs. In particular, in 2004 a series of posters were designed by the artists Maria Hipwell and James Starr to remind staff of the development of language and mindset during the project and were displayed in both businesses.

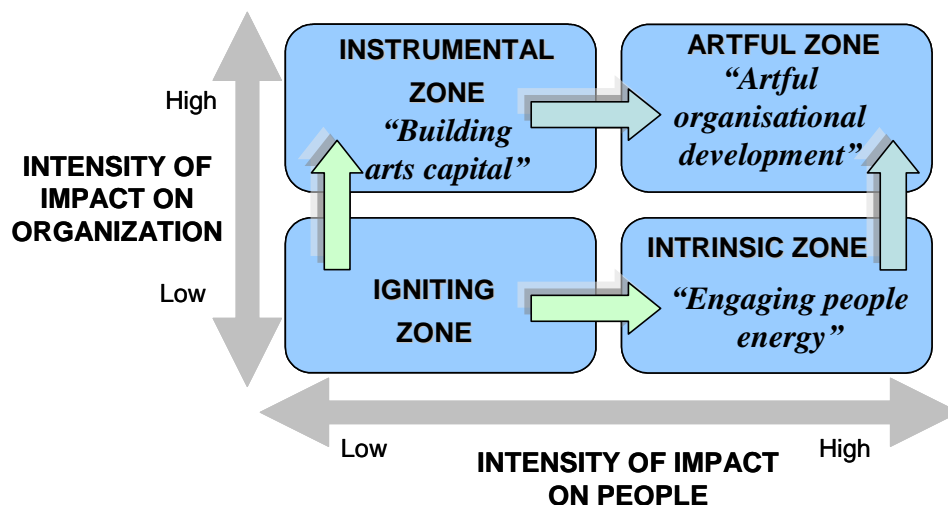


Figure 5. Arts-based strategies.

Generally organisations tend to adopt ABIs as a management tool to support their transformation processes as well as to improve their value creation capacity. However, organisations can integrate artful organisational development strategies and the related arts management approaches and tools in their business model and specifically in their day-to-day activities during stable periods. In such cases ABIs are no longer inspired by a transitory logic, but instead become a management philosophy, integrated with the other management approaches, which can ground management interventions to improve business performance. An excellent example of an organisation that has absorbed arts management in the business model is Spinach (see “Spinach: Integrating Arts in Company’s DNA”).

Spinach: Integrating Arts in Company’s DNA

Spinach represents a case example of adoption and integration of the arts in day-to-day business activities. The arts are integrated in the company’s DNA as a way to be creative and to handle complexity, turbulence, uncertainty and ambiguity. While most companies tend to adopt and experience ABIs on a hit-and-run basis, Spinach underpins its strategy, operations, human resources and daily organisational activities with arts involvement.

Spinach is a marketing research agency established by Tom Conway and Lucy Morris both of whom have previous professional experiences in the research marketing industry. They have previously worked for companies adopting traditional approaches to the management of human resources, operations and product development.

Establishing their own company, they aspired to create an organisation with creativity at its heart, both in the way they ran the company and in the way they approached project work. This was in order not only to achieve high business performance, but also to define an organisational context and atmosphere capable of keeping them interested in what they do. It was to continuously as well as positively challenge them and the people working in the organisation to support their growth as individuals, as a community and as a business.

In creating a creative enterprise, the funders decided to involve artists in the organisational life and to adopt the artistic process as a benchmark model of organisational creativity. To bring in the arts and to continuously generate an organisational context in which art experiences shape a positive energy and atmosphere is not an easy and direct task. For this reason, Tom and Lucy recognised the need to recruit an arts experiences champion, i.e. someone with the task of creating a continuous tension between daily business activities and arts and artistic processes. The position of Creativity Director was defined and a professional artist with experiences in business was appointed. However, in order to guarantee that the Creativity Director could continue to keep his/her creative life as an artist and be able to bring in fresh ideas and stimuli, the organisation chose to make the creativity director independent from the company. Today this position is held by Martin Gent, who is in charge of defining and managing ABIs which can trigger, develop, maintain, renew and flourish a creative organisational environment infused with positive emotional and intellectual energy.

The role of the Creativity Director is to guarantee that art in all its possible forms, and through different media, continuously pervades the company’s environment and activities. The

goal is neither to transform employees into artists nor to necessarily adopt arts as means to carry out day-to-day organisational activities, but instead to instil the use of arts in new product development.

ABIs are also adopted and implemented with the aim to create a positive tension in the organisational context between the logic and linear thinking and the lateral thinking based on the use of senses, imagination, creativity and emotions. According to this arts in business philosophy, ABIs represent the tools to continuously infuse the organisational environment and life with arts experiences. They can address a specific business issue or merely be implemented in tandem with the organisational activities, in such a way as to appear almost independent from the organisation's business, although fully integrated in the organisational context and workplace. The employment of arts and of the artistic processes represents a *modus operanti* of Spinach. ABIs are outcomes of organisational activities and change over time in order to ensure that employees are continuously exposed to new expressions and can experiment to refresh emotional experiences.

In Spinach, in order to make sure that ABIs are aligned with strategic objectives and focused on relevant business performances, the company's CEO and the Creativity Director jointly identify the issues to be addressed by art experiences. The Experiential Day represents a formal planning day, which is dedicated to the discussion, reviewing, planning and proposing of ABIs. This meeting allows the CEO to present to the Creativity Director the strategic and business performances which require attention. However, the interest lies not only in pragmatic and contingent business issues, but also in more general concerns closely related to people and organisational development. In this regard, Tom Conway, Spinach's CEO, states that ABIs "make people to wonder 'why do we dedicate time and resources to experiential activities, rather than simply chase after business which is what basically pays our salaries? Questions like this one move people to see their job and their organisation differently and most importantly to develop a better awareness of themselves, of the organisation and of the world around them".

To allow a business to absorb the arts processes, it is necessary to build a relationship of trust between the company and the artists. This is a necessary condition for artists' actions to fully work in the company. The lack of standards and procedures describing the artistic processes and activities means that the organisations interested in bringing in arts and in absorbing the artistic process, need to have trust in the artistic experiential approaches and to create an organisational context able to accept arts and artists. To allow arts experiences to release their powerful galvanising, inspirational and catalysing energy, artists must be free to express themselves, so that their tacit abilities can be transferred within and diffused throughout the organisation. However, on the other hand artists need to speak and understand the business language and issues, in order to be able to develop initiatives which are capable of meeting business needs. The absorption of arts experiences in the organisational context therefore requires the construction of a 'mutual relationship' and understanding between artists and business people.

Spinach has been able to absorb the arts and artistic processes by using a gatekeeper, the Creativity Director.

Today the arts are part of Spinach's DNA. They have been absorbed as a structural component of the working mechanisms of the company and the role of the creativity director sets in place an art management system as a continuous process to develop organisational people and infrastructures.

Spinach's case shows that arts can have a twofold instrumental position for a company, internally and externally. From an internal point of view, the arts can be employed as a means to define and develop an organisational culture and atmosphere, capable of guaranteeing an emotional and creative capacity, upon which is built the organisational competence to cope with change and business complexity. This also encourages an organisational environment in which people are happy to work. The arts are in this case experienced as an internal catalyser of positive energy. From the external point of view, arts can contribute not only to define the company's identity, but also to communicate and promote it through building a brand.

Conclusions

The successful organisations of the 21st-century will be those that are able to generate a return on emotional equity. This requires creating a context in which employees feel they are contributing to something that will make a genuine and positive difference to their lives as well as to the lives of colleagues and customers (Hamel, 2000).

The message of this report is that the involvement in arts and the adoption of Arts-Based Initiatives (ABIs) within organisations are not just new trends, but rather relevant management approaches to be integrated with the more traditional and rational-based management models and tools. **These can inspire and support the 21st-century organisations in their search for new thinking and methods for growth and wealth creation.** ABIs, as we have demonstrated, represent powerful means to develop a business' capacity for value creation. This not only involves the ability to improve the existing mechanisms of value creation, but also to re-think the organisation and its business model.

In the future, the organisation's competitiveness and efficiency will be increasingly based on the ability to harness complexity. This will involve the capability to be creative, proactive and flexible to change. The economy of the future will demand of organisations to rethink their management assumptions and corporate practices. Organisations will need not only to manage their knowledge domains, but also to dynamically renew their capabilities. Most importantly however, they will need to engage people's imagination, passion and energy both at the individual and the social level.

New management theories and models will be necessary to deal with the emerging demand related to the need of managing organisational energy and emotions. In this instance, Arts-in-Business represents a relevant research and theory stream. It can provide processes, models and tools for a new management approach within organisations.

The approaches, frameworks and tools introduced in this research can be applied in any organisation as well as at any level. This general reference to organisations, without indicating their nature, form and size, serves to prove exactly this; ABIs can benefit public and private organisations, profit or non-profit, large or small.

ABIs can be implemented by executive managers within an organisation moving from one initiative to the next, having in mind different organisational objectives reflecting people development and an organisational transformation. It is possible to adopt a variety of ABIs in order to support organisational development and business performance improvements. The Arts Value Matrix identifies the possible benefits of ABIs, though it makes no value judgements on which are more useful or successful; instead, it shows that ABIs have polyvalent and multiple effects. Organisations should therefore decide against their specific strategic and business needs, which would be the best benefit area to address. Recognising the polyvalent nature of ABIs, a key factor influencing their value is the way in which ABIs are managed. To get the highest possible impact, it is fundamental that ABIs are supported and championed by senior management. Moreover, a positive attitude and affirmative involvement of managers is crucial in order to

move ABIs along the value axis from low impact to high impact, and from individual to organisational effects.

It is evident from our case studies on Merger, Spinach and Unilever that significant initiatives are ones that can balance and combine impacts on different categories of benefits. In this light, **the Arts Value Matrix can be used as a very simple and direct assessment tool of ABIs**. Indeed, by adopting a 'traffic lights approach' to identify the benefit areas on which an ABI can potentially or will actually have an impact, it is possible to evaluate the type and intensity of the benefits generated by ABIs. Accordingly, green can be used to denote those areas on which an ABI can have a major impact and generate most of the benefits. Yellow can indicate the areas where the initiative has a less seminal impact, while red should represent the areas on which only a marginal benefit can be accounted for as a result of the initiative.

The value of an ABI is not self-contained and its impact is not autonomous, but it depends on the organisational and managerial context. The same ABI can generate different levels of impacts and benefits in different contexts, since it can have different meanings in diverse organisations. Therefore, an organisation has to define, on the basis of its specific needs, the expected outcomes and benefits related to the adoption of ABIs. From this viewpoint, the Arts Value Matrix represents a possible framework to drive arts practitioners and managers to identify the best impacts that ABIs can have, in order to align them with performance improvement needs. Furthermore, the use of the Four Value Zones of ABIs can delineate the best arts-based strategy to be implemented in order to generate value for an organisation. Artful organisational development strategies are recommended to spur and drive people and organisational infrastructure transformation, which can in turn generate positive effects on organisation's value and value creation capacity.

We have thus developed and presented some theoretical principles, which contribute to better set up and develop the management research field of arts-in-business. The proposed frameworks are helpful to understand, discuss and manage arts-based-initiatives within organisations in order to support and drive organisational and business performance improvements as well as more generally organisational value creation dynamics.

The developed models are proposed to managers and arts providers to better understand, assess and manage the adoption of ABIs aimed at supporting business growth and development. **These models can be used as a common ground to facilitate conversation between artists and businesses interested in exploring new and innovative management approaches for improving the performances of their organisations**. In addition they can be used as operative tools and guidelines to better design, implement and evaluate the impact of ABIs. Indeed, one of the shortcomings emerging from the field is the lack of structured approaches and models to drive both arts providers and managers in defining ABIs and in evaluating their benefits.

This report aims to fill some of these existing gaps and to provide an understanding of the role and relevance of ABIs as a possible source of creating value. We hope it will open up the discussion to expand the much needed empirical base, by both analysing and comparing further case studies, and particularly by developing longitudinal studies and action research projects. This will hopefully encourage the collection of quantitative data aimed to test the hypothesis outlined here, as well as to explore the cause-effect links between ABIs and business value objectives.

We invite all the organisations to open the doors to arts to live a new and profound experience, and start a dynamic growth trajectory.

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Appendix

Methodology

The adopted methodology is based on two main research cycles, each one characterised by three phases: investigation, theory building, test and review. The first cycle started with the primary formulation of the research issues. It was essentially exploratory in nature and its aim was to better recognize and outline the scope and goals of the research project. During the second cycle we defined and developed the frameworks to assess the organisational value of ABIs as well as the strategic goals which can steer their adoption, on the basis of a clearer definition of the research focus.

First research cycle

We started the research from a brief developed through three discussion meetings with representatives from Arts & Business (A&B) and an academic reference group. The research project was originally inspired by the idea to provide quantitative evidence on the impact of arts-based-interventions on organisational change and within businesses. The use of arts and of the artistic process to address organisational issues raised the need for an urgent and compelling analysis of arts-based interventions.

The first research cycle was underlined by the intention of defining a primary informative base to recognize the meaning and contents of ABIs, their role within organisations, the possible benefits related to their adoption, and some organisations' experiences of the adoption of ABIs.

In the investigation phase an inquisitive examination was developed, combining a desk analysis of the current literature and of other published resources with an array of open and semi-structured interviews with arts providers as well as with managers and entrepreneurs who had experienced the impact of ABIs in their organisations.

The desk analysis was a combination of academic literature reviews and analyses of internet-based information and reports. The analysis of the academic literature focused on organisational, managerial and economic studies. This review was enriched by an internet-based search, seeking to identify any information and/or document useful to better define an informative picture on the possible benefits related to the adoption of arts in business. Although the attention was mainly paid on the adoption of arts and art processes within private organisations, the more general benefits that arts can generate for the public domains were identified and taken into account. Furthermore, in this stage of the research, with specific attention to the English market, an analysis of some of the key arts providers' web-sites had been carried out with the intention of identifying the nature, contents and characteristics of the offered ABIs. The review of the published material provided an informative base to define a semi-structured interview. A first round of eight interviews was then performed, involving arts providers, managers and entrepreneurs.

Along the investigation phase, the main conceptual studies on the role and the possible impacts of ABIs upon organisational performance and development were outlined. In addition, great attention was paid to the detection of direct and indirect evidence, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The combination of these studies defined a framework, which guided the second research phase: the theory building. In this second phase, the fundamental hypothesis, the definitions of the main concepts, and drafts of interpretative models of the benefits and impacts of ABIs within organisations were developed. At this stage of the research, the difficulty to develop a measurement system to provide quantitative evidence of

the effectiveness of ABIs for organisational growth clearly emerged. This was due both to the lack of models to understand the relevance and the impact of ABIs within organisations, and the impossibility to develop on-field empirical longitudinal analyses. Instead, we recognised the need and the opportunity to focus the attention on the development of a body of knowledge, useful to comprehend the organisational value of ABIs.

In the third phase we tested and reviewed the hypothesis and the developed frameworks. A first draft of the report was reviewed by two academic experts and the developed conceptualisations and frameworks were discussed with a panel of arts practitioners³ during both a discussion workshop and by face-to-face meetings. Moreover, an assessment, based on a structured questionnaire, had been carried out evaluating the developed frameworks and collecting feedbacks to further improve the definitions and conceptualisations grounding the research.

Second research cycle

The first research cycle identified the most important issues to focus on and the concepts and frameworks to further develop in order to assess the organisational value of ABIs.

The next step of investigation was carried out, integrating again a literature review and empirical examination. A survey of the literature was used to study in depth the variables and conceptual components grounding the ongoing assessment frameworks. At the same time, the empirical research focused on developing a set of case studies with a twofold purpose: on the one hand to contribute to the development of the assessment models by incorporating insights captured by the interpretation of the qualitative data, and on the other hand to provide qualitative facts supporting the proposed conceptual arguments. For this latter purpose we also adopted secondary qualitative data gathered from the analysis of some key examples reported in the literature or in other published material.

The investigation phase allowed us to refine and further develop the theory and the structure of the assessment frameworks. These were afterwards reviewed by a team of academic experts and representatives from A&B.

³ Along the development of the research project we had made sure to get the full involvement and commitment of a panel of key arts providers with a significant experience in delivering ABIs within organisations. The arts providers represented key testimonials both for collecting information through interviews and questionnaires and to capture insights about the meaning of ABIs within organisations as well as they served the project as auditors of the frameworks we had been developing.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to the development of this research project. Following is a list of the arts practitioners, the organisations, the people from Arts & Business and the academics who were actively involved in the research. They have contributed in different ways and in various phases of the research, by offering their availability for interviews, taking part in the discussion meetings and workshops, filling in questionnaires and reviewing draft versions of this report.

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