

TACIT Methods – Teaching Material

Method title: Innovation Theatre

Workshop size: 20-30 participants

Trainer(s): Henry Larsen and Preben Friis

Content

This module will introduce learners to improvisational theatre methods. Learners will explore challenges in innovation and develop new perspectives on the emerging challenges they experience in particular contexts. As such, participants will explore how communicative interaction between multiple stakeholders can affect the emergence of innovation. The module thus invites participants to engage with improvised scenarios to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and disturb usual patterns of interaction to allow for new directions to emerge. The scenarios are built from burning themes that take origin in real-life situations that address challenges learners themselves are facing. Together, they will explore potential new patterns of practice and challenge own and others' perspectives. In this light, applying improvisational theatre methods in relation to innovation activities enables learners to explore the fundamental social dynamics of collaboration across disciplinary and organizational boundaries.

Improvisational theatre instigates dialogues about the very fundamental social dynamics of collaboration across disciplinary boundaries. It helps participants explore how processes of knowledge sharing and experiential learning can happen across the organisation to challenge existing and explore new decision-making processes. The method can help participants understand the underlying agendas, perspectives and challenges of others to generate resourceful responses.

Educational Objectives

After successfully completing this module, the participant will have acquired the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge/Understanding:

Participants

- gain an understanding of the quality of conversation and explore how they could potentially deal with conflicts and contradictory intentions.
- will explore how new meaning and new ideas emerge in the interaction between people.

Abilities/Skills:

Participants

- will develop new ways of communicating/interacting with others.
- will develop soft skills applicable in other contexts of collaboration/communication.

Competencies:

Participants

- will through experiential means learn about burning themes challenging them.
- will demonstrate an ability to spontaneously adjust goals, adapt to on-going discussions and facilitate the participation of other learners.

Method Implementation

1. Introduction to Innovation Theatre
2. Short acting activities to get started
3. Presenting the context/challenge
4. Playing the scene and recruiting people from audience to act
5. Involving audience in framing the scenario
6. Reflection on the progress and the challenges emerging

Materials used to deliver the method

An open room with flexible chairs

A simple stage consisting of a table and a few chairs that can be moved around

Preliminary reading required to understand the method (to be sent before the workshop)

- 1) Buur, J., & Larsen, H. (2010). *The Quality of Conversations in Participatory Innovation. CoDesign*, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 121-138.
- 2) Larsen, H. (2011) *Improvisational Theatre – a contribution to organizational change. In: Facilitating Change: Using Interactive Methods in organisations, communities and networks. Ed: Lauge Baungaard Rasmussen, Polyteknisk forlag.*
- 3) Larsen H and Friis P (in press) *Improvising in research. In: Freytag P and Young, Louise (eds), Qualitative methods in business research, Springer Verlag.*

Additional reading recommended after the workshop

- 1) Sproedt, H. and Larsen, H. (2012). *Social Shaping of Innovation – the practice of dealing with paradox, and conflict. In Proceedings of the CINet Conference 2012.*



Images: Innovation Theatre at LEGO Group A/S, October 2016