





MANAGER AS AN ARTIST: CREATIVE ENDEAVOUR IN CROSSING THE BORDERS OF ART AND ORGANIZATIONAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract. The key to the considerations contained in this work is the authors' metaphor of the organization: "organization as an artwork", which – based on the achievements of aesthetics – allows us to look at the manager as a creator (true "artist"), and on organization's stakeholders as recipients of this artwork. This new approach places management on a skeleton of Maria Gołaszewska's concept of "aesthetic situation". Thanks to this approach, the elements of aesthetic theories appearing in the management literature take the right context, and solutions borrowed from the theory of aesthetics bring a new quality to the theory of creativity in management. The inspiration to take up the topic was one of the authors own experience in both art and management. The research methodology is based on a qualitative review of the literature. The methodological approach is based on interdisciplinary and multi-paradigm approach taking into account the publications from areas of management and organization, as well as art and psychology. After applying the theory of aesthetics to the management process, it can be said that artistry should be considered as a kind of higher level of management; highest degree in gradation: administrator, manager, management artist.

Keywords: aesthetic discourse, artist, artistic work, creative personality, creativity, creator, manager.

Introduction

The turn of the 20th and 21st centuries was a time when practitioners and theorists of the organization opened themselves to the world of art definitely to search for answers to their doubts, the crisis of values and the need for a creative approach to the changing world (Woodward & Funk, 2010). There is a diametrical difference in the way people think in the technical sciences world compared to people in the humanities world; the greater the difference in the way people think in the science world and in the arts world. Organizations – full of analysts and technocrats – currently need above all creativity in how to use these "hard" resources to realize their competitive advantages effectively (Watkins & King, 2002). Building a strategy, which in these conditions will be sensible and worth implementing, requires an

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unconventional approach in place of a logical choice among solutions that have worked well in the past (Adler, 2006). Beauty is the answer to many questions bothering contemporary managers. The world – begging for creativity – asks us to rethink who we are as human beings. Today society yearns for a leadership of possibility, based more on hope, aspiration, wisdom, meaning, innovation than on the replication of historical pragmatic solutions (Adler, 2015). Therefore, attention was drawn to the fact that academic programs no longer meet the expectations of modern organizations in the field of creative managers training (Mintzberg, 2004). Art has become the foundation of the new spirit of global capitalism (Watson, 2001). The reflections about creative management are developed by critical management studies approach from the beginning of 21st century (Beirne & Knight, 2007).

The key to the considerations contained in this work is the authors' metaphor "organization as a work of art", which – based on the achievements of aesthetics as a science that fully deals with the theory of art and creativity – allows us to look at the manager as a creator ("artist"), and on organization's stakeholders as recipients of this "artwork". The new look allows us to arrange the entire narrative of overlapping management and art areas on a skeleton so-called "aesthetic situation" (Gołaszewska, 1984). Thanks to this approach, theories appearing in management literature get the right context, and solutions borrowed from the theory of aesthetics bring new quality to the theory of creativity of individuals (managers) and groups (organizations). Theories and models from the field of aesthetics have become key in formulating thoughts; the inspiration to take up the topic was one of the authors own experiences in both art and management. The applied methodological approach is multi-paradigmatic taking into account the management discourse treated like creative endeavour similar to art (Sułkowski & Patora-Wysocka, 2018; Sułkowski, 2012).

We ask the question whether the use of aesthetics theory in management will allow to structure and understand the problem of creative actions of managers better?

1. Methodology and theoretical framework

The research methodology was based on a qualitative review of the literature taken from databases: *EBSCO Information Services*, *Google Scholar*, *JSTOR* and *Scopus*. The methodological approach based on interdisciplinary and multi-paradigm approach taking into account the publications from areas of management (managerial and leadership roles), art (aesthetic theories) and psychology (creativity, creative personality). Creativity was chosen as the main common element of art and management. The literature review was focused on the following issues: 1) creativity as a distinguishing feature of managers and leaders, 2) creativity in art, 3) artist as creator and creativity of artists, and 4) overlapping areas of art and management.

1.1. Manager, leader and their creativity

Manager is one of the basic roles in the world of management that is why literature abounds in various definitions of this concept, description of desirable traits and competences (Guranda & Nagy, 2011). A good manager is an effective organizer, effective in achieving economic and non-economic goals (Drucker, 2006); his actions are utilitarian. Hrcacs (2015), based on

the evolution of the classically understood role of manager towards a multi-tasking agent and translator of reality, shows the adaptability of the manager role to changing reality. A manager can achieve the goals imposed by the owner of the organization (separated ownership and management functions) or set goals independently (combined ownership and management functions); in the latter case, we used to speak of a leader (Jankurová, 2017).

Leader is a person “able to influence psychological and institutional resources to motivate and trigger necessary actions” (Postuła & Majczyk, 2018, p. 93). A good leader should keep following commandments: have vision, stay focused, take responsibility, know the subject, team with great thinkers, be a motivator, stay positive, learn from mistakes, be an excellent communicator, appreciate his legacy. A good leader should use four kinds of power: delegated, affiliated, acquired, rainmaker; a leader without followers is a loner (Weingardt, 2000). Mats Alvesson and Martin Blom pay attention to the important fact connected to the leadership: the ability and will to be a follower. This construct can be crucial to our analysis because visions and effects of creative thinking need to be incorporated into organizations by co-workers following these non-regular ideas. Today world appreciates leaders not followers and it tries to develop leader’s features and competences in any person who wants to be a leader (Alvesson & Blom, 2015); unfortunately, not each person can be a leader. We know many concepts and combinations of the qualities of a good leader, but none of them explains how the desired qualities in some “creators” result in the form of a work, and in others do not; creative sense is what distinguish selected individuals and predestines them to be leaders.

Although both roles (manager and leader) have long list of literature, we do not find many works about comparisons in this field, as well as differences in perception of these roles by co-workers (Postuła & Majczyk, 2018). What distinguishes both roles is the art of influence. An analysis of the paths of leadership influence and types of leadership tactics shows that in today leadership the ability to influence is more valuable than authoritarianism (Nikoloski, 2015). Warrick (2019) draws attention to a number of mistakes made by leaders that result in the creation of an illusion that is the reason for failure of the leader’s mission; he also gives solutions which should be used by leaders to protect themselves from creation and functioning in illusory conditions.

Researchers unanimously point out that one of the basic features of an effective manager and good leader is creativity in the approach to managing and in defining the goals. To be a creative manager there is a need to let go of well-known patterns and old solutions, and to enter the active forms of thinking. There are three levels of creative thinking (inspiration, intuition, imagination), which are crucial to an artist. The organizational processes are similar to modelling of material by the artist who creates a sculpture; it can be said that “creative sculpting” is the 21st century definition of management (Reckhenrich, Kupp, & Anderson, 2009).

Although creativity and innovation as phenomena are difficult to observe as they occur, a number of research tools have already been developed, e.g. the Management Innovation Index, allowing to compare the level of organizations creativity (Kerle, 2010).

1.2. Artist as creator: creativity in art

Creativity is the “ability to produce or use original and unusual ideas or to make something new or imaginative” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020b). Synonyms are: cleverness, creativeness, imagination, imaginativeness, ingeniousness, ingenuity, innovativeness, invention, inventiveness, originality (Merriam-Webster, 2020b). It is one of the most wanted resources in contemporary organisations. The phenomenon of creativity is an issue of psychology (individual creativity), sociology (creativity of groups), management (creativity of organisations) and aesthetics (artistic creativity). It is not an easy task to define and to research the creativity that is why most researchers focus on chosen fields or aspects of creativity: gender differences (Ungureanu & Vasile, 2016), creativity stimulation (Ceylan, Dul, & Aytac, 2008). Thanks to this we know that organisations show no differences on creative potential, emotional intelligence, and job satisfaction between male and female managers (Mairaj Ahmad & Fotowwat Zadeh, 2016). There is a positive correlation between leader creativity and team creativity, and this correlation is strengthened by task complexity but attenuated by leader empowerment; the style of leadership is not important in this field as previous literature stated; highly creative leaders apply original ideas in research, development, and management activities.

Dahlberg (2007) points out the key role of involvement in the creativity process of both individuals and groups; using the thoughts of active artists, he states that every child born inherently creative, however educational processes imposing a number of restrictions suppress its innate creativity; the process of recreating or “digging in” to creativity becomes key. We can also divide many elements in creativity process what can be helpful in developing this ability in different circumstances. Min Basadur (1995) in the creative solving problem approach distinguished the stages (finding problems, solving problems, implementing solutions) and distinct steps (problem finding, fact finding, problem defining, idea finding, evaluating and selecting, action planning, gaining acceptance, taking action).

These facts imply also the conclusion, that look into aesthetics theory of creativity can be primary here, in contrast to looking for correlations of second-importance dimensions. Sources of artistic creativity may result from (Gołaszewska, 1984): inspiration; act of creation in the image of nature; discovering timeless ideas and incorporating them in a work; imitation of divine creativity; meeting the needs of social group (sociological theory of creativity); excess energy that remains after basic needs fulfilment (human life physiology); the state of culture having various artistic ideals at a certain level of human development (cultural approach); sums of socio-economic (ideological) conditions in which the artist lives (historical approach); expression of the creator’s personality (psychological approach).

The psychological theories of artistic creativity may be key in the analysis of managerial creativity phenomena: “creativity as an inspiration”, “creativity as a labour” and “creativity as a personality expression” (Gołaszewska, 1984). In the theory of creativity as inspiration, the creator achieves particularly significant artistic results thanks not to his knowledge/skills, but thanks to inspiration (a set of factors that cannot be rationally explained, and which come to the fore in unexpected moments); the results of inspiration are unpredictable; in this theory, creativity is understood as a mysterious gift that man does not control; it can be said that the uniqueness of the product is the uniqueness of the mental process that led to the work;

we are dealing here with a combination of the theory of inspiration and the theory of genius and individualism. The theory of creativity as a labour points to factors such as work, toil, overcoming obstacles and effort; a man has natural abilities, but he must work on them to create true art works; the necessary conditions for creativity are knowledge of the creation rules and the ability to use them; labour remains an inalienable element of the creative process, though not the only one. The theory of creativity as a personality expression suggests that the creator can also express what others feel through expression; the expression that underlies creativity is controlled by the creator's consciousness; art is a way of communicating and its role is to communicate internal states; artists externalize their states of mind to enable recipients to achieve similar states.

Artist is "someone who creates things with great skill and imagination" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020a). The medieval practical perception of art says: artist is "someone who – according to art – works through tools on matter". Synonyms are: master, expert, geek, guru, virtuoso, wizard and antonyms are: amateur, inexpert, nonexpert (Merriam-Webster, 2020a). The artist concept has changed over time and is even off-defined now (Sztabiński, 2002). Synthesizing the achievements of ancient aesthetics, there are several key issues defining an artist: imagination, thought, knowledge, wisdom, the idea he has in his mind, abilities in using the rules of art; in art, only the artist is the legislator (Tatarkiewicz, 2015). The artist's features are: creativity, sensitivity, intuition, "getting lost" in the creative process, putting everything in the creative process (from concept to implementation), self-analysis and self-correction. No less important for the effective implementation of artistic goals are also: persistence/consistency, hard work from an early age and throughout the life, self-discipline, mental resilience, responsibility, the ability to set goals and implement them, the ability to observe the world, perceptiveness, openness. The artist's goals have changed over time, although the most persistent ones include: materialization, giving the form of universal ideas, passing on values, giving satisfaction and pleasure to the client and/or the recipient, bringing the recipient to a catharsis state, transforming ugliness into beauty. To simplify further considerations, the 20th century postmodern meanings of the artist's concept were rejected.

It is much more difficult to answer the question of what a good artist is characterized by. He should be understandable; however, we find many examples of artists incomprehensible to their contemporaries, and after years/centuries being pillars in their fields. He should be popular, which would mean that he reaches the consciousness of the recipients; however, popularity is also not a good indicator, as it does not testify to the quality of artworks. He should refer to universal values and ideas that are understandable and important for humanity regardless of the era. We leave this question unanswered.

To answer the question of what makes a person undertakes creative activity and thus becomes an artist, we must refer to the achievements of aesthetics, which developed concepts of "basic personality" and "creative personality" (Gołaszewska, 1984). Creative personality is a selection of basic personality traits that condition the start of creative activity, its continuation and give shape to the work. Some of the features are manifested in the work, others are a condition for undertaking creative work. Creative personality develops on the background of the basic personality. In the artwork we will never find a full reflection of any of the personalities, although we can conclude traces of the creative personality from the artwork. In order

to notice the characteristic features of the artist's imagination, one must become familiar with his entire work. The issue of creative personality is combined with an artistic style. While the overall achievements of the artist allow to reconstruct the author's creative personality, the given artwork allows to reconstruct a specific approach to the world, the point of view from which all phenomena presented in the artwork are captured.

Researchers, analysing the creative process of artists, separated its conceptual, experience, implementation and post-implementation phases. It allowed to create a typology of creative personalities: intuitive, reflective and behavioural; these do not appear in pure form actually but rather as a mix of above in different proportions (Gołaszewska, 1984). The intuitive type is characterized by close entanglement of the experience and realization phases, the participation of pre-reflective awareness; the process of carrying out the work is fast and with a sense of well-made decisions; the most important creative moments are realized on the basis of acts of intuition without motivation of the discursive type, without the participation of full awareness (musical improvisers). The reflective type is characterized by a clear phase separation, where the experience phase precedes the implementation phase; there is full consciousness involved; it has a complicated structure, hesitation in the choice of concept and means of expression; the creative process is lengthy, the artist controls his intentions, creates a concept, and then implements it more or less consistently; the reflectiveness of the creative process is special, it is not only intellectual reflectivity, it is also emotional, it concerns personal matters and revolves around experiences gained during contact with reality. In the case of behavioural type, the phases of the process are separated from each other, except that the implementation phase precedes the experience phase to some extent; it involves both types of consciousness; it is a kind of trial-and-error method – the artist does not know what the final work should look like and does not feel the need to take such or other steps; it is about incorporating a not entirely clear artistic vision into further real shapes.

1.3. Crossing the borders of management and art

There are publications showing that management and art cross their borders for mutual good and benefit; many organisational problems can be solved with the use of creative artistic practices or approach.

An art in human life has been present since the earliest eras. Although aesthetics as an autonomic science was separated from philosophy relatively late, within philosophical discourses it was present from the beginning of abstract thought. Originally, the concept of individual creativity was not separated, and art was understood as the ability to combine three factors: material (given by nature), knowledge (flowing from tradition) and work (derived from man). Initially, creativity was understood passively as imitation (mimesis). Then the process of defining and analysing the phenomenon of individual creativity, which is the key to our considerations, has just began. Also management has accompanied mankind since primitive times; organizing into tribes, division of tasks, specialization – all this will later be reflected in the theory of organization and management.

The development of the management literature referring to art started after World War II. Ingram (1965) was one of the first researchers who pointed out the importance of creative

sense in using organizational resources and in learned management methods. He stated that a man educated in management methods and techniques is not a manager yet. He must to practice how to use these methods; this ability to use resources creatively was called the management art. Dégot (2007) paid attention to non-material dimension of the manager's activity: efficiency not only in the material and financial dimension. He indicated many bridges (more and less relevant) between management and art and compared management analysis and research to areas related to art theory (aesthetics, art history and art criticism), putting the manager at the centre of his considerations. After the first trailers of new direction of research, in the years 1990–2010 there was a flood of publications showing the benefits of combining the broadly understood art world with management. New horizons occur: process of effective management leadership skills development (Purg & Walravens, 2015), processes of self-analysis, self-development activities (Guranda & Nagy, 2011). Effective methods here are: paying attention – drawing contours; noticing contexts – drawing a negative space; changing perspective – turning upside down and looking at the canvas from a distance; studying art – improving observation and diagnosis skills. Chiapello (2004) draws attention to “artist critique” as a solution for solving organisational problems – where business optics based on profitability and efficiency only – was not able to help anymore. She underlines values of artistry, aesthetics, intellect, culture.

Literature abounds in a number of studies confirming the mutual benefits of symbiosis of art with organizations (business, state or local administration): from group music activities for communities in different cultures, for patronage of business over artists and artistic classes for organizations (Adler & Ippolito, 2016). Researchers analyse the benefits of collaboration showing added value for both sides. The described phenomena are usually forms of symbiosis of two worlds with benefits spreading on both sides with different intensity of benefits depending on the scope of cooperation. Business, patronizing artists, tries to build a specific marketing or corporate social responsibility narrative; artists, in turn, become an entity sharing their selected values, skills and techniques in order to acquire the means to allow for proper creative activity.

Patterns of using creative activities of artists in shaping and functioning of business leaders can be grouped into several approaches (Woodward & Funk, 2010): the “trait approach” (Geier, 1967) to leadership suggests that successful leaders have developed and display certain personal attributes that lead to success; these attributes are personality-based or character-based in nature and are deemed to be leadership traits as seen by the general population; the “behavioural approach” (Mosley, 1998) focuses more so on what the leader needs to do to display leadership; this approach looks at and codifies the skills and competencies required by successful leaders; the “situational approach” (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi, 1999) recognizes that the context, the issues and the people involved all contribute to different types of situations that must be attended to by the leader; the “transformational approach” (MacGregor Burns, 2003) describes leadership that creates positive change in the followers by taking care of each other's interests and acting in the interests of the group as a whole; this approach focuses on held values and the building of trust in others.

Gardner and Laskin (1995) pointed out that effective leaders combine intellect, creativity and ethics. On this base: leadership is a conglomerate of three opticians/faces: a manager

(introducing financial, organizational, structural and qualitative order), an artist (introducing chaos through his creativity – both destructive and constructive) and a priest (a mediator between order and chaos, inspiring the courage to embrace the creative potential of the organization at the risk, while alleviating the fears arising during the change). Jo Hatch, Kostera, and Koźmiński (2005) emphasized the difference between the concept of manager and the concept of leader; this difference can be seen in the formula: leader = manager + artist + priest.

The development of creative managerial skills is more effective using art-based education and training methods (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; April, Beall, & Peters, 2015; Sutherland, 2013) because it develops an element of creativity through timelessness, universality and holism. Managers can learn from artists to imitate the ability to design, feel and inspire with the heart, by using techniques derived from theatre practice (skills transfer, projection technique, essence illustration, action), painting practice (framing, aestheticizing and de-routinizing activities) or psychology of art (experiencing self and others, objectifying and associative work). Learning improvisation techniques (the results are based on research into the experiences of theatre improvisation) are helpful in developing “teaching” leadership skills: creativity, resourcefulness, coping with uncertainty and mysteriousness. Referring to the rules functioning on the basis of art historically and often modified today (perspective in painting, omniscient narrator in fiction), Watkins and King (2002) suggest perceiving the organization in holistic way, and not just as a mechanism based on specific and unchanging rules; rules should be respected, however their creative use and modification are desirable. In other words, rules and techniques for the phenomenon of creativity should also be treated creatively.

Some researchers have been sceptical about combining art and management theories, postulating maintaining clear boundaries between these areas. According to Pelzer (2006) the concept of “management art” has an internal contradiction because the implementation of this concept sometimes results in far-reaching deviations for both art and management.

The beginning of the 21st century was the period when the first synthetic studies (books) dealing with broader topics bordering on art and management began to appear (Biehl-Missal, 2011). Atkinson (2007) tries to answer the question of whether management can be considered an art form. He extensively uses philosophical and aesthetic theories for this purpose, however, he concludes that management is neither science, nor art, nor craft.

2. Results of the research

There are two main results of our research: 1) the new metaphor of an organisation and 2) the use of “aesthetic situation” theory in the management field.

Researchers have created many metaphors of the organization, which is the basic field of processes and phenomena related to management problems (Sułkowski, 2011). A lot of metaphors apply to the art world also: organization as orchestra or jazz band (manager as conductor), organization as a theatre (manager as actor or performer), or organization as a story (Biehl-Missal, 2011). However, there is no metaphor of organization as “an artwork” being a product of the “creator” (manager), which is created (modelled/managed) for the

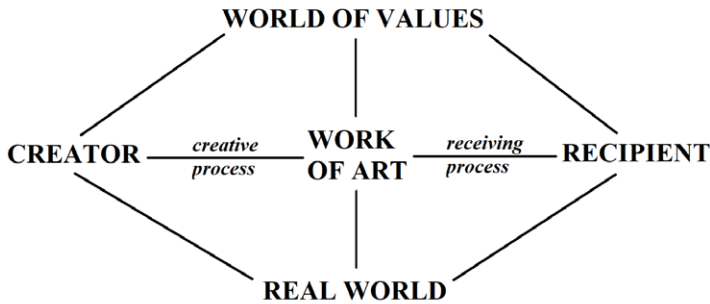


Figure 1. Aesthetic situation (source: created by authors)

needs of “recipients” (stakeholders) according to specific “values”. Only the shadow of this metaphor was outlined by Reckhenrich, Kupp, and Anderson (2009).

When synthesizing knowledge in the fields of aesthetics and management, we consider the activity of a manager as an artistic-creative activity using the “aesthetic situation” theory by Gołaszewska (1984) as a spine of our considerations. There are other aesthetic theories that may refer to our considerations, but Gołaszewska’s theory is the most coherent and at the same time flexible. Gołaszewska – as the author of the concept of the “aesthetic situation” based on Roman Ingarden’s (1970) achievements (phenomenology, aesthetics) – translated her original theory of “axiological situation into the aesthetics area (Figure 1): creator in creative process creates an artwork; the artwork in receiving process is received by recipient; all these elements have connections and interactions with world of values and happen in real world. This theory is the main axis of our considerations.

3. Discussion and interpretation of results

We think that placing management issues on the map of the theory of artistic creativity can help to better understand the phenomenon of manager’s creativity. This new perspective also determines the role of a creative manager who must find a path towards the future of the organization in accordance with the expectations of stakeholders and maintaining minimum ethical standards. We look at the management process – in the spirit of the new metaphor – analogously to the concept of aesthetic situation, focusing on the main elements of this situation separately, *i.e.*: creator-manager, artwork-organization, recipients-stakeholders.

3.1. Manager as creator: creative process, values

Although the most important from the point of view of aesthetics are values, and the most visible symptom of creativity is the artwork itself, it is in the person (mind, consciousness, sub-consciousness) of the creator that the most important processes that make up the phenomenon of creativity occur. We will use the theory of creativity in empirically oriented aesthetics (Gołaszewska, 1984) to trace the creative process thoroughly.

Several conditions influence the undertaking of artistic creation, which are collectively called disposition or creative attitude: personality conditions (abilities and interests leading to

the attitude of interest in creating and appreciating art); social conditions (the impact of the environment and education, and public opinion regarding the position of art and evaluation of the works of other artists); wealth of experience (the sum of the artist's individual experiences). When transposing above elements into the management process, the manager must possess a disposition, which is a set of base factors that can form the basis for the development of the management process: his interest in management, home conditions, education.

To start the creative process, just a creative attitude is not enough – creativity is also needed; motifs can be of two types: assigned – directly affecting the shaping of the work and which can be realized with the participation of creative work (consideration for yourself, *i.e.* the desire to create a work that meets and expresses the creator's expectations; consideration for the work, *i.e.* attention focused on perfection of the work, realizing a high aesthetic value; consideration of the recipient, *i.e.* the willingness to provide others with the experience that artwork can bring); unassigned – marked in the work indirectly and possible to implement also by means of other activities; additionally activating creative potencies (economic considerations, social coercion, compliance with stereotypes). In the case of manager who has a managerial disposition, there are a number of motivational elements: the desire to create an organization that meets the goals set by the owner, an organization expressing personality or values expressed by the manager, the desire to create an organization creating an effect (product, service) with specific assumptions. Among the unassigned motives we can mention: the need for the manager to acquire the resources necessary for life, the expectations of society for a particular manager.

For a work to be created, there must be a direct impulse for undertaking a creative process, *i.e.* psychological activation through an external or internal stimulus: 1) a lack of perception in the world that allows fulfilment or which requires fulfilment (seeing imperfection, the artist decides to enrich reality with a new value); 2) fascination with the world, reality (the artist wants to show his admiration for the world and things in the dawn and save this state from oblivion); 3) an excess of own experiences from which the artist wants to free himself (wanting to present them to others, looking for a way to express them in artistic form). On the basis of organization, such an external stimulus may be: a death of the current manager and the social expectation that our creator will take the place or market situation, which, when properly used, can bring the expected results (material or non-material); an internal stimulus may be the lack of livelihood after an emergency or a rebellious decision resulted from deep reflection.

The sum of the elements to date in the form of internal coercion leads to the final decision to undertake the creative process; then real preparation for artistic work and first efforts take place; sometimes the artist immediately starts the work, but more often the work is preceded by three stages: the concept of the work, artistic vision and artistic intention. In the context of the organization, immediate action can take place in the case of a one-man business, where all the work will be concentrated in one hand; in the case of large organizations, the manager usually starts the conceptual process, formulation of the mission and vision as well as the strategy of action. Like an artist, the artist-manager knows that he is producing an art form (Woodward & Funk, 2010).

The implementation process begins when the artist begins to actually objectify his intention, he shapes the material so that it realizes a certain aesthetic value; the important phases

here are to shape the material of the work so that it is equivalent to an artistic vision. On the basis of organization, the implementation process will start when the business concept, its mission, vision and strategy are put into practice: building teams, reorganizing, assigning task goals. At this point, it is worth paying attention to situations unforeseen in the previously planned concept of the work, resulting from an unforeseen coincidence or even an error at the stage of implementation; forcing the unintended result of an action (stumble on stage by the actor, erroneous sound played by the musician during improvisation) into a valuable and immanent part of an artwork requires the artist's reflex, observation skill and creativity. The same will apply to a manager who notices implementation "accidents at work" and must transform them into wholesome elements of the work.

After the end of the physical creative process, there is post-implementation phase consisting: verification of the value of artist's work and artist's distance to the work. In the context of an organization, the post-implementation phase occurs when the manager finishes the collaboration with the organization. Only then he is able to see his work from a distance and assess whether he has accomplished his intentions or whether the values he followed are visible in the fruits of the organization.

An excellent manager can perfectly manage, however – due to the poor situation in the industry – his organization can achieve poor results and *vice versa* (Dégot, 2007). Poor financial results, however, do not cross the functioning of the metaphor of the organization as an artwork, and of the manager as the creator of the work.

3.2. Organization as an artwork and stakeholders as recipient: receipt process

Artwork is "an object made by an artist of great skill" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020c), "a product of one of the fine arts" or "something giving high aesthetic satisfaction to the receiver" (Merriam-Webster, 2020c). Dégot (2007) compares management analysis and research to areas related to the theory of art: aesthetics, art history and art criticism. Putting the manager at the centre of his analysis, he considers each manager's decision as a separate artwork, which in our opinion narrows the optics of his research significantly. From the point of view of art, this is a mistake, because the artwork is a central element of an aesthetic situation (Figure 1). Just as an artist makes many decisions working on his work, so the manager's decisions are only individual steps on the path to the creation/development of the organization (creator's work). The work is independent of the creative process, and the creative process is independent of the creator's basic personality (Gołaszewska, 1984). The artist's work testifies to the artist only, while the manager's work testifies to the manager but also to the person setting the goal. A creative manager is an artist creating/improving his work constantly (like composer who makes changes in the score after each public performance). The creative act is continuous here. The work of a manager can be fully understood only after the creative act has been completed, *i.e.* the artist's separation from the organization (or a change of his position).

Unconventional/creative methods of looking for solutions are recommended for organizations in which the management system (based on logic and stable rules) is effective. Otherwise, the creativity can cause far-reaching organizational imbalances. Creative visions can be effectively implemented by well-managed organizations only. On the other hand, a creative manager may find methods and solutions adequate to an unstable and illogically-

working organization (although such a situation should be considered as an exception and temporary action, *e.g.* change management).

Recipients of an artwork are specific individuals (when the work was made according to special order), or all potential viewers/listeners who come into contact with the work intentionally or accidentally. The concept of the recipient of an artwork is somewhat more complex in the case of organizations, because apart from the clients who are the main beneficiaries of the product/service/effect produced by the organization, this group also includes the owners of the organization, and to some extent organization employees also. Atkinson (2007) claimed that the audience for the artist-manager performing an artwork is an organization. According to the concept of organization as an artwork, this way of thinking is limiting and results from the determination that the artwork in the management process is the manager's decision.

Certainly, recipients are a source of feedback for the artist about the work and values read from the work. Organizations use various types of customer satisfaction surveys to identify their views and make adjustments in the organization's performance. In art, the artist observing the reactions to his work can compare his intentions with the actual reception, and use this knowledge in the implementation of new works, or to modify the received work.

Receiving process (called aesthetic process) consists in sensual reception of the message located in the work. The artwork receiving process begins with ignorance and ends with interpretation (Woodward & Funk, 2010). In the case of the process of collecting a work that is an organization, the product/service – whose purpose is to meet specific needs – is subject to sensual acceptance by customers. The owner receives the work by comparing the effect produced by the organization with the goals that the owner has set for the organization. Employees receive the organization by comparing their expectations of the workplace with real circumstances.

3.3. Manager as the artist

It seems that the most effective combination of manager and artist roles is found in the equation: leader = manager + artist + priest (Jo Hatch et al., 2005). However, there is a noticeable need to correct and supplement the role of the artist in this equation, to de-mythologize the popular understanding of the term "artist" which, according to colloquial use, is closer to the term "visionary". It is the visionary who throws ideas and does not deal with their implementation; it may seem that he works chaotically and accidentally. The artist has all the features of positively creative thinking and creating visions, but also he has the ability to implement them consistently; it is hard to deny the managerial skills of an opera director who prepares dozens of singers, stage design, choreography and orchestra musicians for many months, or a sculptor who consistently strives for perfectly selected material and realizes in it his artistic idea laboriously. Every true artist is automatically a creative manager. But not every director, sculptor or musician is an artist automatically; if he carries out his works in a kitschy/reproductive/non-creative way, he is rather a craftsman, non-creative manager.

The artist is an ennobling concept also for people dealing with art. Art is the use of a given field with mastery, in a creative way and when rooted to universal values (not only efficiency). The stereotypical perception of artists as creative but chaotic people finds reflection

in management sciences; this cultural archetype is not confirmed by literature. The lack of organization and doing chaos base on the character traits belonging to the basic personality of a person, which means that individuals with such traits can be found in every area of life. Management researchers who are not active artists use art and artistic creativity concepts in a theoretical way, based not on practice and experience. Some of their observations have insightful value, however, it results more from the intuitive perception of art world phenomena than from real participation in them.

We will examine the mutual relations of the artist and manager concepts now; both concepts have many points in common, but also many differences. Similarities include the fact that artist and manager begin creative activities in the non-material sphere (conceptual phase), and then implement ideas/goals in the material sphere. Another similarity is the fact that both – without a specialized education – can function well in their fields; it is also proof of the analogy between artistic talent and managerial talent. Among the differences it should be noted that the manager can be satisfied with the “slightly better” results; the artist, however, always refers to and strives for the ideal – he will consider his work immature if he does not see the full reflection of the ideal in the work. This kind of mixture of unattainable idealism and perfectionism is the reason for depressive states and frustration often found among artists – after all, not many artists manage to materialize these ideals. Manager utilitarianism is inherently contrary to the artist’s creative freedom despite the fact that both of them pursue specific goals. Some artistic (musical) works live in time only, while organizations function in time and space. A classical artwork does not evolve (although contemporary works of art evolve: interactive works, installations); organizations evolve. Artists – with artistic creation – worry about the financial result of the entire artistic undertaking rarely; they have administrative directors (philharmonics, theatres, galleries) for this purpose; in turn, a manager usually has to consider the aspect of financial effectiveness of his work. The artist (writer, painter, musician) works in art on his individual basis, although his interpersonal-organizational skills (building/maintaining contacts with institutions/people) are not insignificant; in turn, the manager works as a team – he is more of an orchestra conductor or director of the performance – and without interpersonal and organizational skills he has little chance of success.

To show the differences in the meanings of the concepts used in management literature with a spine of artistic approach to describe the manager, a graphical diagram was created that dichotomous differentiated the dimension of creativity and the dimension of efficiency (Figure 2). We have described each of the matrix-separated attitudes in a universal way: visionary – a person with high creativity and low organizational efficiency; reproducer – low creativity and low organizational efficiency; craftsman – low creativity and high organizational efficiency; creator – high creativity and high organizational efficiency. Thanks to this simplified model, it is easier to depict the roles from the world of art and the corresponding roles of the business world. Therefore: the visionary in organisational world will be a manager theoretician (*e.g.* professor of management who has not been working in any organisation as a manager, but he is well informed and creative in theory of management); analogical role in artistic world will be the conceptualist, an artist who creates the piece of art but who does not implement own idea in any matter of art. The reproducer in organisational world will

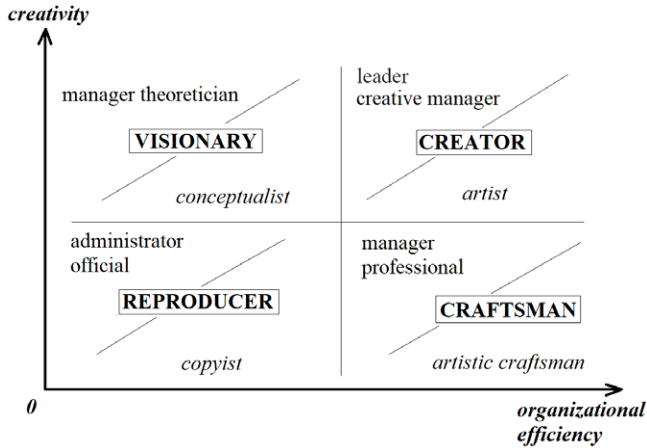


Figure 2. Creativity *versus* organisational efficiency (source: created by authors)

be an administrator or an official, who do not invent any rules but follows imposed (by law or his superior) rules; in art world the reproducer is called a copyist. The craftsman in organisational world can be a manager or a professional; in art world – artistic craftsman, who is specialised in specific art forms (e.g. portrait painter, landscape painter). The creator in organisational world will be a creative manager, who is called a leader; in artistic world – we find him as a real artist.

There is not always a need for artistic thinking for a manager – hence looking for similarities between the manager and the artist is not always necessary. However, a manager with high creativity and proficiency in his field can be successfully called a management artist. It will also be authorized to name the manager as an artist who, realizing his visions, knows how to organize reality according to his intentions – unlike conceptualists who do not deal with the implementation of their creative visions.

Conclusions

It is not possible to create one universal recipe, the use of which will result in creative action. However, we can try to describe the phenomenon of creativity from different perspectives; we never know which perspective will reach the recipients, and which perspective will help them understand the role of a creative manager better. Artistry is not a homogeneous phenomenon; it consists of many variable factors, however, the theoretical achievements of aesthetics in the field of artistic creativity is a rich source of knowledge that can be used to study areas of management successfully.

We are sure that described in this article the creative endeavour in crossing the borders of art and management allow to answer on the research question positively: yes, the theory of aesthetics allow to structure and understand the problem of creativity of managers better or at least in new and well developed perspective. Considering our all assumptions together, we can talk about management as an art, and about manager as a management artist (it does not mean that we want to call all managers as artists *per se* – see Figure 2): the manager/creator

uses tools in a virtuoso and creative way; the manager/creator influences the organization/artwork leaving a trace; the organization/artwork presents a specific message, and the organization/artwork's analysis reveals the values by which it was created/managed; stakeholders/recipients get the result designed by the manager/creator.

Developing the knowledge of “aesthetic situation” (and its detailed elements) we can emphasize the new spheres in management process and look at it in a new creative perspective.

Limitations

The use of aesthetic theory in the field of creativity in organization and management should be moderate and cautious; because the organization is an extremely complex and dynamic “organism” compared to an artistic work, and even minor changes within it can result in far-reaching and irreversible consequences.

The metaphor of the organization as an artwork concerns senior managers (those whose decisions affect the entire organization) rather than operational managers. However – in the case of the activities of lower-level managers – taking into account a fragment of the organization in a specific time perspective (the work of this manager) as an artwork, we can successfully apply this metaphor here as well, *e.g.* the department of the organization as an artwork of its manager.

There is no certainty that empowering experts in their artistic fields in managerial positions will bring positive effects in terms of increasing the level of creativity in the organization. While their creativity will certainly be revealing, their lack of knowledge of the realities of a particular organization, managerial techniques and hard knowledge in the field of finance can imply unpredictable problems – doing more damage than benefits.

Perspectives

The development of management theory based on theories about art, artist's roles and features can bring revealing results. Due to the fact that there are different types of creative personalities, it would be worth examining whether the development of creativity of managers should take into account this typology and differentiate development methods according to this typology. Research-based literature confirms that some leader skills can be learned and taught (Woodward & Funk, 2010), however – analogously to the art world, where not everyone, despite the same artistic education, becomes an artist – the same not everyone, despite the same business education, will become a leader. Each person has unique set of features and it is primarily their arrangement that determines the predisposition to act both in art world and in management world. A broad understanding of the entire context and components of the metaphor “organization as an artwork” for a manager as an artist increases the likelihood of successful implementation of solutions because, like the aesthetic situation, it is based holistically on all management process elements and on values – that through the organization – affect the real world. Applying the theory of aesthetics to the management process, artistry can be considered as a kind of higher level of management; the highest degree in gradation: administrator, manager, management artist.

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VADYBININKAS KAIP MENININKAS: KŪRYBINĖS PASTANGOS ĮVEIKTI RIBĄ TARP MENO IR ORGANIZACINIO DISKURSO

Michał SZOSTAK, Łukasz SUŁKOWSKI

Santrauka

Pagrindinis dėmesys šiame straipsnyje skiriamas autorių pateikiamai organizacijos metaforai „organizacija kaip meno kūrinys“, kuri, grindžiama estetikos pasiekimais, suteikia galimybę į vadybininką pažvelgti kaip į kūrėją (tikrą „menininką“), o į organizacijos suinteresuotuosius subjektus – kaip į tai, kam skirtas šis meno kūrinys. Šis naujas požiūris suteikia vadybai Marios Gołaszewskos „estetinės situacijos“ koncepcijos pagrindą. Remiantis šiuo požiūriu, estetikos teorijų elementai vadybai skirtai literatūrai suteikia tinkamą kontekstą, o sprendimai, pasiskolinti iš estetikos teorijos, į kūrybiškumo teoriją vadyboje įneša naują kokybę. Straipsnyje gvildinti šią temą paskatino vieno iš autorių tiek meninė, tiek vadybinė patirtis. Tyrimo metodologija grindžiama kokybine literatūros apžvalga. Metodologinio požiūrio pagrindą sudaro tarpdalykinis ir daugia-paradigmis požiūris, remiantis vadybos ir organizacijos, taip pat meno ir psichologijos sričių publikacijomis. Estetikos teoriją pritaikius vadybos procesui, gali būti teigiama, kad meniškumas turėtų būti traktuojamas kaip aukštesnio lygio vadybos tipas, aukščiausia pakopa administratoriaus, vadybininko, vadybos menininko gradacijoje.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: estetiškas diskursas, menininkas, meno kūrinys, kūrybiška asmenybė, kūrybiškumas, kūrėjas, vadybininkas.