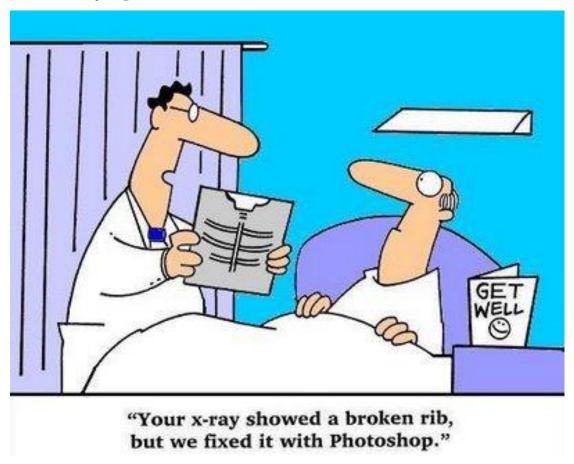# CREATIVITY AND GROUP- COUNSELING IN THE CORPORATE WORLD

A Qualitative Study of Employee`s Experiences with Creativity and Innovation

Master Thesis in Counseling by Inger Lise Sortland

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Trondheim, Spring 2014

"Your x-ray showed a broken rib, but we fixed it with Photoshop."

Front Page Photo from Jokes Journal, year unknown (23.05.2014)

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I: Foreword

I did not choose creativity as a subject; creativity chose me. I have always seemed to take a different approach to the counseling field than others, because my background in creative studies has given me the need to be creative in all that I do. Seeing my creative background as an asset, I now strive to bring innovation and creativity into all aspects of this Master thesis. This includes the theory and methodology.

This Master thesis marks the end of over eight years of study. Thank you to my family and friends for putting up with me: my dad for reading through drafts, my mum for baking. I would like to acknowledge my esteemed teachers. All of whom have made me a better student, and some of whom have given me the tools I need to grow into the counselor I want to be. I would also like to commemorate my fellow students, without whom I would not graduate. At least not as happily. To Rasmus, the love of my life, who has made me a better person. And last but not least, to my tutor, guide and confidant. Eleanor Allgood, I couldn't have done this without your support and creative thinking. For that, and all your hard work, I am most grateful. Thank you everyone, this thesis belongs to all of you.

"One must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star." (Nietzsche, year unknown: 21.05.2014.)

II

II: Abstract

In this master thesis, the focus was on the theme of creative group- counseling in larger corporations. Through a qualitative research process I have sought answers to the following research question: *How can a creative group counseling project improve the cooperation and thus the work environment in a larger corporation?* The process started with the idea of researching how employees respond to creativity during group counseling in the work place. I interviewed participants from the Choir Cooperation, which was a creative project with the counseling perspective of making employees cooperate better through using creativity. The project took place in a large corporation called New Corp. Afterwards I transcribed, coded and analyzed the material, in accordance with the qualitative research method. I discovered four key categories in answer to the research question. They are: The Experienced Creativity in New Corp, Toward a Better Work Environment through Creative Cooperation, Further Developing the Choir Cooperation, and Implications on Developing Creative Counseling.

The findings were then discussed using theories on holistic counseling, group counseling, cooperation, and creative counseling. My focus in the discussion also included a theatre perspective and this sub-research question: *In what ways can such creative projects create a culture that inspires employee-driven innovation?* I have found that creative group counseling can improve cooperation *because* it betters the work environment. I propose that creativity brings out the best in people, such as the employees in a corporation, and it is necessary in order to create innovation. Innovation is needed for development, and without it neither the employees nor the corporation can grow. The research lends support to creativity as helping development and communication, the foundation for cooperation and a better work environment.

III: Sammendrag

I denne masteroppgaven var fokuset på temaet kreativ rådgivning i større bedrifter. Jeg har søkt svar på den følgende problemstillingen gjennom en kvalitativ forskningsprosess: *Hvordan kan et kreativt grupperådgivningsprosjekt forbedre samarbeidet og dermed også arbeidsmiljøet i en større bedrift?* Prosessen startet med ideen om å forske på hvordan ansatte reagerer på kreativ grupperådgivning på arbeidsplassen. Jeg intervjuet deltakere fra the Choir Cooperation, et kreativt prosjekt med bedre samarbeid gjennom kreativitet som rådgivningsperspektiv. Prosjektet tok sted i en bedrift kalt New Corp. Jeg intervjuet deltakere fra prosjektet over to gruppeintervju. Etterpå transkriberte, kodet og analyserte jeg materialet, jamfør den kvalitative forskningsmetoden. Jeg oppdaget fire nøkkelkategorier som svarte på problemstillingen. Disse er: Den opplevde kreativiteten i New Corp, mot et bedre arbeidsmiljø gjennom kreativt samarbeid, videreutvikling av the Choir Cooperation, og implikasjoner på videreutvikling av kreativ rådgivning.

Resultatene ble diskutert så diskutert sammen med teorier om holistisk rådgivning, grupperådgivning, samarbeid, og kreativ rådgivning. Mitt fokus i diskusjonen inkluderte også et teaterperspektiv, samt denne underproblemstillingen: På hvilken måte kan slike kreative prosjekt skape en kultur som inspirer til medarbeiderdrevet innovasjon? Jeg har funnet at kreativ grupperådgivning kan bedre samarbeidet *fordi* den bedrer arbeidsmiljøet. Jeg foreslår at kreativitet bringer det beste ut i mennesker, slik som de i ansatte i et firma, samt er nødvendig for å skape innovasjon. Innovasjon er nødvendig for utvikling, og uten dette kan hverken bedriften- eller menneskene i den vokse. Denne forskningen støtter opp om kreativitet som et hjelpemiddel for utvikling og kommunikasjon, fundamentet for samarbeid og et bedre arbeidsmiljø

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Table of Contents

1: Introduction

 "Creativity is contagious, pass it on." (Einstein, year unknown: 22.05.2014.) This Master thesis is about creative group counseling projects in the corporate world.

1.1: The Research Question and Theme

The research question is the starting point for the project design as well as this Master thesis (Thagaard, 2013). The research question in this Master thesis is:

How can a creative group counseling project improve the cooperation and thus the work environment in a larger corporation?

A sub-research question is: *In what ways can such creative projects create a culture that inspire employee-driven innovation?* A qualitative study is suitable for shedding light on problems in one`s contemporary society through seeking to understand social phenomena. By enabling employees to work together in a creative setting, the hope is that this will help them cooperate better, and ultimately increase their contributions to a better work environment.

1.2: The Choir Cooperation Project

In the qualitative research process, I interviewed two groups of participants from a creative group project called The Choir Cooperation. This data form the basis for the research. The Choir Cooperation was a creative group project organized in a large corporation called New Corp. New Corp has over 400 employees separated into several departments, all with very different responsibilities. An external consultant company that works with developing internal communication and cooperation in corporations, directed the Choir Cooperation project. Throughout the project, the participants, ranging from management to ground floor workers, did several creative group exercises. At the end of the project, the groups competed in a choir contest. The use of creativity was inherent in the whole project, using the choir as a learning-tool for cooperation.

1.3: Conceptual Clarifications

Albert Einstein (year unknown): "Creativity is seeing what everyone else has seen, and thinking what no one else has thought." (In DTI, 2005: p. 4.) Creativity can be a way of creating something new that is meaningful to others, meaning that creativity involves improvisation and experiment as well as innovation (Johnstone, 1979). The

same goes for *theatre* in shaping an original product (Oddey, 1994). The term *creativity* in this thesis includes everything from the arts to the corporate world- as long as it includes creating and imagination. The same as *innovation*, meaning a culture that supports change and initiates development (Strømsnes, 2012). The term *group* in this thesis refer to a gathering of people with preferably a common goal and motivation, who mutually interact with each other through the tasks they perform (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). In the *group counseling* scenario there is need of a trained counselor: a person who helps people learn about themselves and their relationship with others (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005).

Weber defines bureaucracy as "an organizational model rationally designed to perform complex tasks efficiently". (Macionis & Plummer, 2008: p. 170.) The *corporation* described as a "large corporation" in the research question, is a bureaucratic organization with specialization, hierarchy of offices, as well as many rules and regulations. These traits describe a typical bureaucracy, as does impersonality because the corporation is too large to prioritize personal connections across the different levels of hierarchy (Macionis & Plummer, 2008). The researched corporation in this thesis will be referenced as *New Corp*, while the workers as *employees*. The *management* are those at the top levels, while the *ground floor workers* includes middle management. The participants in the creative project are called *participants*, while the interviewed participants will be called *respondents*.

1.4: Contents

The Theory

The first chapter introduces the counseling field, by focusing on the holistic counseling perspective. Then the focus moves on to group counseling, including Mcmurray`s term Person-in-Relation (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005), and McClure`s (2005) holding environment. After, the focus is on counseling theory concerning cooperation, including the relationship dimensions (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005, Kvalsund & Meyer, 2005), and Gadamer`s modern hermeneutics (Gustavsson, 2007). Because of the creative aspect of this thesis, the creative counseling theory has been influenced by Johnstone`s (1979) improvisation perspective, Perls` Gestalt theory (Clarkson, 2004), as well as psychodrama (Johannessen, Kokkersvold &

Vedeler, 2010). Lastly, Darsø`s (2011) concept of innovation is introduced, along with a handbook for employee-driven innovation (Strømsnes 2012).

The Qualitative Research Method

The method chapter start off with why I chose the qualitative research method, followed by an introduction to the research design. Then the focus moves on to the ethical side of being a researcher, including planning for ethics, social ethics, and the practical ethics in the field. My next focus is on the research behind this qualitative process, followed by the actual in-field study. This chapter ends with an account of the transcription, coding, analyzing and interpretation, using category-based analysis as well as symbolic interactionism and phenomenology (Thagaard, 2013).

The Results

The qualitative research process included coding and categorizing the research findings into four categories: The Experienced Creativity in New Corp, Toward a Better Work Environment through Creative Cooperation, Further Developing the Choir Cooperation, and Implications on Developing Creative Counseling. In the results chapter these four categories are presented through a descriptive analysis and an interpretive analysis.

The Theoretical Discussion

After accounting for the theory and results, I answer the research question and sub questions through a theoretical discussion on each category, using the research material from the results as well as counseling theory. The chapter ends with a holistic discussion, answering the research question as a whole.

Concluding Comments

This chapter includes a summary and some tentative conclusions on the research findings.

1.5: Expectations and Ambitions

I feel creativity can be used in all aspects of life, because of my background in drama and theatre. I therefore worked to incorporate creativity in the whole Master thesis. When I met the consultant responsible for the Choir Cooperation at a creative conference, I wanted to see what had been accomplished. My bias going into this process was that creativity was appreciated by the employees in the corporation I researched, but maybe not by the management. There have been several reports in

later years, raving about the effects of creativity, and I hope to really make a difference as a creative counselor. By using creativity towards counseling perspectives, corporations might reap both a better work environment and innovation. "Human creativity is the ultimate economic resource. The ability to come up with new ideas and better ways of doing things is ultimately what raises productivity and thus living standards." (Richard Florida, (2002) in DTI, 2005: p.1.)

2: The Theory

"The discipline of creation, be it to paint, compose, write, is an effort towards wholeness." (L'Engle, 23.05.2012.)

This chapter introduce the theories that form the basis for this Master thesis. The chapter starts with an introduction to the counseling field, where the focus is on the holistic counseling perspective. Then the focus moves to group counseling, and the terms Person-in-Relation, and the holding environment are introduced. After, the focus is on the counseling perspective of cooperation, introducing the terms relationship dimensions and modern hermeneutics. Because I sought a creative approach for the whole Master thesis (See chapter 1.5: Expectations and Ambitions), I have allowed myself to think outside the box when it comes to the theory as well. This by including the sub-chapter called creative counseling. Here the terms Gestalt and psychodrama are introduced, linking creativity and theatre with the counseling perspective. Lastly, the focus is on innovation. The theory on innovation can be linked to the work done in larger corporations, just as the corporation involved in The Choir Cooperation (See chapter 1: The Introduction). The counseling focus is the starting point of this thesis, and it is from there I have developed the research question (See chapter 1.1: The Research Question and Theme). Counseling is described in this thesis as the growth and development that comes when healthy people seek guidance from a trained counselor (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005).

2.1: A Holistic Counseling Perspective

During a lifetime most people meet challenges that they need help facing. Counseling in this thesis is the result from the voluntary helping relationship between client and counselor. Counseling does not mean the client comes to an expert to achieve answers. Rather, the counselor should guide the client to self-growth. The focus is on relational learning through a special kind of relationship between client and counselor (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). A mutual relationship is desirable, but one should always be aware of the power that exists in a relationship. Power can mean one person's control over the other, but can also be positive if distributed more evenly (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2003). A holistic perspective on counseling includes the fact that the people one meets are not just a means to one's end, but are in fact an end in themselves. This means a focus on seeing both people and the world as

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wholes. Also, everyone are interconnected in the relationships and experiences they form together. This can be linked to the saying that "people together are more than just sum of their parts" (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005).

2.2: Group Counseling

The group counseling focus in this thesis is based on "the notion that living systems, asgroups, are self-organizing so each has an inherent capacity to learn, grow, and change." (McClure, 2005: p. 8.) A group is a living organism, and all people in a given group are bound to influence each other. By recognizing and embracing the chaos of different individuals coming together in a group, one can better one`s spontaneous responses. Seeing chaos as beneficial can make it easier to navigate in the space between order and chaos (McClure, 2005). The existential-humanistic worldview is basis for the group counseling perspective in this thesis, because of its focus on the idea that people "are empowered to act on the world and determine their own destiny." (Ivey, D`Andrea, Ivey, 2012: p. 366.) In the existential-humanistic perspective, people are seen as simultaneously acting on the world while the world acts on them. This puts people in relation to each other, and the counseling focus becomes enabling people to see themselves- and act, in accordance with the world around them. Here both empathy and seeing others as people rather than objects is essential (Ivey et al., 2012). Group counseling is about relational learning. As a counselor one "must be acting in the world in ways that increase my self-knowing so that I can help you do the same and become able to make the choices that will enable something to go right in your relation with the world." (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005: p. 53.)

Person-in-Relation

"(…) as in most other areas of human conduct, we stand in need of wisdom about how we should treat one another and about how we may become the kinds of persons we want to be." (Strike & Ternasky (1993) in Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005: p. 1.) Person-in-Relation is a key concept by John Macmurray, where the focus is on interacting with others as human beings, not objects:"(…) Macmurray`s philosophy of the person is defined primarily and essentially as an agent (a do-er in the world) who knows both himself as a person and the "other" as a person only in relation to the "other". (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005: p. 14.) Macmurray`s concept is based on shared experiences, and it came as a reaction to the postmodern view of the

independent person who in isolation reflects on the world. The hope is that if people stop acting as if they are individual beings, one can change destructive behavior towards others by embracing the fact that one and all is connected to each other. This means that destructive behavior by oneself on others will in the end effect oneself. By relating to the whole person, one sees others as human beings, not objects that one can use for beneficial reasons. Here communication is essential, and it is only through reciprocal communication that people can be truly in relation to each other. This includes Macmurray`s concept of "contact-withdrawal-return" in which one reflects on actions with others. The reflections become the basis for relational learning, and one bring one's newfound insight into another cycle of contact and relations (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005).

A Holding Environment
"(...) "holding environment" is consistent with the idea of containment. (…) This containment gives the group more freedom (safety) to experience (risk) emotional growth." (McClure, 2005: p. 113.) Being Person-in-Relation means that two or more people interact in a common environment. McClure (2005) talks about a holding environment. A holding environment can be described as a room where the atmosphere is strong enough to contain all that may come up in the situation or context. A holding environment should be based on a safety as well as stability, helping the people in it open up and reveal their real selves as much as possible by letting go of the metaphoric masks that they may be wearing. The better the holding environment, the easier it is to focus on the internal issues rather than just the superficial. There is room for creativity here too, in the spontaneity that is needed for growth and change. This means one allows one's self to be influenced by the people one is meeting in a mutual relation, not determining beforehand how to respond to the social contact with others (McClure, 2005).

2.3: Cooperation
"We behave differently in the company of another person than when alone. When we meet others we are 'onstage' and so give a performance that differs from how we behave 'offstage'. (Hargie, 2006: p. 1). The premise of relational learning in this thesis is based on the fact that one`s personal knowledge is formed by one`s direct experiences with other people, similar to Macmurray's Person-in-Relation. One learns by experiencing life and acting in the world around oneself. To live and act,

basically means to be in relation to others. When in a group one interacts and learns through the relations one has with the other members: one's existence depends on the existence of others. The goal is to be more aware of oneself through one`s communal experiences with others (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). The fact is that people who have no meaningful connections with others are unhappy, depressed and lonely. Close ties with other people, no matter how painful, is what it means to feel fully human. It is also true that the better one communicates with others, the more satisfying and rewarding is one`s existence (Hargie, 2006). This also goes for cooperation in groups. "The essence of communication is the formation and expression of an identity. The formation of the self is not an independent event generated by an autonomous actor. Rather, the self emerges through social interaction." (Coover and Murphy (year unknown) in Hargie, 2006).

Relationship Dimensions

When one develops oneself in contact with other people, the relationship dimensions also develop. Relationship dimensions are a prerequisite for group development. A group can develop either dependency, independency, or mutual dependency. Ideally the group changes relationship dimensions based on the developments in the group dynamics, as well as the developments in the persons in the group. Commonly a group develops from dependency, through independency, and ideally ends up as including mutual dependency. The dependent relationship dimension is characterized by one-way communication. The person or a group is dependent on someone else, but this dependency is not reciprocated. Dependency can mean being dependent on another to the point where one forego one`s autonomy, and look to others for direction (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005, Kvalsund & Meyer, 2005).

The independent dimension is the opposite, and one depends on oneself for the most part. This can include being too autonomous, foregoing the group perspective. The mutually dependent relationship is the most symmetric of the relationship dimensions, where one is dependent on each other in the group. It is usually the context that decides if the people in the group perceive the relationship dimension as positive or negative (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005, 2005, Kvalsund & Meyer, 2005). Reflecting on one's development as a group is most rewarding when it comes to being aware of what changes would benefit the group. If the group's development stops or goes backwards one can speak of a regressive group. A regressive group

often becomes destructive for the group members. If a group knows how to benefit from each member, however, one can talk of a generative group. A generative group have the possibility of exceeding boundaries and achieve new knowledge about the group and the people in it (McClure, 2005).

The Modern Hermeneutics

Hans-Georg Gadamer is the forerunner of modern hermeneutics, a philosophy that focuses on the interpretation process. Gadamer (Gustavsson, 2007) points out that every meeting is based on prejudices originating from before the actual meeting. To expand one's boundaries one needs to be open for the influence of others. This openness jeopardizes ones prejudices in favor of expanding the horizon of understanding. According to Gadamer it is ideal to let oneself be carried away in a meeting, to be able to come out of the situation a changed person. By doing that one can expand one's mind by letting oneself be influenced by others. This can be compared to the playfulness of children (Gustavsson, 2007), a point of view shared by the drama and theatre community. Children get lost in the game, and emerge from the game with the input of others. In this aspect the modern hermeneutics are similar to improvisation. One has to accept the input of others when improvising, losing oneself in the situation, before surfacing a changed person (Johnstone, 1979)

As I grew up, everything started getting grey and dull. I could still remember the amazing intensity of the world I'd lived in as a child, but I thought the dulling perception was an inevitable consequence of age- just as the lens of the eye is bound gradually to dim. I didn`t understand that clarity is in the mind. I've since found tricks that can make the world blaze up again in about fifteen seconds, and the effects last for hours. (Johnstone, 1979: p. 13.)

2.4: Creative Counseling

"Don't think. Thinking is the enemy of creativity. It's self-conscious, and anything self-conscious is lousy. You can't try to do things. You simply must do things." Bradbury, year unknown: 21.05.2014.) According to the father of improvisation, Keith Johnstone (1979), improvisation is all about creatively accepting what happens: To use spontaneity as an attitude that always makes one take on new challenges. It is an attitude where one dares to face what happens, without planning. As a teacher, Johnstone used the art of improvisation to help students be more

creative by not setting any limits for their imagination. By creating a fiction based on their imagination and creativity, the students became more secure in themselves through their improvisation. "Good improvisers seem telepathic; everything looks pre-arranged. This is because they accept all offers made—which is something no 'normal' person would do." (Johnstone, 1979: p. 41.) Professor Anne Bamford spearheaded the UNESCO report on the role and influence of the arts when it comes to the learning and well-being of students in school. The students experienced more confidence, creativity, and better learning abilities when including arts in the teaching. This comes from the "wow" factor, according to Bamford, and schools that teach the students that learning is fun, achieve better results on the PISA- tests (Hoaas, 2008).

Gestalt

One of the fundamental concepts of Gestalt theory is that the person is basically healthy and is striving for balance, health and growth. Therefore, any approach which presumes the human being to be essentially flawed is incompatible with the Gestalt approach. Perls drew attention to the fact that plants and animals do not prevent their own growth- only humans do. (Clarkson, 2004: p. 49.)

Gestalt counseling, founded by Fritz Perls, supports the holistic counseling perspective in this thesis. In Gestalt counseling one's life can be separated into parts, and one has to have all the parts working together to achieve a healthy Gestalt cycle. Gestalt therapy concerns the fact that sometimes one has trouble moving on to a new process in life, here referred to as a cycle. This can be due to something that should have happened, or something that happened but was not processed properly. In Gestalt therapy one needs to be open to experiencing the here and now, and change between the conceptual pair of figure and ground. The figure is the concrete part that stands out clearly from the background in a given moment, and the ground is the background or context the figure emerges from. To achieve a healthy Gestalt cycle one needs to figure out what is missing in one's life or in the Gestalt process, and add the missing piece. A healthy Gestalt cycle consists of: withdrawal or rest before a new figure emerges; sensation where a new figure emerges from the ground; awareness where one experiences the figure; mobilization of one's self and resources; action where one chooses and implements the desired action; and final contact that marks the end of the cycle. If the Gestalt cycle remains unfinished one

may experience problems, dysfunctions or unfinished business, including these defense mechanisms: retroflection, attribution, deflection, projection, introjection, and confluence (Clarkson, 2004, Ivey et al., 2012).

The gestaltist`s approach is particularly characterized by the use of metaphor, fantasy and imagery, working with body posture and movement, enactment and visualization, time distortion and the full expression of feelings involving the whole body in action. Modern gestalt aims for an integration of body, feelings and intellect, seeing the person`s most basic needs within the context of the social environment. (Clarkson, 2004: p. 2.)

Psychodrama

"William Shakespeare (…): "All the world is a stage, and all the men and women merely players." This quote summarizes in many ways the basis for theory about roles." (Johannessen et al., 2010: p. 211.) Everyone plays many roles a day, and one and all are linked together by the roles one play. Psychodrama was first introduced by J.L. Moreno. This is therapeutic method where one uses other communication methods than verbal communication, to help with a client's mental, psychological and personal problems. The goal is to help people get in touch with their whole self, through the art of dance, mime, movement, music and of course theatre. Group therapy can include a process where the participants solve their problems and conflicts by acting them out in a play about their own lives. The method includes role-play where the client is the protagonist, and the counselor is both participant and observer. The counselor also needs to be a good leader that maintains control over the situation at all times. Psychodrama may be most helpful for those who are not in contact with their feelings. By using role- play and improvisation, one can practice facing other people- as well as one`s own issues, in a controlled setting. Thus achieving experience based learning through using the whole body. Psychodrama includes three stages, called introduction, playing, discussion (Johannessen et al., 2010). Psychodrama can be linked to creativity, because one can better help one's own growth as a person if one improvises creatively (May, 1981, Johannessen et al., 2010).

2.5: Innovation

Innovation can be perceived as some kind act of creation that includes discontinuing the accustomed perception, because one discovers a new one. To incorporate these kinds of changes mean more than just scratching the "surface" (…). Innovation in corporations is about making changes in a sort of stable atmosphere, or say changes in culture, habits, routines, and so on. (Aasen & Amundsen, 2011: p. 38.)

Darsø (2011) defines innovation competencies as "the ability to create innovation while navigating effectively in interaction with others through complex contexts". (p.13.) The definitions above have shaped the concept of innovation that are used in this thesis. According to the well-known saying, birds of a feather flock together, or in the case of innovation: "Similar children play together, but they play the same thing all the time." (Strømsnes, 2012: p. 1.) By thinking outside the box, innovation can help a corporation blossom due to new perspectives and a culture that supports change. Just as one does in the theatre to create something new and meaningful (Oddey, 1994). The EU put together an action plan in 2004 to help entrepreneurship or innovation, starting with creating an innovative spirit. This to combine the knowledge in the corporation with the facts about innovation. One of the ways to promote innovation can be through a competition (Aasen & Amundsen, 2011, Strømsnes, 2012) just as in the Choir Cooperation. Whether the winner gets a work assignment, or just bragging rights, this can help motivate the employees to work together in new ways to achieve a common goal. Lastly, the plan focuses on the need for capital, and the official rules and regulations to help structure the innovation (Aasen & Amundsen, 2011, Strømsnes, 2012).

Guide to Innovation

In a larger corporation one has to consider one's needs before starting the process of innovation, and identify the challenges and possibilities that exist in the work environment. Here it is important to get the management onboard with the plans, as well as employees on the ground floor with interdisciplinary knowledge. There should be an overall strategy that structures- and encourages a culture of innovation. Then there is the matter of planning and organizing the innovation, including making decisions. This includes having enough time to complete the process. In a large corporation one also needs to evaluate the risks involved in the innovation, because time is money and the leaders need to make sure the work does not suffer or time is

wasted. An important tool in establishing innovation is the use of dialogue. To clarify the wants and needs on the different levels of the corporation, one needs clear ground rules and efficient communication through dialogue. Lastly there is always need to follow up the innovation through evaluation, as well as from one's triumphs and mistakes. To implement the newfound ideas and creations one needs to establish a culture that is open to change, but also willing to continue learning by doing (Strømsnes, 2012).

Employee-Driven Innovation

Employee-driven innovation is a common term for when the workers in a corporation actively help in the development of new solutions, services, products, business models or processes. To achieve employee-driven innovation, The Ministry of Trade and Industry in Norway (2012) have made a handbook that emphasizes the need for an open and inclusive work environment. This handbook focuses on the involvement, trust and security of a corporation, factors necessary to succeed in involving the employees in a culture of innovation. The employees needs to feel pride and ownership in what they do, as well as be able to think outside the box. The handbook presents some tips to support employee-driven innovation in a corporation: focus on the leadership, and better their ability to detect and nurture the employees` potential. Focus on cooperation: give out information and let the employees have a say in the matter. There is also need for a system that help the different parts of the corporation communicate, and that makes sure ideas are followed up. Lastly: be patient. If the corporation incorporate a focus on employee-driven innovation, the results will come in one form or another (Hansen et al., 2012). By collaborating with other corporations and vendors, a corporation can achieve more than by working alone. The same goes for the employees. If the employees are uninspired, there will be no creativity or new ideas, and in other words no innovation (Strømsnes, 2012).

3: The Qualitative Research Method

This chapter starts off with why I as a researcher chose the qualitative method, followed by an introduction to the research design. Then the focus is on planning for ethics, the social ethics appropriate for this thesis, as well as the practical ethics of this research process. After, the focus moves to the research that was done at the start of this process. This includes an introducing the conversational group interview, before accounting for the practical study in the field. The in-field study includes a brief summary of the two interviews I performed as a researcher. The last part of this chapter is dedicated to what happened after the research in the field, focusing on the category based analysis, as well as symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. The theme for this Master thesis is creativity (See chapter 1.1: Research Question and Theme), but how can I write about being creative if I do not employ the same creative praxis in this research? The qualitative research method includes a dedication and involvement in the human condition (Thagaard, 2013) that I compare with writing plays and performing them on stage. Both the research process and the process of making theatre involves an interpreting process, where the social context is the center of attention (Oddey, 1994). This is why I want to use a theatre analogy throughout this chapter.

3.1: Choosing a Research Method

"Qualitative methods seek to get a depth perspective, and emphasize meaning (…) Qualitative methods are known for their flexible research." (Thagaard, 2013: p. 17 and 31.) I as a researcher chose the qualitative method for this thesis. This because the method focus on human life experiences, just as theatre conveys the life stories of the characters on stage (Oddey, 1994). Through the systematics, involvement and flexibility that define qualitative research, one is able to get a depth perspective by using this method. This unlike the breadth perspective within the quantitative method (Thagaard, 2013). The quantitative method focuses on large demographics and generalizations, rather than the qualitative text analysis and interpretation. The quantitative method also specializes in data that can be statistically measured (Ringdal, 2001), where this research process focus on longer conversations within a social context. The qualitative method allows the researcher to go beyond the surface of the context that is being investigated: it gives each quality found in the research a

thorough look, hence the name. Because of this, the method reveals meaning not easily found through the quantitative method (Thagaard, 2013).

This thesis includes group counseling, cooperation, creativity and innovation (See chapter 1: The Introduction). As in qualitative research, the focus is on social phenomena and direct contact with real people. The qualitative method is concerned with interpreting different contexts, where the culture becomes the framework for interpretation rather than the causal factor (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2009, Thagaard, 2013). Here, creativity comes into play in the interpretation. By thinking outside the box, a researcher can bring new perspectives to the table that the participants involved in the context have been unable to see. Both in qualitative research and in the theatre, a story comes together throughout a research process where one find answers to one`s questions. Here the research question work as the plot: it dictates the direction of the story, but allows for changes along the way. The process perspective can work as the basis for creativity and cooperation in both the theatre and the qualitative method. The process is all about flexibility and innovation, where inspiration and interpretation can take the process somewhere one could never have imagined (Thagaard, 2013). With this perspective on creativity, one can understand the research process as taking on a life of its own, ending in an original result. The qualitative method can be creative because of its diversity, flexibility, and imaginative nature (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2009, Thagaard, 2013), but only when the researcher succeed in making it so.

3.2: The Research Design

The purpose of the research design is to set the framework and structure for the project, describing what is going to happen. The design and research question go hand in hand in a qualitative method, influencing each other along the way (Johnsen, 2007, Thagaard 2013). The qualitative method gives the research design the same focus as the setting in a theatre performance, creating a defined context for the story or research (Oddey, 1994). The research design defines the focus of the research process (Johnsen, 2007), Thagaard 2013), including: the *where* (a larger corporation in Trondheim, her referred to as New Corp); the *what* (creative group counseling to better the work environment through cooperation, and possibilities for employee-driven innovation); and *who* (the employees, adults working on the ground floor or in middle management). The qualitative method is meant to study living things, and

describe and analyze a dynamic and organic world (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2009). The cooperation in a large corporation is just that, an organic world, and the workers are living beings. I also want to find out the *how*, another reason why the qualitative method is appropriate. To better understand people in their contexts, one is interested in how they experience their reality. The qualitative method of understanding is based on the explanations and statements of others (Kjørup, 1996).

The *how* in this thesis is linked to epistemology, the theory of knowledge, rather than the more deterministic ontology, the theory of what is. The epistemological point of view can be used for research, making it more legitimate by unveiling the reasons behind the knowledge (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2009). In this case meaning the subjective stories that have shaped the social context. This was the case when I engaged the respondents in conversation, seeking a truthful account of their experience (See chapter 4: The Results). The qualitative method can be said to have a holistic perspective, where the whole picture equals more than the sum of its parts (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). I wanted to combine this perspective with an atomic perspective, meaning that there is sometimes need to focus on parts of the whole picture (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2009). I experienced this need to be flexible during the interviews: focusing sometimes on the whole (the theme, the context, the corporation); and other times on the parts (the people, situations, smaller contexts). A qualitative research process is not just about one or the other. There are many factors that need to be considered at all times when working with people in an organic culture and context (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2009).

3.3: My Ethical Role as a Researcher

To be an ethical researcher there are some lines of defenses one needs to follow. The researcher needs to take responsibility for their actions, always safeguarding the rights of the people involved. There is also need to choose people who can give their consent, knowingly and willingly so as not to put anyone at risk. This means letting them sign a consent form. Ethical researchers also needs to adhere to guidelines and regulations, as well as make their results public. There are also rules to safeguard the rights of the researcher and the results (Ruyter, 2003). The ethics found in research can be compared to the moral found in a theatre performance. Although one plans for one thing, the social situations and contexts tend to shape the process in unexpected

ways. Theatre has an ethical side too, because it influences people by the use of their artistic abilities (Johnstone, 1979).

Planning for Ethics

Ethical dilemmas are prominent when it comes to the qualitative method. There has been made specific ethical guidelines for when there is direct contact between researcher and the people the researcher are studying, defining the researcher`s relationship to the participants. (Thagaard, 2013: p. 23-24.)

Before starting this research process one should familiarize oneself with The National Research Ethical Committee for the Social sciences and Humanities (*NESH*). As a researcher, one needs to be aware of how to treat information that can be linked to individuals (Thagaard, 2013). Starting the research I applied to The Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), an organization that controls the research in Norway (Ruyter, 2003, Thagaard, 2013). To be reliable and valid the research design needs to follow the right standards and rules, although they cannot guarantee that a research is ethical justifiable. Starting this quantitative research process one needs to consider the ethical aspects and ramifications on the work one is planning. When working with real people in a cultural setting and context, both the research process and results have the ability to affect the life of others. Utility versus people's best interest is a topic that has many gray areas, meaning that not all aspects of the research ethics are right or wrong. It depends on the context, and it is up to the researcher to stay informed as to make good ethical decisions throughout the process (Ruyter, 2003).

Social Ethics

Rather than searching for neutral principles to which all parties can appeal, social ethics rests on a complex view of moral judgments as integrating into an organic whole, everyday experience, beliefs about the good, and feelings of approval and shame, in terms of human relations and social structure. (Christians, 2000: p. 142.)

The social ethics is suitable for the complex social situations and contexts that is being researched in this thesis. Cooperation and the group interview are both social settings (See chapter 2: The Theory), as was The Choir cooperation (See chapter 1.2: The Choir Cooperation Project). The morality becomes the core of the social ethics, a core that the people subject to a given ethical perspective share (Christians, 2000).

Social ethics can help us navigate the different morals that exists, giving people guidelines and reference points in a complex society. Because the qualitative method is meant to study the qualities of society (Johnsen, 2007, Thagaard 2013), one needs creativity when facing the complexity of the research context. The two different group contexts I faced when interviewing (See chapter 3.5: Entering the Stage of Field Study) called for a flexible approach, even though I was consistent in using the same qualitative method. Through communication and relationships, communities shape experiences (Christians, 2000), just as I have shaped the research method through improvisation and reflection.

Practical Ethics

The research material is from adults working in a large corporation, so there was no need for the extra rules in place to protect minors. This thesis neither include any real names, nor describe any traits about the research context that are unique to that corporation. Anonymity is essential in qualitative studies involving information about people (Ruyter, 2003, Thagaard, 2013). I also obtained the respondents' written informed consent and confidentiality agreement before starting the fieldwork (Appendix 2). The participants of a research project has the right to be fully informed at all times. This gives them the opportunity to change their mind about participating, rather than feeling mistreated or misused (Ruyter, 2003, Thagaard, 2013). This research result is based on continuous self-reflection rather than shortcuts and the exploration of others (Ruyter, 2003). Ragnvald Kalleberg points out that there are many ways to make one`s research unethical: "When data is fabricated, the nonfiction is transformed into fiction. Forgery however, refers to dishonorable manipulation of data obtained in the usual manner. Plagiarism has to do with the relationship amongst colleagues." (Ruyter, 2003: p. 186). This research was done as creatively as possible when it came to work methods, brainstorming and social connections, but never at the cost of an ethical research praxis.

3.4: Backstage Research

To answer a qualitative research question there is need for preparation, a process that both precedes and overlaps the work in the field. This research process started with a project description based on my own experiences and research, elaborating on what I found interesting and wanted to investigate further. The description contains the general theme and framework (Thagaard, 2013). I compare the preparation and

research before a qualitative process to the backstage area of a theatre performance. Both in a qualitative research process and in the theatre, most of the work are done behind the scenes, only coming into the light of the field or stage when the participants need the interaction of others (Oddey, 1994). Then there is a matter of being able to let go of the preparations when entering the field, opening for a mutual influence among the people in the situation, as in the hermeneutic point of view (Gustavsson, 2007).

Choosing a Qualitative Procedure

Qualitative research procedures include interviews, observation, or a combination of both (Thagaard, 2013). "If you want to know how people view and assess their lives and the contexts they are in, you need to talk to them and ask them some applicable questions." (Johnsen, 2007: p. 118.) I as a researcher wanted to describe a culture and context in this thesis, through the answers of people from that culture and context (See chapter 4: The Results). The qualitative interview is designed to have open questions that can lead to multiple and detailed answers (Sohlberg & Sohlberg, 2009, Johnsen, 2007). "(…) observation of smaller units can give information concerning contexts in general." (Thagaard, 2013: p.70.) Observation can give a more complete picture of the situation, and can help determine whether the interview answers correlate with the observed context (Johnsen, 2007, Thagaard, 2013). The Choir Cooperation project was already finished when I started gathering research material. I therefore used interviews in this research. I was still a participating observer of the respondents' interactions and dynamics, bettering my interpretations of their experiences (See chapter 3.5: Entering the Stage of Field Study). When a researcher participates in the research setting, they will always influence the other participants and vice versa. By focusing on being neutral, one can discourage the respondents from answering what they think the researcher wants to hear (Thagaard, 2013).

The Conversational Group Interview

"The point of an interview is to get comprehensive and extensive information on how other people experience the circumstances of their lives, and what viewpoints and perspectives they have on the subjects discussed in the interview setting." (Thagaard, 2013: p. 95.) The group interview can be referred to as focus groups, and are suitable for finding out the attitudes and opinions of the respondents (Thagaard, 2013). The

group interview reflects the group cooperation researched in this thesis, and gave me a chance to observe the dynamic of the group. The interviews was conversational, with a semi structured interview guide (Appendix 1), combining structure with the room for creativity and follow up questions (Thagaard, 2013). I believe the interview guide helped me learn the real opinions of the participants in their context (See chapter 4: The Results). One also needs to be aware of saturation, or one may end up with many people with the same answers (Johnsen, 2007, Thagaard 2013). That is why I chose to do only two interviews with three in each group. Dukes (Postholm, 2005) theoretical assumption states that it might be as purposeful to interview three people as interviewing ten.

Choosing the Respondents

This research is based on a strategic selection of respondents. This is a usual approach to the qualitative method, because qualitative research is quite time consuming. It is important that the researcher does not leave everything up to chance, spending one`s time on the people who are likely to answer the research questions. This includes making sure the respondents are available as well as accountable (Johnsen, 2007, Thagaard, 2013). My Choir Cooperation contact put me in touch with upper management in New Corp (See chapter 1.2: The Choir Cooperation Project), and they contacted participants from the project for me. The Choir Cooperation project was partly chosen for this research based on the assumption that the employees in this larger cooperation can give solid and reflected answers to the research questions. The employees live and work in the context that is being researched, and they participated in the very creative group project. They are also presumably sane and reliable as adult employees with duties and responsibilities. The participants of a qualitative research process are real people from a real social context (Johnsen, 2007, Thagaard, 2013). I feel I was right on these accounts when entering the practical research process (See chapter 3.5: Entering the Stage of Field Study). However, as the characters in a theatre performance, people sometimes wear metaphoric costumes and masks that need to come off in order to get to know the person underneath. They can also play different roles throughout their day, changing their behavior after the context they are in.

3.5: Entering the Stage of Field Study

In the theatre analogy, the fieldwork is perceived as the work on stage. A stage full of set pieces and props that comes into play throughout the research process or theatre performance (Oddey, 1994). When the stage had been set for research, it was time to get into the action in the field. Creating a good and lasting contact with the context that is being researched is always essential. The conversational interview gave me room to improvise, and allowed me to develop as a researcher through experimentation. "A dramaturgical perspective on interviewing is based on the interactional approach, and accentuate the interview as a dynamic, meaningful process focusing on how informal exchanges and mutual openness can contribute to emphasizing the meaning of the uttered content." (Thagaard, 2013: p. 105.) My observation was that the positive atmosphere in the room made it possible to give of one`s self, and to be honest and opinionated in the group setting. By being in dialogue with the respondents in the unpredictable give and take of conversation, I got invaluable input to the interpretation process (See chapter 4: The Results).

The Qualitative Procedure in Praxis

The place to begin creating the relationship with our participants is with knowing ourselves, acknowledging our personhood by reflecting on our experienced knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values and so forth. We can be open to look at our personal qualities as we interact with our participants, to bring those qualities more into our awareness and to consider how they affect our research. (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005: p. 147.)

As an outsider, the researcher constantly influence the context they visit (Johnsen, 2007, Thagaard, 2013). The researcher should reflect on the prejudices and meaning they bring to the situation, and convey the attitude that they will learn a great deal from their participants. Making this knowledge available to the participants in the research context, there is room for a co creation (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005), just as when making theatre. I experienced co creation when the respondents and I finished each other's sentences. Working together in the conversation interview makes the research results more valuable and complex. The researcher must not lead the respondents (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). The researcher must remember that the conversational interview is neither an everyday conversation nor a therapeutic conversation. The researching conversation can be maintained by clarifying the

researcher's role and the themes of the interview, as well as using some pre-defined structure (Johnsen, 2007). The research maintained some of the planned structure at all times, and I tried not to inquire too deeply into the feelings and emotions behind the respondents` experiences.

Conversing in a Group Interview

A researcher can never tell beforehand how people will react to their presence. The researcher represent the outside world, and is by definition not part of the respondents' context. That is why it is important to show compassion and consideration, no matter what the situation or perspective one is faced with (Johnsen, 2007). According to the holding environment, it is easier to focus on internal issues if the environment is supporting of whatever may come up during the situation (McClure, 2005). Because the respondents were on friendly terms, it was easier to facilitate an environment that was open and positive. A question may open up for hidden emotions or reactions, and a phenomenological approach is a way to observe the phenomena as it appears, no matter what it is. By means of the respondents' own introspection (Kvalsund, 2005), I as a researcher experienced sides of the respondents that no question might ever have reveal. They reflected loudly on stories from their past, saying they were realizing things they didn`t know about themselves (See chapter 4: The Results).

Relationship Dimensions

The theatre, the qualitative research process, and the cooperation in a corporation (See chapter 2.3: Cooperation) all include a social context. It is important to be aware of relationship dimensions that may influence the research (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). To increase the probability that the respondents do not hold back information, or say what they think the researcher wants to hear, one should strive for a mutually dependent relationship with the respondents. This fitting for the mutual influence found in the qualitative method, as well as this research. The context usually decides which relationship dimension that will dominate the meeting (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). This research context was both open and positive. I felt the first interview was mostly mutual dependent, the respondents talking without me asking. The second interview was more dependent, the respondents depending on me to clarify and define terms before they were able to answer (See chapter 4: The Results). I promoted a mutual dependent relationship with the respondents through saying as

little as possible, and encouraging them to continue the way they were going. This was designed to make the respondents more secure of themselves throughout the interview process.

Meeting the Respondents

The respondents was positive and friendly, creating a social atmosphere with small talk and laughter. This was especially the case for interview one, while the atmosphere in interview two seemed more tense from the start. The atmosphere became more relaxed throughout the conversation in interview two, ending in a liberating laugh. Both groups had one person that did not speak as much as the other two. The dynamic in the second interview was two from middle management, and a passive respondent from the ground floor. Eventually, I stopped addressing the quiet person. This because they continually agreed to the statements of the other two, even when I asked them specifically. The respondents and I come from different backgrounds. This lead me to define more terms than first planned, but only at their initiative. This still made me wonder if I as a researcher influenced their answers, a common mistake that can lead to sources of error in the research results (Thagaard, 2013). Overall I was glad I got to interview groups, because the respondents collaborated on answering, helping each other out. On the other hand, sometimes one person lost focus because another spent a long time on a digression.

In a qualitative process using research interviews, it is essential to have a trial interview to edit the interview guide and practice on the researcher role (Johnsen, 2007). Because of the length of the interview guide (Appendix 1), the trial group interview involved practicing mostly on facilitation. The trial run made me aware how easy the respondents can move to another subject if I as a researcher is not an active participant in the conversation. I thus ended up changing the interview guide a lot during the first interview. This because they gave me new perspectives that needed to be included, and because they gave fuller answers than anticipated. By being intentionally present with the respondents, I tried to remain open to what they brought to the table. Every time they questioned the quality of their answers, or the progression of the interview, I assured them that there is no right or wrong answers- or approaches to qualitative field study. I took my time to respond authentically and creatively even when the respondents went off topic, and then veered them back on

track. This took some time in the first interview, but in the second interview the respondents were quite precise and to the point (See chapter 4: The Results).

3.6: Closing the Curtain on Field Study

Just as an actor, when the curtain closes after a theatre performance, the qualitative researcher retreats backstage after gathering the research material in the field. This is when the researcher has all the power, influencing the results even more than in the field. The interpretations and statements from the fieldwork became the basis for analysis, after transcribing the research material from a recording device. The general interpretation of the researcher is bound to leave a mark on the result (See chapter 4: The Results). The analysis in this thesis has a theme focus, meaning a focus on subjective themes and opinions rather than on the respondents themselves (Thagaard, 2013). The theme focus seems appropriate because the group conversation involved four respondents and I as a researcher. By focusing on the theme rather than the individual people, one can discuss the corporation as a whole without including all the individual narrative processes (Thagaard, 2013).

Category-Based Analysis

In the analysis the researcher enters a dialogue with the research material, interpreting based on one`s prejudices. Coding the material means reading the transcriptions of both interviews, looking for terms and statements that best convey the meaning one wish to get across. Here one can write comments or memos along the way, identifying common denominators and clues that can help in the classification process. When classifying the coded material one gathers central themes and terms in categories, and starts identifying the answers to one's research question. When categorizing, one`s pre-understandings interact with central tendencies found in the material. This is a descriptive analyzing phase, basing the analysis on the respondents' experiences for the most part. When one enters the interpretative phase of the analysis, the researcher starts reflecting on the material to a larger extent. This means implying a more remote use of the participant's direct experiences (Thagaard, 2013).

In the case of this thesis, the transcription was coded using memos in the margin, as well as a marker to make a selection in the text. For the descriptive analysis a table was used to enter the categories that matched the research questions. The categories

ended up as: The Experienced Creativity in New Corp, Toward a Better Work Environment through Creative Cooperation, Further Developing the Choir Cooperation, and Implications on Developing Creative Counseling. The respondents` quotes that seemed the most interesting was also included in the table, together with words that underlines the theme of this thesis. In the interpreting phase I added my own comments, based on theory as well as my subjective interpretations of the raw material. The categories was then worked on again, after a thorough look at the research question. This according to the flexible process of qualitative study, and that one should always be in dialogue with the field material (Thagaard, 2013).

Symbolic Interactionism and Phenomenology

An important objective is to capture and understand the outside world the way the people we study perceive it. According to symbolic interactionism people continually create their identity when interacting with others. Every action has both a meaningful internal side and an external action side; it is thus symbolic. (Thagaard, 2013: p. 38.)

The interpretation and analysis in this thesis is inspired by both symbolic interactionism and phenomenology (See chapter 4: The Results), because this thesis focuses on social phenomena. Symbolic interactionism focus on how people interact with each other, and is therefore process oriented. This is similar to the qualitative group interview, where the road is made while navigating in a conversation between the people in the group. There are three principles in symbolic interactionism that apply to this thesis: 1) One relates to something based on the meaning one attributed the thing. 2) One develops the meaning to the thing through social interaction. 3) One develops one`s relationship to things through a social interpretation process (Thagaard, 2013). In the group interview both I as a researcher and the respondents conveyed meaning through interacting in a group, and we interpreted each other's statements and behaviors (See chapter 3.5: Entering the Stage of Field Study). This was based on the meaning we attributed the different terms and themes that were the focal points of the conversational group interview. Symbolic interactionism is based on phenomenology, a term that focuses on the subjective experience of both researcher and participants. The researcher`s own reflections over her or his experiences are brought into the research process, but he or she also needs to be open for the experiences of those who are studied (Thagaard, 2013).

4: The Results

This chapter consists of an analysis based on the categories found in the raw material. Each first four sub-chapter represents a category. These includes a descriptive- as well as an interpretive analysis. The analysis is qualitative, and it is based on subjective experiences, and can therefore not easily be generalized (Thagaard, 2013) to fit all the participants of The Choir Cooperation. This chapter starts with the respondents` associations with the word creativity, and continue with the respondents` subjective experiences of how the creative project enhanced the work environment through cooperation. The next focus is on what the respondents would have liked to change with the project in hindsight, with the goal of bettering the work environment even more. Lastly, the focus is on future projects, and on the implications for developing creative projects in the future. The interpretations are my own, and fitting for qualitative research the analysis is based on the experiences of the respondents, the researcher`s personal prejudices and background, as well as observations made in the field (Thagaard, 2013). The results presented in this chapter form the background from where I answer the research questions (See chapter 1.1: The Research Question and Theme). The respondents in each interview agreed to what is stated in these categories, even though some voiced their opinions more clearly than others did (See chapter 3.5: Entering the Stage of Field Study).

4.1: The Experienced Creativity in New Corp

This category is based on what creativity is for the respondents, after taking part in the Choir Cooperation. It is based on their experience with the word in general, not the creative project in particular. To answer how creativity can make changes on the cooperation and work environment in a corporation, it is important to first establish the employees` experiences with creativity. This is to understand how they define the term, and how creativity influences the daily work in New Corp. In addition, the employees` experiences with the term creativity formed the background knowledge for their experience and interpretation of the Choir Cooperation project.

Descriptive Analysis

When asked about their associations with creativity, words like fun, playing, challenging oneself, creating, breaking boundaries, and "thinking outside the regular box" (Respondent B, Interview 1.) came up. "It is positive (…). I feel there is room

for creativity in our corporation. The framework might be given, but it is not completely square." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) The respondents agreed that the word creativity was linked with positivity, and that only the fantasy sets the limit. The exception is when the work place limits the creativity through regulations. "You have to make something that works [to its intention at the work place]. It is completely different if I make something for myself. There is no point in making something if only some people are able to use it. (…) It`s everyone or no one." (Respondent B, Interview 1).

According to the respondents, it is up to them as employees to make suggestions. Still one is for the most part free to do what one wishes. This includes that the employees are allowed to manage their own day, and it is up to them to seek new solutions. "We are so free that I organize the whole day myself. And I can plan it however I like." (Respondent A, Interview 1). There are possibilities for social climbing, making it possible to achieve one`s goal if one as a worker initiates it. Although, there is no guarantee that one will achieve something if one is creative: "There are of course possibilities for promotions. (…) You have to initiate everything yourself, and you cannot expect to be rewarded if you further your education. There is no automatics in that, so that is a shame." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) Still there is potential for creativity in the corporation: "There are many people who are creative, as long as they are allowed to and wants to." (Respondent C, Interview 2.)

Interpretive Analysis

I take from this that even though creativity is a term the workers are familiar with, it is linked to the Choir Cooperation project for the most part. The project was seemingly a positive experience for the respondents. Because the attendance increased during the process I believe this was the general impression for all involved in the project. The respondents use creativity in their work. Because many work alone, there may not be much room for creative cooperation. "I walk in my own bubble, and I actually feel they [the management] don`t know what I`m doing. (…) They don`t interfere, don`t really get anything positive or negative, I have just been that guy in the basement that fixes things." (Respondent B, Interview 1.) The employees has to follow the rules of the corporation. However, I am curious of the

potential for developing the term creativity in a work setting, making it a bigger part of the everyday work life.

There is nothing that suggests that New Corp inhibit or trigger the creativity of the employees. Going into this research my prejudice was that the hierarchical bureaucracy (Macionis & Plummer, 2008) was holding back the creative potential of its employees, a prejudice I will adjust to thinking that these types of corporations limits the creativity in its employees. This because the workers have to do everything themselves if they want a creative work environment, and not everyone knows how to achieve creativity. The good thing is that the Choir Cooperation project, along with developments in later years, have made several of the respondents see creativity as a way of creating new solutions: "In my opinion it`s possible to play your way to a solution. When one is creative when joking around at work, something might come up that you can actually use." (Respondent A, Interview 1.)

People can talk freely and openly. And you get more responsibilities, and to put it that way if you make a great suggestion at a meeting, then you get the responsibility to start working on it. (…) You have become more visible, and you are heard. (Respondent C, Interview 1.)

4.2: Toward a Better Work Environment through Creative Cooperation

This category is based on what the respondents experienced in New Corp during and after the creative project. The focus is firstly on how the creativity helped the cooperation, and secondly on how the developments in cooperation have changed the work environment. This thesis is based on subjective experiences from a selection of participants in The Choir Cooperation. To determine how the creative group project can improve cooperation, and if this truly betters the work environment, one needs to start with how this particular project influenced the respondents. From there one can start discussing repercussions and implications of this research.

Descriptive Analysis

Getting started

We typically want everything the way it`s always been, and we don`t want any changes. But after being part of a process, I can see that people have a different attitude. And it is easier. Because even though everyone is not positive per se, you at

least have four-five people who are positive, and then it`s easier to include the rest too. (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

The respondents were positive to the creative Choir Cooperation project from the start, even though the dedication and involvement varied from simply participating to taking charge. However, I was told this was not the case for many of the other participants. There were some who were described as negative, and it took a long time before basically everyone was involved in the project. This was said to come from a reluctant attitude to anything new, and that many employees in New Corp are scared of what is not familiar. "There were those who were sour-faced and those who thought it was simply okay. And when you compare this to that creativity you [another participant] experienced…you get more cohesion that way. But when you have someone standing on the brakes…" (Respondent A, Interview 1.)

The experienced negativity ended up slowing the project down, until most of the employees got involved in the end. The respondents said the Choir Cooperation made them happier and their workday a little easier. The contact has improved in the whole corporation, making it easier and more comfortable to cooperate and talk to everyone: "We have gotten to know each other in a different way. (…) I feel we are heard and respected and that we know each other. (…) We have included everyone and there are less problems." (Respondent C, Interview 1.) It was fun and positive for the respective departments the respondents are working in, and they feel it was exciting to have been a part of something big as this. "I feel it was exclusively positive. I am surprised that so many participated actively in the end." (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

One can see after this project that our corporation has a clear advantage. It is quite unique to be able to achieve this in such a large corporation, especially being able to bring out people's knowledge. Because usually one is only one in the crowd in such large corporations. Making everyone more visible is for sure an advantage, and that so many are involved that one can actually make something as this [creative project] happen. (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

Creativity for Better Cooperation
We are not world champions when it comes to working together (…). But after being involved in this project, and I was about to say having to *work together, after seeing*

each other in a somewhat different setting, I have realized that it [New Corp] has expanded. I don`t know if I should call it dear friendships, but we have definitely gotten to see new sides of each other. (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

The cooperation got better by working together creatively, and the respondents credit this to getting to know each other in different ways than in the everyday at work. They also got to talk to other people than those they usually spent their time with, making it easier to realize the competencies and skills of themselves and others. "I imagine the cooperation would not have been that good without the creativity. (…) It is important to have someone that is creative, and that the group consists of different personalities. (…) Working together with creativity is essential." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) "Yes because is much easier to include people [when being creative]. But you have to give of yourself to get something in return. You have to give quite a lot of yourself, or I don`t think you will get that much in return." (Respondent C, Interview 2.) This made it easier to use the different competencies in a cooperation.

In the creative choir project everyone was needed and got to contribute, creating a creative and safe atmosphere where all contributions and ideas were accepted. Getting to know each other in more creative ways was said to make it easier to suggest new creative ideas. By having to work together many have realized the creative potential of others, making the employees more visible to each other: "I got one of those aha!- experiences [during the project] (…) That was when I realized the importance of being visible (...). It doesn`t help how good you are if nobody knows or finds out about it." (Respondent A, Interview 1.) Being more visible was said to make it easier to be creative in cooperation with each other. There is more interdisciplinary cooperation than before, an improvement that has bettered communication both vertically and horizontally in the corporation. "I feel we have become more visible, and that we play on the same team as the management. We [New Corp] have shrunk together (….) and are more on the same level now. We speak the same language and have the same goal." (Respondent A, Interview 1.)

Cooperation for a Better Work Environment
You got to see colleagues in a completely different way then you usually do every day. (...) We sang at work, we practiced at work, sang at the office. I mean, we were so much happier, looking forward to choir practice. (...) That way it was a giant

boost! That is a big word for me to use. When I say giant boost then that is what it is.
(Respondent C, Interview 1.)

By seeing their colleagues in a different light, or seeing them at all through working together creatively, the respondents agree that the work environment has changed for the better. The creative project was described as a contribution to the work environment, knitting the employees closer together and making it more social. "We used to sit on different molehills, and didn`t really know what the others were doing." (Respondent C, Interview 1.) "We sat and glowered at each other." (Respondent A, Interview 1.) It was pointed out that the whole organization seems closer knit after the project, with more delegation of responsibilities from the management, as well as more independency and self-sufficiency among the employees. There is also less internal strife in the departments and among the different groups, and they feel New Corp speaks the same language and has the same goals to a larger extent now than before the project.

"It is easier to get people to work together. People, they take charge more automatically. (…) And when you pick three people at random and tell them they *have* to…[work together], you don`t get the same protests as before." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) I am told these changes make it is easier to get people involved in new and creative projects, because now the employees know how fun and helpful it can be. There are fewer protests, and suspicions, in a work environment where the employees take more contact and get to know each other better. "A break in the same pattern you always do (...) If you do that break you appreciate the everyday more, I think it is like that with most things." (Respondent A, Interview 1.) Because the employees now know each other better, they dare to step out of their comfort zone, resulting in more responsibility and initiative, as well as commitment. "One have to take care of each other. That is how one contributes to a working environment that contribute to creativity, and so on." (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

It [a good work environment] takes that you enjoy being at work and that you are safe at work, and that you feel comfortable in the situation you are in (…). In addition to being understanding towards each other in a group, because we are all so very different. This was not the case before, when someone said they couldn`t work together (...) but I see less of that now. (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

By improving the cooperation through creativity the employees feel more heard and respected. They feel part of the decisions in the corporation, and they "dare to think outside the usual box" (Respondent C, Interview 2.). This because they now have better communication with the management and other employees. An open work environment makes putting oneself out there feel less terrifying, and it is now apparently easier to get involvement from the employees. "You dare to do stuff together with other people. You dare to make a fool out of yourself, and therefore you get braver. (…) It is not about who was the biggest fool, but to be creative and find solutions." (Respondent C, Interview 1.) This makes it easier to be comfortable at work, an essential feature for a good work environment.

The employees seem to take better care of each other and their workplace, and they feel better integrated. There are also less clicks with conflicts. This makes for less resentment and more positivity, and the employees feel the work environment is more positive and encouraging. This because the employees are more engaged, and everyone is better suited for change and progress. The work environment has changed for the better because the respondents all experience that they are invested in more, and that it is easier to get the employees and management onboard with creative developments. "It [the project] made an impact on everything. We came closer together, the cooperation got better, there is more openness, and less glowering. And one also got to get to know other people more (…), we usually see the outside only." (Respondent C, Interview 1.)

Interpretive Analysis

Creativity Versus Negativity

This reluctance to participate in something new can come from many things. It is my belief that employees working in a bureaucratic corporation (Macionis & Plummer, 2008) often are left out of the decision-making. This means that when something new is presented, the employees have a lengthy incubation period, taking a long time to decide if the new addition is good or bad. The employees may end up rejecting what is presented, creating an even lower tolerance for new things in the future. The Choir Cooperation project seem to have had a positive influence, lowering the threshold for new experiences. According to the descriptive analysis the employees changed their opinion of their co-workers after the project, a relational development moving them closer to each other. Because the respondents talk about many of the

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benefits from the project in past tense; "we were happier then" (Respondent C, Interview 1) and "We had clear goals when working on the project" (Respondent A, Interview 2), I believe the long-term effects may be fewer then the immediate ones. This is sad because the respondents seems so aware of the benefits from the projects, and so hungry for more.

Creative Potential

I sensed the respondents were surprised over what they themselves had managed to accomplish, and they were clearly proud of the result. Statements such as "We might not be the group with the best confidence" (Respondent C, Interview 2), makes me curious if their low self-esteem make them unaware of their own potential. I wonder what they can do that they haven't discovered yet, and also the potential in other companies lacking creative projects. Are the developments in New Corp bound to happen over time, or will this corporation have an advantage over other corporations because of the project? My analysis is based on the voices of participants that make themselves heard. The four respondents with the strongest opinions dominated the interviews, while the others mostly agreed with the ones that spoke the loudest. Ergo, I know that the ones with a voice in the company were happy about the Choir Cooperation, and that they felt achievement and ownership to the result. What I do not know is if this was the case for the participants and respondents who never spoke up. This even though the increase in participation during the process to some degree speaks for itself.

Cooperating for Change

During the Choir Cooperation project it turned out that the employees working on the ground floor had problems identifying their goals, wants, and wishes. This may be caused by fear of development, again raising the question of confidence. This is a fear that may be based on how they perceive their role in the corporation, and by extension, themselves. This can be an issue of security and general wellbeing, because the employees who are scared will undoubtedly experience more insecurity and stress then the others. The respondents also said safety is an important factor for speaking up and being creative, meaning the changes creativity brings have the potential to make the employees less happy if they bring insecurity and doubt. This is something New Corp can work to prevent if they support the employees, and encourage a culture for creativity. This also means including the employees in the

decision making rather than planning creative revolutions behind their back. I also get confirmation of the hierarchical structure of New Corp during the interviews. The respondents agree that while communication decisions up and down in the corporation work, there is still room for improvement. The employees and management both have duties and responsibilities to the work-environment.

4.3: Further Developing the Choir Cooperation

This category is based on how the Choir Cooperation could have been made even better. It also includes what the respondents' experience indicates regarding what creative projects in general should focus on to better cooperation and thus the work environment. The focus is on what the Choir Cooperation lacked, including goals and work methods. In a holistic counseling perspective one is never done with developing, because the road is made when walking (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). By analyzing the wants from respondents, one can deduce what creative projects need to have an even better group counseling effect on cooperation and work environment.

Descriptive Analysis

Creative Developments

I never understood why I should lay low and be invisible, it stands against everything I believe in… But now those days are gone, and that is an important development. If we are supposed to be good and best and all that they [the management] talk about, then we have to break down the barriers, all the walls around us, because we are done with that. (…) It is much better now (…). Many of the walls I have mentioned has come down, but there are still some left… *(Respondent A, Interview 1.)*

The respondents felt strongly that more every-day social activities, as well as projects like the Choir Cooperation, can help breaking the walls found in a bureaucratic corporation (Macionis & Plummer, 2008). This is a development that is needed on all levels of the corporation, and it would help if everyone were even more open to changes then after the creative project. When asked, the respondents wanted even more initiative from the management, and for the management to show more interest in what each worker is doing. "Many people struggle with "what I say doesn`t matter." There is need for headroom when it comes to participating, and that the workers competencies are sought after. (…) It means a lot for us as a group to be

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noticed." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) By showing interest, the respondents believe the management can discover the workers` potential, and help their growth by planning for their further development. This includes using the competencies found internally, rather than hiring external help that work outside of the system.

"I am surprised they [the corporation] don`t use their own people more. I mean, the competencies are there, but then they go around the bend to get it somewhere else." (Respondent A, Interview 1.) The respondents wanted to keep developing towards being less "top heavy", thus bettering the to-way communication, and making goals and visions that everyone can feel ownership for. "I believe that if the management gets together it can come up with a lot of good things, but the ones who really know how a corporation works are not sitting at the management-table." (Respondent C, Interview 2.) This included discovering the resources in the corporation, giving the employees better confidence in what they are doing through individual feedback, and valuing and appreciating all voices so it becomes easier to give of oneself: "In my work place we have to keep developing all the time. (...) And this process gives most people trouble along the way (…) I am scared of not being able to follow the developments." (Respondent C, Interview 1.)

They [the management] most definitely have a vision, and a defined goal, and the visions to reach the goal. Maybe there are some secondary goals. This should have been made known to everyone. Only then can you make up your opinion, and if you have a good idea it is easier to submit it if everything is less vague. Then you can see if the idea fits the goal. Also, the expectations should be clarified. What do they expect of me now? (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

Together Towards a Common Goal
We miss having a goal! (…) When you know where you are going it is easier to get people on board. (…) The thing is, the project made something fun. Creative fun to put it that way, as well as dinner and something extra and everything else that made people look forward to this. And that people for once were rewarded for their effort, that is something that is lacking in New Corp in my opinion. Many deserve to get more feedback or something. (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

When asked, the respondents had many views on how to make the next creative project an even better one. The main criticism was that the longer the management

waits until the next creative project, the harder it will be to get the employees involved again. The respondents found it wasteful that there has not been any evaluation on how the creative project was perceived among those who participated. "The bad thing is that a lot is invested in the employees, a lot is done in the corporation, but nobody asks the participants what they think. (…) Evaluation becomes a foreign word." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) The main focus should have been on developing what worked, and learning from ones mistakes, or else the development stops after the project is done. "I mean, we have to think in new ways. You have to adapt. (…) You cannot fall asleep in class." (Respondent A, Interview 1.)

Being given a creative task in a group creates community, and makes it easier to understand each other and work for mutual development for the corporation. "We are not stronger than the weakest link no matter what." (Respondent A, Interview 1.) For this development to be successful, the respondents agreed that New Corp "should have evaluated and struck while the iron was hot." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) The project gave the workers something to look forward to, and many were eager to see what came next. When nothing did the disappointment was great, and now the respondents ask for: more feedback, better planning with known goals and visions, more positive output from management, and basically that they get to finish what they started. For that to happen there is need for interdisciplinary groups where the employees can let their guard down, and that their voices are heard in an accepting forum.

Because we are working on the floor and we have been quite invisible for many years, I think it may be hard for people to believe in themselves. And being given small things like that [creative tasks], you can see some of them [the employees], they grow from it. It doesn`t have to be much. (Respondent C, Interview 2.)

Interpretive Analysis

Creative Development for Everyone

The Choir Cooperation has broken down walls, and for that I am glad. That the employees remember all too well what it is like to walk with their head down is really sad in my opinion. However, the respondents experienced developments the last few years give me inspiration to believe something has changed in the corporate

system. This has also made me believe that there are still many employees with their heads down in other corporations. I believe a continued development to creative projects such as the Choir Cooperation should focus on initiative and involvement from top to bottom a corporation. The experiences accounted for in the interviews make me believe all employees can benefit in learning from each other, management and ground floor workers alike. For a corporation to be the best it can be I believe in mapping the employees` competencies, and develop the corporation`s visions and goals based on the resources available. This way everyone can pull in the same direction, and cooperate as an interdisciplinary group to increase creativity and innovation.

Yes it [the development] has really been taken one step at the time. But it has... it hasn`t happened on its own. But of course someone had to get the ball rolling (…), and that the positive wave is getting stronger than the negative wave, and to be able to see all that. It is quite exciting to have been a part of it all. (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

Reflection is necessary for development: "when they [the corporation] spends so much money and resources on something then it surprises me that they are not more interested in the result." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) The respondents always brag about how much New Corp does for them. They have all stayed a long time in the corporation after all, and they want to be the best in the business. Is there no room to follow up the employees in a bureaucratic corporation? Self-actualization and growth may be lost on the management, because the employees are not getting the individual time and feedback they need. "Most things are just put in a drawer. We try to sometimes tell the management how it is without being asked though. And then we have one employee appraisal, but that is locked down [in a drawer] afterwards, and then nothing more happens." (Respondent C, Interview 2.)

Developing a Culture

In my opinion there is need to secure a culture for creativity and innovation. If New Corp keeps taking just one step every few years, then they will miss the benefits of continued creativity leading to inspiration and innovation. Because the corporation develops rapidly, a culture for creativity would support the changes through flexibility. A creative culture could make the employees would be more equipped to

dealing with change: "We have to be a part of the development all the time, and this is what many people find difficult." (Respondent C, Interview 1.) The employees need continuity for them to better accomplish the goals and visions along the way. For this to happen the employees need to not only be visible, but the grand plan also needs to be made visible for them. Only then will the employees truly be heard, and their voices contribute. There is no point in creating if one is left in the dark about what to create

4.4: Implications on Developing Creative Counseling

This category is based on developing creative counseling projects further, using what one has learned from the Choir Cooperation and seeing what could have made creative projects work even better. The focus is on how to develop towards a culture for employee-driven innovation. The focus is also on how theatre can be used in a creative project. By analyzing the experiences from the respondents, one can make assumptions on the implications of continuing to develop creative projects

Descriptive Analysis

Creative Inspiration for Employee-Driven Innovation

There is need for creativity to create involvement. I realize that you can get people involved in a lot of things, and you can manage a lot, as long as you present it the right way and in the right order. And also that they [the participants] can digest it before they are thrown into things. (Respondent A, Interview 2.)

When asked what they associate with innovation, not all the respondents had many suggestions. Words they agreed on were creativity, change, new solutions, creating something, inventing, brainstorming, and new ideas. The common theme seemed to be that the management needs to be involved and supporting, and that innovation is based on the participation of the employees. "If you want to be creative and on the road to innovation there should almost be a requirement that you have to contribute. It is important to be on the same page as everyone else." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) The questions on employee-driven innovation brought out the wish for a stronger influence and involvement among all employees, starting on the ground floor and "working upwards, past the foggy castle in the sky." (Respondent B, Interview 1.) This includes a need for headroom when it comes to ideas and creativity: "that the

corporation looks for solutions among the workers who have the practical knowledge." (Respondent A, Interview 1.)

"There is more openness, and there is a lot of creativity and suggestions, and that`s been the case all the time if you ask me. But it hasn`t come into the open before, just been swept under the rug." (Respondent B, Interview 1.) New Corp allegedly invests a lot in the employees nowadays: "If you want to you can clearly see that every employee is invested in, maybe now more than ever" (Respondent A, Interview 2.), but there is still need for employees to care more and be involved in developing and safeguarding their workplace. The respondents also agreed that everyone has a responsibility to include the others. "As an employee you don`t only have rights, but duties too. And by that I mean in relationship to your coworkers and when it comes to the work environment." (Respondent C, Interview 2.) The employees also needs to make suggestions, look for inspiration other places, dare to be visible and stand up for what they believe in. This as well as work together for interdisciplinary solutions: "Its ingenious that we are all so very different, no matter what you work on (...) it is the combinations [of people] that makes it great. (...) everyone is good in his or her own way if we all use each other." (Respondent A, Interview 1.)

Creative Counseling in New Ways
No, if it had been a theatre performance or something like that, that would have been the same. The thing is that we get together and create something, and that the cohesion creates something. So if it had been a play it would probably work just as well. (Respondent A, Interview 1.)

The point is obviously something everyone can participate in and look forward to, according to the respondents. Trying new things is perceived as something valuable that makes the employees connect. It seems the idea of participating is more vital than what they participate in. "It was the creativity, it doesn`t have to be a Choir Cooperation, it can be something else. But it could be a competition and the requirement that you have to deliver something you want to show off." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) As long as the employees feel safe and appreciated, many will take on whatever comes next. Competition, employee-codetermination, goals, and more positive involvement from the management seem to be the main points. "We miss

that the management is more involved during the process I guess." (Respondent C, Interview 2.)

The respondents underlined the importance of lightening the mood and making people happy. Here parodies of employees and bosses are given as examples. When exaggerating someone`s personality with humor, the respondents find it easier to bring sensitive subjects into the light. "It is possible it makes it easier to see how you really are. (..) You see it from another point of view." (Respondent A, Interview 1.) One parody in New Corp ended with the boss in question changed his behavior. Parody and comedy are both part of the theatre culture (Johnstone, 1979), and as said in the interviews "theatre can be a powerful means to an end." (Respondent B, Interview 1.) Without me asking, the respondents in interview two agreed that theatre would be a good next step on the creative development in the corporation. The respondents felt that theatre strengthens the idea of being able to do anything, as it lowers the threshold for daring to stand tall and speak up. "Yes we could probably have written a play too." (Respondent A, Interview 2.) "No problem, I think we would have managed it with flying colors!" (Respondent C, Interview 2.)

Interpretive Analysis

The words innovation and employee-driven innovation were clearly not in the every-day vocabulary of the respondents, and I had to assist by defining the terms. This makes me wonder if the word innovation is used more frequently at higher levels of management in New Corp, or if they use the word less than other corporations do. Still the Choir Cooperation project was innovative, supporting a culture for creativity. The upper management was critiqued for not laying down the ground work, making the participants feel excluded and uninformed. I also wonder if the upper management realize the benefits of creative projects such as this, or maybe they do not know where to go from here. This was as far as I know their first creative project in New Corp. Based on the respondents' experiences I can only imagine what can happen if the employees get to experience more creativity in cooperative group projects. So where *do* one go from here? I believe the employees should have been asked this question, to further the creative culture. It is too bad if the positive wave described above is to stop rather than sweep the corporation.

5: Theoretical Discussion

In this Theoretical Discussion chapter, I answer the research question asked at the start of this Master thesis: *How can a creative group counseling project improve the cooperation and thus the work environment in a larger corporation?* The four categories from the Results chapter is used to form a discussion based on relevant counseling theory (See chapter 2: The Theory). The chapter starts with discussing 1) the experienced creativity in New Corp, and continue with 2) how the work environment got better through the creative Choir Cooperation. Then the focus moves to 3) how the Choir Cooperation could have been developed even further, before looking on 4) the possible implications of developing creative projects in the future. Here I also answer a sub research-question: *In what ways can such creative projects create a culture that inspires employee-driven innovation?* This chapter ends with a holistic discussion, where the focus is on the bigger picture and I answer the research questions as a whole. My interpretation of the research results forms the basis for the discussion. The results are based on what was found in New Corp (See chapter 4: The Results), but the discussion also points to what these results imply for corporations of the same sort.

5.1: The Experienced Creativity in New Corp

The Experienced Creativity in New Corp is apparently greatly influenced by the Choir Cooperation, and less from the daily work. Keith Johnstone (1979) helped his students gain creativity without limits through working with improvisation. This "anything can happen" philosophy is supposed to make it easier to think outside the box, as well as make learning and development more fun and successful (Hoaas, 2008). I argue that this is similar to what happened with New Corp after the Choir Cooperation. The respondents describe the many benefits they have gained from using a form of Johnstone`s limitless creativity (1979) in the project. Thinking creatively in the project has lowered the bar when it comes to doing something new and unexpected in the everyday work life. This is also the point of improvisation, to gain a creative and accepting attitude to what may come (Johnstone). Similar to the results Bamford dicovered for UNESCO, the creative arts of the Choir Cooperation has made it possible to think outside the box, giving the employees ownership over their work. Just as in the theatre one is more likely to feel ownership to something that has grown out of a cooperative creative process (Hoaas, 2008). The creative

process in the Choir Cooperation has resulted in an increased feeling of wellbeing in New Corp, a similar to schools focusing on creativity (Hoaas, 2008).

5.2: Toward a Better Work Environment through Creative Cooperation

Negativity from the Start

It took some time before all the participants got involved in the creative process of the Choir Cooperation. To explain this in counseling terms, one can use the modern hermeneutics of Gadamer. The participants went into the creative project with prejudices that influenced their interpretation of the project (Gustavsson, 2007). If the participants had negative prejudices and expectations, this could have caused hesitation and made them scared of the unknown. The respondents also said the employees of New Corp do not have the best confidence levels. A way to make them more open to change could be to change their thinking from "no we can`t" to "yes we can". Because improvisation is all about accepting change instead of blocking it out, the negative participants` attitude could have been changed if they had learned of improvisation before the project. Improvisation includes using spontaneity as an attitude that always makes one take on new challenges, and where one dares to face what happens without planning (Johnstone, 1979). This way improvisation can become the tool to help creativity and development by changing negative prejudices.

The Gestalt Cycle

When expanding the employees` horizon about creativity and cooperation, the results can be that they are able to benefit more from the creative process. By learning from others, one can come out the other side of the project richer in both human capital and corporate success (Gustavsson, 2007). Another way to explain the hesitation of the participants of the Choir Cooperation in counseling terms is by using Gestalt theory by Perls, specifically the Gestalt Cycle (Clarkson, 2004). Even though fun and better results are often linked,as in the UNESCO report by Bamford (Hoaas, 2008), some people tend to hold back and prevent their own growth when they do not feel comfortable in a situation. In Gestalt this can mean difficulty when it comes to moving to a new process, or that one misses parts of the Gestalt cycle because one is not open to change and development (Clarkson, 2004, Ivey et al., 2012).

The respondents described that many participants hesitated before they got onboard with the project, needing a long incubation period to decide if the new additions was good or bad. The effect on the sceptics of the project might have been a disturbed Gestalt cycle. The Gestalt cycle may have started with sensation and awareness as usual, but these feelings may have resulted in more stress than desired for the participants feeling unsure and out of their comfort zone. When the positive participants started the mobilization and action phases of the Gestalt cycle, the hesitators however may have felt even more excluded. This because they did not know how to move forward, meaning that their final contact and rest could have ultimately been disturbed by unfinished business.

Another possibility for negativity could have been bad experiences from the past, where an unfinished Gestalt cycle that had brought on either conscious or unconscious dysfunctions was now making it hard to start a new and similar process. Problems during a Gestalt cycle can also cause defense mechanisms to develop. If the negativity makes the participants avoid contact with others, or makes them seem absent in the creative situations, one may speak of deflection. Prejudices can also make one project one`s own bad qualities or experiences onto other people or new situations (Clarkson, 2004, Ivey et al., 2012). No matter what the defense mechanisms are, the participants experiencing them are more vulnerable to a bad Gestalt cycle than the participants who are positive. This because the positive participants unlike the sceptics remain open to experiencing everything the creative project has to offer. If the negative participants do not work through what is making them experience these defense mechanisms, new prejudices may be the consequences. If the negative participants keep having unfinished cycles that bring with them more negativity, every new Gestalt cycle can be more challenging.

Group Development through Counseling

The participants of the Choir Cooperation were split into groups, and if one views these groups as living organisms, the participants are bound to influence each other (McClure, 2005). The negativity described above was subdued by the positivity of others, resulting in a steady increase in participation and involvement from the creative project`s start to finish. If the participants had not been in groups, or the creative work had not had a counseling focus designed to develop the groups, the results may have been completely different. Using group counseling perspectives in

creative projects, the groups have the ability to change and grow, as well as help the participants navigate between order and chaos (McClure, 2005). By embracing the insecurity and uncertainty that encouraged negativity and doubt at the start of the project, most participants seem to have changed position and come out on the positive side in the end. The project ended up giving the participants many clear advantages, such as: more openness, they seem to know each other better, they use the corporation`s resources better, there is less hierarchy, and they feel more visible. These advantages have enhanced the cooperation and thus the work environment in New Corp. By finally opening themselves up to others in the respective groups the participants have seemingly taken charge over their destiny, as per the existential-humanistic worldview (Ivey et al., 2012).

When working in groups one can be seen as a person in relation to others, because the group members share experiences and are interdependent of each other (Kvalsund & Allgood, 2005). This was the plan behind the Choir Cooperation: to develop the groups towards a cooperation that enabled the participants to change their own and others destructive behaviors for the best interest of the group (McClure, 2005). For this to happen I argue the need for a mutually dependent relationship dimension. That way all the participants contribute and reflect on the world, and develop not only as individuals but also as a collective (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005, Kvalsund & Meyer, 2005). Seeing the creative process of the Choir Cooperation as a whole, in the beginning the groups seemed fragmented and in a dependent relationship dimension. This because the progress of each group was dependent on the few who took initiative. All participants were also seemingly dependent on the leadership and involvement from the projects organizers and New Corp's management. There was uncertainty around how to act, and in what way one should participate. After getting to know each other better more people took initiative, and went from being negative to feeling positive. This made the participants more cooperative, as well as more mutually dependent of each other.

A Holding Work Environment

One can say that a holding environment was established during the Choir Cooperation, where the headroom for creativity and contributions were raised. This also lowered the bar for contact amongst all parts of the corporation. This enhanced the cooperation, according to the respondents, and made the employees more

satisfied about their work environment. The atmosphere after the project seem to have been more safe and open, with a focus on getting to know the real people from within. This includes better communication on deep subjects, as well as dissolving conflicts rather than ignoring them (McClure, 2005). The positive development in New Corp after the Choir Cooperation also included something the organizers had not planned for. One of the foundations of innovation includes cooperation between management and employees with interdisciplinary knowledge (Strømsnes, 2012). After the project, cooperation was improved in general, but the respondents also talked about how their knowledge and ideas are appreciated and invested in more these days. This is a step towards a culture for employee-driven innovation (Hansen et al, 2012), where corporations use their resources to achieve the best possible development on both a human level- and a corporate one.

5.3: Further Developing the Choir Cooperation

A Step in the Right Direction

All in all the Choir Cooperation had a positive result, but this creative project was but a step in the right direction. The respondents all agreed that there is still a way to go. In the future they want more of what made this project a success. This includes making the employees more visible by breaking down more walls. This means group developments towards an even more mutual relationship dimension, the goal of group development, where the context is perceived as positive (Kvalsund & Allgood, 2005, Kvalsund & Meyer, 2005) and holding. The holding environment would ideally make for internal social contact (McClure, 2005) among all levels of the corporation, continually developing through initiative and involvement from employees and management. By being open, one can expand one`s mind by letting oneself be influenced by different opinions and experiences. Adopting this hermeneutic perspective (Gustavsson, 2007), could help corporations develop towards a generative group; always exceeding their knowledge (McClure, 2005). This includes discovering and using the corporations` interdisciplinary competencies and resources. By developing a reciprocal communication throughout the corporation, one can achieve rational learning through continuous reflections (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). The personal development goes hand in hand with corporate success, a fact not lost on the respondents.

What Was Missing

For a creative group counseling project to improve the cooperation and work environment in larger corporations, the development must continue after the project. The respondents seem to not just want to take one step here and one step there, but create a culture for creativity that makes the work environment more stable and safe. The environment after the Choir Cooperation may be described as a supporting holding environment (McClure, 2005), but according to the respondents the environment is getting less holding as time goes by; new employees are hired while some leave the corporation, and developments change the context in which the Choir Cooperation was conducted. As a holding environment is stable and safe (McClure, 2005), I argue that not knowing what comes next makes the environment unstable and diffuse. The respondents express clear needs for knowing the goals and visions in the corporation, so that everyone can pull in the same direction. If this doesn't happen, the relationship dimension can become more independent then mutual, leaving peoples development up to themselves (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005, Kvalsund & Meyer, 2005).

Not knowing what others expect from the employees when it comes to ideas and contributions makes them feel insecure. This is another reason why the environment needs better reciprocal communication (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). Without communication the employees will experience less consistency, a trait missed by the respondents after the Choir Cooperation. The respondents admit that they dislike being thrown into things. With a consistent culture for creative projects, the management can better communicate the development of the corporation. This includes evaluating and reflecting on the creative projects, another thing that was missing from the process. Developing means reflecting on what worked and what can be changed, if this is not done the group can be regressive and not know how to benefit from each other and one's experiences (McClure, 2005). The evaluation and feedback process can be compared to the final contact phase of the Gestalt cycle. By skipping this phase, defense mechanisms can occur because one moves onto something else too fast. Attribution may also occur, if one feels as a bystander to one`s own life, because one has no control over the progress or what one has accomplished (Clarkson, 2004). This can be one of the answers to why the

respondents feel something has been missing after the creative project; the Gestalt cycle was never completed (Clarkson, 20054).

5.4: Implications on Developing Creative Counseling

Innovation:An Extra Benefit

Inspiration through creativity is a must when it comes to achieving innovation (Strømsnes, 2012). The handbook from The Ministry of Trade and Industry states that openness and inclusiveness are the basis for employee-driven innovation (Hansen et al., 2012). The word innovation is little used by the ground floor workers in New Corp. Still the respondents described the benefits of innovation when talking about their experience with creativity. The Choir Cooperation has helped creativity and cooperation, but also laid down important ground work for a culture of innovation. This includes a more trusting and secure culture, with the management opening up for the involvement of the employees in the development of the corporation. However, the management may not be as nurturing as is ideal in employee-driven innovation (Hansen et al., 2012); the employees in New Corp still have to initiate their own development, and the respondents talk of some rules in New Corp that seem to sometimes restrict creativity. To help innovation, rules must be in place so the knowledge and resources have the right focus, but the employees must still be able to be inspired (Aasen & Amundsen, 2011). The Choir Cooperation was clearly an inspiration that generated both enthusiasm and creativity that has spread as innovation throughout New Corp.

An inference I make from the respondents answers, is that the New Corp corporation and a culture for innovation are not opposites, but rather two sides of the same culture. Cooperation and creativity are both invaluable to achieve a successful corporation as well as working innovation, and the common denominators between a corporation and an innovative culture are many (Aasen & Amundsen, 2011). Some of the main elements that recur in a corporation, innovation, as well as creative projects, is the focus on combining the employees and management`s participation and involvement, with interdisciplinary knowledge (Aasen & Amundsen, 2011). The respondents clearly stated that innovation for them means being able to brainstorm ideas, that everyone is involved, and that the internal competencies are used rather than bypassed. This was also what they got during the creative project, but not as much as they would have liked after the project was completed. This can mean that

even though a creative process may bring out the innovation in a corporation, something more must happen if a corporation is to get the stable atmosphere and routines that characterize a culture for innovation (Aasen & Amundsen, 2011).

When it comes to the question of in what ways creative projects can create a culture that inspires employee-driven innovation, I believe the answer can be linked to group counseling and employee-driven innovation. By using the innovative contest element as an incentive for groups to work together (Strømsnes, 2012), and a creative work method, in this case singing in choirs, the employees have to work together in new ways to be able to succeed in creating something. By focusing on cooperation, involvement and development, creative projects can promote an innovative culture, where everyone is heard and ideas are followed up (Hansen et al., 2012). The Choir cooperation achieved this according to the respondents, but I believe the use of reflection, communication and evaluation must be implemented in future creative projects to maintain the culture that is created. Innovation needs encouragement, investment and patience, and therefore the management needs to follow up the work to make sure the employees continue develop the corporation through employee-driven innovation.

Theatrical Implications

Active counselors, who focus on the whole person in the counseling relationship, characterize both the Gestalt approach and the theatre. The mind and body go hand in hand as well, and the same goes for feelings and needs (Clarkson, 2004). This means theatrical inspiration can be seen as a holistic approach to counseling, uniting all parts of both participant and counselor (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005). In both Gestalt and improvisation one has to accept rather than block (Johnstone, 1979) what comes out of the ground to become the figure (Clarkson, 2004). Projects using theatre as a method, as psychodrama, can unite the employees` needs with the intention of Gestalt through creativity (Johannessen et al., 2010). This means a focus on the whole person through the medium of theatre. The participants in the Choir Cooperation appreciated the creativity of the project, and they said themselves that they were all open to new creative inputs. The prejudices towards the Choir Cooperation may have been based general skepticism rather than the creative approach. This could mean that the New Corp stage is set for developing projects using theatre to further promote counseling perspectives.

I argue that the Choir Cooperation used the different stages of psychodrama: introduction, playing and discussion (Johannessen et al., 2010). The project did not utilize these stages however, as far as I can see. This means the participants may have missed the right introduction and closure for the Gestalt to be complete. Using theatrical techniques in psychodrama as role playing, visualization, fantasy and imagery (Johannessen et al., 2010), combined with a Gestalt approach to group counseling and cooperation, one might better the work environment further than during the Choir Cooperation. By focusing on a healthy and complete Gestalt cycle (Clarkson, 2004), and by using the techniques of drama and theatre, the employees may find it easier to be playful as children as in the modern hermeneutics. This way they can be carried away and reemerge as new persons (Gustavsson, 2007) after a creative project, rather than watching from the sidelines. This may call for an active and creative Gestalt counselor, but also that the employees have the skills of improvisation so they can be able to lose themselves in the situation (Johnstone, 1979). Because we are all players of many roles this lies inherent in us as people. It is therefore my belief that through creative projects using theatre, employees can better their cooperation and work environment through improvisation, and at the same time enhance their reception to new creative projects and activities.

5.5: Holistic Discussion

Answering the Research Question as a Whole

"The discipline of creation, be it to paint, compose, write, is an effort towards wholeness." (LÈngle, year unknown: 21.05.2014.) The participants in the Choir Cooperation clearly evolved through creative tools. They opened themselves up, which reflects the goal of hermeneutics (Gustavsson, 2007) and improvisation (Johnstone, 1979), and cooperated better through the playfulness of creativity. If the positive consequences of creativity are so many, then one can ask why were so many participants scared of the unknown? I use Gestalt theory to understand why some of them have problems entering a creative process that is designed for the good of everyone involved. By embracing the challenges and negativity found in the Choir Cooperation`s Gestalt cycle, New Corp has the potential of developing on a human level as well as corporate level. This includes learning from experience rather than ignoring the difficulties. Also by embracing what the project has to offer, one has a better chance at achieving a healthy Gestalt cycle, and this will ultimately make for a

better work environment for the employees who experience defense mechanisms and problems because of their hesitations. This gives them a better chance of participating in good developments in the future New Corp, and therefore makes for a more secure and stress free work environment.

Group counseling and working in groups benefits cooperation, and cooperation is the most important tool when it comes to creativity. This because cooperation makes one open up to the influence of others, and both the people in the group, and the group itself, can grow by reflecting over mutual experiences. The group development in the Choir Cooperation made it easier to be creative and vice versa, meaning the work environment was strengthened by the efforts of the participants. Seemingly New Corp still reaps the seeds, but they are fewer every day. This because to an outsider there seems to have been little work to better either creativity or cooperation in the months after the project. By being persons in relation and through a holding environment, the participants of the Choir Cooperation have developed enormously, something the respondents feel they never could have achieved on their own. The cooperation and communication is better because one knows what others bring to the table, and appreciates the contribution of others. By getting to know each other the group became more than the sum of its parts, bettering the work environment for the employees and the benefits for the corporation

Everyone needs information to get onboard with a development, creative or otherwise. If the management had communicated better with their employees, I believe the creative Choir Cooperation project could have been more than just a step in the right direction. All the respondents agreed that they wanted more creativity, communication, goals, visions and information. With a culture for creativity and innovation that puts these activities and projects on the agenda, I believe the creativity can do even more for the cooperation and work environment than the Choir Cooperation ever did. As the respondents stated: The creative activity does not have to be big for them to feel more appreciated and included. Feeling valued can also contribute to the employees having healthier Gestalt cycles, meaning that the corporation can contribute to employee growth rather than prevent it.

The participants were apparently surprised at what they achieved. I interpret this as a result of them not knowing how to realize their potential. As stated from the respondents "most people just keep their heads down and work." This makes me ask the question: how to best discover the potential and resources that are in a corporation? If creative projects achieve this, then how can one best continue the development when the project is over? This is where a culture of employee-driven innovation might work. Many of the participants in the Choir Cooperation were unaware of their creative potential. Many corporations are also unaware of the innovative potential that lies inherent in the corporate culture. If creativity makes the corporation more safe and open, then the work environment will be better after introducing creativity. This is because as the employees get to know each other in different ways, they are better equipped for an innovative future. The qualities that are needed for innovation are the same that are needed to stay competitive in an ever-changing world. It seems to me that there is no reason to think that there would be more negativity towards projects using theatre, meaning that as a counselor one is initially open to using creative methods after one's own choosing.

The Future of Creativity in the Corporate World

It`s as with spinach. If your child doesn`t want to eat spinach, it doesn`t help to give the child more and more spinach. (...) But if you serve the spinach in a different way. More creatively. Maybe in a pie or something. Then it might just happen that your child says "wow, this was delicious. (Quote by Bamford in Hoaas, 2008: 13.2.2014.)

As New Corp is what I imagine to be a typical bureaucratic corporation in Norway, and the respondents and participants typical ground floor workers, I think that the results found in New Corp likely can be transferable to other similar corporations in the future. Additional research could confirm or disconfirm this. When hearing that many participants were negative at the beginning of the Choir Cooperation, I ask myself: is it realistic to think that one can please everyone? By using creative techniques I believe that one can "serve a spinach everyone can like". Everyone may not be inclined to love everything, but by creating a relational learning relationship between participants and counselor, one can focus on the whole person rather than exclude some parts of a person`s self or process. As two wholes in a mutual relationship the influence on each other can be greater than outside a holistic approach to counseling. This means learning to grow by developing in relation to the

world (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005), whether it means starting to like spinach or cooperate better through creativity. This learning potential is also possible for groups similar to the Choir Cooperation. One behave differently when among others than when one is alone (Hargie, 2006), but one still form one`s behavior through sharing experiences with others. Because creativity can help communication, creativity may be said to be one of the bases for happy relationships: The better one communicates the better the relationships (Hargie, 2006).

The negative effects of the Choir Cooperation project happened because the creative project was neither finished the way it should have been, with evaluation, nor maintained with continuing projects. The negativity has in that aspect little to do with the creativity. There are many good things to say about the Choir Cooperation project, but as with the theatre, one never knows how things work before trying them out on real people. This means that the benefits achieved after the Choir Cooperation should be developed and reflected on for them to multiply. One project cannot change everything that is missing in a corporation, but using counseling perspectives the organizers achieved their objective of bettering the cooperation. Still better does not mean best, and the development needs to continue through reflections and practice for creative projects to truly change the cooperation and work environment of larger corporations. This includes evaluation, seeing the projects from different angles and perspectives, and adding what is missing. Only then can a creative project be a living organism, creatively developing and changing according to needs of the corporation.

6: Concluding Comments

6.1: Summary

The theme of this Master Thesis has been creative group counseling in larger corporations (See chapter 1.1: The Research Question and Theme). The research question was as follows: *How can a creative group counseling project improve the cooperation and thus the work environment in a larger corporation?* The discussion included this sub research question: *In what ways can such creative projects create a culture that inspires employee-driven innovation?*

6.2: Tentative Conclusions

This conclusion is separated into four parts, one for each category.

The Experienced Creativity in New Corp

When it comes to the creativity, the creative project seemed to help the participants become better employees. According to themselves they think outside the box more, are more flexible when it comes to changes, and they dare to do more than they did before. The communication is better because they have gotten to know each other in different ways, and that in turn improves the cooperation. The creative project also seemed to make the employees happier and wanting more, which can be an ideal starting point for development. The creativity thus influenced the work environment, creating a safer and more holding (McClure, 2005) culture for creativity and innovation.

Toward a Better Work Environment through Creative Cooperation

Not all the participants were excited from the start of the creative project. Still there is some evidence that the Choir Cooperation may have changed the Gestalt (Clarkson, 2004) of those with negative prejudices. The progress of the project seems to indicate an increase in involvement and participation throughout the project, and I credit this to the creativity. If the participants were skeptical going in, they apparently changed their minds when experiencing the creative counseling. This may have improved the cooperation and work environment for the future, because the employees may have changed their prejudices after being part of something successful. The participants also seem to have a better potential for handling the chaos (McClure, 2005) that comes from groups and cooperation in a corporation. By opening up to others (Gustavsson, 2007), they are better equipped to dealing with the

change and growth that follows creative work and innovation. More initiative has also come from having to focus on group activities in a creative way, making the employees at all levels of the corporation more mutually dependent of each other (Allgood & Kvalsund, 2005, Kvalsund & Meyer, 2005).

Further Developing the Choir Cooperation

Even though I have tentatively concluded that the Choir Cooperation had a clear positive impact on the employees of New Corp, one can argue that this was but a step in the right direction. What is the point of making the employees more receptive to creativity and development if the corporation falls back in its uncreative ways? It can be that even though a bureaucratic corporation like New Corp may not be inherently creative and open to change, the employees still might be. To develop the cooperation and work environment further the corporation needs to listen to what the employees want, and continue using creativity at the work place. This has the potential of letting both the employees and the corporation grow and develop. Had the management also focused on evaluation and feedback after the project, the cooperation and work environment might have been even better. I argue that if creativity stops, development stops. If this happens, New Corp may end up as regressing (McClure, 2005) to its former way of being . This can make the employees lose the benefits of cooperation and the work environment that they experienced in the first place.

Implications on Developing Creative Counseling

The creativity in the Choir Cooperation opened New Corp up to a more trusting and secure culture. A culture not unlike the ideal culture for innovation (Strømsnes, 2012). By further using creativity, I suggest that New Corp could continue to be open to the benefits of employee-driven innovation. This is because after the creative project the corporation had achieved many of the traits that define an innovative culture. Innovation is needed in the future of corporations. Since there is no innovation without creativity (Strømsnes, 2012), I argue that creative projects can always help create a culture for employee-driven innovation, especially a creative counseling project focusing on cooperation and a better work environment. I also conclude that there are many possibilities for promoting counseling perspectives through creativity in addition to the Choir Cooperation. Drama and theatre can function to improve cooperation through improvisation (Johnstone, 1979).

Psychodrama is well known for using theatre techniques (Johannessen et al., 2010) to improve communication and deal with private difficulties as those found in a group or corporation.

6.3: What Does the Study Mean for Real Life and Future Research?

The qualitative method is not designed for obtaining results that can easily be generalized in a grand scale (Thagaard, 2013). However, New Corp follows the same bureaucratic structure (Macionis & Plummer, 2008) as many other corporations, and the employees seem similar to ordinary people. Therefore it seems likely that a creative counseling project can achieve the same results in other similar corporations. How can one compare the bigger picture in this thesis with the bigger picture from the real context? I conclude that the bigger picture means using creativity in corporations in new ways, not only through a choir competition, and not only to promote counseling perspectives. If one is to achieve innovation, I believe one needs to incorporate creativity in all that one does. This belief could be tested in further studies, using creativity as a measuring stick for corporate innovation. One could also investigate through a quantitative analysis (Ringdal, 2001), to see of those findings would back up the results found in this thesis. No matter what, I will continue believing in creativity. In that aspects my prejudices have not changed much throughout the work on this thesis. One needs creativity to grow, but also to be happy.

The arts are not [just] a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable. Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow, for heaven's sake. Sing in the shower. Dance to the radio. Tell stories. Write a poem to a friend, even a lousy poem. Do it as well as you possible can. You will get an enormous reward. You will have created something. (Vonnegut, 2005: 21.05.2014.)

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Appendix 1: Intervjuguide master i rådgivning

Før intervjuet:

- Hilse på informantene
- Gi en kort presentasjon av tema og informerer om sensur (Se info fra NSD)

Tema: Hvordan bedre samarbeid og arbeidsmiljø i større bedrifter gjennom kreative grupperådgivningsprosjekter

Problemstilling: Del 1: How can a creative group-counseling project improve the cooperation and thus the work environment in a larger corporation? **Del 2**: In what ways can such creative projects create a culture that inspire employee driven innovation?

Temafokus framfor individfokus

- Skru på lydopptaker.

Innledning (bli kjent, etablere tillit)
1. Hvor lenge har dere jobbet i bedriften?
2. Hvilken rolle har dere i bedriften?
3. Hvordan ble det så dere havnet i akkurat denne bedriften?

Intervjuspørsmål (over på tema)

1: Kreativitet

4. Hvilke assosiasjoner får dere hvis jeg sier kreativitet?

5. På hvilken måte vil dere si kreativitet kan knyttes til samarbeid i gruppe?

6. Hvordan var samarbeidet før det kreative prosjektet dere har vært med på?

7. Oppfølging: Hvordan var arbeidsmiljøet før det kreative prosjektet dere har vært med på?

8. Hva opplevde dere var formålet med det kreative gruppeprosjektet dere var med på?

9. Hva sitter dere igjen med erfaringer etter det kreative prosjektet dere var med på?

10. Hvordan har samarbeidet i grupper fungert i etterkant av prosjektet?

11. Oppfølging: Kan dere gi et eksempel?

12. Hvordan har prosjektet preget arbeidsmiljøet?

13. På hvilken måte føler dere at det kreative gruppeprosjektet dere har vært med på kan bidra til bedre samarbeidet?

14. Hvilke grupperessurser har dere blitt klar over i etterkant av det kreative prosjektet dere har vært med på?

2: Innovasjon

15. Hva assosierer dere med ordet innovasjon?
16. Hvilke ressurser som kjennetegner innovasjon vil dere si eksisterte før prosjektet i deres bedrift?
17. Hvilke ressurser som kjennetegner innovasjon vil dere si eksisterte etter prosjektet i deres bedrift?
18. Føler dere kreativitet kan bidra til innovasjon, i så fall på hvilken måte?

3: Medarbeiderdrevet innovasjon

19. Hvordan vil dere beskrive medarbeiderdrevet innovasjon?
20. Oppfølging: Kan dere gi et eksempel?
21. Hva mener dere skal til for at dere skal få en arbeidsplass som fremmer medarbeiderdrevet innovasjon?
22. På hvilken måte opplever dere samarbeid som avgjørende for medarbeiderdrevet innovasjon?
23. På hvilken måte føler dere kreativitet kan i bidra til en innovasjonskultur som fremmer medarbeiderdrevet innovasjon?
24. Vil dere si noe av det kreative prosjektet lever videre i deres bedrift?
25. Opplever dere medarbeiderdrevet innovasjon i hverdagen?

4: Samarbeid og arbeidsmiljø

26. Opplever dere at arbeidsplassen gjør nok for arbeidsmiljøet?
27. Hva skal til for å bedre arbeidsmiljøet på arbeidsplassen i dag?
28. Oppfølging: Kan dere gi et eksempel?
29. I en drømmeverden, hvordan føler dere arbeidsmiljøet ville vært?

Avslutning

La oss ta et øyeblikk, så kan dere kjenne etter om dere sitter med noe dere ikke har fått sagt

30. Oppklaring av eventuelle spørsmål/ svar, minne om sensur, takke for hjelpen

Etter intervjuet:

Skru av lydopptaker, få signert samtykkeerklæring, stille meg til rådighet for å svare på eventuelle spørsmål i etterkant.

Appendix 2: Samtykkeerklæring

Dette kvalitative forkningsprosjektet utføres av en kvinnelig masterstudent innen rådgivnig, ved Institutt for Voksnes Læring og Rådgivningsvitenskap, NTNU. I den forbindelse skal det utføres to gruppeintervju med tre deltakere i hver gruppe. Intervjuene skal være samtalebaserte, og vare mellom 1 til 2 timer. Oppgaven skrives på engelsk, men intervjuene vil foregå på norsk.

Studenten har valgt å utforske temaet kreativitet innen rådgivningsfeltet med utgangspunkt i følgende problemstilling: How can a creative group-counseling project improve the cooperation and thus the work environment in a larger corporation?

I den forbindelse vil studenten intervjue voksne ansatte som har deltatt på et kreativt gruppeprosjekt med rådgivningsfokuset samarbeid. Alle intervju vil bli tatt opp via diktafon eller mobiltelefon. Umiddelbart etter intervjuet vil opptaket overføres direkte (ikke via internett) til en passordbeskyttet datamaskin. Intervjuene vil så transkriberes til engelsk tekst som vil bli lagret på den samme passordbeskyttede datamaskinen.

Oppbevaring av materialet vil gjøres strengt konfidensielt, og alle data vil slettes senest ved prosjektets slutt, i løpet av mai 2014 - alt i henhold til personopplysningsloven. Funnene vil nedtegnes i en masteroppgave som vil publiseres ved Institutt for Voksnes Læring og Rådgivningsvitenskap, med godkjenning fra Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste (NSD).

Alle navn vil anonymiseres i det skriftlige materialet, og opplysninger som vil kunne bidra til å identifisere deltakerne vil endres.

Med dette samtykker jeg om å delta på prosjektet, så lenge det følger de retningslinjer som beskrevet ovenfor.

Navn: _____ Dato: _____