Chapter 33

# LISTEN TO THE RADIO! A Series of Radio Shows as an Intervention to Connect Managers, Teachers, and Staff in a Change process in a Dutch School Organization

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# 33. Listen to the radio! A series of radio shows as an intervention to connect managers, teachers, and staff in a change process in a Dutch school organization

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## Abstract

*This chapter presents the results of a design study in which radio shows were used as an intervention in an innovation process in a school organization. The ambition of three initiators in this school was to start up a process to connect colleagues stronger to their organization and to organize commitment, pride, and a feeling of belonging. They used a monthly radio show as a way to attain this. The question that is central in this chapter is to what extent custom made radio shows can contribute to making the new direction of an organization clear to its employees; and to supporting the actual change process that the employees are expected to undertake. Four design criteria formed the basis for the series of radio shows: 1) Employees as active builders of the change process; 2) Connecting stakes of both change initiators and employees; 3) Linkage between above surface and below surface interventions; 4) Creating depth and scale in the intervention. Based on the content of the shows, the numbers of listeners, the reactions of the employees of the school to the shows, and various interviews, the criteria are assessed in order to answer the research questions. The findings lead to design questions that have been discussed with a panel consisting of 2 experts and 2 stakeholders from the school organization.*

## 1. Introduction to the problem

The context of this research is a school organization for vocational education and adult education (both for professional development and for initial training). In the Netherlands this school is called a 'Regionaal Opleidings Centrum' (ROC). Graduates either enter the labor market or continue in professional higher education. In total, there are 5000 students located at seven locations. Staff consists of about 800 employees (among which around 650 teaching staff and 150 support staff). The management board of this school organization in the Netherlands makes an update of their strategic plan once every four years. This plan presents the vision and the steps that are necessary to take in the upcoming years. This plan is sent out as printed copies to the teachers and supporting staff of the school. The management board noticed that even though they put an effort in printing and distributing the plan, employees take hardly notice, and often do not even read the plan. Their question was whether it was possible to find an attractive format to both disseminate the content of the strategic plan and to activate the employees to actively participate in acting accordingly.

The idea then emerged to use a series of radio shows to inform, and activate the teachers and supporting staff. The idea to choose radio podcasts as a medium originated from an internal brainstorm session. It is not the idea to use a regular radio show but rather to make a series of podcasts that can be downloaded, and one live radio show at the location. Radio was considered to be an interesting medium because of several reasons:

a)  it could help to present the new plans in an active way by making use of interviews with members of the management board;
b)  it could help employees to give meaning to the new plans by inviting them to react and to create in-depth conversations by interviewing them;
c)  it could disseminate actions that people are taking based on this plan by making reports on the spot;
d)  it could help to connect to other organizations and possible partners in the region; it could bring some fun to the whole change process because of the opportunity to listen to each other's favourite music songs.

Both the question of the management board of the school, and the idea of using radio as an intervention, forms the starting point of a design research that was conducted in 2012. The research got shape by experimenting with monthly radio shows, conducting literature research on the topic of organizational change, and by a process that is best characterized as continuous reflection-in-action. The central question that the study aimed to answer is:

*How can a series of radio shows contribute to making the new direction of an organization clear to its employees; and to supporting the actual change process that the employees are expected to undertake?*

## 2. Conceptualization of the study

The ambition of the school board can be framed as a wish for change. They first developed a clear vision in the strategic plan. In this plan they described their vision for the upcoming years with respect to: 1) content and approach of education; 2) professionalization of teachers and supporting staff; 3) management; 4) the network of organizations and people in the region of this school. They then want to spread this plan among their employees with the purpose that they can adopt the vision and will actively contribute to turn this vision into practical actions.

According to Boonstra (2000), change processes often do not have the results that were initially expected. Drucker argued already in 1993 and more recently that in the last decades society has changed from an industrial economy to a knowledge economy (Drucker, 1993). This has drastically changed working relationships and the way of working in organizations. This also has impact for educational institutes. The ROC is a school organization that educates (young) professionals in this changing society. Precisely because this economy is changing, it is relevant that a ROC school organization have a vision to design education in such a way that it prepares students for this society. Studies and initiatives like KSAVE support this line of thought (see for more detailed information also Unesco 2011, or: EU Recommended key competences).

In many institutes, like vocational training institutes traditional assumptions, based on work in an industrial economy, still prevail. In a knowledge economy however, it is necessary to consider revising these assumptions. This section describes the characteristics of the knowledge economy as opposed to the industrial society we used to be. This framework will help in the next section to come up with concrete criteria that could help to design and experiment with an intervention that could contribute to the change process that has been initiated by the board.

Practices that determined success in the industrial economy, like the replication of products and the focus on productivity, need re-examination in an economy in which the value of knowledge is seen as a major economic resource. In a knowledge economy an organisation's success is more determined by intellectual than by physical resources (Harrison & Kessels, 2004). The success of organisations in a knowledge economy is determined by the extent to which they manage to create new knowledge and apply that new knowledge to the improvement and innovation of their products, services and working processes.

With respect to the organisation structure, it becomes clear that with the rise of the knowledge economy a shift takes place from traditional hierarchical structures of companies, towards new forms of cooperation and organisation that consist of network structures (Huemer, Von Krogh, & Roos, 1998). Indeed, instead of hierarchy as a mechanism to divide and organise the work, networks become the structure in which employees connect to each other in order to do their work. This form of cooperation makes it important that employees choose peers, experts, and like-minded colleagues to work on intriguing and urgent questions that they encounter in their work environment (De Jong, 2010).

In this work environment there is no management layer that holds exclusive responsibility for achieving predetermined goals or results. Instead, employees set, together with their colleagues and managers, their own goals. This freedom to set one's own goals goes together with the responsibility to deliver results, therefore employees are given a lot of autonomy in their work. Intrinsic motivation becomes more important in these kinds of work environments. Intrinsically motivated employees tend to be more vitalized than people who are extrinsically motivated (Nix, Ryan, Manly, & Deci, 1999). Intrinsically motivated teams will persevere when things are getting tough, while others would rather give up (Kessels, 2001; Van Lakerveld, 2005).

Maybe the type of questions that employees encountered in the workplace in an industrial economy did not differ so much from the questions that employees face in a knowledge economy. But the necessity to come up with innovative solutions has grown. Where a single-loop learning process (Argyris & Schön, 1978) could lead to satisfying results in the industrial economy, the necessity to develop the ability to go through double loop learning processes that break the existing thinking pattern, becomes more and more important in a knowledge economy.

In a knowledge economy learning with the intention of improving and innovating is very important (Verdonschot, 2009). Work and learning are not separated - as they were or have been though the industrial economy. The training paradigm has changed into a learning paradigm and the work environment takes on characteristics of a learning environment (Dixon, 1999; Kessels & Van der Werff, 2002).

Finally, the relationship between employees and employers has also changed. Baruch (2004) speaks of the 'old deal' and the 'new deal'. In the old deal employees are loyal and conform themselves to their employer. In return they expect security of employment, and career prospects. In the new deal, employees make long working hours, and take high responsibility. In return they expect reward for performance, and autonomy to do their work.

**The context of the school organization**

The school organization is located in The Netherlands and provides education in vocational training and adult education. It has seven locations and offers education to more than 5.000 students in seven specific domains. During the last couple of years the management has worked intensively with teachers to develop a new structure and vision to organize learning activities for students. This new practiced based learning is now at the heart of the school organization. At the same time management sees it as an important challenge to connect this vision on learning more personally to the teachers. Management wants to touch "the heart" of every teacher and support him or her in developing innovative and strong learning interventions to enable the professional development of their students.

## 3. Criteria for the design

Many organisations work on innovation and change processes in order to be successful in the knowledge economy. Although the day-to-day practice in many organisations is marked by characteristics belonging to a knowledge economy, the assumptions that underlie the change efforts often still originate in the way of thinking that was common in the industrial economy. We could, however, develop alternative assumptions, derived around the nature of the knowledge economy, and which might be more effective in realizing innovation. The alternative assumptions that assume how effective change takes place form the criteria on the basis of which the radio shows are designed.

**Employees as builders of the change process**

Often, management takes initiative in change processes. They develop, either by themselves, or with help from internal or external consultants, new concepts that need to establish a new way of working. Then, they develop a predefined path for the new change to be implemented and prescribe this way of working to the employees. When employees are not immediately enthusiastic for this way of working, this is called 'resistance' and management develops strategies to break through this resistance (Ardon, 2009; Cummings & Worley, 2008).

A core point in this assumption is that the initiators of change and the actors are seen as different people. Furthermore, the subjects of the change project are regarded as the 'receivers' of this process. They are seen as passive entities who do not change themselves but who need to be managed for change (Ardon, 2009; Homan, 2006). However, research on innovation in knowledge intensive firms has shown that in the end the knowledge workers are the ones who step by step innovate their work (Van Poucke, 2005). Normally, talking about the shift from an industrial towards a knowledge society, is applied to organizations. In this chapter, we apply this to a school organization. Teachers and support staff can be seen as professionals.

This means they need to be seen as workers who improve, and from time to time radically innovate their own work (Drucker, 1999). If obedience and loyalty are core values, then it is possible for employees to execute something that is developed by someone else. But when work takes on the characteristics of a learning process, it requires that employees feel closely connected to the change process and that they engage as co-developers.

A possible alternative assumption could be to regard all employees as knowledge workers who actively contribute to the change process by taking initiative for action according to the new strategic vision in their day-to-day-work environment (Drucker, 1999; Kessels, 2001). The work environment becomes a 'hotspot' for innovation. Gratton (2007) characterizes a hotspot as a place that is full of energy, where employees collaborate, ideas become contagious and new opportunities appear.

**Connecting the stakes of both change initiators and employees**

In an industrial era it was logical that the board of an organization would set out the lines for a change process, and that employees would follow this up in concrete actions. In a knowledge economy however, this becomes more difficult. In order to develop innovative solutions for intricate questions, it seems necessary to combine the opposite interests that are at stake. Pfeffer (1992) describes two strategies of 'getting things done' that are often used in organizations: hierarchical authority and the development of a strongly shared vision. He says that these strategies, although often pursued, are actually problematic. Using hierarchy as a strategy to get things done implies that the highest in rank decides the goal that is pursued. This does not work because for almost all work cooperation with people who do not fall within one's direct chain of command is necessary. And, a critical question that comes up with respect to this strategy, is: what happens if the person whose orders are being followed, is incorrect? These two problems that result from the use of hierarchy to get things done, are especially true for innovations. First, the innovation practices studied did not consist of hierarchical structures in which one has the power over the others and could determine the central goal. Hierarchy as a governing mechanism does not work in the creation of a new and unknown future (Scharmer, 2007). Second, when innovation is depicted as a process in which the outcome is not known in advance, there is no-one who knows in advance what goal could best be pursued in order to make sure that the right direction is chosen.

Using a shared vision then, as a way to get things done, is also problematic. Pfeffer (1992) states that there is not always enough time to build a completely shared conception of the world. In innovation practices too, the pressure to attain results is often high. Besides, the development of a shared vision brings the risk of groupthink. Groupthink is a pressure to conform to the dominant view of others due to a desire for harmony in a decision and consensus in a decision process. Alternative ideas are not being evaluated anymore. For innovation groupthink may lead to the risk of group members becoming more committed to the status quo of the group than to the innovative performance (Angle, 2000; Tranfield, Parry, Wilson, Smith et al., 1998). The group may jointly become tunnel-visioned and get blind-sided (Van de Ven, Venkataraman, Polley, & Garud, 2000).

The use of individual influence to get things done in organizations is brought up by Pfeffer (1992) as a good alternative for the two aforementioned strategies. In this approach the emphasis is on method rather than structure. The two steps that this approach according to Pfeffer consists of, are having one's own goals clear and examining the points of view of others. This leads to the alternative assumption in which both initiators of the change process, and the employees need to connect their interests.

**Linkage between above surface and below surface interventions**

For a long time attention to innovation initiatives focused on changing formal procedures, adding or adapting hierarchical structures or creating rules to enforce the desired innovation to occur. But when organizational ambitions are high, emotions and deeper sense making of the professionals within the organization also play a dominant role. Without including these dynamics in innovation projects, the risk is to only create superficial ideas, in which initiatives very quickly disappear when projects are finished or external consultants disappear (see Table 1). An increasingly dominant perspective in innovation interventions is to actively connect the two layers in the project in order to increase the success rate of innovation to occur.

*Table 1: Aspects in change processes that appear above the surface and below the surface (see also Model I and Model II theory in use by: Argyris, Putnam, & McClain Smith, 1985)*

| Above the surface | Context and visible structure of the organization; observable rules and procedures of the organization; existing management layers, structures, and work processes. Emphasize rationality, suppress negative associations, task unilaterally. |
| --- | --- |
| Surface | The actual change or development intervention in the project. |
| Below the surface | Deeper emotions such as opinions, beliefs, anger, disbelief, questions, insecurity, etc. |

**Creating depth and scale in change and its interventions**

An existing change dilemma exists of a continuous tension between the depth of the change process versus the proportion (Vermaak, 2009). Organizational change demands that individuals can take time to work on the topic at hand with colleagues, personally, to change beliefs or ideas and to include new behaviour or attitudes. At the same time organizations can have a big number of employees that need to step into this process. This results in a tension between depth and proportion. The result often is to suppress below surface dynamics with intervention aiming at above surface.

## 4. The intervention: A series of radio shows

The intervention that is developed by a design team in collaboration with the school organization comprises a series of radio shows. The sections below describe the way this intervention was designed in order to meet the design criteria. Furthermore the intervention itself is characterized, and the different roles (such as radio-DJ, side-kick etc.) are explained.

**Design of radio as an intervention to promote change**

There were nine radio shows (see table 2), each show lasted for about 45 minutes. And was distributed via podcasts on the Internet only available for the staff of the school organization. The composition of the design and development teams for the radio shows was based on the different criteria outlined in the following section.

***Employees as active builders of the change process***

The radio team that consisted of both managers, and employees from the department of communication. Furthermore in the radio shows interviews have been carried out with several teachers and supporting staff. Each show also has a different focus or topic, making it possible to invite different people to give input in the show.

***Connecting stakes of both initiators and employees***

The radio shows offer the possibility to connect different perspectives during live discussions. Different opinions, ideas and beliefs are included. Also the side-kick of the central DJ has a free role, making it very easy to ask critical questions and stretch the interview in order to link various perspectives.

***Linkages between above surface and below surface interventions***

The radio shows try to connect that what happens 'above' and 'below' the surface. The radio shows allow for someone to request a favourite song and at the same time have a good discussion or debate. It has quick changes in the dynamic of the interaction.

Radio also creates a lively atmosphere, you can hear each other and discuss about a specific topic, instead of reading it on your computer.

***Creating depth and scale in the intervention***

Radio might have the potential to connect the tension between the two poles: depth in the one hand, and scale at the other hand. Radio as a medium makes it possible to share ideas, outcomes and discussions with a certain depth, because the radio studio offers an intimate atmosphere that allows conversations to come to a deeper level. At the same time the shows are available to a larger audience. People can react, respond and connect on the initiative. Furthermore the timing in radio is different from the timing in regular conversations that one would have in organizations. Normally, you could easily talk with one another for an hour or more, whereas in a radio show, this becomes boring very quickly. The average duration of a conversation on the radio is expressed rather in minutes than in hours. An interview of 10 minutes is actually quite long for a radio item. This means that radio makes it possible to have several in-depth conversations during the course of one show.

**Description of the radio shows**

The project started with two test shows. This took place in November and December 2011. The shows were cut to a trailer, a short radio fragment of around 2-3 minutes to share with people in the organization. Based on the trailer several radio shows of about one hour each were made. A specific item of the new strategy had a central place during each radioshow. A small editing team (consisting of employees of the school organization and the external consulting company) prepared the show: they selected favourite music of colleagues, prepared and planned interviews, etc. Before the start of the show the radio team prepares the show in the studio. After the show was recorded it was immediately put on the website that was especially created for this purpose. The radio shows were not live broadcasted, but rather have the form of audio-files at a lively website. This website contained the complete audio file to listen to the show, and short descriptions of the guests each show. Furthermore the site contains background information on the shows such as an introduction of the DJ-team. Colleagues (teachers and staff) could download the show from this website. The last show consists of a *live* radio show that is recorded and broadcasted at the location of the school. This is also the day that the academic year is opened and colleagues prepare themselves for the upcoming year. This last show can be listened by anyone, and the idea is by making this a live show that alumni, organizations in the region, students, friends and family of the employees, and other people in the network are invited to participate and listen to this show.

Table 2 shows an overview of the series of shows. Table 3 offers an overview of the items that recur each show. The theme of the June show is 'At home in the region'. Topics in this show comprise an interview with a local account manager from Rabobank who often invites students for internships. Also a teacher who is connected to the learning-to-work program at the Academic Hospital in Amsterdam is invited. The interview aims to understand what kind of impact these internships have on the professional development of students. Also during the show a student and director of the school discuss specific issues.

*Table 2: Overview if the themes and timing of the radio shows*

| Date | Topic in the show | Location |
|---|---|---|
| November 2011 | Pilot show | Studio in Hilversum |
| December 2011 | Pilot show | Studio in Hilversum |
| February 2012 | "Our education" | Studio in Hilversum |
| March 2012 | "Finances, accommodation and administration" | Studio in Hilversum |
| April 2012 | "Employees in development | Studio in Hilversum |
| May 2012 | "Focus on the student" | Studio in Hilversum |
| June 2012 | "At home in the region" | Studio in Hilversum |
| September 2012[1] | Starting the new school year | Studio in Hilversum |
| September 2012 | Opening of the academic year on location | LIVE at school |

*Table 3: Recurring parts and items each show*

| Flow of the show (every show lasts approximately 45 minutes) |
|---|
| Quick dialogue between guests |
| Jingle of the show |
| Song requested by a listener or chosen by the DJ's |
| Listening to voicemails left by listeners |
| Looking back at previous shows, and focusing on the topic of this show |
| News and gossip within the organization |
| Interview with an external or internal guest |
| Song requested by a listener or chosen by the DJ's |
| Interview and discussion on the topic |
| Song requested by a listener or chosen by the DJ's |
| Reflection on the discussions with DJ team |
| Song requested by a listener or chosen by the DJ's |
| Interview and discussion, sometimes with an external guest |
| Song requested by a listener or chosen by the DJ's |
| Facts and figures about ROC ID college |
| Reflection and deducing some conclusions |
| Final song |

**Description of the different roles of the people involved**

In this section we describe the different roles in the project. There are four different expert areas: the DJ team, the technician, the editor team and the producer. All actors participated voluntarily.

***DJ team***

This group play a very visible role in the production of each show. They are the directors of the show and determine what is suitable for recording. Four people are part of the DJ team: two central DJs and two sidekicks. The sidekicks were two colleagues of the school organization.

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[1] At the time this article was written, the last two shows did not take place yet.

The central DJs make sure the structure of the show is maintained and take responsibility for the interviews. The sidekicks ask critical questions and have a free role during the show that they can use to ask uncommon or triggering questions and to play around.

### The technician

He or she makes sure the end product of the show is up to standard. The technician mixes in music, makes intro tunes and keeps an eye on the time during the show. The technician also collects the songs, and cuts or edits specifics parts in interviews to enhance quality.

### Editor team

This team consists of two colleagues of the school organization who worked in the communication department. One is related to the department of internal communication, and one works for the department of marketing. They have the responsibility to inform people who participate in the show participants of the radio show in time, making the complete scenario structure of each show, and also collect relevant material for the website of the show.

### Producer

The producer oversees the complete series of shows. He connects regularly with the initiators of the initiative and developed the questions and content together with the DJ team. He is also responsibility for the budget and making sure the website is up to standard so that shows can be downloaded quickly after recording. In this case the producer has also the role of DJ.

## 5. Assessment of the radio show against the four criteria

In order to learn more about the outcomes of the series of radio shows in relation to its goals the design criteria were used as evaluation criteria for the quality of the radio shows. This section presents the results of the analysis in which several data sources were compared in order to evaluate the success and the impact of the radio project. In order to answer the research questions we have assessed the radio shows against the criteria. Actually, the purpose is to find out the extent to which the shows contributed to the change process. However, we did not evaluate directly the effects of the change process. We looked at it in terms of the way employees were connected to and contributed to `the radio shows. The following data sources were used for this:

- Facts on the number of visitors to the website on which the radio show could be downloaded.
- Secondary analysis of the results of an employee satisfaction research that was conducted annually by the school organization.
- Interviews with two members of the DJ-team to learn more about what they see happening within the school organization in terms of participations of staff members. One of them also takes on the role of producer of the show. He is an external consultant [2].
- Regular informal meetings between the initiators in which they reflected on the radio show as an intervention.

[2] The authors of the article, together with Pepijn Pillen and Pieterjan van Wijngaarden were the inventors of radio as an intervention in organizational change. One of them (Pieterjan van Wijngaarden) facilitated this process at the school organization that is used as a case study in this article. Pieterjan takes on both the role of DJ and the role of producer in this case.

**Criterion 1. Employees are active builders of the change process**

- For each radio show a group of colleagues is actively preparing the show. This group enlarges gradually during the flow of the shows. Some of the team members are part of the DJ team. The total number of active builders (people who contributed to the making of one or more shows) can be estimated at ten. This is perceived as a small number.
- During the shows a number of interviews are carried out. Within the school, but also outside the school. During the shows, in total 28 people are interviewed, of which 10 external professionals, 16 teachers or colleagues, and 2 students.
- A teacher who contributed to the show said: "Thanks for the nice experience! Great to hear how real this is! Also quite exciting, but the show is fantastic!"

**Criterion 2. Connecting the stakes of both initiators and employees**

- Producer of the radio show: "A tension in the project is that the project is quickly seen as a communication project instead of a means to facilitate in a change process. Colleagues and managers are used to more or less fixed communication activities that do often not focus on facilitating change, but rather have a marketing or communication purpose. Although the radio shows have the intention to contribute to the first, it is often experienced as the latter. The department of communication is by employees seen as a vehicle of the management directors as a direct platform to inform their employees."
- Member of the DJ team: "After each show we receive positive reactions of employees. They mention that this is something they really need in the organization. It helps them to look forward. Often these reactions come from participants that visited the radio studio or are involved in the preparation phase in some way."
- The topics of each radio show have a strong focus on content. They mainly focus on actual questions from a managerial perspective.
- The employee satisfaction research showed both positive and negative reactions to the show. Negative reactions focus not per se on the content of the show itself, but rather on the teacher's own context. For instance there was a reaction that there is no money for a teacher that wants to organize a party when he retires but that there obviously is budget for a radio show. There are also employees who regard the radio shows as a vehicle for the management team to express their opinion.
- One of the DJs: "I am not sure if people change their behaviour due to the shows. But people who visited the studio have a lot of energy to start working again. That gives trust and fun to continue with the project".
- A member of the board of directors sent an e-mail to the DJ-team: "I have listened with great pleasure to the first radio show of ID on air. Great work for your work and involvement. This is really about our organization! Very cool, nice music and nice conversations. I gave me a lot of energy and I am really looking forward to the next show. And of course the great final: the third Thursday of September".

**Criterion 3. Linkages between above surface and below surface interventions**

- In each show there is room for listeners who have called to the voicemail to tell a story or to request a song. For instance in one of the shows a teacher requested a song for her students who were on an internship. She wishes them good luck and says she is curious to hear their stories as soon as they've come back. This is a way to also give room to the things that happen below the surface and that are more connected to personal stories. Every show one or two of those phone calls or requests are being received.
- In each show one or two requests or voicemails are being sent in.

- Reactions vary from listeners. Some are very enthusiastic and emphasize the attractiveness to listen to new development regarding their school organization. Others are more negative and have the feeling it is an initiative of management to inform about new decisions.

**Criterion 4. Creating depth and proportion in the intervention**
- Table 4 shows the number of visitors to the radio website.
- It seems as if there is a core group of listeners. They immediately listen when a show is online, respond via e-mail, the website, or twitter.
- The internal employee satisfaction research showed that around 4% of the 800 employees listen to the show. The first show had relatively high listening numbers. The shows after this resulted in declining of listening numbers. The show after this about "the region" resulted in an increase of listeners.

*Table 4: Overview of visitors of the radio website in January, February and March 2012*

| Parts of the website | January 2012 | February 2012 | March 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Listeners & downloads | - | 798 | 258 |
| Shows | 49 | 399 | 153 |
| Reactions | - | 114 | 33 |
| Poll | - | - | 4 |
| Trailer of the first show | 12 | 186 | 36 |
| About the DJs | 22 | 280 | 35 |
| About the initiative | 17 | 151 | 31 |
| *Note: The number of hits explains how many times a page was opened. It does not guarantee for instance that in February 2012 798 different colleagues listened to the radio show* | | | |

## 6. Conclusions and reflection

The previous section showed the findings in relation to the design criterion. Based on these findings we draw in this section some conclusions and formulate design questions. The findings show that during the radio shows, the number of listeners dropped significantly (see table 4), and all in all a small amount of colleagues participated (around 4%). At the same time the findings give interesting input for future initiatives to connect radio to organizational change projects. The idea is that answers to these design questions can help to further develop radio as an intervention in change processes. The design questions were discussed in a round table conversation that was facilitated by the authors of this article. In this session two participants (one of them is manager and one of them teacher) of the DJ team and two experts in the field of design research and activating organizational interventions took part. Their role was to act as a so-called critical friend. This section presents the conclusions and design questions per criterion. Furthermore it shows the reactions in the round table session to these design questions.

**Criterion 1. Employees are active builders of the change process**

*Conclusion*

It seems that the aim to support active builders within the school organization via a radio show mainly was realized when staff members would be part of the preparation phase of a radio show. The DJ team is enthusiastic about the shows and prepares it every month with dedication. There is also a large group of participants who act as guests and interviewees.

They are often enthusiastic about their contribution and the show and they show their enthusiasm by responding via e-mail, or via other media after the show. There is also a circle of people who contribute to the show by requesting songs or leaving voicemail messages. Then there is another circle that contains employees who only listen to the shows. Outside this circle there is a large group that does not listen nor contribute to the shows. It seems as if the people who actively contribute to the design of the shows are active builders in a change process. They think about the topic, select guests, prepare and do interviews.

### Design question

The DJ-team and the editorial team actively develop their focus on the processes that are going on in the school. Others contribute less actively, or even only listen to the show. What could be ways to activate more people and invite them as active builders in the change process?

### Criterion 2. Connecting the stakes of both initiators and employees

### Conclusion

Reactions to the radio show as a way to get active builders within the school organization appear to be mixed. Some are positive and others are sceptical about the shows. A possible explanation for the sceptical reactions can be that the topics of the radio show seem to be formulated from a managerial perspective instead of from a teacher or staff perspective. At first sight the topics do not relate to urgent work questions, nor do they refer to provocative or exciting topics. This can be a reason for listeners and possible listeners that the shows do not appeal to them because they do not recognize their own questions. Another explanation can be that the shows are experienced as a vehicle from management to 'push a message through'. The communication department, who is one of the main participants and initiators of the show, are seen as an extension from the board of the school. People therefore can easily get the impression that the radio shows are not really a way to curiously collect different views, but rather as a way to 'communicate what has to be done'. Another finding is that sometimes topics actually do serve as a vehicle to connect different interests. For instance the radio show focusing on the region and location of the school. This show attracted more listeners and many perspectives were connected.

### Design question

In what way can the radio shows both acknowledge the initiative of management, but also include the interest and stakes of teachers and other colleagues?

### Criterion 3. Linkages between above surface and below surface interventions

### Conclusion

For listeners to the radio show there is the possibilities to request a song, or to leave a voicemail message. These moments lend themselves to hear a bit more about what happens 'below the surface'. However, in total the amount of people that interacts in this way appears to be limited.

### Design question

What could be a way to create more 'rumour around the brand' and to influence the informal conversations that teachers and maybe also students have about the questions and emotions related to the change process?

**Criterion 4. Creating depth and proportion in the intervention**

*Conclusion*

It seems a challenge to at the one hand create a big group of listeners, and on the other hand develop a core group of participants to have in depth conversations that lead to action. The group of people that are in some way contributing to the shows appear to become active listeners. This raises the question if it is possible to connect depth and proportion during a developmental change process in an organization.

*Design question*

Radio seemed to be a suitable way to connect both depth and to scale up the change process. However, in practice, this seems not so easy to attain. Are there examples of interventions that managed to combine these two? What can we learn from these examples for the radio shows as an intervention?

**Reflections based on the expert consultation**

A number of interesting reflections emerge while discussing the findings of this research with the expert group. We mention three central reflections:

1. The radio initiative is an intervention to invite colleagues into a radio studio and discuss developments about their school organization. The number of listeners over time droppes (see Table 4 for instance), and that could imply a legitimacy to stop the intervention, at the same time the colleagues that participate are very enthusiastic. Change initiatives start small, and needs time to grow. The experts came up with the suggestion to bring the radio shows and parts of it to teams within the organizations.

2. It could be interesting to use radio fragments, discussion, etc. as a toolbox of interventions and content to use in team meetings, or management meetings. Such as Dutch "School TV" that made specific shows on educational topics and distributed it to schools.

3. A change process is also about doing things together, to create new meaning. It could be interesting to use radio as a way of capturing these initiatives and sharing them in the school organization. Instead of discussing these developments.

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