

## Hackathon, brainstorming and creativity

*Or how artists are entrepreneurs without knowing it*

### Preamble

#### **“Can we reconcile art and entrepreneurship?”**

*March 31, 2015 - Gabriel M. Chirita*

*We often wonder what artists and entrepreneurs may have in common. Can the artist comply with the laws of the market? How far can the entrepreneur be creative in his value proposition? Are these two completely different dynamics? We record for you some opinions expressed in the literature on this subject.*

*(...) Mayeur (2006) considers that there are many similarities between the entrepreneur and the artist. Both are on the lookout for societal developments. They share the same attraction for all that is novelty, they seek it. The enthusiasm of artists for everything new, particularly for everything related to new technologies, is proof of this. Routine is their enemy. The artist as the entrepreneur can not be satisfied. They are in a perpetual search for experimentation; they take an ever more refined look at reality.*

*(...) According to Daum (2005), the arts sector is a source of inspiration for entrepreneurs. Successful entrepreneurs are pragmatic people and it is not their risk-taker instinct that attracts them to management techniques specific to the arts community. In fact, it is the fact that the project management methods commonly used in the field of the performing arts are among the most effective and consistent. In addition, these management systems are applied consistently throughout the world. Thus, any actor or musician can adapt quickly and easily in any theater or orchestra around the world. »*

<https://www.gabriel-chirita.com/single-post/2015/03/31/Peuton-reconcilier-lart-et-lentrepreneuriat>

#### **« What if the entrepreneur was the 21st century artist? »**

*Pascal GREMIAUX – 02/08/2018*

*Is there such a big gap between the creative process of an artist and that of an entrepreneur, in search of the idea that will make the difference, who thinks, rethinks, works, whoever changes projects, with the famous pivot, dear to startupers, who has nothing to envy to the transition from the pink period to Cubism at Picasso?*

*The entrepreneur as well as the artist must take into account in his approach the function and the destination of his creation. His tools are certainly different: his ideas, his dreams, the employees men and women who make up the company, finance, the means of production ... The brush is replaced by a keyboard, the table by a screen. What a difference ?*

*Like the artist, the entrepreneur faces a long process of reflection, of maturing an idea or a project, of shaping a string of small details. This path is sometimes fraught with pitfalls but allows him to transform a dream into a business idea, and to carry out his project or his work. This approach, although laborious, is itself a source of a sensation of fulfillment and great satisfaction,*

*just like the artist who sees his work finally take shape and can give free rein to his imagination to embark on a new creative process.*

*The work he creates is alive - the Anglo-Saxons call the nature morte "still life" - rich in human relations. Management is a tool that allows the entrepreneur, as the painter nuances the colors of his palette, to tame, nuance and feed interactions, relationships and emotions, those of his customers, employees, partners and ultimately all citizens in touch with its ecosystem.*

*What the entrepreneur builds is a living work, in permanent interaction with its actors and visitors, driven by the initial direction or intention impelled by the creator, his inspiration, developed and transcended by the thread of experiences, actions and reactions of the work. This report was beautifully described by the late Canadian economist and writer Patricia Pitcher, in a book that became famous "Artists, Craftsmen and Technocrats in our Organizations: Dreams, Realities and Illusions of Leadership". She wrote: "artistic conception, through its problems and creative processes, provides codes of access to decipher the contemporary world and offers new perspectives, necessary for the creation of economic, social and cultural wealth."*

***Offering perspectives: this is a superb definition that goes to the entrepreneur as well as the artist."***

<https://www.journaldunet.com/management/expert/69565/et-si-l-entrepreneur-etait-l-artiste-du-21eme-siecle.shtml>

## Introduction

At the beginning of this European project, the fact is that nobody around the table was really able to enounce a clear definition of « artistic entrepreneurship » that all the people agree with. One year long we were trying to reach the best definition of this notion, but one day, it appears clearly that the thing was possible : too much differences between the system of theater in the six countries we came from, and the way of thinking, teaching, managing the « arts du spectacle » are so various that we must find another way to reach the goal we try to approach.

Even in our French school, the word of « entrepreneur » appears for a lot of teachers and students as a capitalistic word, a notion that an artist must not be able to play with without imagine something like to win and waste a lot of money with a lot of futility in a Disneylandworld.

*(cf. 1. PPTX ENSATT and Entrepreneurship)*

When at our time we had to organize activities for this European project in Lyon, we met some people of a new Department at the University Lyon 2 called BEELYS : they are working to give tools to students who want to be entrepreneur during their studies : management (icebreakers, tools to create in a group on all subjects etc...). (<https://www.beelys.org>)

And all together, we imagine a very short « hackathon » about « The theater school of tomorrow ».

And in San Miniato in July, a short workshop with the tools of this hackathon was organized for students and teachers who wanted to try this tools of collective creativity.

We didn't suppose that this kind of thinking in a very short time, with different exercises, can really help all the people to reach the goal we gave at the beginning of this game.

So it appears clearly that young entrepreneurs and artists can use the same tools to organize their minds, even if they look like so different.

Quite simply, because it's about developing human creativity, using « soft skills ».

I just want to resume what a real hackathon is, and how we organized this hackathon for artists and managers as a part of this European project.

1. Hackathon and definition, with tools for collective creativity
2. Hackathon in Lyon
3. Hackathon in San Miniato

## 1./ Hackathon for the European project

### 1.1. Definition of the word : Hackathon

*“Term derived from the English Hack (get into a system) and French marathon imagined by the communities of developers grouped within the Free Open Source Software movement. The hackathon refers to the gathering of computer scientists for several days and at least one night (often organized over a weekend) to collaborate on cutting-edge and innovative computer programming topics. Each proposed project must be accepted by the participants to be processed. Successful project leaders give their instructions to a team of developers whose goal is to create as quickly as possible a ready-made prototype application. A jury determines the winners. Despite an extremely short realization time and even if the event is rather festive and encourages mutual help, the stakes are serious and the method is rigorous. Developers make themselves known to entrepreneurs and reinforce their knowledge while adopting new working techniques.”*

<https://www.e-marketing.fr/Definitions-Glossaire/Hackathon-257022.htm>

*« An event, typically lasting several days, in which a large number of people meet to engage in collaborative computer programming.*

*‘a series of 48-hour hackathons to build new web and mobile services’*

<https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/hackathon>

### 1.2. A Hackathon : Why ?

It does not seem necessary to invent and rewrite anything other than the following:

*“This concept has been adopted, more broadly, to address the whole spectrum of activities of an organization, public or private. It has become the essential meeting point for those who wish to work differently, opening with their ecosystems. In this case, multidisciplinary teams are formed with employees, customers, suppliers, students, researchers, citizens to reflect together on issues and common themes.*

*The objectives of a hackathon are multiple:*

- *create and innovate differently - think "out of the box"*
- *work in Open Innovation (principle of innovation by which an organization relies on the actors of its internal ecosystem (employees of all services combined) and external (customers, suppliers, researchers, partners, students, retirees, etc.) to think and design innovations iteratively).*
- *identify and recruit talent*
- *foster an agile and digital culture by adopting new technologies (ubérisation, big data, blockchain, virtual reality ...) and boosting employees with methods of design thinking, lean startup and agile*
- *accelerate the resolution of operational problems*
- *Rapidly prototype new products and services using the latest technologies*

*In short, it is an accelerator of innovation, whatever the nature of the themes it addresses: commercial, organizational, managerial, social, cultural, etc.  
(...)*

### ***The right brain, guest of honor of the hackathon!***

*In 1981, the Nobel Prize in Medicine, the neurophysiologist Roger W. Sperry, demonstrates that our brain owes its full intelligence to two hemispheres: the right, center of our creativity and intuition, and the left, responsible for our capacity for rational analysis .*

*A hackathon is a moment when the senses of the participants are indeed extremely stimulated. The solicitation of the creative part of the individuals brings them to a state of galvanizing and irrational emotion. Thus, this type of comment is often expressed at the end of the event: "... I did not think I was capable of having so much imagination ...", "... I am very happy to have had the opportunity to express my ideas freely ... ", "... I am delighted to work with people I do not know ... ", etc.*

*This state of mind, sought by the organizers themselves as conducive to innovation, is an indispensable element. Indeed, if it is proven that our two hemispheres are complementary, in the framework of the hackathon, we stimulate above all the emotional hemisphere (right) of the participants, making sure to then trigger the reflexes of the analytical hemisphere (left). ) at the right time and in the most accurate way.  
(...)*

### **Conclusion**

***The hackathon, although ephemeral by nature, can be a continuous and lasting lever for transforming the strategic and operational ambitions of an organization, by revealing the full creative potential of its ecosystem as part of a global approach, ranging from the preparation of the event (and above all) until the implementation of the selected projects. It would seem that the Graal of innovation is at the end of this uncertain path, if and only if the creative initiative is properly undertaken and supported in its concrete and operational implementation, before, during and after the event.”***

01 mars 2018 - Karima Merabtene

<https://www.orange-business.com/fr/blogs/hackathon-phenomene-mode-ou-solution-davenir-pour-lentreprise>

### 1.3. Tools for creativity and BEELIZ

Lyon 2 University organized a training cycle on creativity which began in 2019, January the 17th:

- January 17: "How to work well as a team + postures of the host"
- February 1st: "Ideation - Phase 1: Brainstorming and selection of ideas"
- March 13: "Ideation - Phase 2: Deepening an idea"
- April 8th: "Votes, pitch, final jury and examples of complete events"
- May 16: "Let's create / test your format! "

We send to people who can read the french language all the PPTX we received from the university about this formation.

The theme about Ideation : "Brainstorming and selection of ideas" and "Deepening an idea" is exactly what the artists can use when a collective project has to be build, after using icebreaker tools to let people know each other a bit to work together kindly and knowing things about "how to work well as a team":

*For example :*

*"The emergence of ideas is a phase of the ideation process ..."*



*which is part of an approach that is not linear :*



## 2. HACKATHON IN LYON : WEEK OF 2019, FEBRUARY 11TH TO 15TH

### 2.1. Organisation and goals

As Olivia Château wrote to all participants : (extracts)

*“Following the last meeting in Hamburg, the week of activity of Lyon will be a place of experimentation around a common :*

- *Autonomy*
- *Empathy*
- *Intuition*
- *Potentiel*
- *Get time*
- *Self confidence*

*OSER : «Exister, c’est oser se jeter dans le monde.» Simone de Beauvoir*

**TO DARE : “To exist is to dare to throw oneself into the world”**

*Workshops conducted by the different teachers of the partner schools will be offered over 3 days in parallel with the Hackathon.*

*The hackathon will be held for both groups alternately on Tuesday and Wednesday with a refund and award ceremony on Thursday afternoon.*

### SPECIFICATIONS OF THE HACKATHON

**Objective of the Hackathon: to test the techniques of project management.**

Group of 4 participants (1 student PM ENSATT, 1 former ENSATT, 1 teacher partner school, 1 student partner school).  
2 half-days on the theme "Theater School of Tomorrow». Creation of a stand to present their school in a student lounge with a poster (paper or video ...), a brochure (paper or video ...).

1 kit will be available: Paper board, a video-project, camera, portable computer....”

The organisation of the hackathon is completely related on the PPTX that Léa prepared for the participants and the excel board that you will find in attachment.

(cf.2.Hackathon ENSATT.pptx et 3. Excel board for participants and teamleaders)

## 2.2. Bilan

Each group was composed with students, teachers and researchers of the all schools, even if french students of Administration Department of ENSATT were in higher numbers : the balance in the composition of these groups being a condition for the success of the project.

Collective brainstorming and then concrete presentation of the school they dream : just 9 hours to create this school of tomorrow...

4 groups presented their work at the end of this short hackathon about the theater school of tomorrow, in so many different ways : ex/ a play, an experience in a garden, a game with all the participants, the presentation of a school like a garden.

All can watch photos and film :

<https://vimeo.com/327232950>

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Ensatt/videos/>

It is obvious that even if all these projects were not totally realistic, they all include ideas that would bring to each school some ideas to define in other ways time, spaces, the different and innovative ways of transmitting knowledge.

**It was really a perfect human european experience.**

A french student wrote a e-mail to resume her experience :

*Good evening Valérie and Olivia,*

*First of all, thank you very much for organizing this week and this human experience, international, formative and unifying. I am very happy to have met these interesting and passionate people, as well as to experience the confrontation of methods and points of view on the same subject. I will therefore participate with great pleasure in another Hackaton!*

*Among the ideas expressed, I mean the need for students to have an open and transversal space (between departments as well as between professionals and students) that would allow a free exchange of know-how, points of view , ideas ... "A piece without function" as defined by one of the groups, which would simply bring us together.*

*The question of rhythm has also often been addressed (especially through the idea of "breaths") and I think that this expressed need must be taken into account. We need time not only to accumulate knowledge (sometimes superficially, to "spit" on a multiple choice that even the teacher deems useless) but also to put it into practice by*

*talking with people from other departments, to concretely implement projects. From my point of view, the temporalities as imagined for the Administration department are to be reviewed with more free time (to explore the school, open to other disciplines and other students, to experiment) and a global organization around projects (highlights such as the Hackaton, joint workshops in several departments, courses outside the walls, opening to other schools: Finally, there is a strong desire to be active in our studies. This goes hand in hand with the question of rhythms (not being passive 7 hours a day on a chair, as exciting as it may be!) But perhaps also with that of creativity. Even if we are in Administration section, it is obvious that each of us has an artistic fiber (otherwise we would be in Business School in cultural project management and not in ENSATT) and that we need space and time to imagine this administrative-artistic mix that characterizes us.*

*CNSMD, Fine Arts, Circus School of Lyon ...)*

*Given these different elements, what seems to me the most feasible and the best able to meet our needs would be:*

*- a space open to all, comfortable -canapés-heating, welcoming, vegetated as far as possible (note the number of green plants in our presentations !!) with a table and chalk to be able to pass messages between students projects or looking for specific skills and walls on which we could write / draw / express ourselves*

*- a lighter schedule (for example half a day free per week or even greater freedom of attendance for all classes). I understand that this last proposal could lead to undesirable situations (absenteeism, less class dynamics ...). But we could "frame" this freedom by defining half days or days of possible absence of students per month. For example, say that each student has 3 half-days of absence to go to see modules / courses that interest him particularly in other departments with course, warning teachers concerned and attendance at exams.*

*- a tool for pooling schedules of all departments (to be able to attend modules / courses of other departments, if only as observers)*

*- an opening on the outside: courses outside the walls as at the House of Dance with Dimitry or the Celestial-Tramps with Lab 71, a mixture of art school students, concrete projects made in connection with institutions (why not imagine a marketing strategy for the library network of the city of Lyon for example?)*

*I was a little long but I hope I was constructive. It is certain that, in view of the discussions we have already had with Valérie, Olivia, Laurent Gutmann or other people from ENSATT, there is definitely a desire to improve the career of administrators. The Hackaton allowed us to identify more specifically the stakes of this change and especially to imagine concrete solutions. I hope now that these ideas will be followed by movement.*

*Once again thank you very much for this rewarding week.(...)"*

### 3. HACKATHON IN SAN MINIATO IN JULY 2019

The success of this way to collective work in short times suggests another application of these tools.

We decide to organize a little hackathon in SAN MINIATO with Elona Bajoriniene, Director of the Theater and Music School of Vilnius (Lithuania).

Look at the excel plan we decided : 2 X 3 hours, two days organized 2 times.

*(CF.4. Complete board excel with instructions for the team/ SAN MINIATO Hackathon)*

FIRST DAY :

A	TITLE	INSTRUCTION FOR PARTICIPANTS
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<p>14:10</p>	<p>Welcome &amp; introducing words, global planning of the hackathon, team building</p>	<p>Welcome &amp; introducing words Global planning of the hackathon Final goals</p> <p><b>Team building</b> : choose a challenge or a subtopic that speaks to you</p>
<p>14:30</p>	<p>Team building game Team cohesion game</p>	<p><b>1_ Team building game:</b> "tell your team an anecdote related to the school/teaching of the theatre that the Dixit card tells you" 15mn</p> <p><b>2_ Team cohesion game:</b> "as a team, you must transform as many circles as possible into recognizable objects in 3 minutes" et 2 mn for discussion</p>
<p>15:00</p>	<p>State of play / mental map</p>	<p><b>1_ Mental map of the situation/state of play (20 min):</b> &gt; based on the issue you're team is dealing with &gt; state actual facts &gt; use color/form codes to highlight : positive/negative aspects, lacks, dysfunctions</p> <p><b>2_ Focusing time (10 min):</b> <b>"Inventory of the state of play" in order to:</b> --&gt; Reformulate the +'s and -'s, be more or less clear with everything that has been mentioned --&gt; Identify the major issues and formulate them into relevant questions --&gt; 2-3 major issues to be identified</p> <p><b>Deliverable: bring out 2-3 major sub-problems that each team wishes to address</b></p>

**15:35** **Idéation #1 :**  
**"In the shoes of..."**

**[20 min] SOLO exercise.**

- choose a character you like/who speaks to you
- put yourself in the shoes of this character
- bring out as many ideas as possible on post-its to answer the sub-problem(s) chosen by your group

*N.B : you can change characters if you are short of inspiration or if you want to have ideas from another angle.*

*Be exhaustive, bring out as many ideas as possible!*

**[10 min] Free exchanges / relaxation:** as a group, share the ideas that have emerged (no rendering objective)

**[5 min] SOLO :** select **3 ideas** you prefer among those you have brought out

**Deliverable :** each participant must come out with **3 written ideas clearly and understandable by all on post-its. Keep them with you**

**16:10** **Ideation #2 :**

**[25 min ideation time]**

- \* Each of you draws 3 columns on an A4-sheet.
- \* You have 5 minutes to write **and detail** on your sheet the 3 ideas that you think best meet your challenge
- \* When the 5 minutes are up, pass it on to the neighbour on the left
- \* Then take the sheets of the neighbour on your right. You'll have 5 minutes to complete his/her ideas.
- \* At the end of these 5 minutes, pass this sheet you have just completed on to the neighbour on your left. Etc. up to a full turn.

**[10 min solo selection + presentation of your ideas to the group] :**

Take back his or her sheet, read it again in 1 minute and select the idea that seems most relevant to you. Then explain the idea to the other members of the team.

**TIMEKEEPER :** 3 min presentation per idea + questions/answers

**Deliverable:**

- **4 ideas (1 idea per person) placed on a flipchart,**
- **This ideas will feed your reflexion about the challenge your team choosed**
- **Please also keep the A4 sheets "in case" you want to use them later to develop/confirm/infirm the idea we are working on.**

<p><b>16:30</b></p>	<p><b>Idea's choice</b></p>	<p><b>From the 4/5 ideas that emerged from the last exercise, you need to proceed to develop a "global system" of ideas by :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assembling several ideas that cross each other, are similar, complement each other, etc.</li> <li>- Giving the + and -, the ideas that attract the more and the less</li> <li>- Making connections between several ideas: mix, transpose, articulate, nourish...</li> </ul> <p><b>Deliverable: a system of ideas must emerge at the end and will be further developed</b></p>
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SECOND DAY:

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01:00	14:00	15:00	<b>Deepening the idea (persona)</b>	<p><b>In this exercise, you will focus on deepening the solutions that emerged yesterday</b>  <b>From these solutions, you will have to think about:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- who will live them (=personas)</li> <li>- how these people will live these solutions</li> <li>- how to make the other group understand the experience that these people will be expected to live</li> </ul> <p>Your team has received empty canvases to design personas</p> <p><b>1_ You will first have to imagine personas using the given canvas</b> in order to understand the people your solution is addressed to, their problems, their needs, what they expect, how they see their environment, etc.</p> <p><b>2_ imagine route(s) that will describe:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one typical hour/day / week / year depending on the chosen solution and the simulation that your concept will require</li> <li>- interactions with other people</li> <li>- the person's evolution as they live this experience, etc.</li> </ul> <p>+ give operational answers (cf. specifications: time, approx. budget, manpower...).</p> <p>The more the story is told, the more the other group understands and is empathetic.  Again : the person who discovers the solution starts from scratch !</p>
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Each time, the participants explained the difficulty to limit their minds, their thoughts in a such short time we imposed, but they all accept to play the game and respect the rules.

At the end, they all were able to present an organisation, of the subject they have chosen in a list of themes that we had wrote and proposed : interdisciplinary theater, theater for minorities etc.

The ideas they present in different ways can be illustrated by these photos :



## CONCLUSION

It was a great experience to share these tools for creativity with all participants, - teachers, researchers and students – because we have all discovered that it's really interesting to apply this kind of management normally reserved to entrepreneurs with artistic people : with these shares, the collective creativity is decidedly boosted....

### ***Artists, entrepreneurs and researchers, all in the same boat!***

*In appearance, radically far removed from the socio-economic point of view, artists, entrepreneurs and researchers, regularly threatened by the lack of support for public policies, actually share more than we think.*

#### *Creation, a pledge of humility*

*Above all, artists, entrepreneurs and researchers find themselves faced with the difficult task of the creative process. The very condition of their existence, they must be able to propose original ideas. This exercise requires first of all humility, in that it requires to acknowledge the past. In many cases, the artist has learned from the traditions before detaching himself, the entrepreneur is aware of his industry and his tendencies, while the researcher bends to the exercise of the "literature review" of expose his knowledge of previous work before claiming to contribute to it.*

*Nothing is created ex nihilo. "I saw further than the others because I perched on the shoulders of giants." humbly recalled the famous Isaac Newton.*

#### *Between innovation and compliance*

*While creation seems to be defined by the new, it is often part of artistic trends, economic trends or intellectual traditions. To be too different, the risk is to appear marginal, misunderstood and finally devalued; but conversely, melting into the mold can prevent any accession to recognition. It is this delicate balance between innovation and conformity that punctuates the lives of artists, entrepreneurs and researchers.*

*Moreover, the independent and even solitary nature of these professions must not hide the powerful link that unites them to their community. Professional associations, incubators and research centers encourage the sharing of ideas. Moreover, collaborative projects are an essential part of this community life.*

*[http://archives.lesechos.fr/archives/cercle/2017/01/09/cercle\\_164681.htm#LxdHqWXWez1iyD1Y.99](http://archives.lesechos.fr/archives/cercle/2017/01/09/cercle_164681.htm#LxdHqWXWez1iyD1Y.99)*

Tools of collective creativity and personal management can be share between all humans who just want to create.

*If « To exist is to dare to throw oneself into the world »*

*If "I saw further than the others because I perched on the shoulders of giants"*

To exist as an artist is to dare to perch on the shoulders of giants and to throw oneself into the world, isn't it ?

*PJ.*

1. PPTX ENSATT and Entrepreneurship
2. Hackathon ENSATT.pptx
3. Excel board for participants and teamleaders – Hackathon in LYON
4. Complete board excel with instructions for the team/ (SAN MINIATO Hackathon)