

Creative Agility

The application and embedding of arts-based strategies in organisations
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Handbook for Creagile Transfer Processes (WP5)

By: Dagmar Frick-Islitzer, Peer Holthuizen, Peter Jungmeier, Michael Uhl

Handbook for Creagile Transfer Processes



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Introduction

What does 'creative agility' mean?

By creative agility, we mean the ability to act in an open, flexible and collaborative manner, whereby art-based strategies open up creative space.

At the corporate or organisational level, we observe in a wide variety of contexts that the successful execution of complex tasks or projects that are difficult to plan is not merely a question of technical skills, existing expertise or the availability of qualified staff. Increasingly, it is about the ability to free oneself (mentally) from existing structures, to adapt creatively to new situations and, in doing so, to communicate with one another respectfully yet effectively – both in person and online.

We have come to the conclusion that art-based strategies and artistic interventions – building on insights and practices from organisational development and communication – bring about a shift in perspective. This can break down and reform communication habits and innovation processes and helps to make use of the resulting scope for action.

In order to be able to convey, share and apply this ability, it is necessary – in addition to the familiar (agile) approaches to organisational development – to implement the methods and strategies that artists employ in their work.

Creative agility focuses on processes in which the outcome is open-ended and unpredictable – as is often the case in art.

*'What essentially takes place in acting is more of a process of exploration. A process of discovery, exploration and experimentation that takes place collectively on the rehearsal stage. After all, it's not called a 'rehearsal stage' but a 'trial stage'. It's not about rehearsing a finished scene, but about finding something out. And if you fall flat on your face, you get back up and try it differently. In this process, I usually find that questions open things up. If I come up with answers straight away, the search usually stops.'*¹

About this handbook

This handbook aims to take you on a journey. It is not a set of instructions, because creative agility does not believe in 'We know how to do it!'. Creative agility is like a winding path, behind whose bends a new, unknown landscape awaits time and again. A path that branches out, that holds surprises within it. A 'creagile' process that leads into the open landscape anticipates these surprises; it literally embraces them.

Creative Agility in organisational development makes use of the random and the unexpected. In this, there is a connection to the concept of serendipity². One of our key insights is: 'From artists, we learn to find without seeking.'

¹ Michael Uhl, from: Dagmar Frick-Islitzer: «Künstlerische Agilität – 30 Wege zur schöpferischen Kraft», Alpenland Verlag, Schaan/LI, 2026; p. 135

² Serendipity refers to the chance observation of something not originally sought, which turns out to be a new and pleasantly surprising discovery (see Wikipedia).

In practical terms, creative agility in organisations often takes the form of a cycle. This cycle begins with the 'overwhelmed', unprotected 'I' within the existing organisation. As part of the training programme (developed in the predecessor project), the individual, together with others (= the team), embarks on a creagile journey by passing through a chosen 'door of overwhelm'. In doing so, they unfold further into the organisation, experience change and trigger changes. This transformed organisation can now start afresh, setting out on creagile paths (see Fig. 1³).

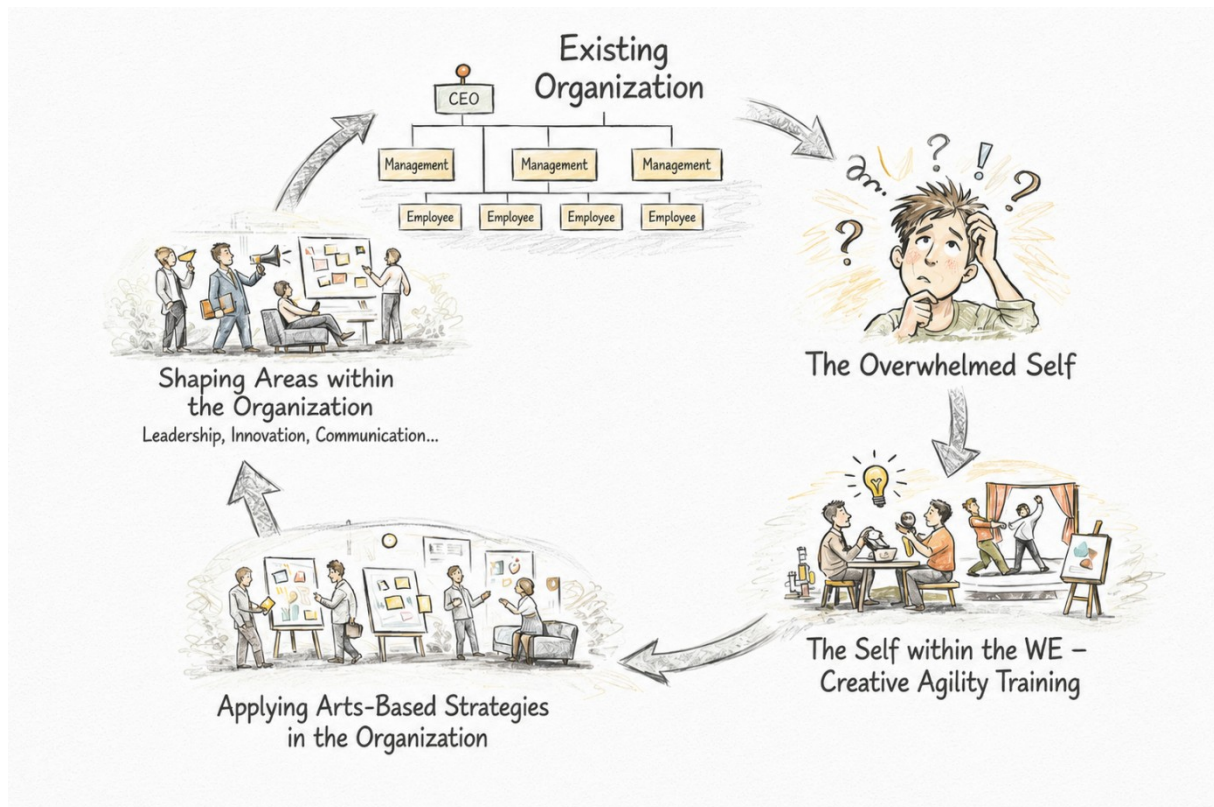


Fig. 1: The 'creagile' process

Creative agility points to a field that cannot necessarily be represented in conventional schematic depictions of an organisation (e.g. an organisational chart). We have therefore sought alternative forms of representation that better correspond to the open, creagile approach whilst also enabling the identification and categorisation of specific areas of action. To this end, we have drawn on the concept of 'areas'. By this we mean specific areas of action, such as 'Leadership', 'Internal Communication', 'Processes / Interfaces', 'Key Actors', and 'Market / Strategy'. These areas/fields of action also encompass settings in which fundamental forms of collaboration within the organisation take place, including their points of friction and areas of conflict.

³ Generated with ChatGPT

A more detailed description of what ‘areas’ and ‘arenas’ mean can be found in Chapter 4 of this handbook. We shall now begin our journey with a brief description of the initial situations and framework conditions within the project and in the three pilot organisations.

1. Initial situations and framework conditions

Building on the experience gained from the previous project, various versions of the ‘Creative Agility’ training programme have now been tested, including the transfer of ideas from the training. Feedback from the first project showed that it is precisely this transfer into the organisation following the training that represents a bottleneck in maintaining a ‘creagile’ behavioural culture.

We first developed a model workflow for the interaction between the three process steps – analysis, training and transfer – within the framework of this project (see Fig. 2).

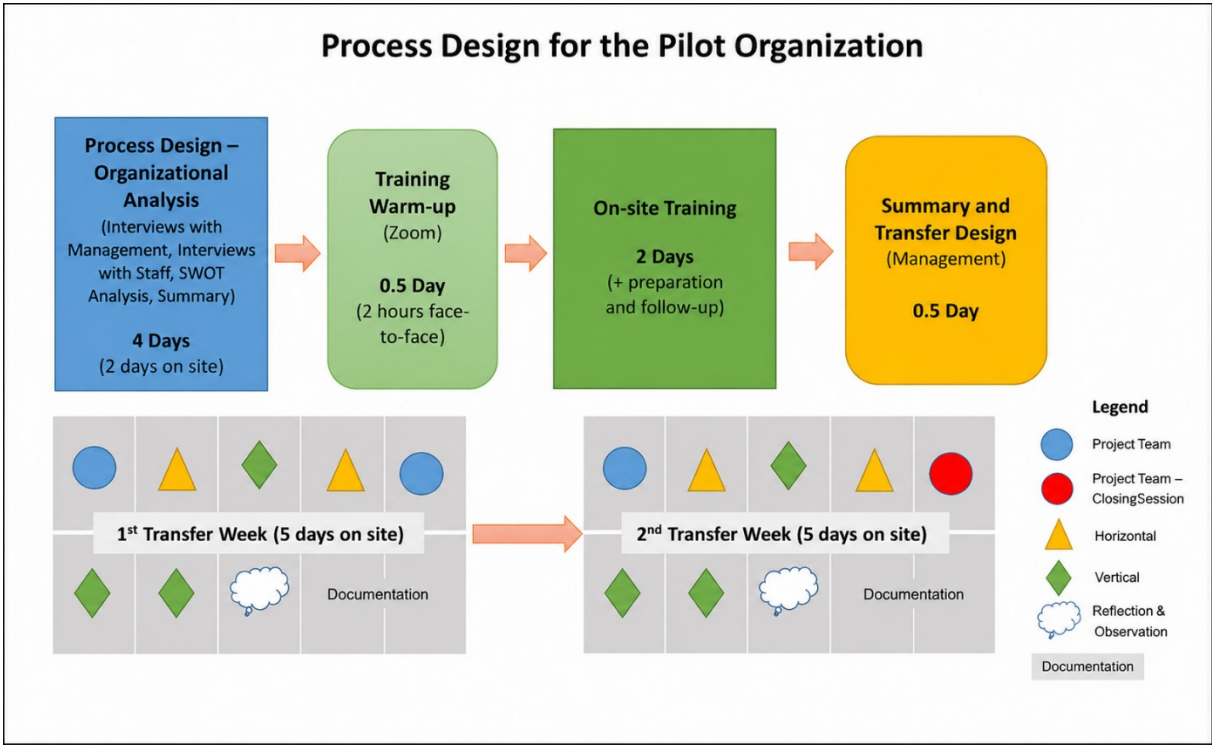


Fig. 2: Model process design in a pilot organisation

As a project team, we were aware that we would be working with organisations that bring their own traditions, history and culture – and thus their own mindset – to the table. Each of the three pilot organisations operates in a different context in terms of ownership, markets, product and service ranges, target groups and legal frameworks. Our approach to designing and facilitating a ‘creagile’ process would address precisely these factors. That is why, when selecting the pilot organisations, it was important to us to secure three different types of organisations as development partners.

Specifically, we drew on the ‘traditions’ of the various organisations during the analysis phase. Using three tools that were as ‘concise’ as possible yet highly informative, we sought to find out ‘how the organisation ticks’ before the process began.

One of these instruments is the ‘**Organisational Analysis: Framework Conditions for Creagility**’ quick check – a self-assessment tool conducted in the form of an interview with senior management. Covering various areas of the organisation, this provides a good overview of the status quo and an assessment of the organisation’s future development in around two hours (see Figs. 3 and 4). From this, initial potential areas for action relating to ‘creagile’ working can already be identified.

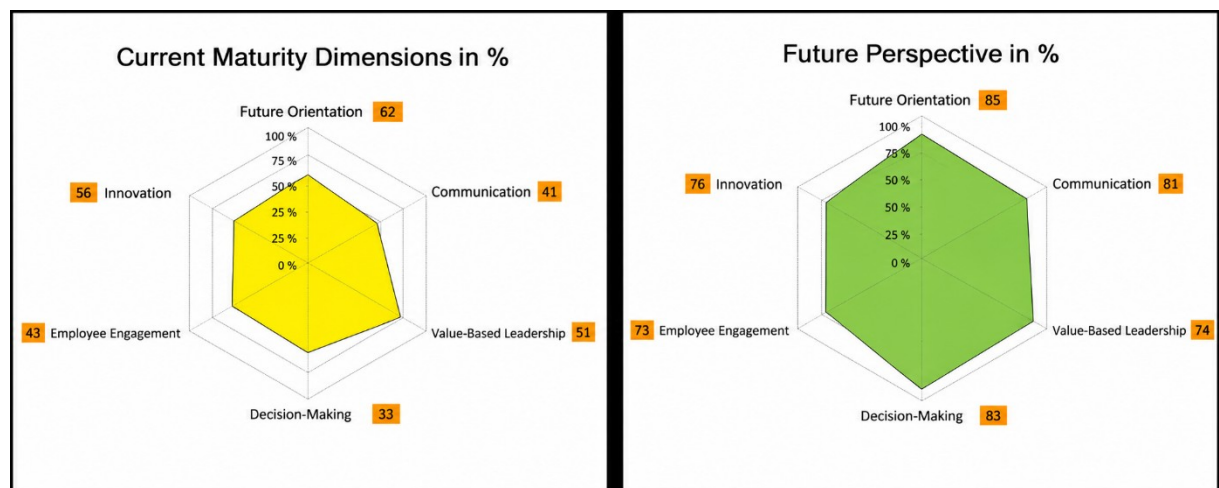


Fig. 3: ‘Status Quo’ Quick-Check

Fig. 4: Quick-Check ‘Expected future development’

As the next step, qualitative interviews (duration: approx. 30 mins) were conducted with employees selected according to various criteria (including length of service, gender, and areas of responsibility) – who do not necessarily have to be integrated into the subsequent process – based on a set of guidelines. These interviews serve, in effect, to ‘balance out’ management’s perception and enable a multi-perspective approach to potential areas for ‘creagile’ action.

Finally, the key results and findings are consolidated into a SWOT analysis and subsequently discussed and reflected upon with management.

In this way, we were able to enter the training and transfer process with an ‘intuition’ for the organisation and its characteristics.

Using three different pilot organisations, the project team was able to gain extensive experience and test various approaches for the transfer of ‘creagile’ measures. Below is a brief description of these pilot organisations⁴.

⁴ The names of the pilot organisations are deliberately not mentioned in this handbook.

Pilot organisation 1: A department of the Liechtenstein State Administration

a. Initial situation

The head of the department has been in charge for seven years. Almost all the managers have joined the department in the past one and a half to two years. Team development is therefore a key objective for the head of the department. She wants the managers of the four subordinate teams to exchange views on leadership. The aim is to clarify lines of communication and points of reference amongst the managers. The trainers point out that this programme is not a team-development facilitation session in the traditional sense, but rather a training session involving the participants themselves.

b. Context

Due to the relatively small size of the department (10 people) and the high degree of self-organisation among those involved, the training and transfer process outlined in the proposal was adapted to the needs and realities of the pilot organisation (see Fig. 5).

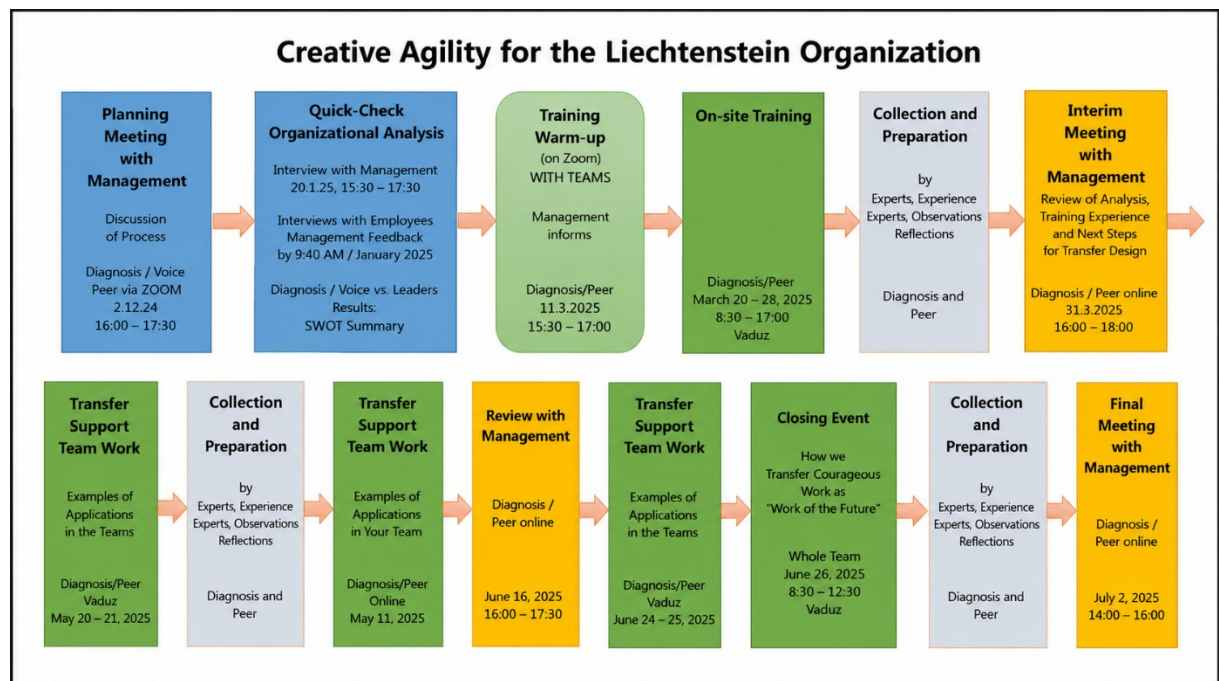


Fig. 5: Sequence of the overall process in pilot organisation 1

In brief: it proved sensible and effective to

- to split the training into two separate days
- not to block out a two-week period within the organisation for the transfer phase, but instead to carry out separate transfer support sessions with the individual teams, and
- to hold a joint closing event at the end of the process.

Pilot organisation 2: Medium-sized manufacturing company in Germany

a. Initial situation

This pilot organisation is an independent company with around 270 employees, which forms part of a group of companies. Contact with the group's HR department led to the idea and, ultimately, the brief to introduce 'Creative Agility' as a team-building initiative in collaboration with the company's management team.

The company's managing director was responsible for steering this process – and was therefore the main point of contact for us as the project team. The target group, namely the management team, comprises a total of eight members – in addition to the managing director, the division heads are also represented on the management team.

b. Context

Within this organisation, the process was implemented as planned. Following the organisational analysis, the training was delivered (online warm-up, 2 days of training). The first transfer week took place just under a month later, with the second following approximately 5 weeks after that. The three trainers were thus able to trial the '*trainer-in-residence*' approach⁵ by effectively acting as 'temporary staff' who commuted to 'work' every day, thereby becoming an integral part of the company during this period.

Pilot organisation 3: Adult education centre in Germany

a. Initial situation

This pilot organisation, run by an association, is based in a rural area and employs just over 20 staff. Its core business is delivering various training programmes on its own premises. Participants can stay overnight and are provided with meals whilst undertaking their further training.

The impetus for the collaboration within the framework of Creative Agility was the need to manage ongoing change processes and to further develop collaboration between the various teams within the organisation. The team of trainers had the opportunity to immerse themselves in a very challenging phase of the organisation's development.

b. Context

Although originally planned to include participants from all departments, the process ultimately had to be launched with a small number of participants. This was due to several staff members taking sick leave at the same time, resulting in an acute staff shortage which made it impossible to include all those originally invited in the training.

The process itself proceeded as planned in the model process; however, there was a relatively long gap between Transfer Week 1 in December 2025 and Transfer Week 2 in

⁵ This term is modelled on 'artist-in-residence programmes', which enable visiting artists to work in a new environment, often far removed from the constraints and pressures of their everyday lives. Their host provides them with the time and space to further develop their work and creatively explore new ideas.

February 2026. This was because the pilot organisation was closed in December, and the period from January to mid-February saw peaks in workload.

A distinctive feature of the 'Trainer-in-Residence' approach was that the trainers were not only present at the organisation during the day but were also able to stay overnight – effectively a hybrid of 'guest' and 'staff member'.

2. The approach of individual overload in tension with the established organisation

Our 'creagile' process begins with the 'I'. In Creative Agility, we deliberately use situations of being overwhelmed as a 'ticket in'. For if the overwhelming, ambiguous and multifaceted can also be a source of creativity, then we can consequently try to deal with the overwhelming in a playful or artistic way.

“When I paint a picture, I don’t know what the end result will be.⁶”

The artist Frank Zucht, from whom this quote is taken, talks about his artistic process in the video linked above. Whilst he always has the goal of painting a picture in mind, he does not know what it will depict and therefore approaches the process with an open mind. He must endure this state of not knowing and the associated uncertainty during the painting process.

What interests us, in terms of creative agility, about artists across all disciplines – visual and performing arts, music and literature – is not the finished work, but the artistically agile process: How do artists think and work? How do they engage in an innovative process? How do they discover the new? How do they create space for themselves? How do they enter a creative flow? How do they expand their imagination? How do they deal with obstacles? What techniques and strategies do they employ to achieve their results? How does the richness of 'creagile' emerge? What is the breeding ground for 'creagile' working?

Now imagine a manager in a company that is clearly structured, follows defined processes and has to satisfy various shareholders financially. The head of a development department at an international company said in a conversation with Dagmar Frick-Islitzer: *“You know, I’d still enjoy the work, but in recent months, organisational matters and efforts to safeguard the business have got out of hand. Let me give you an example. In the past, it was enough for me to come up with one or two proposals for a new product. I’d then discuss them with the relevant product manager, and we’d quickly agree on the favourite. I could make realistic estimates of procurement, costs and the timetable. That always worked out well for me. That’s the advantage of decades of relevant experience. After all, I’m the expert in this field. Nowadays, the motto is: we want to see four to five proposals, setting out all the pros and cons, with a detailed cost breakdown per supplier and a detailed timeline. I’m telling you, all this clarifying, obtaining quotes and comparing them now takes up so much time and resources – you wouldn’t believe it. Especially as I already know which option is most likely to be chosen. After all, I know the competition and the feasibility of production inside out. I’m now easily spending 80 per cent of my time on unnecessary admin, and the tinkering and experimenting are falling by the wayside. Yet coming up with creative solutions used to be the very reason I got this job at and why I enjoyed going to work every morning. But I just don’t enjoy it like that anymore.”*

⁶ Frank Zucht, The Inner Sight, Film, 2013, <https://vimeo.com/75164135>

So where are the spaces and opportunities for ‘creagile’ action? Embarking on a project with the aim of producing something useful, but without being fixated on what that outcome will be – or how I’ll achieve it. As strange as this idea may seem, it nevertheless holds a great fascination; indeed, it exudes a certain power, as our aforementioned head of department discovered. But more on that later...

“Out of chaos, structure and order emerge.⁷”

Artists first create chaos in order to create something new from it. This is a perfectly normal artistic process. Creative disorder, multi-layered compositions, a jumble of forms and meandering colour gradients, sharp edges and blurred lines – all of this forms a necessary reservoir and provides a rich source of inspiration for the artist’s eye. The artist’s task is to discover structures within this hubbub, which they then guide towards a new order. To do this, artists need open senses and a high capacity for concentration in order to recognise the new. This shift from chaos to order, and back to chaos and then back to order, can continue indefinitely. In the Art of Hosting, this is also referred to as the ‘Chaordic Path’, along which new and unexpected things can emerge.

Where are the spaces for chaos for our leaders in (regulated) organisations? In which projects might it be helpful to bring about chaos? How can tension and uncertainty help us to engage with the familiar whilst at the same time refraining from throwing it into disarray?

Fear is the greatest constraint

For individual overwhelm to trigger a creative, innovative and surprising process within an organisation, fear-free spaces are needed. *“Fear is the shabbiest room in the house. I want you to live in a better environment.”⁸*

This fundamental approach – not to restrict people through mechanisms of fear, but to give them spaces in which they can develop their true selves for the benefit of the ‘collective endeavour’, where they are allowed to fail and start afresh – is essential for the development of creative agility in organisations. This also means giving them power. *“What if, within organisations, we were to create structures and practices in which empowerment is not necessary, because they are designed in such a way that everyone has power and no one is powerless?”⁹*

What takes the place of fear? Where fear leaves, trust may take root. Trust is the essential prerequisite for growth, for being allowed to try out new things, and for turning mistakes into opportunities for development. Trust leads to confidence, initiative and responsibility.

⁷ Frank Zucht, The Inner Sight, Film, 2013, <https://vimeo.com/75164135>

⁸ Hafiz; from: Laloux, Frederic: Reinventing Organisations, Verlag Franz Vahlen GmbH, 2015, p. 44

⁹ Laloux, Frederic: Reinventing Organisations, Franz Vahlen GmbH, 2015, p. 60

“Fear is the greatest constraint. When organisations are built not on implicit mechanisms of fear, but on structures and practices that foster trust and responsibility, unexpected things happen.”¹⁰ “

The basic principle of the ‘safe space’

“In my art form, theatre, it is particularly important that there is a safe space for everyone involved. The performers have to reveal a great deal about themselves. They have to expose themselves, and for that to truly happen, I see it as my task to create a space in which they feel safe and secure.”¹¹ ”

Fear-free spaces require a ‘safe space’. This is not merely a question of location. Furthermore, the categories of ‘right or wrong’ are irrelevant. There are no ‘mistakes’, only ‘experiments with different experiences’. It is not uncommon in artistically innovative processes for a supposed ‘mistake’ to lead to a new direction. In theatre, we therefore speak of a ‘rehearsal stage’, not a ‘practice stage’. We do not practise something; rather, we try things out.

“Beyond right and wrong there is a place. That’s where we meet!”¹² ”

¹⁰ Laloux, Frederic: Reinventing Organisations, Franz Vahlen GmbH, 2015, p. 83

¹¹ Dagmar Frick-Isplitzer, «Künstlerische Agilität – 30 Wege zur schöpferischen Kraft», Artist’s Talk with Eveline Ratering, p. 46.

¹² Rumi, Sufi mystic (1207–1273)

3. The unprotected 'I' meets the team

Training as a 'gateway to challenge' in organisational change

How can the skills, knowledge and creativity of individuals (the unprotected 'I's) be channelled into the further development of the shared organisation?

Safe spaces are anxiety-free spaces in which the unprotected 'I' can reveal itself. This is also the essential subject for open-ended processes. It knows best where the bottlenecks lie within the organisation – as the head of development quoted earlier demonstrates.

During the 'Creative Agility' team training, the focus initially shifts from the 'I' to the 'WE'. The individual participants encounter one another in unusual artistic and creative settings, go through new experiences together in different constellations, and thereby get to know one another 'anew' in a different way.

Working through individual situations of being overwhelmed together in various small groups throughout the training ultimately leads to questions and concerns for the organisation. This creates a new 'door to being overwhelmed': the one leading away from the team and into the organisation...

3.1 The 'Creative Agility' training programme – the foundation

As part of the Erasmus+ project 'Creative Agility' (2021–2023), a two-day leadership training programme was developed, during which various modules were tested. This face-to-face training was complemented by two digital sessions, each lasting 90 minutes (warm-up and reflection).¹³

Following the project's completion, further practical applications and feedback from participants revealed two key findings. Firstly, participants confirmed that Creative Agility, as a future-oriented skill, enriches both their personal and professional lives. At the same time, participants reported that the practical implementation and application of the training content in their day-to-day work was challenging. The current project therefore focuses on the application and embedding of art-based strategies within organisations and in everyday organisational life.

However, to ensure the broad applicability of the building blocks already developed in the previous project, these must offer greater variability so that the training can be adapted to meet specific needs. Furthermore, the training no longer needs to culminate in a concluding online session, but must instead pave the way for a subsequent transfer phase.

The following description of the different training variants takes both requirements into account. By increasing the flexibility, broader applicability has been made possible.

¹³ For this chapter, it is recommended to refer to the curriculum 'How Art-Based Strategies Transform Digital and Analogue Communication in Organisations'. This can be downloaded from the project partners' websites.

Consequently, even under the most diverse conditions, the 'Creative Agility' training can be delivered with its core content, and the subsequent transfer phase can be prepared.

3.2 The training programme – extended measures and methods

The 'Creative Agility' training programme seeks to create spaces for experience in which participants can discover art-based strategies for themselves. These are not presented as fixed learning content, but as building blocks and options. Based on this personal experience, strategies are then discussed and identified, so that participants can adapt them for their own specific use.

Key art-based building blocks of the training are: *narrative research* using the *Narrative Plotboard*, the '*Werkstück*', the *collage* and the *Creagile card set*. Further development has also been used to supplement these tried-and-tested methods with additional approaches, enabling them to be applied in even more varied ways.

1. Play leads to options – aspects of forum theatre in narrative research

In the *Narrative Research* method, the *Narrative Plotboard* is used to draw on personal experiences of difficulties, examining them playfully from multiple perspectives. The various stages are '*Who does/says what?*', a change of perspective (*role study*) and '*What effects (emotions) do the actions have?*'. These steps enable the small groups, supported by theatre-based educational exercises, to share the scenes they have developed with the whole group in a playful manner.

The aim of this expanded method is to actively involve the whole group in the respective topics, thereby adding a further dimension to the scenes. Aspects of *forum theatre* lend themselves well to this.

Forum theatre

Forum theatre is the central method of *the Theatre of the Oppressed*, which was developed by the Brazilian theatre practitioner Augusto Boal. It involves addressing social issues through theatrical scenes. In the interactive form of *forum theatre*, members of the audience have the opportunity to take on roles in the play themselves, thereby influencing the course of the scene.

This interactive aspect is incorporated into *Narrative Research*. After an initial performance of the scene, the audience (the observing participants) are asked about their impressions:

- What did they observe, and what did they like?
'Liked' here refers to the pointed highlighting of bottleneck situations. The aim of the scenes is to gain insights into the challenges faced by the organisations.
- Does anyone in the audience or the larger group have an idea as to how the impression of a relevant challenge could be reinforced? If so, that person is asked to become part of the scene, which is then repeated with a 'new' cast.

There are now two options:

- If we continue to follow the *Forum Theatre* approach, alternative courses of action for the bottleneck situations portrayed can be developed through the audience's ongoing discursive and performative input.
- When implemented into the *Narrative Plotboard*, the scenes – which have been expanded in multiple dimensions by the audience – can be used to further differentiate the *Narrative Plotboards* through the 'options' step.

In both cases, it is important not to seek solutions, but rather to identify the available courses of action. Focusing on solutions too early carries the risk of merely developing good intentions that will not stand the test of time in everyday working life.

In the original format of the training, the 'options' were used as a separate module on the second day of the training. This was done, on the one hand, to revisit the plotboards with a fresh perspective, and on the other, to use them to prepare for possible steps in the transfer process.

Practical experience has shown that it makes sense to incorporate the *options* into role-play scenes using *forum theatre* techniques. The various courses of action developed create a field of tension. This tension in the content – and the participants' need to address it – provides an excellent starting point for moving on to the *practical exercise*. A method that transitions from deconstruction to collective action. And thereby to important 'creagile' process experiences.

2. Creagile Cards in Practice

The *Creagile card set* is an important training resource for creative agility. It contains 15 *Creagile principles*. These refer to approaches, skills and attitudes that artists apply in their work to achieve something new, e.g.: 'Working with an open outcome', 'Allowing for not knowing', 'Changing perspective' or 'Experiencing a safe space'. Each card features the relevant principle alongside quotes from artists and exercises relating to that principle.

In the original training format, the card set was used to reflect on 'creagile' process experiences throughout the training. However, it became apparent in several practical applications that there was not always sufficient time available for this on the second day of training.

The aim of the expanded combined method is to link the creagile principles directly to the experience of doing. To this end, they can be incorporated into the artistic component of collage.

Collage

Collage is an artistic technique for designing – in this context – a situation or a mood board. It is an individual activity and a technique that promotes diversity, condenses and expresses complexity, and is therefore well suited to representing multidimensional, ambiguous and paradoxical concepts.

Participants select from a large collection of visual material, e.g. magazine clippings sorted by themes such as ‘People’, ‘Animals’, ‘Nature’, ‘Architecture/City’, right through to ‘Art and Culture’ and ‘Curiosities’. On the theme of ‘Me in my organisation’, they create a collage from these elements on a backing sheet.



Through the collage work, participants engage in an artistic process. The *creagile principles* can now be used to reflect on their own experience of the process and to situate it within the broader context of creagile working. To this end, once the collages are complete, the *creagile card set*, containing its 15 *creagile principles*, is laid out. Each person can now choose a principle. To ensure everyone has a choice, a second set of cards can be laid out as well.

Participants should now engage with their creagile card, its quotes and tasks, and incorporate these into their vision for their collage.

Observation: As the participants are engaged in an artistic process through the collage work, they are receptive to reflective and inspiring interventions, such as those represented by the *creagile cards*. They can interweave these with their own actions. Furthermore, by combining this with the presentation of their own collage, the individual principles are shared with the whole group.

3. Organisational Map and Areas – Sustainable Transitions into Implementation

The *organisational map* is a versatile tool that can be used to represent both areas and their settings, as well as various ‘creagile’ measures. It can be applied at different stages of the ‘creagile’ process and is suitable for gaining an overview of the entire ‘creagile’ process, from training to transfer¹⁴. Its use in training provides a method for transferring insights from the training into concrete fields of action within the organisation.

Areas / Fields of action¹⁵

Creative agility points to an area that cannot necessarily be represented in conventional schematic depictions of an organisation (e.g. an organisational chart). We have therefore sought out alternative forms of representation that better reflect the open, creagile approach whilst also enabling the identification and categorisation of specific areas of focus. To this end, we have drawn on *the concept of ‘areas’*. By this we mean specific fields of action, such as ‘leadership’, ‘internal communication’, ‘processes / interfaces’, ‘key players’ and ‘market / strategy’. Depending on the specific organisation, the trainer

¹⁴ Further details on the organisational map can be found in section 4.2.2

¹⁵ Further details on the organisational map can be found in Chapter 4

team will suggest areas. To populate these and derive actions for transfer, we draw on the participants' most pressing questions, which have arisen during the training with regard to transferring the learning into their everyday working lives. Some exercises for this:

- **The 'Tricky Questions' Game**

Once all participants have identified a question that deeply concerns them in terms of applying what they have learnt to their own working lives, groups of 3–5 people are formed. Three people sit together in the centre, and the initial question is posed. Everyone is then only allowed to respond with further questions; in other words, the conversation is structured solely through questions. Any impulse to provide answers is stopped. The aim is for the question to give rise to a sharper, deeper question.

The 'Tricky Questions' game serves to uncover the question behind the question, in other words, to explore one's own question in greater depth. After the game, each participant has the opportunity to rephrase their original question. This further developed question then forms the basis for the next step.

- **Questions in Areas**

Based on the organisation's context, the team of trainers now suggests areas to which the participants try to assign their respective questions. To this end, the individual areas are laid out in the room on labelled signs, so that participants can place their questions within the space.

In the next step, the whole group goes through the areas. The questions placed there are read out, and the group has the opportunity to add further questions relating to each area during a short brainstorming session. These are noted down and added to the relevant area, e.g. on a flipchart.

In this way, a condensed selection of relevant questions emerges, which are already assigned to specific areas of action (areas). In the next step, measures for implementation can be developed and discussed on this basis. Furthermore, this introduces the basic concept of the areas and, through their spatial positioning, initiates the idea of the organisational map.

- **The next elegant step**

The organisational map, with its fields of action filled with relevant questions, provides a kind of coordinate system for the transfer. This must now be translated into concrete transfer steps. Here, the principle of the 'next elegant step' comes into play. In accordance with this principle, all participants first note down their own specific next implementation step on differently coloured cards. They then formulate the desired step for the team that falls within their own area of responsibility. This results in a list of individual next implementation steps and a list of group-related next implementation steps. These can be understood as specific action items, on the basis of which agreements on measures can be reached during the transfer phase.

- **What are your needs?**

Alternatively, the question about the next step can also be framed as a needs assessment. Through the training, participants have become familiar with the 'creagile' approach. What supporting tools would they like to see for the transfer phase? Where do they see a specific need where they can make use of the trainer team's presence during the transfer? Needs can be expressed openly during the training or via a 'secret' vote. It is also possible to submit these needs subsequently by email.

This approach is recommended, for example, if the transfer phase is to be structured with a more individual focus rather than an organisational one. To foster early creagile autonomy, the creagile catalogue (trial app) with its creative strategies can be introduced for this purpose.

- **Our joint transfer timetable**

It is advisable to discuss and collate participants' availability during the transfer period whilst the training is still underway. Where appropriate, this also allows group meetings to be arranged in advance for the transfer phase. The timetable can, for example, be drawn up on a noticeboard where everyone can see it.

Using the principle of 'areas' and the 'organisational map' tool, different approaches to transfer can be designed: ranging from a stand-alone training session, after which participants return to their individual working lives, to a scheduled transfer phase within the organisation. The steps described can be adapted to suit the situation and combined in various ways.

4. Creative strategies – Introduction of a 'creagile' catalogue (trial app)

There is a wealth of strategies in the field of creativity. But which ones are most suitable for which specific issue? In the training session, key factors of a creative process are explored using art-based building blocks: *questioning*, *materials* and *making*. Supportive creative strategies can be assigned to these for independent follow-up work.

The idea of a digital catalogue (pilot app)

What if selected creative strategies were made available to participants for independent further work? As a written catalogue would be impractical due to its sheer volume, the idea of a digital format was developed. This would also have the advantage of being able to suggest a specific exercise or method at random, based on a needs-oriented pre-selection. Users would therefore be 'presented' with an exercise that they could not simply skip over as they might in a printed catalogue.

To test this idea of a digital 'creagile' catalogue, a prototype app was developed. Based on the needs 'overcoming mental blocks', 'tackling a task' and 'warm-up exercises', corresponding creative strategies and exercises were incorporated. These were supplemented by the *creagile card set* (see above) and low-threshold creagile prompts (*surprise cards*).

A screen presentation is a suitable way to introduce the pilot app during the training session. This allows the basic structure and navigation to be explained to participants.

Afterwards, they can explore the app independently and have any further questions answered.

The digital creagile catalogue provides an accessible form of independent further use and offers strategies and exercises tailored to participants' needs. It also serves as a kind of reminder of the training, thereby encouraging further (intellectual) engagement with the content covered. This helps to bridge the gap to independent application as well as to a subsequent transfer phase.

The use of the trial app during the training session yielded important insights. However, there is still a long way to go before the app reaches its final stage of development and is released (see section 5.1).

3.3 Variations of Creagile training

The methods described above were tested in various training variants. These were necessitated by differing contextual conditions. The variety of variants now allows the training to be delivered in a way that is tailored to specific needs.

- **Two-day variant**

This variant comprises the core components – *the Narrative Plotboard, the Workpiece, the Collage* and *the Creagile card set* – and, supported by playful exercises and Creagile facilitation methods, prepares participants for the subsequent transfer phase.

- **Two separate days with a gap in between**

Made necessary by limited time availability in one of the pilot organisations, the training was split into two separate days whilst still incorporating the core components: *the Narrative Plotboard, the Workpiece, the Collage* and *the Creagile card set*. In addition, the introduction to the digital Creagile catalogue (trial app) provided an opportunity for participants to continue working independently and apply what they had learnt during the transfer phase.

- **One-day training**

One of the organisations requested training for a larger group of staff. A one-day version of the training was therefore designed. This included the components '*Narrative Plotboard*', '*Artwork*' and *the 'Creagile Card Set'*. The presentation of the workpieces was used as an opportunity to invite the original training participants to join in. In this way, despite time constraints, a bridge was built across departments and hierarchical levels into their shared everyday working lives.

3.4 Further exercises for use in Creagile training

As part of the various measures and training variants, further exercises were also developed and used, which had not yet been described in the curriculum to date. On the one hand, they are suitable as playful interludes, but they can also serve to prepare for one of the measures. They can be adapted and used as required for this purpose. Where

there are specific recommendations and observations from practical testing, these are listed.

A. Exercises for digital group work

- **Favourite object**

Each participant is asked in advance to have a favourite object ready. The objects are presented individually, clearly visible in front of the camera. Why was it chosen? What is your connection to the object? What does it mean to you personally?

Recommendation: The object should be clearly visible on camera. The order can be set by the facilitator, or each person can nominate the next participant. This exercise is also ideal for face-to-face sessions.

- **Lecture-Performance: *Overwhelm / Corridor-Foyer***

This performance, which explores scenarios of feeling overwhelmed, is presented by a trainer using themselves as an example within their respective professional field. Small toy figures are used, e.g. Playmobil or similar. Due to a new composition of the trainer team, the performance has been expanded to include the professional field of the set designer. It can be adapted as required to the specific professional field of any of the trainers.

Recommendation: Write a script for the sequence and rehearse it several times.

- **Lecture Performance: ‘Complexity’ rather than ‘Ambiguity’**

This performance uses different-coloured Post-it notes featuring topics and challenges that a trainer encounters in their own day-to-day professional life. The labelled Post-it notes are stuck visibly onto the trainer’s upper body, creating a striking visual representation of complexity.¹⁶ As the trainer portrays themselves in an overwhelming situation whilst drawing a parallel to creativity, this can serve as a catalyst for discussion amongst the participants.

Recommendation: The trainer should choose their own professional background. In the variants tested, the backgrounds were visual artist and visual project artist respectively.

The lecture performances described can be used in individual digital breakout rooms for small-group discussions. If this is not technically possible, the ‘Yes, and’ exercise can be used with the whole group.

- **‘Yes, and’**

This method builds on a positive response to what has been said previously. During a warm-up phase, the facilitator begins with a narrative element, e.g. ‘We’re going to Lake Constance’. The facilitator then calls out a person’s name. That person reinforces what has been said so far and adds their own narrative

¹⁶ Practical tip: Small Post-it notes require a large number of topics or challenges to be collected to achieve the desired visual impact; large Post-it notes, on the other hand, have a more striking effect, as they allow a great deal to be covered in a short space of time.

element: 'Yes, and I'll pack my swimming trunks.' The facilitator names all the participants in turn, each of whom continues the story with 'Yes, and...'

The facilitator then returns to the lecture performance and asks the group the same question: 'How did you find the lecture performance?' The participants each begin their feedback with 'Yes, and'. This can be followed by further rounds of questions: What did you observe? What stuck with you?

With the 'Yes, and' method, there is no disparaging feedback, because each response builds on the previous one and fosters a sense of goodwill.

B. Exercises for the 'creagile' in-person training

- **Two images – two levels of effect**

This exercise raises awareness of the thought processes triggered by different visual stimuli. It focuses on the shared willingness *to look more closely*.

First, each person in the circle of chairs is shown an image (for approx. 5 seconds) whilst being asked to observe their own thoughts; for example, two women walking through an icy forest. A second image is then held up alongside a symbol, such as the letter A. The participants are again asked to consciously notice their own mental associations whilst observing the two images.



Note: The group does not comment on the process. The rationale behind the exercise is that the associations evoked by the photograph are of a personal or narrative nature. When combined with the letter, these are overshadowed. The aim of the exercise is to help participants perceive their experiences during the training as a series of 'causal impulses' (meta-level).

- **Group vocalisation** (voice and body exercise)

The group positions themselves as spread out as possible across the room. Each person begins with a sustained 'A', starting softly and then gradually getting louder. The 'A' is sung several times, and each time attention is directed to a different aspect: Where in the body is the 'A' formed? As you make the sound, do you listen to the sounds in the room? How can I use my breath to relax?

The "A" is followed in turn by the "O", the "U", the "Ü", the "I" and the "E".

Afterwards, all the sounds are sung one after the other, from "A" to "E" and back again. At the end, everyone listens to the collective resonance in the room.

Variation: 'Singing Gibberish'

The vowels mentioned above are "voiced" freely and combined with individual consonants, e.g. ssaaii, kiiii, vooo, lüüü, paaa, tüüküüüfaa, etc. A melodious imaginary language emerges.

In the next step, the sound production is supported by body movements. The body is given free rein whilst making sounds, i.e. allowing postures to 'emerge'. Just as the sounds generate an individual impulse, they are expressed through the body. Afterwards: Close your eyes and reflect on the experience; be still, sitting or standing as you wish.

- **Stop – Dance – Freeze**

Music is playing. Participants are guided to move freely around the room to the music. As soon as the music stops or someone calls out 'Stop', everyone freezes in their current posture. After holding the pose briefly, this posture serves as a starting point for a slow melting away, a springing up, a twitch, a sway, and so on. Each of these movement sequences transforms into dance as soon as the music starts again. As we dance, we stretch our arms towards the ceiling, make eye contact with the others, and move together until 'Stop' is called again, and everyone freezes.

- **Stick exercise**

Each person is given a wooden stick 1 metre long and approximately 2 cm in diameter. The group forms a circle and each person holds the stick with the index finger of their right hand. On a signal, everyone moves one position further round the circle in a clockwise direction, whilst the sticks remain standing vertically. The aim is therefore to pass the stick to the person on your right in such a way that they can take it over using just one finger. The rule is: the sticks may only be touched with the right index finger.

Variations: Move anti-clockwise. Vary the pace. Different people give the signal. The aim is eventually to pass on or take over the sticks collectively without any verbal cue.

A possible preparatory exercise: balancing the stick on your index finger.

C. 3. Feedback methods

- **5-Finger Feedback**

This form of feedback allows for detailed feedback in a relatively short time. Participants are asked to draw the outline of their own hand on a piece of paper. They are then asked to provide appropriate feedback for each finger.

- Thumb: What did I like?
- Index finger: This is what I'd like to point out.
- Middle finger: What annoyed me?
- Ring finger: What did I feel?
- Little finger: What was missing?

The sheets containing the anonymised feedback are then collected.

- **WWW – What Went Well?**

A method borrowed from positive psychology as developed by Martin Seligman. In a closing session, each person reflects on the positive aspects they encountered during the seminar. These positive impressions are then shared during the closing session.

A feedback method that focuses on the positive and provides encouraging impetus for further engagement.

3.5 Conclusion

The 'Creative Agility' training programme follows a modular principle, which is made even more versatile by the methods and exercises described above and tested in practice. In the fields of art, facilitation and training, the ' ' of the facilitator and trainer plays a central role. It is their individual professional backgrounds that shape their role as a 'creagile' facilitator. Added to this is the richness of the 'creagile' team. The methods and exercises described are intended as an expanded and tried-and-tested repertoire for planning and delivering 'creagile' training sessions tailored to specific needs. Adapting them to the specific situation and context is recommended.

At the end of the training, the previously mentioned transfer timetable, combined with the questions, needs and concerns gathered, serves as a guide into the transfer phase or, if you will, as the next 'door of overwhelm' to be discovered through artistic and playful means.

4. Areas and venues of ‘creagile’ transfer

What do we mean by an ‘area’ within the organisation?

Change often does not originate in clearly defined functional organisational units. Change germinates in the in-between: at the interfaces, in shared processes, in the encounter between different ‘I’s. In our reflections on where creative agility might best find its way into an organisation, we sought to focus on this ‘in-between’ – on the ‘fluidum’ that permeates the various units of an organisation and holds them together. To this end, we introduced the concept of ‘areas’. Encounters and collaboration within an organisation often take place across divisions or departments – with people working in different organisational units. In our view, such areas include the following:

- **Leadership**

How do we lead within the organisation? Who leads whom? Is there a leadership culture? Leadership responsibility brings together people from different areas, from both staff and line functions. In other words, it is a space where creative agility can provide impetus and flourish.

- **Internal communication**

There are probably very few organisations whose staff would claim with complete conviction: ‘Our internal communication runs like clockwork!’ Many people are involved in communication channels that, like veins, run through and connect different units, teams and individuals. Misunderstandings, shortcomings and excessive demands are all too likely to occur in this area. This makes it a particularly good starting point for creative agility.

- **Innovation**

Innovative processes usually involve people from different areas and fields of activity; they require different roles to succeed. When difficulties and crises arise, failure is often accepted rather than being harnessed as a creative opportunity. We see a strong connection between artistic and innovative practice. Creative agility is right at home here.

- **(Open) processes**

Processes that require various internal (and external) service providers, thereby linking different units within the organisation, provide a good starting point for creative agility. Creative agility principles such as ‘embracing collaboration’, ‘changing perspective’, ‘stimulating reflection’ and ‘harnessing diversity’ find a natural home here.

- **The ‘I’ within the organisation**

The organisation’s managers and staff are constantly moving through the ‘interstices’. They meet one another in the canteen, at meetings and gatherings, over coffee, and in the car park after work. These are opportunities for our ‘I’s’ to inject new ideas – often unconsciously – into the organisation.

We can harness this interaction of the 'I's' in the in-between spaces for our 'creagile' transfer processes. In particular, using the collage tool (see Chapter 3).

- **The TEAM within the organisation**

Much like the 'I's', the 'WE's' – the teams within the organisation – must also engage with other 'WE's'. Or rather, individual teams are constantly confronted with the question of how their own role within the organisation and their interactions with others can be shaped and renewed.

- **Strategy**

Ideally, both the development and implementation processes of a strategy trigger interactions and participatory processes within the organisation, encompassing all its units. Strategies, by their very nature, address the challenges facing an organisation. Creative agility can make valuable contributions here to generating options in the face of these challenges.

What do we mean by a 'venue' within the area?

By 'arenas', we mean spaces, places and opportunities for action within a given area. These include, for example, meetings, break areas, retreats, outings, the canteen, the car park, staff meetings, conversations in the corridor or joint celebrations.

A regular management team meeting would therefore be a setting for the 'leadership' area, which could be designed in a creative and agile way, just as the way people converse in the canteen could contribute to this. Approaches to innovation could emerge in unusual settings (e.g. in the car park or the boiler room), as the location itself may provide new, creative impulses.

That is why, throughout the transfer processes, we were constantly asking ourselves which setting we could utilise and shape in order to give creative agility room to flourish.

In the next three sections, we will attempt to describe, on the basis of the three different transfer processes, both their procedures and the way in which different areas were addressed, along with the respective settings we selected for each.

4.1 The transfer process, using a department of the Liechtenstein State Administration as an example

Team of trainers: Dagmar Frick-Islitzer, Peer Holthuisen

4.1.1 The initial situation prior to the transfer

Following the training, the transfer process was discussed, designed and organised. **The following arrangements were made for the transfer:**

- Participants were asked to test how they could use the trial app (p. 19) in their day-to-day work and to identify which features were particularly popular or helpful. The trial app includes artistic strategies, 'creagile' cards, individual and group exercises, as well as inspiration provided by surprise cards.
- Support for the transfer takes the form of needs-based coaching on using the trial app, as well as organisational support for the programme leader and her department heads and their staff.
- Following the first transfer block, the trainers gather their experiences, observations and reflections and prepare them for the next interim meeting with the manager. The second phase is structured on the basis of this meeting.

4.1.2 First transfer phase

The trainers consulted the manager and the four line managers in advance to ascertain their needs regarding the topics, so as to be able to prepare the first transfer phase effectively.

The following transfer steps were carried out:

- **Individual coaching session with a manager**

Content: Application and use of the trial app

- **Half-day workshop with the director and four managers**

Content: Review of the organisational analysis and discussion of three topics:

- Appreciation & communication within the management team
- Deputies or back-up arrangements: Who can stand in for me if I am absent for an extended period? How do we effectively build a team of deputies?
- Optimising communication

On the topic of 'Appreciation and rapport within the management team', an 'appreciation chat' was introduced in two small groups.

The back-up solution was addressed in more detail in three steps:

- a. Carrying out the handover exercise (handing over/accepting tasks)
- b. Agreeing on a back-up culture for everyone.

- c. The 'headstand' method: 'What can be done to prevent a back-up (a spontaneous takeover) (see Fig. 6)?'

This method involves a creative strategy that generates solutions to the task by reversing the objective. The question of deputy back-up was rephrased as: 'What must be ensured to guarantee that a spontaneous takeover of the task, activity or area of responsibility fails?'

Within a few minutes, 15 activities, attitudes and behaviours were identified that effectively prevent a colleague from taking over the tasks. From these, approaches were derived as to how a takeover might occur, what is important in the process, and what this might potentially mean for day-to-day work.

Using the following guiding questions, the group developed specific implementation steps: How do we describe our work processes so that someone else can easily find their way around them? How do we use digital tools? What does this mean for both general and day-to-day documentation? How do we identify suitable forms of documentation?

1. Everyone maps out their workflow or project plans, e.g. a schedule and task list.
2. Everyone demonstrates their area of expertise. How do I approach my tasks?
3. How do I proceed in specific terms? Describe the essentials in depth, including a timeframe.
4. Who does the job holder want to see in the role? Who among the others could envisage standing in for them?
5. Regular updates and insight into each other's diaries.
6. Develop and adopt the right mindset: thinking on the other person's behalf – how does that work?
7. Identify the next logical steps (forms of documentation and contingency plans, 'what if?', developing a framework for exchange)

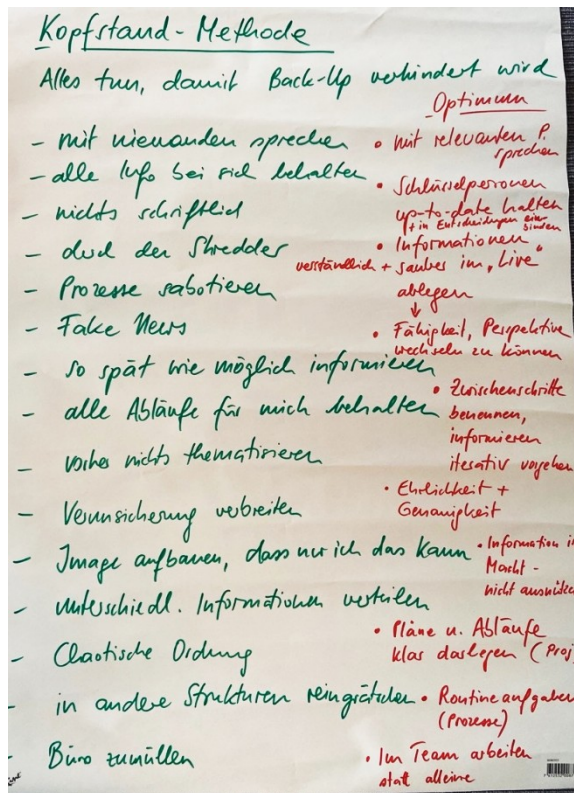


Fig. 6: Documentation of the 'headstand method' (creative strategy)

The objective of 'optimising communication' specifically refers to communication with colleagues.

To ensure the discussion quickly gained depth, the 'Six Thinking Hats' method from the trial app was used as a creative strategy.

The aim of this exercise: by choosing an agreed role and switching roles, a multi-perspective view of the challenge at hand is facilitated. The chosen role is represented by a coloured hat.

Each participant took a hat, put it on and acted in accordance with the corresponding colour.

- White hat – Rational/Facts:

From this perspective, obstacles and possible solutions were identified, for example: a lack of time and space, a need for essential containers, the others need to gain more insight...

- Green Hat – New Ideas/Alternatives:

Creating opportunities ('venues') for communication, such as a business lunch, an open day, a joint 'meaningful' outing, a cycle ride, a bus trip or a team BlaBlaCar, etc.

- Red Hat – Feelings and Intuition:

From this perspective, 'time' was frequently mentioned as a limiting factor: time (and how it is used) is an emotional issue; time acts as a barrier – "I've got so

much on...”; investing time must make sense; interpersonal relationships take time.

- Yellow Hat – Optimism, benefits and possibilities / opportunities:

Core problem: The participants do not know enough about each other’s roles to allow ‘networks’ to emerge spontaneously; generate ‘wildcard initiatives’ to create spontaneous, non-natural networks; take responsibility for their own needs.

- Black Hat – objective criticism, warns of risks and dangers
- Blue Hat – organises and leads the process (facilitator)

The last two hats were not used due to time constraints.

Agreement: The manager, together with the team, will create a space for ‘vessels’ – that is, for events and opportunities to shape and nurture internal communication.

- **Short workshop with the team leader and two managers**

Content: Collaboration on planning an important kick-off meeting to revamp a concept

The tasks of the Creagile trainer team: to be present, curious and critical; to be aware of processes and structures; to listen and ask questions; to initiate a change of perspective, broaden perspectives and highlight blind spots.

This resulted in scenarios and approaches regarding the kick-off meeting and the potential project objectives. Expectations and wishes were identified through a ‘holistic review’.

- **Creagile Executive Coaching (1)**

Content: Reflection on the structure and the manager’s team

The sub-team’s tasks, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the team members, were examined. The conclusion was that the sub-team’s tasks and self-image leave little scope for alternative processes and approaches.

- **Creagiles Executive Coaching (2)**

Content: Restructuring a 15-strong team into three regional teams with the aim of reducing the span of control to three points of contact.

In a lively discussion, ideas were developed on how the trainers could engage this group using Creagile methods and guide them towards forming regional teams. The task was to establish Creagile processes. To this end, a half-day workshop with the team will take place during the second transfer phase.

Key question: “How can we work together to create a working structure in which we can manage our resources more effectively?”

The aim is to develop a process design that improves collegiality and flexibility in context-specific resource management and promotes quality management.

- **Short workshop with a manager and two staff members**

Content: How can we use Creagile methods (or the trial app) in our day-to-day work, and are they even suitable for this purpose?

The team was able to describe its work in more detail: What does the team's remit consist of? What approaches are taken? (Contact persons, clients, methods, etc.)

Practical applications were discussed together with the trainers. A workshop featuring exercises and methods that help participants perceive things differently is to be offered.

- **Creagile coaching for the manager**

Content: Draft for a Creagile workshop to be led by the manager at a later date. Topic: "Vision and values for the entire department"

With the help of the trial app and drawing on their own experience, the trainers developed concrete approaches in the areas of vision management and values-based orientation, and roughly outlined tasks for the workshop.

One finding from the organisational analysis was that not everyone is familiar with the department's goals and vision. The workshop was intended to help participants get to know and live by these.

The proposed method – starting with individual goals and embedding them within a shared team goal – may offer opportunities for improved team wellbeing and motivation.

- **Short workshop with a manager and the head of department**

Content: Support for an upcoming project in the field of evaluation.

After the manager had introduced the topic and outlined the tasks, the trainers highlighted the differences between innovation processes in organisations and in artistic projects. They then worked together to develop a possible scenario in stages.

Drawing on the supporting project descriptions, reference groups and facts at her disposal, the manager formulated various research questions which need to be elegantly narrowed down in order to optimise the study's benefits and enable its practical implementation. Different clusters of questions involve different parties and pathways within the process landscape.

Various approaches were explored, and a short presentation was scheduled as an online meeting to serve as a dress rehearsal for clarifying the terms of reference.

4.1.3 Second transfer phase

Following on from the first phase of the transfer, the implementation steps described below were carried out within the organisation.

- **Creagile management coaching (online)**

Content: Dress rehearsal of the presentation for the upcoming meeting with a research institute. The trainers were asked to review the content from an outsider's perspective and provide feedback.

They emphasised the importance of clarifying the objective and expectations at the outset. They also pointed out that it is not only the WHAT (content, task, facts) but also the HOW (people, soft facts, values, collaboration, communication) that matters. It is helpful to find out how the other person perceives things. The main senses of perception are visual, auditory and tactile. Accordingly, the choice of words and the presentation of information can help to foster better understanding and harmony. Identifying shared values is also helpful, particularly in the case of a longer-term project.

As a result, the presentation concept was ultimately reoriented.

- **Short workshop with a manager and two staff members**

Content: Workshop on changing perspectives and applying this to everyday working life.

The trainers guided the three participants through various perception exercises designed to enhance their ability to shift perspective.

- **Team workshop with 15 staff members (half-day)**

(The team leader was only present at the start and end).

Content: Workshop – restructuring into three regional teams

The trainers used *narrative inquiry* to bring the teams together into viable groups. It is worth noting that the workshop methods were efficiently condensed without compromising on content.

Results: An initial step towards development was taken. The members of the three teams were able to agree on future collaboration and set out the first steps. A key aspect here was that the staff recognised the potential for shaping their regional teams.

- **Creagile coaching for the team leader**

Content: Programme for the closing event, incorporating the latest insights.

- **Half-day closing event**

Content: How do we embed creative agility into our working culture? Highlighting the experiences gained from the trial app and the transfer process in general

The 'Creagile' petals were introduced as the key method for consolidating the transfer insights and were adapted to suit each department:

- *Petal 'Prerequisites'*
What framework conditions do we need for creagile working?
- *'Resources' petal*
How do we create opportunities? What frameworks do we provide for creagile collaboration?
- *'Application' petal*
How can we work in a 'creagile' way in our day-to-day lives? How could the app help with this?
- *Petal: 'Team'*
How can we support one another?
- *Petal 'Stakeholders'*
What opportunities can we create to share 'creagile' attitudes with external parties?
- *Petal 'Organisation'*
What organisational culture should prevail in the department in future?
- *Petal: 'Identity'*
How do we create a shared identity with the teams?

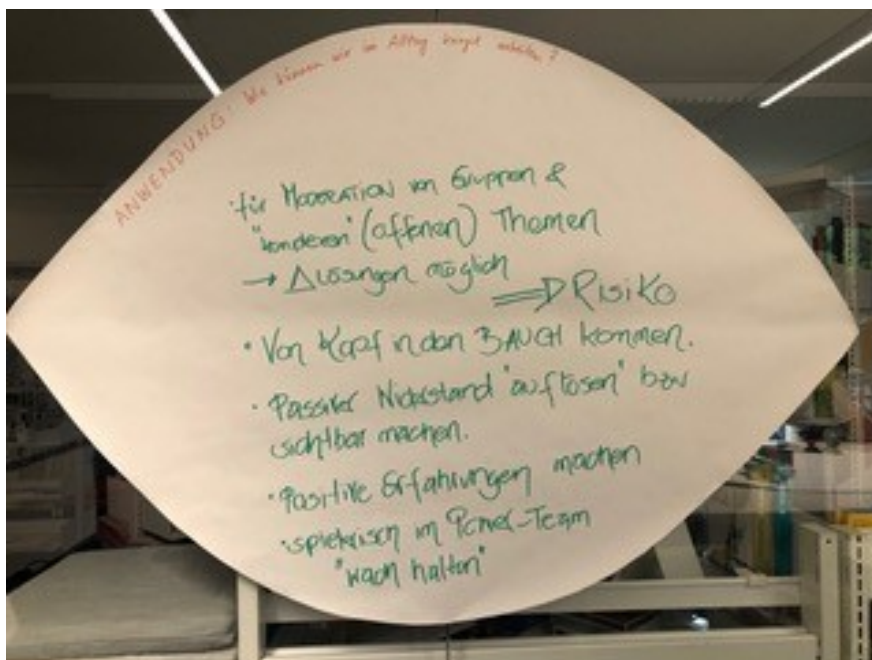


Fig. 7: 'Application' petal

Gradually, a picture began to emerge, and the group gained confidence that they could independently continue with the 'creagile' magic formula

'Materials + Questions + Doing = It'll work out!'

and the use of the toolkit and the app is gradually becoming possible.



Fig. 8: Creagile design of a petal

4.1.4 Reflection and evaluation of the process

- **The importance of the trial app**

Overall, the trial app played a major role – from the training sessions right through to the closing event. The team leader, for example, thought it was brilliant that her team had caught the 'fire' through the trial app and the creative-artistic methods – and that this enthusiasm is being passed on with enthusiasm. It is important to set aside time to keep the team engaged, for example with a 'creagile' session.

The Probe App offers a wealth of creative strategies as well as ideas for thinking and taking action in day-to-day work.

- **The 'creagile' magic formula as a guide**

Alongside the Probe app, the 'creagile magic formula' was seen as a key contribution to embedding the creagile methods within the organisation.

The 'creagile magic formula' emerged from the experiences of the predecessor project ¹⁷:

Material + Questions + Doing = 'It'll be fine!'

¹⁷ See the curriculum "How art-based strategies transform digital and analogue communication in organisations." This can be downloaded from the project partners' websites.

By *'material'* we mean the forms the world takes. In other words, in what form do we encounter the world? This refers to the physical world, but also to the various narratives about it. And it refers to people, with their backgrounds and knowledge. *'Material'* refers to the resources available to us in our process.

By *'questions'* we mean our approach to the world. Here, we are thinking less of a specific question or a task that quickly implies an expectation of a particular solution. We mean a fundamental attitude of approaching the world with a questioning mind. Questions open things up. They keep our curiosity alive and prevent us from jumping to quick, definitive answers. And they open up spaces for us to explore diversity.

'Doing' refers to active engagement. And to getting started. Getting started without having a complete plan beforehand. It implies and provides the energy that sets a process in motion and is also drawn from unconscious sources, such as intuition. It means thinking with one's hands and acting with thoughts and words. *'Making'* is giving shape. And it is a process of shaping through which we communicate with the world and explore both it and ourselves.

'It'll be alright' is a somewhat casual reference to trust and confidence. The trust that if we engage with the world in an open, inquisitive and creative way, something will emerge. It refers to the confidence that one can set out on a journey even without a predetermined goal. And that one will arrive at something.

- **The value for the team**

The aim of bringing the team closer together was achieved through the Creative Agility process. Opportunities to get to know one another better were provided and taken up, and new synergies were discovered. Those involved confirmed that the process had been worthwhile for the team.

At the closing event, the department's four teams worked in groups organised by specialist area, which brought the respective team members closer together. The team leader intends to take the 'petals' they had developed – the results of which were perceived as very valuable – to the next team meeting to continue working on them there.

The team leader also sees a good opportunity to apply this approach during staff appraisals: to explore together where her team members see opportunities to incorporate 'creagile' working into their day-to-day routines.

- **Use of resources**

In such a small organisational unit as this department, you need highly visionary people who can assess the value of the investment. Normally, this department holds one team day a year. That is generally all that the management and their team can manage. By comparison, the entire 'Creative Agility' process consumed a great deal of human resources and represented a major investment. But the outcome was considered to be excellent.

Could the entire process be made more efficient and thus streamlined? Art-based strategies and artistic approaches, however, require space and time. It may be difficult to tolerate this ambivalence...

- **Sustainability**

Between the training sessions and the first and second transfer phases, the trainer team sent short 'creative agility' reminder emails to the participants to keep Creative Agility firmly in their minds. These reminders were very well received. The leader expressed a desire to receive this kind of support at an inspirational level, to help with the process in everyday life over a longer period. This suggestion gave rise to the 'creagile' monthly prompts, which are explained in more detail in Chapter 6.

- **Transformative processes within the organisation**

How can Creative Agility be shaped into a form that can be sustained within the ongoing process?

The value must first be recognised. If an organisation views innovation as a key aspect of its business activities and sees creative agility as a useful tool, then those responsible will also set aside additional time for it.

Business processes have a goal. If one wishes to achieve something within business processes through creative agility, the necessary framework must be established. If certain aspects of these processes are well served by creative agility, then this would be a valuable approach. Naturally, this requires human resources, but also mental and physical space, a tolerance for mistakes and the courage to fail.

Transformative processes trigger resistance. This is particularly true when the organisational structure is not 'built' for creative agility. In such cases, those involved may well reach their limits. This raises the next question: how could the structure be made more suitable – or does the structure need to be adapted at all?

4.2 The transfer process: the example of a medium-sized manufacturing company in Germany

Training team: Peer Holthuisen, Peter Jungmeier, Michael Uhl

4.2.1 The transition from training to implementation

The training begins with the concept of 'overwhelm' in order to identify and address, together with the participants, the bottlenecks within the organisation. What is happening in these settings? Who is involved? What are the rules of the game? The theatre-based approach using the 'Narrative Research' method serves to examine these settings from multiple perspectives.

At the end of the training, the relevant areas are identified together with the participants from the settings and situations examined through 'Narrative Research', and supplemented with

guiding questions and tasks. This is where the 'organisational map' tool¹⁸ is first applied. Based on the schematic representation of the relevant areas and their specific settings, the transfer phase can be planned and agreed upon collectively.

This is what we will now focus on in the form of a practical case study. The 'organisational map', with its mapping of the identified areas, will serve as a unifying framework. The areas identified as relevant in our practical example were:

Management team collaboration, key stakeholders, leadership, internal communication, market/strategy, processes/interfaces.

In addition to the relevant areas and settings identified during the training, an organisational analysis was carried out. This involved conducting an environmental analysis with the management team through a self-assessment, which was subsequently supplemented by interviews with staff. Based on this, the training team drew up a summary in the form of a SWOT analysis. Together with the insights and results from the training, this served as the basis for planning the transfer phase.

4.2.2 The transfer – immersion in specific settings

In this pilot organisation, two working weeks on-site were allocated for the transfer phase, following the 'trainer-in-residence model'. There was a four-week interval between the two transfer blocks. This allowed the training team to carry out thorough follow-up work on the first phase and to prepare the second phase in detail. The participants involved were also able to use this break to consolidate and build on the experiences gained during the first transfer week. The key measures and insights from both transfer weeks are described below.

In order to adopt a goal-oriented approach during the transfer phase, the most relevant settings were defined in collaboration with the participants from the areas identified. The 'next elegant step' served as an important guiding principle for initiating transfer steps that were as concrete and actionable as possible.

I. Meeting Practices

As the training participants all belonged to the management circle, its meeting formats were defined as the most urgent areas for action. In addition, a smaller group deals with the technical operational areas. At their request, this group was also included in the transfer phase.

¹⁸ The 'organisational map' is a multifaceted (i.e. not rigidly defined in form) tool that helps to illustrate and present the potential applications and implementation of Creative Agility across various areas or dimensions of an organisation.

Elements of a Creagile-inspired meeting culture:

- **'Safe space'**

One aspect of the training that all participants regarded as central is the principle of the 'safe space'. This is a fundamental prerequisite for open, creative processes and the primary learning objective of the training. Its key conditions are:

- Nothing comes in from outside (e.g. mobile phones and laptops switched off)
- Nothing leaves the room – unless it has been discussed collectively
- Everyone decides for themselves what to share
- It requires the (positive) energy and engagement of everyone
- There are no *mistakes*, only *attempts* and *experiences*
- There is no *right* or *wrong*

These are principles that can create a 'safe space' in artistic processes or in a training setting. But how can this be adapted to everyday working life?

- **Warm-up**

For 'creagile' working, the principle of warm-ups is a key concern. Warm-ups prepare the body and mind for what lies ahead. They refresh and prepare participants for social interactions within the group. Particularly in the context of everyday working life, warm-ups represent an important threshold, allowing participants to (briefly) leave the topics and pace of their daily work behind and be ready to step *outside the box* and think collectively. Warm-ups are the gateway to collaborative, creative and agile working.

Possible and tried-and-tested warm-ups include:

- **Creating a suitable group situation**

It is not the trainers who dictate the spatial arrangement, but the group that decides which layout is most suitable for the task at hand – designing a collaborative 'creagile' meeting.

Observations: instead of the usual table, the group arranged themselves in a circle of chairs. This arrangement changed as the meeting progressed and they worked together. Over the course of the meeting, participants took up different positions in the room and were on the move.

- **Impulse circle (arms crossed)**

This is a seated variation of the clapping circle and is suitable for seated circles.

Each person places their hands, crossed over each other, on their own knees (right hand on left knee, left hand on right knee). Following the order of the hands, an impulse is passed round the circle (= hand claps on the knee). When there is a double clap, the direction of the impulse changes. If a hand makes a mistake, it moves behind the back.

Observations: A coordinative challenge that requires full concentration. Everyone's attention is focused on the shared moment. The playful approach creates a relaxed atmosphere. The inevitable mishaps foster a relaxed attitude

towards mistakes and establish another central principle of the 'creagile' approach: embracing failure with enthusiasm.

- **Ball Relay**

Another little game that brings everyone fully into the moment and allows them to fail in a playful way.

The group stands in a circle. In a pre-determined order, in which each person takes a turn, the ball is thrown from one person to the next. The last person throws it back to the first, creating a cycle. More and more balls are introduced into the cycle. Here, too, the boundaries of what is manageable are playfully pushed, and the motto is: 'failing with gusto'.

Observations: One of the group's favourite games from the training sessions, which brings everyone fully into the shared moment. In practice, like many warm-ups, it can also be used as an interlude.

- **Spaghetti Plate**

In addition to physical warm-up, coordination and flexibility, this game also aims to playfully push participants beyond their limits, following the principle of 'failing with joy'.

An imaginary plate – filled with spaghetti and sauce – is rotated upwards in a circular motion involving all the arm joints and the torso; it is then returned to the starting position.

Variations: with the other hand/arm, or alternately with both arms at the same time

Observations: As the coordination exercise becomes increasingly complex, everyone eventually experiences a moment of 'enjoyable failure'. This means stepping outside one's controllable comfort zone. At the same time, participants realise that this failure is perfectly fine. As with all the exercises listed here, this leads to the safe space being experienced as effective.

Furthermore, through its criss-crossing right-to-left body movements, this exercise encourages interaction between the two hemispheres of the brain.

- **Chatting in the group's presence**

A method that introduces a transition from movement and spatial exercises to content-based work. The trainers discuss these topics in the presence of the participants. The group simply listens whilst the 'gossips' discuss various aspects relevant to them.

Observations: A good method for addressing various relevant aspects without doing so in a lecture-style or confrontational setting. Here, the trainers used it to refresh participants' memories of key content from a training session that had taken place several weeks earlier, whilst also addressing relevant aspects of the upcoming transfer of learning.

- **Check-out**

A key aim of the transfer phase is to carry over the improved quality of the training – in terms of communication, atmosphere and working methods – into everyday working life. The importance of warm-ups and the ‘creagile’ approach of open-ended questioning has already been outlined. To ensure these qualities continue to resonate, it is important to build a bridge to everyday life. This is where check-out exercises come into play. Here is a tried-and-tested selection:

- **Word-Ball Circle**

This is a variation on the ball relay (see warm-up).

Instead of a ball, each person’s name is called out in the agreed order. Further ‘balls’ in the game could include, for example, a car make, a type of fruit or vegetable, or a city.

Note: The circle must stand closer together for this than when throwing a ball. Everyone must be able to hear each other clearly. Eyes are closed. The focus here is less on ‘enjoyable failure’ and more on shared concentration. How many ‘balls’ (terms) can we keep in play together?

Observation: An exercise that is also suitable as a quick activity in between sessions, e.g. before or after a break. As a wrap-up, it leaves the group with the feeling: ‘Look at everything we can achieve together!’.

A) ‘Management Team’ Meeting Design

The warm-up session concludes with preparatory work on the workshop or meeting topic. In this case, the joint development of conditions and rules for meetings. As a first step, an attempt was made to apply the principle of the ‘safe space’ to everyday working life.

We observed that adhering to the rules of the ‘Safe Space’ can be challenging in day-to-day working life. Time constraints, a packed schedule, and conflicting interests can quickly turn meetings into tedious chores that people try to offset by engaging in other activities at the same time: replying to emails, typing text messages, or doing research on their smartphones. At the same time, under workplace pressure, differing interests quickly clash in meetings, which can then lead to confrontational discussions. What are the necessary conditions for an alternative ‘creagile’ approach? How can the quality of meetings be improved so that the time spent together is of general value? Which meetings are then worthwhile, which are less so, and which can be cancelled in favour of the more valuable ones?

Working in small groups, two sets of proposals for conditions and rules were developed in parallel. These were then presented and consolidated in the plenary session under the guidance of a facilitator. The outcome was a list of conditions and rules to which all participants could commit.

Steps in the process

1. What is **the purpose** of the meeting in question?
 - What are the opportunities and obstacles?
 - Where are the interdependencies and connections (stakeholders)?
 - (Hierarchical) classification within the triad **of informing – consulting – deciding**
2. Frequency and framework conditions?
 - How and when can a safe space be created?
 - What conditions and rules apply, and which are necessary?
3. Who plays which role?
 - Who ensures that conditions and rules are observed and, if necessary, enforces them?
 - 'Guardian' / 'Keeper', not a 'facilitator'
 - How does the 'leader' behave?
 - What does each person need from whom? And what does the collective effort require from everyone?

B) Meeting design: 'Technical staff meeting'

In the case of the smaller operational meeting, the steps described were followed in a similar but modified way.

1. By addressing the question of the meeting's purpose – including the possibility of cancelling this meeting – a new meaning for the meeting was developed through a questioning facilitation approach.
2. Alongside this, a new structure was established.
3. As all meeting participants are on an equal footing in the hierarchy, the options for decision-making were explored. What happens in the event of disagreement?
 - Disagreement is a catalyst: what is the actual problem? What is the question behind the question?
 - Measuring resistance: which option provokes the least resistance from everyone?
 - The possibility of delegating decisions, e.g. to the entire management team, including senior management

These steps were developed using a questioning facilitation approach. In addition, the **'tinkering & building'** method was employed as a Creagile technique. The basis for this was the Creagile magic formula developed during the training: **Questions + Materials + Doing = 'It'll be fine'**

- Once the key *questions* have been gathered and formulated through a questioning facilitation approach, various building materials are made available (building blocks, Lego).

Questions:

- What is the purpose of this meeting?
- What is needed to achieve this?
- How do we get there?

Group task: explore the questions together using the building blocks (= materials).

- Observation: What worked very well during the training (see 'workpiece') is now stalling here. Presumably due to the different perspectives and interests of the various departments, it is not so easy to initiate collaborative 'working'.

The task set at the start – to build something together – is changed to an individual task: to give shape to one's own ideas about the structure and role of the group. Afterwards, each participant presents their structure and thoughts.

- Observation: a very respectful, trusting and objective exchange about the purpose of the group, its possibilities and conditions.

Afterwards, there is time to discuss substantive topics relating to day-to-day business. Here it becomes apparent how quickly a safe space that has been established can begin to show cracks due to individual perspectives, differing departmental interests and the various leadership styles. Individual follow-up discussions are envisaged.

Through the steps described – which involve different facilitation formats and playful interactions – the frequency, framework conditions and distribution of roles were clarified, with the result that, according to the participants, the quality of the meetings has improved in both meeting formats.

II. People in their actions (the 'I')

A person's behaviour within an organisation is decisively shaped by the 'role' attributed to them and their individual interpretation of it. What is the job description for this role? What is the understanding of this among the person concerned and their environment? From the wealth of experience gained through the training sessions conducted to date, we have come to realise that one of the most fundamental conceptual frameworks in organisations is: 'I' and 'the others'. Many organisational challenges can be found within this area of tension. It is one of, if not the central arena in everyday organisational working life.

Following on from the topic of meetings, another key focus in the 'creagile' transfer is therefore the individual employee. In the practical case described, this refers to the individual member of management.

The 'individual rehearsal'

The 'individual trials' have various stages, which can be selected according to need and circumstances.

1. Clarification of the task:

At the end of the training, each participant has identified specific needs for their individual implementation steps in the transfer process. These are discussed in a joint meeting and, where appropriate, concrete implementation steps are agreed upon, e.g.:

- Focusing on my role in the works council
- Understanding of interfaces

- My interaction, implementation and development of creative agility in subordinate teams
2. Individual coaching:

Building on the training, a foundation of trust has already been established, which, if required, enables the initiation of individual coaching following a clarification of the remit. The collages created during the training on the topic of 'Me in my organisation' have proved to be a very helpful bridge in this regard. For example, future structures with altered areas of responsibility were discussed in relation to the participant's own area of responsibility. The concepts borrowed from conceptual theatre work proved very helpful here: what 'roles' are there? And who are the responsible 'players'/'actors'?

3. 'Individual rehearsals' as building blocks for the shared stage:

The question raised in the 'creagile' meeting design – 'What does the collective endeavour require of me?' – can be explored here in a safe environment. Individual role models can be discussed, and doors opened to possible options.

Observation: The individual rehearsals had an impact at every level. They paved the way for the next concrete steps in the transfer process, whilst at the same time offering, where necessary, a deeper, more personalised grounding in the Creagile approach. By questioning one's own role, participants influenced the meeting design (see above).

III. Management and Leadership

What are the implications of the 'creagile' approaches and insights from the training, which were found to be inspiring? What do these mean for one's own leadership? For ' ' – collaborative leadership as a management team? And for the leadership culture at the team levels within the individual departments?

'Direction' – Inspiration for 'creagile' leadership

During the training, participants learn about and develop 'creagile' principles. These are provided in *the 'creagile' card set* as 15 different principles for further use. They heighten awareness of creative working and offer a rich array of helpful ideas for independent application.

For leaders in particular, beyond the Creagile principles, the question and challenge arises: what kind of leadership fosters the Creagile approach and the application of these Creagile principles?

Therefore, specific principles have been derived from theatre direction – the leadership of ensembles in open, artistic (rehearsal) processes – to provide inspiration for Creagile leadership within organisations.

Here is a selection that has been applied in real-world scenarios:

- **‘Fulfilling a role – not portraying or playing it’**

It is essential for us to step into roles – in theatre, as in organisations and companies. One cannot simply act as a human being; otherwise, one suffers (for example, it can be emotionally difficult to have to let staff go, but in the role of a manager, one sometimes has to do this for the organisation’s sake).

For roles to come alive, they must be filled by people. We do this using the resources at our disposal – and within their limitations. The temptation is great to gloss over these limitations in order to maintain the desired external image. Yet this carries the risk of appearing artificial and lacking credibility. It is not about the (*external*) *image*; it is about one’s *attitude* – for example, what does the shared task require of me?

For managers, two aspects follow from this:

- As a manager, I also have a *role*, a function. This must be fulfilled using the resources at my disposal. If my resources are insufficient for this, I must find an authentic way of dealing with it and should not start ‘playing the boss’.
- What conditions must be in place so that individual staff members can fulfil their assigned roles?

The next principle addresses this very point:

- **“What does the group / team need from me?”**

In order to be able to contribute using one’s own resources, the right conditions must be in place. This is the responsibility of both the individual and the team. However, it is also the responsibility of managers to create the conditions that enable individuals to draw on their own resources to fulfil their roles and tasks.

Here’s a further thought on this: Should the role assignment perhaps be adapted to the employee and their resources, rather than forcing the employee into a specific role?

- **‘The players aren’t stupid’**

An exaggerated maxim that encapsulates several aspects:

Employees notice when leadership fails to practise what it preaches. Even in the creagile open field, a manager should not merely ‘play’ the part of the creagile leader, but should exemplify it through their attitude. This includes dealing openly with one’s own limitations and mistakes, and exemplifying a positive culture of learning from mistakes.

With their individual resources, employees offer potential that may not be captured or tapped into by job descriptions or task specifications. In the creagile open field, such valuable resources can come to the fore – provided they are allowed to do so and are not hindered by a prescriptive assignment of roles.

Although they are the disciplinary superiors, leaders cannot and do not have to know everything better. With their diverse resources, employees represent a potential for participation, enabling them to find solutions that go beyond the manager’s own resources. Otherwise, rigid hierarchies can lead to the solution chosen not being the

best one in terms of content, but rather the one dictated by the hierarchy. For organisations, this poses a risk when leadership is merely played at or claimed.

- **“We [managers] don’t know how to do it. But we know what it’s all about.”**

Open processes are characterised by the fact that the outcome is unknown and the path forward still needs to be explored. Expectations and specifications regarding the ‘outcome’ should be avoided, as should an attitude of already knowing the way forward and the outcome. Open processes cannot be conceived from their end point, as otherwise they will not lead to anything new.

However, a manager should know what is at stake. In open processes, it is important to clarify the situation and the context of the task or challenge. A manager should take care and assume responsibility to ensure that this is accessible to the team and the staff.

IV. Processes and Interfaces

In training sessions and one-to-one discussions, ‘stakeholder management’ was frequently described as a challenge, linked to the perception that departments often have little understanding of the framework conditions in other departments.

A method from theatre work was used here:

- **‘The Hot Seat’**

In theatre work, this method is used to gain a deeper understanding of one’s own character. It can be adapted for the organisational context.

One person presents their department in 2–3 sentences. The others ask concise follow-up questions. The answers should also be as brief and precise as possible.

It is important that the questions are not personal, but relate to the function (= role) within the department being described. The agreed principle of a safe space applies.

Observation in practice: Although the atmosphere is otherwise often fraught with conflict, the participants treat one another with great respect. This trusting exchange leads to objective insights.

A closing session shares the insights: What am I taking away from this? What can I offer?

The method was applied and tested in three different constellations and situations: cross-departmental, within a department, and across hierarchical levels.

Findings: It works best at interfaces between distant departments, but where hierarchical levels are similar. Interview-like situations should be avoided. The focus should be on the flow of all participants.

V. Team Development

One request from the training participants – all of whom were managers – was to pass on the Creative Agility approach and methods to their staff and teams.

It became apparent that the ‘**Narrative Plotboard**’ method can serve as a valuable starting point for addressing various team challenges: the further development of organisational units, the formation or merger of teams, and the transfer of the Creative Agility philosophy to one’s own team, amongst other things.

By ‘plotting’ the situations (e.g. specific challenges arising from staff turnover and generational change within a team), an alternative representation of the department (or team) emerges – one that clearly visualises bottlenecks.

What did we observe?

- The collaborative mapping process fosters a high degree of openness and understanding of everyday situations. The method, combined with the guidance of a creagile trainer, enables a high quality of mutual interaction, beyond what is usually possible in day-to-day work.
- Department heads gain a deeper insight into their staff’s day-to-day work.
- Bottlenecks, although fraught with conflict, are openly identified and objectively analysed. This leads to a strengthening of mutual trust.
- The resulting plot board is retained as a basis for future restructuring and joint strategies to address the challenges.
- Options are developed collaboratively to enable the individual teams to continue their work.
- The insights gained during the creation of the plotboard and its outcome form the basis for subsequent development steps, such as ‘creagile’ one-to-one coaching (‘individual rehearsal’), the ‘hot seat’ or the use of the ‘A-Z method’¹⁹.

The use of **creative strategies** offers a different, valuable approach to ‘creagile’ team development. Using the workshop task ‘Creative Team Dynamics in Product Development / Innovation Development’ as an example, a selection of creative strategies is provided, from which small groups can choose suitable ones and try them out over several development stages.

What did we observe?

- The tasks fostered a sense of flow and a creative working atmosphere.
- The selection of creative strategies is experienced as enjoyable and inspiring. For divisional management, this serves as a good preliminary step towards the subsequent introduction of the trial app, a concrete digital tool for accessing creative strategies.

¹⁹ Associations relating to the topic are written down for each letter of the alphabet in alphabetical order. It is important to allow for a spontaneous flow of ideas without filtering – this helps to reveal any ‘blind spots’. Afterwards, the written-down associations are shared within the group.

VI. Sustainability / Creagile Cultural Change

Creative agility aims to bring about cultural change, both in individual and collective behaviour and in the structural framework. However, change in organisational cultures takes time. Measures have therefore been developed and tested that take sustainability into account.

Introduction and use of the trial app

There is a wealth of strategies in the field of creativity. But which ones are most suitable for which specific problem? To address this, a trial app has been developed that provides a selection of creative strategies. These are filtered through a needs- and bottleneck-oriented pre-selection process and then made available via a random generator. In addition, the trial app includes a selection of warm-ups, 15 'creagile' principles and a number of surprise cards for low-threshold 'creagile' prompts (see section 5.1.).

The app is particularly valuable as a pool of creative strategies for managers. They can search for creative strategies tailored to their needs and then apply them within their teams, e.g. in meetings, innovation and leadership.

'Trainer in Residence' format

During the transfer phase, the trainers spend some time within the company or organisation. Where possible, they have a small office where they are available to staff.

- What effects does this have?
 - It enables low-threshold arrangements for transfer activities, as well as straightforward coaching sessions.
 - The creagile Trainer-in-Residence programme acts as a kind of reminder of the training and its creagile measures.
 - For the trainer team, a residency means a deeper immersion in and understanding of the organisation. They operate within the company much like a temporary employee.
 - The creagile trainer team also has time internally to reflect on the transfer phase and discuss the next steps in the creagile measures.

The Creagile Residency as a Team

During the creagile Trainer Residence, it is beneficial to have more than one trainer on site. The presence of several trainers allows for changing roles within the team. Alongside an executive role, a trainer can always take on an observing and reflective role within the team. This allows the transfer process to be examined from different perspectives. Furthermore, the changing roles also enable a multi-perspective transfer programme and internal trainer reflection.

Multiple perspectives within the team

Despite the description of principles and methods, creative agility is shaped by the personality of the trainer delivering the session. As described previously, *roles* are filled based on the individual's own resources. This also applies to the role of the trainer.

Organisational developers have different resources to visual artists. The latter, in turn, have different resources to theatre directors. In addition to professional backgrounds, personal prior experiences come into play, which can shape the selection, approach and delivery of a training programme. A team of trainers can consciously harness this multi-perspective approach through dynamically designed roles.

The Organisational Map – the comprehensive ‘creagile’ framework

The *Organisational Map* is a multifaceted training and transfer tool that can be used to transparently represent both areas and their settings, as well as various ‘creagile’ measures. It can be applied at different stages of the ‘creagile’ process.

- **Training:** Description of potential areas of action within the organisation based on these domains. Based on the participants’ needs, concrete steps for knowledge transfer can thus be agreed upon
- **Implementation:** During the implementation phase, the next steps can be planned and placed within an overall context. The map enables the progress made so far and the possible next steps to be visualised.
- **Review / Outlook:** A review for participants of the entire ‘creagile’ process across the different areas.

Furthermore, the overview of what has been experienced and learnt can point the way towards independent creagile application. Supportive tools are provided for this purpose:

- The creagile trial app provides not only various creative strategies but also warm-up exercises, creagile principles and creagile surprise cards for participants to use on their own.
- **Creative Compass:** The creagile Compass is based on the *creagile magic formula* with its three fields: Questions – Materials – Doing. For each field, specific steps for self-application are outlined, building on experiences and insights gained from the transfer process. This is combined with the vital confidence that something valuable will emerge from open-ended processes – even if it cannot be defined in advance as an expected goal.



Fig. 9: Organisational map as a retrospective

‘Creagile Monthly Impulses’

Once the transfer phase has concluded and the training team has departed, there is a risk that the Creagile input will fade into the background of day-to-day organisational life. Therefore, for a period agreed in advance with the management and the participants, monthly Creagile prompts (see Chapter 6) are sent to the participants by email. These monthly prompts are specifically tailored to the target group.

In our case study, the following prompts were used:

- participant-specific individual documentation of the transfer phase
- ‘Boredom’: on the impact and significance of aimless time / leisure
- ‘Shit plus X’: on the crucial difference of approaching problems in an exploratory manner
- ‘Time and Creativity’: on the factor of time and the ‘not-the-first-best’ solution
- ‘Creative Agility Compass’: on the four factors of the magic formula for creative, open processes
- ‘Long-term reflection’: where could creative agility be implemented? What has changed as a result?

4.3 The transfer process, using the example of an educational institution in Germany

Training team: Dagmar Frick-Islitzer, Peter Jungmeier, Michael Uhl

4.3.1 The initial situation prior to the transfer

Due to staff absences through illness and the resulting workload for a number of employees, the training could only be carried out with the teaching team. Accordingly, the first week of implementation focused on the needs expressed by the team members during the training:

- Integrating Creative Agility into their own professional practice
- (Structural) development of the teaching team
- Taking the entire educational institution on this journey

The educational institution's offer to provide overnight accommodation on site gave the 'trainer-in-residence' approach a very special touch, as it allowed the training team to experience the institution from a guest's perspective. This provided further insights into the staff's day-to-day work.

4.3.2 Transfer from different perspectives

A. The individual

How can the experiences and tools from the training help me in my work and in my interactions with others? What interests me personally about Creative Agility? Can applying Creative Agility tools help ease my workload?

In one-to-one discussions ('individual sessions'), which began with a reflection on the respective collage, the questions mentioned above were of central importance. During these sessions, participants reflected on the tasks and responsibilities undertaken in individual educational projects, as well as their own role within the team and the interfaces with other areas.

The shift in perspective – "To OTHERS, I am also someone else" – helped participants understand that different working styles and personalities cannot be treated in the same way. Through targeted questions from the trainers, participants were then able to explore their own interests: What would I be curious about? Who would I like to collaborate with to some extent? This gave rise to the concept of 'mini-tandems', which enable participants to open up their own area of work to an interested counterpart. These 'mini-tandems', which walk part of the way together for a limited time, could lead to new projects and new ideas for initiatives.

The reverse approach was also explored: What does the game need from me? For whom can I open doors? Or – to quote from the original conversation with an educational staff member: "What Secret Santa presents shall I place on the edge of the plate?"

In addition, one-to-one discussions were used to explain to the participants how to use the trial app.

The individual trials yielded concrete starting points for further steps towards the 'mini-tandems', towards the educational team and towards the organisation as a whole.

B. The management

Initially, possible starting points for the two transfer weeks were discussed with the management team (Director + Deputy Director), based on the organisational analysis. How can creative agility help us strike a good balance between success, change within the organisation, collaboration with the sponsoring organisation, and the workforce's capacity?

Following a period which, in recent years, has brought about much change but also success ("We're making people jealous!"), there is now a palpable need among many staff members for continuity and clarity in the structures. Shaping this transition "from one state of excellence to another" should be part of the Creative Agility transfer process.

From the management's perspective, there are three key priorities:

- The further development of the educational team into a cohesive unit (despite the high degree of personal responsibility and self-organisation expected of its members),
- the involvement of key parts of the wider organisation in the form of a one-day training session, and
- exploring ways to reduce the management team's workload in order to improve their availability to staff.

C. The teaching team

As part of a team day during the first transfer week, the training team initially worked with the educators present on the following topics:

- The team's self-image,
- the interaction between the individual team members, as well as
- visualisation of tasks and responsibilities ("Who actually does what?")

The 'safe space' and the 'doors of overwhelm' from the training session served as a refresher on the working principles and the challenges identified for the 'I' within the team. To symbolise this, two participants performed the scene they had developed during the training.

In the subsequent group discussion, the participants identified what they considered important for their collaboration. Among other things, the following concerns emerged: the introduction of rituals, punctuality at meetings, space for 'coffee breaks', maintaining professionalism whilst enjoying the work (), presenting a united front to the outside world, an efficient meeting system, and a focus on what unites them and on the positive aspects.

The team of trainers sought to provide a glimpse behind the facades of this team in order to get to the heart of the challenges more effectively.

Drawing up a 'team map' showing the respective areas of responsibility and services helped in this regard. It became clear who was involved in which products, services or areas of activity – thereby illustrating just how diverse the educational work is. Education is delivered to the target groups through five pillars, using a variety of formats. We observed that some team members had hardly any overlap in terms of content, whilst others worked very closely together. And that it is a complex undertaking when so few people have to juggle so many balls...

Working in two small groups, the participants explored the questions that arose in greater depth, using two creative strategies from the trial app:

- What makes a team a team – or not?
 - Strategy used: shifting criteria using visual stimuli

Objective: To view things from a completely new perspective by stimulating visual thinking.

Task: Develop a new perspective on a given challenge through image analysis and visual analogies. Formulate the challenge as a question. Spontaneously select an image from the collection below.

Link the challenge to elements from the image (individual parts, colours, characteristics, moods, associations, etc.) and allow all thoughts on the matter to flow freely, including those that are unusual or seemingly nonsensical.

These ideas are then analysed and possible solutions identified.

- What do we need to know about each other?
 - Strategy used: Problem – Opportunity

Objective: To explore a challenge (problem) in greater depth by shifting perspectives and to grasp it in its entirety.

Task: The group should come up with at least five answers to the following questions:

1. What would someone have to do to end up with the same problem that 'I' am currently facing?
2. How would they therefore need to behave?
3. Which 'skills' actually help to perpetuate this problem? What 'skills' would someone need to possess in order to create the same difficulty?
4. Which values or beliefs support this problem or ensure its continuation?
5. What other personality traits or aspects of identity contribute to this problem?
6. In what context does it arise? What purpose does it serve to perpetuate this difficulty?

Document all proposed solutions.

The group decided to continue working on the following topics in the 'creagile' transfer:

The introduction of 'coffee breaks' and rituals, strengthening the team (externally).

During a further team day, largely traditional training tools and content were used to strengthen the participants' collaboration (developing a personality profile, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team²⁰)

The use of Creagile tools and principles is particularly helpful for trust-building measures and for working together to resolve conflicts in order to reach sound agreements: the safe space, warm-ups, exercises and role-play, the 'workpiece', collage, the 'hot seat', and others.

Following this, the quarterly meeting of the teaching team was discussed and adapted with the group.

Some members of the team took advantage of the presence of the creagile trainer team to reflect on projects. In one session, the trainers acted as a reflecting team, observing the dialogue between two team members, asking questions and providing feedback at the end. On another occasion, a reflective and open coaching conversation was also used with two team members to further develop a ' ' project. In a further online discussion, a staff member and a colleague reflected on their collaborative work on projects, using a collage created by the former as a basis.

Conclusion: Training and transfer lead to a shared language within the team, to an understanding of the 'unprotected self' and, consequently, to the freedom to allow for a change of perspective, to be willing to work with complexity and conflict – and, in the process, to experience the joy of failure from time to time.

D. The entire organisation

A key priority as the transfer process continued was to involve staff from other departments who had been unable to attend the training due to staff shortages.

To this end, the training was condensed into a single day as part of the transfer process (see Chapter 3.3). This now makes it possible to establish a shared 'language' for the entire organisation. At the end of this training session, there was also an opportunity to exchange ideas with the educational team, present the workpieces and celebrate.

The trainer team's continuous presence over the course of two transfer weeks also had an emotional impact on many staff members within the organisation. "It's so good to have you here. Even if we don't need you – just knowing that we could come to you is important to us."

²⁰ See Pat Lencioni: Overcoming the Five Dysfunctions of a Team, 2005

5. Opportunities for self-directed transfer

5.1 App for creative and agile working

During the protracted client acquisition phase, the partners revisited their concept and developed the idea of a digital application in the form of a pilot app. This 'companion app' supports creative agility in everyday working life. It is embedded in a website and remains available to participants after the training. Fortunately, it also served as a door-opener during the client acquisition process.

The app serves as a guide in selecting 'creagile' methods and strategies for specific professional situations where the focus is on generating ideas for making progress in confusing and complex processes where no clear path has been mapped out. In practice, it is often used as a 'creagile' stimulus and as a reminder of the experiences gained during the training.

5.1.1 How is the app structured?

The app is designed to meet users' needs. It therefore comprises three main sections: 'Overcoming mental blocks', 'Tackling a task' and 'Warm-up'. It has the following structure:

5.1.1.1 Home screen

Ereignisbaum Begleit-App für Kreative Agilität
Stand 30.03.2026

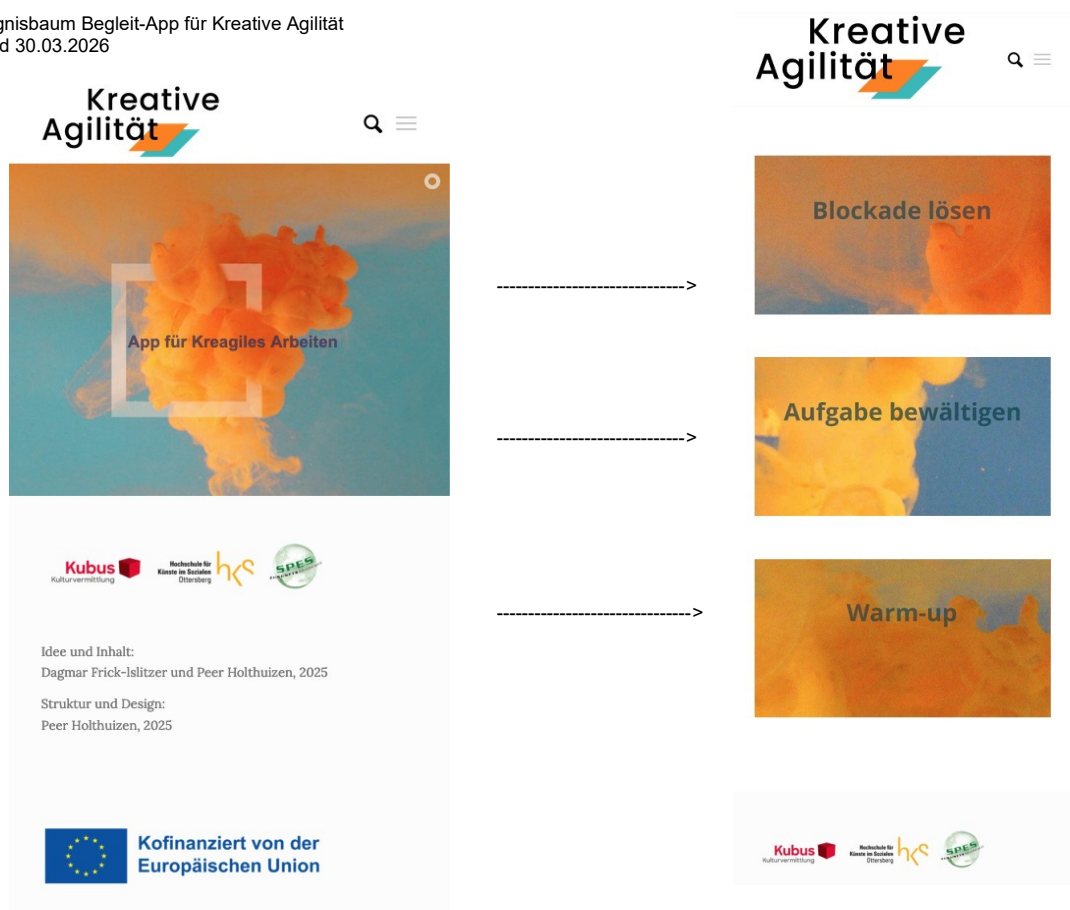


Fig. 10: Home screen of the app for creative working (German language)

5.1.1.2 Overcoming a mental block

This section offers support for the creative process, helping individuals to get into the flow, to question things, topics or situations, and to make progress as a team on a group-dynamic project.

Under 'Overcoming mental blocks', you can select the following areas:

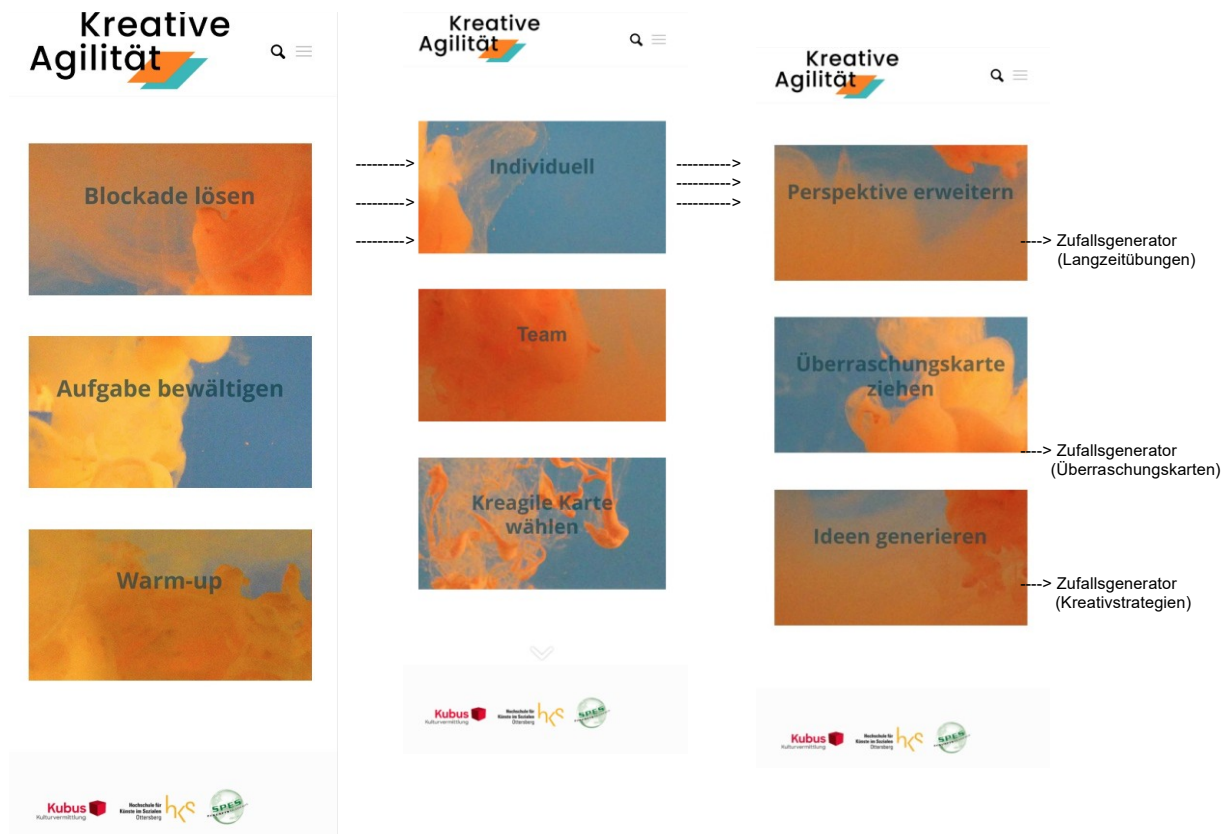


Fig. 11: 'Overcoming mental blocks' decision path (German language)

a) Individual (help to broaden one's own perception)

- Broadening your perspective: Long-term exercises to change your own behaviour.
- Draw a surprise card: food for thought on seeing or doing something differently to break through a limiting status quo
- Generating ideas: creative strategies that you can implement yourself



Fig. 12: Decision path 'Overcoming a block – Team' (German language)

b) Team (help to broaden awareness within the group)

- Joint exploration

Analytical strategies: two different types of exercise for problem-solving in general.

- o Analysis tool: Questioning an assumption in the face of a problem. Methods that encourage us to view a problem differently
- o A meta-level perspective. Understanding the problem.
- o Aims to resolve the impasse by exploring and questioning the problem together in order to see it more clearly.

- Safe space

All exercises help to break the ice and engage with one another, warm up creatively, have fun and strengthen team spirit

c) Choose a Creagile card

- Fundamental artistic strategies that can always be adopted, whether working alone or as part of a team
- These help to overcome mental and practical blocks

5.1.1.3 Tackling a task

This involves solving a specific task in a goal-oriented manner. There are various strategies, methods and approaches for doing so.

For 'Tackling a task', you can choose from the following areas:

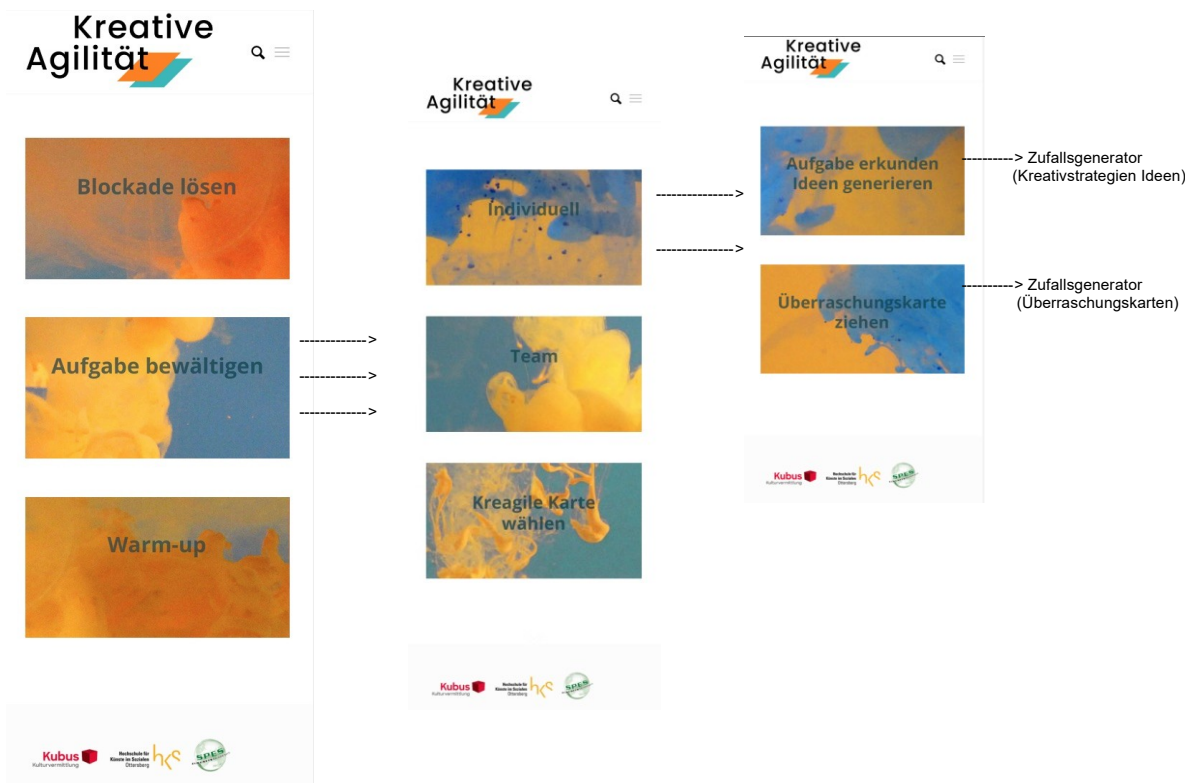


Fig. 13: Decision path 'Tackling a task' (German language)

a) Individually

- Exploring the task / Generating ideas
 - o Strategies you can pursue on your own to solve the task and come up with ideas for it
- Draw a surprise card
 - o Gain inspiration to view a task differently and tackle it in a different way
 - o Intervene in the creative process and help the person think along different lines

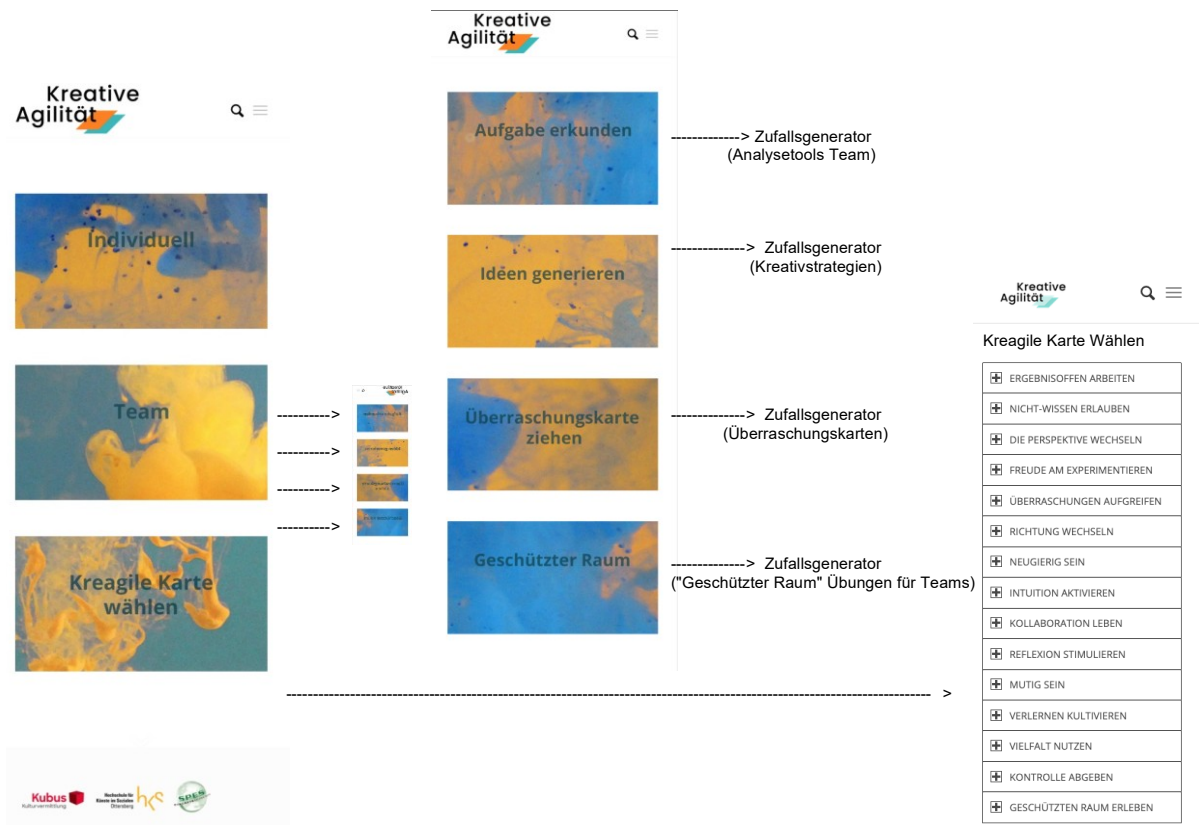


Fig. 14: Decision path 'Tackling the task – Team' (German language)

b) Team

- Explore the task
 - o An analytical tool for tackling a task as a team. 1. Analysis, 2. Generating ideas – to be carried out as a team in two steps
 - o Strategies help to view a task differently and allow the subconscious to play a part
- Generating ideas
 - o Creative strategies that lead to generating lots of ideas (idea generator)
- Draw a surprise card
 - o Stimuli to help the team make progress on a task in a different way
 - o The cards ask questions, give instructions and include exercises and games designed to help you adopt a new perspective so you don't get stuck in the creative process.
- Safe space
 - o Fun, good preparation for creative solutions
 - o Creating an atmosphere within the group where participants interact openly and trust one another

c) Choose a Creagile card

- Fundamental artistic strategies of a general nature
- Tried-and-tested approaches used by creative professionals, applicable in many situations, both individually and in a group

5.1.1.4 Warm-up

- Quick reference guide for team warm-up exercises



Fig. 15: 'Warm-up' decision tree (German language)

5.1.2 Using the app

How are the exercises structured?

Each exercise is described with a title, objective and task.

How is the app used? In what situations?

Instructions that artists use for inspiration when they get stuck in their creative process are helpful in emergencies and when facing creative blocks. We open the app and select 'Surprise Card', and a random message appears: 'Find the lowest common denominator.' And after pressing it again: "Take a break." These are 'creagile' options that a manager can

try out depending on the situation. The app offers 'creagile' approaches to tackling tasks differently, both individually and as a team. Some strategies require 'thinking outside the box'.

The app as a bridge to a playful approach to tasks

A participant uses the app in a playful way, without any specific aim in mind. They are not looking for solutions, but rather to be inspired. Simply reading the text triggers something that can later be applied to a specific situation. The surprise cards are perceived as accessible and therefore applicable in almost any situation.

The app is comparable to a catalogue of exercises, artistic and creative strategies, 'Creagile' cards and artistic prompts in the form of surprise cards, offering a total of over 200 options or so-called 'hits'.

The app helps users to 'try things out' by presenting them with creative impulses, i.e. without the risk of being overwhelmed by possibilities. The app does not take into account the situation, the context, the time required or the group size. Nor does the app account for the frequency of use, which means that different user groups report varying needs.

Experiences and insights

The app was made available to participants on a trial basis as part of the training and/or in a transfer context, with a request for user feedback. Preliminary findings are as follows:

- Users who design workshop settings and pose open-ended questions as part of their work use the app relatively frequently. Those who allow little scope for decision-making hardly use the app at all.
- The surprise cards are selected most frequently. There was also a request to receive monthly or weekly 'creagile' prompts via the app.
- It became apparent that it would be beneficial to integrate user- and needs-specific functions into the app in future.

For the time being, the app has fully served its purpose as a 'creagile' client acquisition, workshop and 'magic formula' strategy.

Feedback on long-term use

- "I think the app is a good tool. I can use it when I need something. When I hit a creative block. I'd like to continue using the app because creative methods are important in my work with my team." (Head of Department in an administrative body)
- "The app gives me inspiration. I find it difficult to choose methods. The random generator helps me because the sheer variety would otherwise overwhelm me. The app has a playful and enjoyable quality to it. That suits me. I took the first or second suggestion and it worked well. Over time, I've gained more insight into the various creative strategies. Without the app, I wouldn't have been so aware of them." (Head of a department in a public administration body)

- For me, the benefit of the app was rather indirect – less through the specific methods and more through the act of reflection itself. I used the app to generate ideas and consciously shift my perspective. I mainly used the surprise cards for this. I also see the element of surprise as the main benefit: we all tend to think along pre-determined, predictable paths and therefore usually arrive at the same conclusion. Breaking free from mental simplifications and shortcuts, daring to take detours and embracing uncertainties and coincidences – that, to me, is creative thinking. The app can help us to push this ‘mental work’ and make it both more enjoyable and more likely to succeed.” (Head of Department in a public administration)

What are the app’s limitations?

The app is not suitable for resolving interpersonal problems.

Which expectations are not met?

The app is not a recipe book with instructions for a guaranteed result. It does not provide the solution but rather shows a way to view the user’s current intention from multiple perspectives.

The aim is for participants and organisations to become the architects of their own ‘creagile’ process. The app supports this process.

How can creativity be fostered in organisations – with or without the app – to gain new perspectives?

In a world that is becoming increasingly dynamic, contradictory and multi-perspective, creativity is one of the most important key resources for dealing with the unforeseen and the uncertainty that comes with it. The good thing about creativity and agility is that they can be learnt. Thinking differently, in new ways or in the opposite way; playing, discovering, experimenting, discarding, recombining, consciously taking detours – artists are masters at navigating open fields.

We, too, can immerse ourselves in creative and agile thinking and action, and familiarise ourselves with artistic approaches by questioning familiar patterns of thought and norms, and by leaving well-trodden paths where nothing new can emerge. By devoting ourselves with enthusiasm and perseverance to what fascinates us. By pursuing topics and projects with passion and tenacity. By enduring uncertainty and being prepared to take greater risks, accepting wrong decisions, crises and failure as part of the creagile process.

The starting point forces artists to carry on in a different way, which is often what leads to something interesting in the first place.

In short: if we manage to allow ourselves to think and act in terms of possibilities, and if we serve as role models for others, inspiring and empowering them, we gain not only new perspectives but also the courage and confidence to shape this world together. All of this, in turn, strengthens our resolve to adopt a creagile mindset as a way of life.

5.2 The Creagile Compass

A key challenge lies in applying the creagile approach (methods, exercises, tools, principles) experienced during the training to one's own day-to-day organisational work. This cannot be done immediately across the board, but only selectively and in specific areas. Which areas, tasks and issues are actually suitable for this?

The Creagile Compass provides participants with a concise guide to applying Creative Agility in their day-to-day work.

It is based on the '*creagile magic formula*' explored and developed during the training:

QUESTIONS + MATERIALS + DOING = 'It'll work out!'

The essential foundation for this is the *Safe Space*. This must be guaranteed, or at least be something that can be created and enforced (rules, agreements, guardians). And the *Safe Space* must not only be safeguarded, but also nurtured.

QUESTIONS

Challenges that point towards the (as yet) unknown – where the way to overcome them is still open and unknown – are well-suited to the Creagile approach. Large, overwhelming challenges should be broken down into smaller ones. Focus on one of these challenges and formulate it as a question that is as specific as possible.

- What is this really about?
- What is the question behind the question?
- Can the question be phrased as specifically as possible?
- Do you already have a 'solution' in mind? Forget it.

Creative strategies available within the app can also help you identify and refine the question.

MATERIAL

Once a specific question has been identified, the focus shifts to the material available. This refers not only to physical materials, but also to the resources at our disposal, including staff and their backgrounds and knowledge, as well as their availability in terms of time and energy.

- What is actually available?
- Who can do what?
- What is there, within reach? And is it reliable?
- What might a helpful and productive team composition look like?

- If you are a manager, how can the availability of resources be safeguarded and ensured?

What matters here is not a 'wish list', but clarity about what is actually available. What matters is focus. Creativity does not require an abundance of options; on the contrary, limiting the materials available makes it easier to focus and can open up new creative possibilities.

DOING

Once a question has been identified and there is clarity about the resources available, doing is fundamental – it's about getting started. This does not require a fully worked-out plan, but rather a willingness to begin taking action. Doing is giving shape, thinking whilst acting and acting whilst thinking.

- What happens when the path ahead is determined by the act of doing?
- Do you experience intuition whilst doing?
- The act of doing must also be protected: for example, through suitable spatial conditions and clear agreements: Who does what? And when?
- When taking action, draw on your training experiences as you see fit (workpiece, collage).
- You can find Creagile principles that can enrich your work, for example, in the Creagile cards (see app).
- Keep your eyes open for what happens whilst you're creating: it will enrich your initial question.
- A few suggestions for your work:
 - What helps you? What holds you back?
 - What gives you energy? What energy drains do you experience?
 - Are there any Creagile oases within the organisation? Can you create them whilst you're working?
 - Are you still working in a safe space? Make sure you are, and help one another. Could this be, or become, a 'creagile' oasis?
 - If you're in a leadership role, keep an eye out for supportive (framework) conditions for the team. Enable them, protect them.

Taking action leads to shaping something. Something that can be shared with others (e.g. with the team, your line manager).

“IT’LL WORK OUT!” and the little *firsts*:

Let yourselves be carried by the fundamental trust and confidence that DOING will result in something that takes you further – even if you don’t yet know what that will be.

But when is something ‘finished’? In theatre, it’s an agreed time, a deadline – the *premiere*. And we’re all familiar with that *trap of being overwhelmed* called ‘limited time’. Define a milestone for yourselves. A stage that can be shared with others – within the team, with your line manager, with your colleagues.

Beware of perfectionism; this is about creating something new. Should you be able to incorporate something into established processes, you can always work on perfecting it later.

When working together openly, shared check-in points are important. Taking a shared look at what you’ve achieved. Be proud of the journey you’ve taken and reward yourselves for it. And dare to take an open, unbiased look at what you’ve achieved.

- How does this change the question?
- Was that the original question?
- Or has something else emerged?
- What question follows from this?
- What reliable resources are available to you?
- Who does what?

And the game continues ...

Once again, in a nutshell:

QUESTIONS + MATERIALS + ACTION = “It’ll be fine”

Questions: “Engaging with the world through questions”. Even without having to provide answers. This is not just something to put up with, but something to celebrate wholeheartedly. Because the focus is on a shared, meaningful engagement.

Materials: “Forms of the world”, e.g. I, I within WE (team), WE (team/company). And, of course, the time and material resources available.

Doing: “Exploring, trying things out, shaping and giving form”. And above all, getting started – taking those first concrete steps.

It’ll work out: the fundamental trust that what emerges will take us further, even if we don’t yet know what that will be.

5.3 The appointment of a 'director' within the organisation

To keep creative agility alive within the organisation, it needs to be experienced time and again, incorporated into the cells, neural pathways and the 'brain' of the organisation. We need someone who consistently provides creagile input, someone who is there to facilitate such processes.

Ideally – or perhaps even more realistically – this person would not be in a managerial role. What if organisations had a person in the role of a 'director' for this purpose? In other words, someone who drives the process forward and shapes it in a dynamic, creative and agile way. Someone who ensures that the safe space is maintained and that creagile principles are applied.

We draw inspiration for these considerations from the role of the director in theatre processes. In theatre, the director's task is to work with the artistic team and the ensemble of actors involved to create an exciting evening's performance. This is done on the basis of a concept developed in advance. During the collaborative rehearsal process, the group experiments with (rather than simply practising!) what is exciting, interesting and relevant. To do this, the director does not need to know the 'right' way forward in advance or dictate it. Instead, they must help to clarify the underlying situation. The creative process is guided through observation, description and questioning.

What would it mean to introduce such a role within a company or organisation?²¹

²¹ See Chapter 4.2.2, section 'Facilitation prompts for 'creagile' leadership'

6. The transformed ‘creagile’ organisation

At the end of our project, the question remains as to what extent training, knowledge transfer and the provision of ‘self-learning tools’ have actually brought about a sustainable transformation of the (teams within the) pilot organisations.

Shortly after the pilot processes were completed, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive answer to this question. The project team endeavoured to continue providing ‘creagile’ inspiration even after the transfer measures had been completed. These monthly inspirations are described in this chapter, as are some insights into the effects of Creative Agility, which were also documented weeks and months after the respective transfer phases had ended.

6.1 The ‘creagile’ monthly updates

The idea of the ‘creagile’ monthly prompts arose specifically at the request of those involved in the Liechtenstein pilot organisation. These contributions, which were not originally planned, were designed to ‘keep the spirit of creative agility alive’ within the organisation; they took the form of short prompts sent by email each month, intended to inspire readers to take immediate action. In this way, the trainers were able to provide a ‘daily surprise’ once a month and re-establish Creative Agility amongst the participants.

Below you will find a selection of these prompts.

6.1.1 ‘Try out different places to work’

Many artists choose their workspace depending on the task at hand. To do this, they occasionally leave their studio. “When I start a new piece, I stand outside the door and see something that I take back into the studio with me. I make notes and doodles that I then develop further in the studio,” explains Berlin-based painter Bettina Wächter in conversation with Dagmar. Inspiration cannot be forced, but when she is outside, the artist’s senses are alert and receptive. In this way, she trains her attention and perception.

- Exploring unusual places to learn and work

As part of the ‘Künstlerbrille®’ programme, students leave their classroom during the summer term to listen in on a conversation between an artist and an entrepreneur – on a lawn on campus, beneath shady trees. The conversation could just as easily have taken place indoors, but the pleasant atmosphere in the open air helps to create a memorable experience. An in-depth one-to-one exchange whilst on the move – during a walk – has a different quality to sitting in chairs all day. Creative ideas have been shown to flourish best whilst on the move and in nature, as confirmed by brain researcher Prof. Dr Dr Manfred Spitzer.

- Breaking down mental barriers

Why always work out a concept at your desk, or hold a client meeting in a conference room? There's another way. A sunny day in July. Dagmar and her workshop partner are developing a concept for a future-focused workshop on the terrace of Dagmar's studio, sheltered under the awning. We stick our ideas for the approach onto the outside of the large studio windows. Her partner remarks: "We've been working for four hours now, but it doesn't feel like work to me."

- Trying out outdoor spaces

Which locations outside the workplace are suitable for you? You'll have to find that out for yourself. The outdoor location should have a pleasant, inspiring effect on you and support your topic. It's best to visit it beforehand and spend some time there. Outdoor spaces are more prone to disturbances than indoor ones. Be mindful of distractions such as the noise of passing cars and pedestrians, as well as the weather conditions. You won't stay long in a place that's too hot or too cold, or where there's a draught. And if outdoor spaces are too cosy, there's a risk of your mind wandering.

Changes in surroundings prompt the brain to rethink things. Thinking differently therefore enables you to act differently too. Consequently, different environments can be beneficial when tackling both routine and new, unstructured tasks. Behavioural patterns shaped by experience and habit are broken down, opening the way for new perspectives and ways of thinking. Places that fall outside the norm offer sensory experiences in new contexts and remain vivid and lasting in the memory.

- Creagile's recommendation
 - Go for a relaxed jog or walk through the woods in search of a good idea.
 - Once a month, work on conceptual or creative tasks in a different location to your usual one.
 - Be aware of the room or rooms where you normally hold your meetings. Decide to hold your next one-to-one meeting in a different location. Or whilst walking. Preferably outdoors.

6.1.2 'Shit plus X'

Ronja von Wurmb-Seibel has a simple formula for seeing the world in a new light: 'Shit plus X'.

We're all familiar with the 'crap'. Every day, new problems come crashing down on us: being late because of a traffic jam; squeezing an ultra-urgent appointment into an already packed diary; a colleague and/or child being ill; a blocked drain at home and the plumber not coming until Monday – if at all; a flat mobile battery and an empty fridge, and so on.

The X is the game-changer. It stands for everything we can use to tackle problems. We're not stuck in the pessimists' corner, where nothing happens anymore because everyone just moans and does nothing. Nor are we optimists who naively see everything through rose-tinted glasses and therefore wait for problems to sort themselves out. No, with the X, we belong to the 'possibilists'. These are people who see every challenge as an opportunity and a chance to try out solutions. Trial and error, a testing ground rather than

knowing exactly how to do it – do you remember that bit in the training? We train our eyes to see what's possible. Instead of just staring at what's going wrong, we develop a 'creagile' mindset that automatically searches for the X.

You can have the 'X' fed to you via the creagile app. Choose a creagile principle or a surprise card and shift your mindset – both in relation to your problem. Does it work? If not, find a colleague – perhaps the one in the next cubicle – who's willing to listen for just five minutes, and notice how your mind realigns itself in a creagile way.

Using the creagile app can change the way we think – namely, how we speak, how we lead, how we work together, how we tackle and solve problems, how we make decisions, and how we navigate life.

Today's task could be: choose a problem and identify three X-factors for it. Notice how your mindset shifts – from frustration to a desire for X.

We hope you enjoy exploring the creagile X.

6.1.3 'Long boredom during the days between Christmas and New Year'

The philosopher Wilhelm Schmid defines *leisure as 'work'*, one of a total of seven types of work. He writes: 'The term "work" is important; otherwise, nobody takes it seriously. Leisure is, as a complement to the active life (*vita activa*), the contemplative way of life (*vita contemplativa*), in which **reflection, thinking differently, re-thinking and re-imagining can unfold – not goal-oriented**, not useful in the immediate sense, and precisely for this reason an inexhaustible resource of creativity.'

Leisure means having time on one's hands. It is a feeling we are all familiar with and which is therefore second nature to us: wherever there are waiting times – in the lift, in a traffic jam, at the bus stop – time seems to stretch out and our thoughts wander, if we allow them to and do not distract ourselves with our smartphones or small talk. Boredom invites us to pause and reflect. It sharpens our perception and sparks our creativity. It's no coincidence that there's a saying that rings true: boredom is the mother of creativity.

Give it a go: over the days between Christmas and New Year, curl up in your favourite spot and let your thoughts wander! Without any purpose, without any intention, and without a guilty conscience! Take a moment to reflect on the words of the German philosopher Walter Benjamin (1892–1940): 'Boredom is a warm grey cloth, lined on the inside with the most radiant, colourful silk. We wrap ourselves in this cloth when we dream.'

We wish you a happy festive season and a creative 2026 in all its many forms – both professionally and personally.

6.1.4 ‘Those who are wrong are right!’

To kick off the week, here’s our ‘creagile’ September inspiration:

Paul Arden (1940–2008), former Creative Director at Saatchi & Saatchi / UK, recommends: “Start making mistakes. Then suddenly everything becomes possible. Stop trying to be infallible. You may not know what lies ahead, but the chances of it being exciting are very high. Of course, it’s risky to make mistakes. Nobody likes to suggest something silly for fear of what others might think.

You’ve surely been in meetings that would have required a new way of thinking – prompted by your original suggestion. Instead of saying, ‘That’s a suggestion that leads us to a new solution’, the room falls silent. Eyes turn to the ceiling, and the discussion carries on as before. You can gauge people by the risks they take. Those who don’t want to take any risks want to preserve what they have. Those who do take a risk often end up with more than they had before.” So says Paul Arden.

Creative questions and the freedom to make mistakes:

- Are you someone who clings to the status quo, or do you like to try new things?
- Do you dare – just like artists – to deliberately step into uncertainty? Into situations where you encounter the unknown and are most likely to make mistakes?
- Observe yourself and the people you’re talking to the next time you put forward an innovative view in a suitable situation. Pay attention to non-verbal cues and have the courage to name what’s happening right now. This might just give you the chance for an open conversation.

6.2 Training and transfer: observed effects

A few months after the end of the transfer process, we once again gathered perceptions and opinions on various issues to find out what effects from the training and transfer had ultimately remained within the organisations.

Below is a brief summary of the topics covered in the survey.

6.2.1 Embedding Creative Agility in your work / in your department?

The exercises and role-plays from the training and the various workshops during the transfer phase were helpful in building trust across different teams and seeing colleagues in a new light. Continuing this to the same extent in day-to-day work proved difficult for many, as other issues quickly took centre stage.

Weeks or months after the end of the process, embedding it in the sense of a cultural change does not seem to have materialised. However, participants do report that they access the app or exercises when they feel they need some inspiration. They now regard their way of working as more ‘creative’.

Creative agility could realise even greater potential if it were practised regularly.

6.2.2 Changes brought about by the ‘creagile experience’?

The majority of participants report that they have grown closer as a team or with their team – an effect that apparently occurs immediately after the training. Trust is built as people, colleagues, get to know one another in a completely new, unguarded way during training and the transfer phase. Humour and ‘creagile language’ also foster a sense of togetherness and provide opportunities for laughter.

At an individual level, we found that some participants were applying ‘creagile’ methods in various situations with greater courage and confidence. One participant reported that, by developing their self-image through the collage, they now perceive situations more clearly and scrutinise their own behaviour more closely.

6.2.3 What is the value of the ‘creagile’ monthly prompts in retrospect?

There is clearly a risk that the ‘creagile’ monthly prompts get lost in the flood of emails (just like so many others).

Nevertheless, when they were read, the participants perceived them as a varied and colourful splash, a splash of colour in the daily routine that had accompanied them.

6.2.4 What are the practical benefits of the app for everyday working life?

The app is mostly described as a helpful, enjoyable tool that can be quickly consulted. It is particularly popular for preparing meetings and workshops, as it provides inspiration and an initial, often important spark.

Other participants say that, for a while, they used the app to pick out something like a ‘motto of the week’, which was then sometimes circulated within the team.

The app is probably more accessible to people with a background in education and teaching than to those in administration or other professional groups.

6.2.5 Can creative agility continue to flourish within the organisation?

For creative agility to continue to flourish, we need role models who repeatedly draw on and bring back shared experiences. Whether it’s a brief ‘James Bond’ reference from the game ‘Flash’ or a ‘Why not give the app a go?’. We need to succeed in creating specific spaces within the organisation where the ‘creagile’ way of working can continue to be applied in practice.

The way meetings are structured is also an opportunity to practise ‘creagile’ approaches time and again and to bring humour into the mix. Generally speaking, feedback indicated that there is more laughter in team meetings than before. A wonderful outcome.

Creative agility has helped to foster a climate of trust within the teams and made it easier to address the issue of ‘feeling overwhelmed’.

'The whole creative agility process has led me to open up more. It was a sign of trust. The safe space probably played a part in that. You can feel it. Thanks to creative agility, we've found a common language and a shared understanding. Because creative agility forces you to open up and reveal yourself. That's a key factor. It creates a common ground. I've never experienced anything like this on such a scale before.'

6.3 A good story to finish with

Do you remember the story of the manager in the packaging industry²² ? The department head who felt almost crushed by the increasing administrative workload?

Let's see how that conversation, that situation, developed further.

"I (note: Dagmar Frick-Islitzer) listened attentively and suddenly blurted out: 'What would an artist do in this situation?' 'What – how? An artist?' 'Yes, imagine an artist who is just as creative and keen to experiment as you are, who finds himself faced with this administrative overload: how would he act? He might ask the relevant product manager to explain what the new product can do and how it's used. He'd then jot down a few rough ideas to make sure he's understood it correctly. He'd dig out a few samples from the competition to illustrate what has become the established standard – for example, that everyone uses it from the top down. However, top-down application would be more ergonomic and therefore more user-friendly. He would immediately sketch out the benefits on paper or on the whiteboard. Furthermore, the amount dispensed could be controlled via a metering dispenser rather than a spindle. Wouldn't that be a way to set ourselves apart from the competition? Let's think this through further..."

"Yes," said my colleague, "that sounds like creative ease. Somehow delightful."

He found this new perspective enlightening and assured me that he wanted to try it out at the next opportunity.

That opportunity wasn't long in coming. It involved developing new primary packaging in collaboration with a Japanese supplier. Both partners had already gathered and exchanged ideas beforehand. They then settled on one idea, and each tried to devise a design based on it. But both designs – my colleague's and the Japanese team's – were flawed. The product had to work in mass production: on the Japanese production line and during the filling process at my colleague's site. So he flew to Japan to find a solution through round-table discussions. There he met the project manager and two of his staff, all of whom were engineers. It had already been clear that the two managers spoke some English, but the two staff members could only speak Japanese. That was difficult. , how can you discuss complicated designs if you don't share a common language? That's when my colleague remembered our conversation. He went over to the whiteboard and began sketching out the latest version of the design. Wherever he spotted problems, he marked them with arrows. The Japanese watched intently, then began to discuss the matter amongst themselves, in hushed voices, in Japanese. Then there was silence again. You could see them thinking. The Japanese project manager wiped away an arrow

²² See p. 11

and altered the drawing at that point. My colleague looked on, thought for a moment, picked up the model he'd brought with him, turned it round, and alternated his gaze between the drawing and the model. He took his time. Without any pressure, his thoughts oscillated between the drawing, the model and the feasibility of mass production. Then he crossed out part of the Japanese team's suggested improvement and replaced it with a new one. Then the ball was back in the Japanese team's court.

Bit by bit, they worked through all the outstanding issues in this way. They thought things through together, they contributed their ideas, and both engaged in this interplay of deliberation, weighing up options, sketching, checking, modifying and discarding. The whole process took a good two hours. Full of concentration and attention. No one disturbed them, no one interrupted. The atmosphere was pleasantly tense. And at the same time, it was like a meditation – a lot of silence, with the Japanese team speaking softly at times. At some point, during the final correction, the Japanese man's face lit up. His eyes sparkled. He drew a tick, underlined it and put the pen down. With that, everything was clear.

It was a new experience for my colleague to arrive so quickly, with few or no words, at a joint solution that everyone could get behind. They had reached a broad consensus – both professionally and on a personal level. The joint refinement of the design met the requirements of both companies, in terms of both production and bottling.

What creative and agile approaches come into play here? My colleague dared to try something new for a change. The outcome was open-ended, the path to it uncertain. He already suspected that the meeting with the Japanese would be anything but easy. When verbal language barriers arise, as in this case, we can always fall back on the universal language: the language of images. Pictures speak louder than a thousand words. Thinking through a single drawing together led to success.”

Or, to put it simply: he tried out the creagile 'magic formula':

QUESTIONS + MATERIALS + DOING = IT'LL WORK OUT!

Wishing you all a joyful and creative experience,

Dagmar Frick-Islitzer, Peer Holthuizen, Peter Jungmeier and Michael Uhl

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