

Body percussion and team building through the BAPNE method

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Abstract. BAPNE Method is a method based on cognitive stimulation integrating music and movement through body percussion. The aim of this research is to explore its whole potential as a tool to build teams. Team building is a philosophy for work design, and since over two decades ago, it defends that obtaining a high performance and organizing efficiency is more useful to perceive employees as interdependent members in a team of work than individuals ones. From this viewpoint, this research advocates that BAPNE Method's body percussion practice will have an impact on this vision of team work directly. For its own characteristics, body percussion stimulates ways of contact in movement, which ease social ties and, especially, promote group cohesion. Through social, body and, affective dimension; BAPNE Method is capable of developing a shared vision and a single aim, to stimulate team work identity and an atmosphere of trust; and finally, to improve individual communication and satisfaction levels in group tasks.

Keywords: BAPNE; team building; cohesion; communication; motivation.

1 Introduction

Team Building is a methodology based on learning through direct experience. Experience learning offers an opportunity to create spaces to obtain significant learning from exploration and experimentation (learning by doing). In the case of Team Building, such learning is based on effective team work training in a creative and constructive atmosphere, [5]. Developing teams consist of factors as leading, compromise, criticism, and creativity. A team is more a collection of individuals than an emotional entity, rooted in its members' feelings and thoughts. Team Building is set on the basis that teams learn collective skills, affecting their performance and management as a whole, [4]. Its action develops these skills by identifying the retention and team could have to precisely work on them in order to

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improve its effectiveness. Basically, the main characteristics in an efficient and successful team include team identity, collaborative and synergic team work individual and mutual responsibility, trust at all levels and a united group atmosphere.

BAPNE Method is a method based on cognitive stimulation which objective is to develop multiple intelligences throughout body percussion. This methodology is arranged to integrate different disciplines: Biomechanics, Anatomy, Psychology, Neuroscience, and Ethnomusicology and its main purpose is to develop the most significant strengths of all the previous intelligences proposed by, [8]. Body percussion, according to BAPNE Method, through rhythm and the use of our own body as an instrument, intends to integrate music and movement in a new scenario that links emotions to social relationships. Due to the methodology procedures, work dynamics is highly interactive; no matter it is a circle, concentric circles, semi-circles, a quartet, a sextet, in pairs or in queues, [13]. Starting with the axis of rhythm, multiplicity of interaction and the necessary physical contact to do its exercises, BAPNE Method's body percussion becomes a fundamental resource for team work in order to increase group cohesion and provide its members a sense of group identity and belonging.

With this research, our purpose is to connect BAPNE Method to Team Building to make it a managing tool, a dynamic measure and team building one. From this viewpoint, we consider that BAPNE creates environments and opportunities where participants can learn in a vivid way to work efficiently in teams, with the objective of transferring the learnt values, competences and attitudes to work atmospheres. One of the most valuable strengths of BAPNE Method is the capacity of generating body and emotional states which provoke significant behavioral changes. One of the most relevant factors consists on its role while easing social ties, [14]. Our starting hypothesis is that BAPNE Method's body percussion improves group effectiveness, empowering trust relationships, stimulating communication levels and creating a united group atmosphere by transferring those learning processes to the workplace.

2 Method

The method applied to this research has been a theoretical revision of previous literature made on Team Building and body percussion so as to release a proposal about the layouts to be followed. This revision consists on a deep bibliographical searching. Before going further in the contributions of BAPNE Method to this field, we consider crucial to point out the aspects of Team Building in order to provide a complete sense of its action and content framing.

2.1 Team Building

Interest about Team Building (TB from now on) replies to the quick social and technological changes that our society is experiencing. Such changes have affected the manner in which organizations manage themselves nowadays. In this context, TB has helped to improve the organizations' adaptation ability to these changes, providing a new managing approach based on interrelationships, due to the fact that there are several problems to be solved at present and it is impossible for a single person to effectively look after them.

The essential purpose of TB is to provide a means for a group's members to examine their own behavior and allow them to carry out active courses to improve effectiveness. Despite there is no agreement about the true definition of TB, following a model of problem-solving action, conceptualizes as it follows:

“A planned series of meetings facilitated by a third party consultant, with a group of people having common organizational relationships and goals that is designed specifically to improve the team’s task accomplishment by developing problem solving procedures and skills and then solving the team’s major problems ” ,[2].

Liebowitz and De Meuse [12], meanwhile, define TB as an intervention of work teams to show them how to learn through experience, by examining their structure, aims, rules, values and interpersonal dynamics, as well as to develop their skills for an effective team work. This definition highlights the ability of groups to be more efficient while identifying, diagnosing and solving their own problems, supervised by a specialized consultant in Behavioral Science. The hypotheses of TB come mainly from the Humanistic philosophy of McGregor, Likert, Argyris, Maslow, Bennis and Schein. French and Bell [6] classify them into three categories:

1. Individuals: Most people show their need of personal growth and development, therefore, they need an appropriate workplace and an atmosphere that mean challenges. In this context, individuals wish to do and being allowed to contribute while achieving the organization’s objectives.

2. Group members: The work team is a relevant reference from the psychological point of view and it implies that people wishes to be accepted and interact with it. In order to optimize group effectiveness, its members must help the leader. Repressed feelings and unsolved conflicts affect negatively when there is a need to solve problems, to grow personally and to obtain satisfaction from hard work. The solution to most organizations’ attitude and motivational problems involves interpersonal dynamics.

3. As members of the organization: Inside organizations, there are different groups which are linked and structured at hierarchical levels. Win-Lose strategies among employees or groups are not appropriate for certain conflicts. High performance improvement comes from effort and the organization development, this is to say, the whole of the human resources.

At a methodological level, TB uses what behavioral scientists call a paradigm of investigation for action, which is applied by following a three-stage procedure [10]: Unfreezing, Changing and Refreezing. Their key aspects consist of data collection, problem diagnosis, team feedback provision, data discussion opening work teams, establishing an action plan, and finally, the action properly speaking, [12]. Changing occurs at all of the organization’s levels: the individuals, the team leader or supervisor, the group (agreed values, beliefs, aims, aspirations...), and the whole organization (ideas, philosophy...). Though there are several TB models, there is a common process in most of the programs described in literature,[1,3,9 and 11]. The steps of the process, framed in the research model of Frohman, Sashkin and Kavanagh, [7], are the following ones:

- Scouting: meeting between the specialist and the group/organization.
- Entry: agreement and hiring of the negotiated work. It is important that it has the administration backup.
- Data collection: interviews, technique observation, surveys (before and after).
- Data feedback: moment known as *survey* feedback, which is considered the key stage of the “unfreezing” of the current attitudes, values, rules, and behavior of the group members. If they are aware of what is going on and how it affects their attitude, they will be open to change.
- Diagnosis: Techniques and exercises are proposed to help discussion, problem analysis and agenda development.
- Action planning: Development of solutions with techniques and exercises.
- Action Implementation: Solutions are used at the workplace. It is a stage of change of the old ways, which are replaced with the new ones to increase team effectiveness.

- Evaluation: Assessment of sessions. Change extension and the refreezing of the team's behavior are evaluated.

TB can be used to strengthen the existing teams, create new ones, rebuild them or reorganize them to improve interfaces among teams. Moreover, TB can be also applied to different types of groups, from supervised employees to top groups of administration spheres, being able to adjust varied techniques according to each group ,[6].

2.2 Contributions of BAPNE Method

One of the peculiarities of BAPNE Method is the huge quantity of social interaction it generates. These types of interactions are vividly experienced as ways to contact somebody else. Most of these contacts are physical, tapping a strange body or only as a visual contact, as part of a coordinated movement. Eye contact, listening, touching... in a synchronized way with the rest of the group, these are some ways to contact proposed by this method. Such ways of contact in movement have an important role to ease social ties. In fact, BAPNE Method's body percussion is performed in groups, establishing basic learning positions of social and communitarian characteristics. These include work in circles, concentric circles, semicircles, quartets, sextets, octets, pairs, two queues with lateral movement and two queues with faced movements, [15].

Working in a circle is a manner to stimulate inclusive work and promote the development of communication skills. Working in two concentric circles eases social interactions where there are no ranges and where everybody relates to each other. Singing and chorusing in unison a melody, produces pleasant sound perception and stimulates the oxytocin secretion, a hormone related to the formation of trust and generosity relationships. This type of group dynamics promotes backup and personal consolidation within social relationships, its participants' active participation and the development of a solid link to the group. At the same time, body percussion is a means of expression where body talks, where we express, and where self-recognition and social recognition happens. For these reasons, BAPNE Method promotes a type of learning that is shown with different patterns al linking levels, what includes physical contact, equality, mutual trust, belonging feeling, and group identity.

To sum up, BAPNE Method, following the reference framework proposed by [5] about effective groups, brings the following matters:

1. Appropriate leadership: BAPNE Method stimulates agreed decision styles in the leader's figure. Team management is considered a shared task, so other team members can play that role whenever they possess relevant abilities for the team's needs. Working with the leader is considered by BAPNE as a fundamental axis because in a Team Building process, the leader is the most vulnerable person to critique. Through music and movement, and with a specific action plan, BAPNE Method works to let the leader acquire the competence of sharing responsibilities so he or she can also integrate all the human resources and available skills of the group.

2. Commitment to the team: In an experiential manner, BAPNE Method proposes ways of team work which develop team compromise, its aims and purposes. Through mutual backup, common values, conviction on a vision, success feeling, and a structured pattern of socialization, BAPNE Method proposes social communitarian ways of learning which build and strengthen team compromise, so their members feel that they represent and belong with the team.

3. Constructive atmosphere: The working atmosphere proposed by BAPNE Method encourages people to feel relaxed, predisposed to be straight and ready to take risks. Its

work dynamics develops five qualities: Self-trust, opening, authenticity, closeness, and high energy.

4. *Desire to achieve*: BAPNE Method helps to clarify affordable and inspiring aims. Through its dynamics, it stimulates success motivation and boosts reflection about high performance to find ways of improving.

5. *Effective work methods*: BAPNE Method provides the necessary scenario and situations to develop effective, systematic, and active ways of solution by promoting active listening and efficient meetings.

6. *Constructive criticism*: The important matter of BAPNE Method is not that the exercise is well performed in musical terms but the communitarian and emotional dimension in which these exercises work implicitly. Individual and group errors are not examined as a personal attack but as a way to learn from experience. Through music and movement, the members of a group can learn to talk honestly about their own and somebody else's errors, in order to be able to dialogue constructively about efficiency improvement.

7. *Individual development*: BAPNE Method eases personal development of the members of a group inside a learning positive atmosphere. This permits developing interpersonal skills and eases growth of emotional management in aspects such empathic understanding, authenticity, trust, acceptance and esteem. To do so, compromise, generosity, opening, challenge, constructive confrontation, and functional shift are necessary. BAPNE Method stimulates the latent power of the members of a team and empowers their professional competences redirecting them towards new challenges.

8. *Creative strength*: The fact of stimulating interaction between the members of a group promotes new ideas rising. BAPNE Method generates a creative culture by supporting diversity, the appearance of new ideas, risks taking, and creativity reward.

9. *Positive intergroup relations*: When two teams have to work together, BAPNE Method stimulates collaboration between them, helping to identify opportunities and share priorities. From Bapne, we work to develop intergroup positive relationships encouraging members of a group to work with others. This implies the identification of common aims, the creation of an atmosphere of trust, and a system of interaction between them. Each team is part of the system and organizations are systems. Organizational success requires a balanced system of interdependent teams.

Thus, BAPNE Method's body percussion proposes environments and opportunities where participants can learn through music and movement to work efficiently in a group. Such learning starts from the premise that when a vivid learning is assumed, such leaning will remain in the participants' mind. After the Action stage, we consider there must be a Reflection stage, and a later Conceptualization (Kolb's learning model). Reflection about what happened where the procedure is analyzed and discussed. This stage can help participants to be aware of key realities that affect their result as a group. Finally, Conceptualization explains the conceptual framework and the empirical investigations that refer what happened along the activity in order to move it to the organization environment. In this process a consultant or a Behavioral Science expert is necessary to transfer learning with concrete actions to the organizations' reality and this is a way to consolidate the developed skills.

3 Conclusions

This research defends that the practice of BAPNE's Method body percussion affects directly this vision of team work. Due to its characteristics, body percussion stimulates ways of contact in movement that ease social ties and especially promote group cohesion. Through a social, corporal, and affective dimension, BAPNE Method develops a shared

vision and a common aim, stimulates team identity and an atmosphere of trust; and finally, it improves communication and satisfaction levels of group tasks. Therefore, to support the above explained, we consider necessary further investigation of the theoretical and practical bases of body percussion to the Team Building spheres, regarding the development of strengths and exploring all their possible applications. It is indispensable to provide a sufficiently solid theoretical corpus that could be recognized in scientific circles as well as in information and educational ones. Furthermore, it is fundamental to develop research strategies that permit the most efficient sequencing of specific exercises for each reality and organizational situation, in advance, divided into four categories:

- Strengthen the existing teams.
- Create new teams.
- Remake teams after reorganizing them by fusion or restructuring of groups, client list globalization...
- Improve "interfaces" among several teams.

We consider that this methodology is efficient because it is oriented to the development of group-centered and individual competences, highlighting directly the attitudes and values of their participants. One of the research layouts to be made up should be its fitting as a managing formation program, framed in an Outdoor Training, where, through music and movement, BAPNE Method be a team managing skill learning resource.

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