Lose yourself to dance, know yourself better

March 7 2014

Could managers gain a new kind of understanding about their interaction with colleagues and employees by 'dancing'? That's the question arising from new research published this month in the International *Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion.*

Management is usually considered a stiff and rational business, decisions made based on fiscal studies, profit margins and market forces. However, Anneli Hujala, Sanna Laulainen and Kaija Kokkonen of Department of Health and Social Management, University of Eastern Finland, in Kuopio, have studied whether creative movement ('dance') might improve a manager's awareness concerning their management interaction.

The team encouraged volunteers to "dance their feelings" and videotaped them so that hidden insights and emotions might be extracted. They suggest that creative movement harnessing the whole body may give rise to new knowledge about management interactions. Most intriguingly, they suggest that a person's dance moves might reveal unconscious and unnoticed thoughts about their life and their position in the workplace and so highlight the aesthetic and embodied dimensions of management. The researchers point out that being good at dancing is irrelevant to their research: it is simply about creative expression through music - losing oneself to dance, as it were, to borrow from a recent pop song.

They concede that they received a great deal of doubtful feedback on how applicable the method would be in 'real life' and how many 'real' managers would dare to surrender themselves to creative movement

when the purpose is to research something pertaining to their professionalism. However, their volunteers, although known through personal connections to the team, were all too willing to take part in this kind of experimental study, in which 'dance' was used as a method, instead of a conventional research interview.

It remains to be seen whether this novel and evocative embodied research approach is more widely adopted. However, it would be interesting for any of us to test what our body, through creative movement, could tell us about how we interact with each other.

More information: "Manager's dance: reflecting management interaction through creative movement" in *Int. J. of Work Organisation and Emotion*, 2014, 6, 40-57

Provided by Inderscience

Citation: Lose yourself to dance, know yourself better (2014, March 7) retrieved 24 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2014-03-lose-yourself-to-dance-know.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.