

WE VALUE

CASE STUDY



People's Theater, Germany

Background

People's Theater (PT) is a non-profit program based in Offenbach, Germany (staffed mainly by youth volunteers aged 18-25) that uses drama workshops to help school children to explore social responsibility and non-violent conflict resolution. Its philosophy is based on a positive image of humanity, and the view that individuals have a duty to build their own character, develop positive social values in themselves and serve the wider community.

PT is a founding partner in the ESDinds Project Consortium, which created WeValue, and has been actively involved in the project from the start.

Exploring Values

PT staff, in collaboration with an external researcher from the We Value team, took part in a workshop in the summer of 2009 in which they were asked to make a list of their values and then arrange them in order of priority. The same exercise was repeated with the PT youth volunteers.

'Unity in Diversity' and 'Integrity' were found to be the two most important values for PT.

Measuring the Indicators

In February 2010, 11 of the indicators were selected for measurement. These indicators related to the values of Unity in Diversity, Empowerment, Justice and Trust, which are among the values that had been selected by PT during the first workshop as being the most relevant to its work.

To measure these indicators, the organisation chose the following ways of collecting evidence:

Evidence based on what people do and say during their day-to-day activities

Structured Observation: Three observers (two from PT, and one external researcher) watched a small group of youth volunteers during a rehearsal. Each observer completed a structured assessment sheet for every volunteer, and another for the whole group, by marking statements about their behaviour on a three-point scale (Not at all – Sometimes - Very much). Video recordings of the rehearsal were also made and reviewed, to capture nuances missed during the direct observation. Where there were differences between the observers, the consensus of two out of three was taken as valid.



Self-Assessment and Follow-Up Dialogue: After the structured observation exercise, each youth volunteer was given a copy of the same assessment sheet and asked to complete it themselves by reflecting on their own behaviour. Any differences between the observers' assessment and the participant's own self-assessment were discussed with the youth in a short face-to-face dialogue.

Evidence based on what people think and feel

Questionnaire: The youth volunteers were asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire with closed-ended questions, and the responses to each question were counted.

In this case study, different methods were used effectively together to give a nuanced picture of the overall situation. The participants found it interesting and useful to follow up structured observation with self-assessment and dialogue, highlighting the differences between their own understanding of their behaviour and other people's perceptions.

Benefits of the WeValue Process for PT

These are just a few of the benefits described by the project director. To learn more, download the full report [here](#).

- After the first workshop (Exploring Values), the preparation phase for new volunteers was changed to centre around values, rather than themes related to acting or the performance itself. Although values were always important to PT, the project helped to put them into focus and aided them to see each human being as 'full of values'.
- After taking part in the WeValue measurement process, PT decided to change its evaluation strategy for the youth volunteers. Previously, they had only been asked to fill out a questionnaire about motivation, but when WeValue evaluation tools were used instead, the conversations 'became much deeper' and the evaluation had a greater impact than before. The staff felt that giving feedback based on specific, observable criteria makes the evaluation more structured and objective.
- PT staff were inspired to read about the creative evaluation methods used by Echeri to measure the WeValue indicators. The spatial surveys ('Stand on a Colour' and 'Vote with your Feet') and corporal survey ('Posture Vote') were felt to be very useful tools for evaluating PT's performances in schools. Previously, the children were given a questionnaire, but project volunteers had observed that younger children did not understand them and often gave inappropriate answers. PT staff members are planning to try out some of these approaches in the coming academic year.
- Being able to measure indicators, and interpret them to indicate the presence of values, will give schools more clarity about the work of PT. Youth volunteers will be able to state more clearly what happens (in terms of values) as a result of its performances, without necessarily having to show a full performance as an example for every prospective new school in order to persuade them to join.