

SPECIAL ISSUE: ARTS ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Anyone Can Improvise

The ABCs of Arts Entrepreneurship—A Case Study

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ABSTRACT: The concept of improvisation and the “Jazz Model” for Entrepreneurship as a gathering of creative minds with the goal of creating a new outcome is frequently used in the entrepreneurship literature. Especially the unique setting of a jazz jam session exemplifies a successful model of group creativity (Herzig & Baker, 2014) with options for training towards organizational innovation. This case study traces the entrepreneurial efforts of Jamey Aebersold, David Baker, and Jerry Coker, the ABCs of jazz education, who developed the foundation for teaching materials and curricula worldwide. Furthermore, this case study documents the entrepreneurial mindset of these three innovators as a result of their improvisational training and regular participation in jazz jam session situations and thus implies strategies for teaching creative thinking techniques in entrepreneurship education. **KEYWORDS:** entrepreneurship education, jazz education, improvisation, jazz model, effectual entrepreneurship. DOI: 10.34053/artivate.9.2.112

Introduction

The jazz metaphor as a tool to develop improvisational capacities and an entrepreneurial mindset is a frequent topic in the entrepreneurship literature (Barrett, 1998; Hatch, 1999; Lewin, 1998; Weick, 1998; Diasio, 2016; Eisenhardt, 1997; Kamoche & Kunha 2001; Walzer & Salcher 2003; Zack, 2000). Team creativity and performance are generally attributed to improvisational capacities and willingness to take risks (Moonman & Miner, 1998; Hargadon & Bechky, 2006; Perry-Smith & Shalley, 2014) but there is no clarity on how to develop such improvisational skills. In fact, Zack (2000) argues that the degrees of constraint inside jazz performances and

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styles dictate different models and approaches that offer various transfer options to group models and should be explored more in depth. Serrat (2010) argues that creativity defined as “the mental and social process—fueled by conscious or unconscious insight of people—of generating ideas, concepts and associations” is essential to organizational performance and innovation as the “successful exploitation of new ideas.” The Encyclopedia Britannica lists the definition of improvisation in music as “the extemporaneous composition or free performance of a musical passage, usually in a manner conforming to certain stylistic norms but unfettered by the prescriptive features of a specific musical text.” While this process of creating in the moment is central to the process of a jazz musician, there are additional artistic and contextual factors that contribute to a successful product specifically observed in the jazz jam session process (Herzig & Baker, 2014).

Similarly, recent empirical organization science literature offers factors and models that facilitate innovation (Tsoukas, 2009), but with inconsistent results. In fact, a recent meta-analysis of seventy-three studies on how entrepreneurship education influences post-education entrepreneurship intentions found only a slightly positive effect (Bae et al., 2014). While of course outcomes of entrepreneurship education might manifest themselves through other factors, such as knowledge or skill, there might be a missing link in fostering the entrepreneurial mindset needed in order to engage in innovative ventures. It seems that the focused training of creativity and improvisation and the collaborative nature of the art form jazz provide a consistent metaphor for the creative process in teams leading to organizational innovation. Holbrook (2008) and Zack (2000) highlight such transfer options to marketing and management teams in their treatise of the jazz model.

Duxbury (2014) identifies improvisation in organizations as a coping alternative in situations of extreme change and turbulence. He confirms that lessons about acquiring improvisational skills may be drawn from art forms that regularly engage in such behavior, i.e. jazz and improvisational theater, and that capacity for improvisation can be trained. Limb and Braun (2008) provide evidence that during improvisation the brain deliberately activates the prefrontal cortex, thus facilitating creative flow. Similarly, Vera and Crossan (2005) emphasize that effective improvisation and group creativity in organizations take readiness and training. These findings debunk the misconception that the willingness to improvise is a character trait and support improvisational training in entrepreneurship education. Lessons from teamwork in the arts and sports about fostering effective team characteristics as well as creating supportive contextual factors may provide cues for effective teaching strategies.

Herzig and Baker (2014) developed a seven-factor model based on the analysis of interviews, surveys, and literature about jazz jam sessions. These factors include: Individual competency and knowledge of the field, practicing improvisation, establishing mentoring systems and role models, democracy and collaboration, leaders and sidemen, community support, and continuous evaluation systems. Options for transfer to organizations and teams were developed by Belitski and Herzig (2018) and conceptualized for managing creativity (Herzig, 2015). Even though the jazz model is discussed frequently in the entrepreneurship literature, barriers for successful implementation in entrepreneurship pedagogy remain due to the differences in

training and intrinsic drive of jazz musicians. Of course, dedicated entrepreneurs are also fueled by an intrinsic drive to invent and succeed but also by a larger need for extrinsic financial and organizational success that is rarely attainable in the art form jazz. Vera, Nemanich, Velez-Castrillon, & Werner (2014) were able to demonstrate the relationship of contextual factors with effective improvisation capability in research and development teams. These relationships are similar to the contextual factors of a jazz jam session, hence the model developed by Herzig and Baker (2014) might provide the needed cues.

This case study exemplifies the theoretical construct and practical applications of the jam session model for group creativity across disciplines through the example of the entrepreneurial impact of the ABCs of Jazz Education: Jamey Aebersold, David Baker, and Jerry Coker. The concept of offering formalized academic study of jazz and jazz improvisation is often associated with the work and publications of the ABCs of jazz starting in 1964 with Jerry Coker's *Improvising Jazz*, David Baker's *Jazz Improvisation: A Comprehensive Method for All Players* (1969), and Jamey Aebersold's entrepreneurial venture of play-along recordings (1967) resulting in a publishing empire and further curriculum and teaching materials developed by David Baker and Jerry Coker (Witmer & Robbins, 1988). As a result, University programs have grown exponentially, with 224 US programs and 31 international schools offering degrees in Jazz Studies according to the 2018 Student Music Guide in *DownBeat* Magazine (October 2018, pp. 72–175). A lesser-known fact is that these three individuals are all Indiana natives and shared time together as students and faculty at Indiana University, where they observed the problematic lack of educational materials and courses for the art form jazz and responded with various solutions facilitated by their extensive training in improvisational thinking.

I argue that the entrepreneurial mindset and team creativity needed for the ABCs of Jazz to invent and refine the materials and methods for a new market were the direct result of their intensive improvisational training and engagement in jazz jam sessions. The fact that their innovation happens to be jazz education is not an essential ingredient of the argument, similar cases can be made for Noel Lee (Monster Products) or Carl Stormer (Jazzcode Data Management) who are both trained jazz musicians. But the observation that the three individuals discussed here apply every factor of the jazz jam session model as they engage in the process of organizational improvisation—the spontaneous convergence of action and design (Moorman & Miner, 1998)—offers a series of implications for arts entrepreneurship curricula and beyond. These implications that could be the earlier-identified missing link between entrepreneurship training and developing the entrepreneurial mindset. Hence the final discussion offers thoughts and suggestions for transferable lessons from the case of the ABCs.

The ABCs of Jazz Education

1. Jamey Aebersold (Born July 21, 1939)

Anyone Can Improvise is the title of Jamey Aebersold's popular Masterclass DVD as well as his comprehensive pamphlet chronicling common chord–scale relationships, forms, and more

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basic jazz theory concepts. The phrase has also become his mantra over his years publishing pedagogical resources for jazz education, offering his popular summer workshops since 1973 around the globe, and teaching at the University of Louisville as well as countless clinics and master classes worldwide. Aebersold is probably best known for his series of play-along recordings featuring a rhythm section of highly accomplished musicians performing jazz repertoire pieces without the melody. Aspiring jazz performers worldwide have used the recordings to practice melodies and improvisational techniques since the publication of Volume 1 in 1967. He was inducted as an NEA Jazz Master in 2014.

Aebersold's journey searching for the ingredients of the jazz language and becoming a jazz musician in the 1950s and 60s shaped his inclusive philosophy. When he applied to be a student at the Manhattan School of Music in 1957, the response letter several months later was one sentence long: "We do not offer the saxophone" (Aebersold, 2009). His dreams were crushed. On recommendation of his brother, he attended Indiana University only to find out that neither saxophone nor jazz studies were available degree options. Through his own initiative and with the help of fellow jazz education legend David Baker, with whom he took private lessons at the time, Aebersold gathered the needed knowledge and resources to crack the jazz code.

2. David Baker (December 21, 1931–March 26, 2016)

Most listeners associate David Baker's name with his trombone artistry in prominent groups of the Bebop era and beyond, with musicians such as George Russell, Quincy Jones, and Slide Hampton, as well as with his leadership in jazz education. In the 1962 Reader's Poll of *DownBeat* Magazine, Baker was voted Best New Star and in the year 2000, he received the prestigious NEA Jazz Masters Award, as well as the Kennedy Center's Living Jazz Legend title in 2007. In 1966, he founded the jazz studies program at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, where he taught multiple generations of prominent musicians and educators. With more than sixty books and four hundred articles, he defined a canon of jazz education worldwide. Lesser known is his extensive repertoire as a composer, which includes more than two thousand works from solo to chamber music, symphonies, concertos, vocal compositions, ballet and film music, and of course many compositions and arrangements for big band and jazz combo, many recorded and performed by world-renowned artists.

3. Jerry Coker (Born November 28, 1932)

Growing up in South Bend, Indiana, Jerry Coker was an impressionable teenager when the Bebop era came along and the level of virtuosity and note choices by players like Bird and Diz pushed the boundaries of ear-playing into a new realm of improvisational theory and practice. Inspired by listening to his father's gigs, sessions, and rehearsals, Jerry decided on a career in music and entered Indiana University in 1950. He later taught at Sam Houston State University, Indiana University, the University of Miami, Pembroke State University, Duke University, and the University of Tennessee. Jerry Coker's influential book *Improvising Jazz* first published in

1964 was the result of his master's thesis research. David Liebman testifies: "Jerry Coker is the Godfather of jazz education, if only for his groundbreaking and best-selling book *Improvising Jazz* which established many of the terms we use every day to describe the workings of jazz like 11-V-I; CESH, etc." Coker's output of educational books throughout his teaching career grew to seventeen published books and more coauthor credits. After leaving Indiana University for the Frost School of Music in 1966, Coker, together with his teaching assistant Dan Haerle, refined a curriculum that included a four-semester sequence of improvisation courses as well as ensemble playing in various styles and settings, jazz composition/arranging, jazz theory/ear-training and history, and jazz keyboard fundamentals that became the blueprint for college jazz programs worldwide.

Method

The seven factors of the jazz jam session model (Herzig & Baker, 2014) are exemplified by the entrepreneurial endeavors of jazz educators Jamey Aebersold, David Baker, and Jerry Coker extracted from personal interviews and literature reviews, as well as personal and public documents and records. The discussion of the findings analyzes the relationship of their training in an improvisational art form and their high level of entrepreneurship and suggests transfer methodologies to the classroom.

The Jazz Jam Session Model and the Arts Entrepreneurship of the ABCs of Jazz Education

Herzig and Baker (2014) developed the jazz jam session model within a project that documented the creative process of the jazz jam session from a historical, social, and musical perspective. As a result of observations, surveys, and interviews, seven factors were identified that drive group creativity and entrepreneurship as documented in Belitski and Herzig (2018). Following are the seven factors with examples from the work of the ABCs of Jazz Education.

1. Individual Competence and Knowledge of the Field

In order to learn their craft, jazz musicians spend hours practicing their instruments, transcribing solos, and learning the jazz language (Berliner, 1994). Competency plays an enormous role in any improvisational activity (Vera & Crossan, 2005) and of course shapes the quality of results.

The superior level of competence and knowledge of these three individuals in their chosen field is well documented. All three have master's degrees in music education and taught jazz improvisation all their lives. Two of them were awarded the highest honor in the field of jazz, the NEA Jazz Masters Award (David Baker, 2000; Jamey Aebersold, 2014). Their performance credentials are extensive, from initial touring engagements with the Woody Hermann Orchestra

(Jerry Coker)¹ to some of the most groundbreaking recordings with the George Russell Sextet (David Baker).² The discipline of mastering an instrument and their determination to do so is exemplified in this comment from David Baker (*Smithsonian*, 2000): “I started thinking I have to have another instrument, so I decided I was going to play piano. I started practicing piano eight hours a day.”

Jerry Coker’s first method book *Improvising Jazz* (1964) was the result of meticulous research and knowledge. In a 2008 interview with the author he explained the process of acquiring the needed knowledge when he initially started teaching:

I have to say I was a little nervous and terrified because I thought that I did not want to be responsible for someone else’s learning especially if I am going to have to invent all the stuff they are going to work on. So after I got over that, I took about a week to prepare, and during that time I sat down and wrote down everything that I thought I had ever learned in my own quest for playing. I ended up with a very long list. Then I went back over the list and started crossing things off, eliminating things that I had learned, but not found meaningful or useful. Then I put them into a logical order, a sequence. I made an outline and wrote out a few starter type patterns and things. So the lessons worked out well. In fact, they got me my first teaching gig at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville because the head of the department there played a gig with two of these guys and saw how much they had improved in a very short time. He decided that the improvement was on the basis of what I had taught them.

2. Practicing Improvisation as the Ability to Overcome Self-Consciousness

As Vera and Crossan (2005) state, “improvisation is not inherently good or bad; however, improvisation has a positive effect on team innovation when combined with team and contextual moderating factors.” The improvisational process requires the participants to take risks as they enter new situations, interact with new people, and train their brains to respond to the moment. Brain studies by Limb and Braun (2008) document the extensive deactivation of the prefrontal cortex during the improvisational process, thus the willingness to engage in the moment without pre-evaluation. Peplowski (1998, p. 560) adds “We are always deliberately painting ourselves into corners just in order to get out of them. Sometimes you consciously pick a bad note and try to find a way to get out of it. The essence of jazz music is to try to put three to eight people together while they’re *all* trying to do this at the same time.”

During their training as jazz musicians, Aebersold, Baker, and Coker engaged daily in the act of improvisation, such training their brains to take risks as documented by Limb and Braun (2008). Similarly, Aebersold’s venture of recording his first play-alongs was a major

¹ Jerry Coker joined the Woody Herman Orchestra in 1953 followed by stints with Mel Lewis, Stan Kenton and a period of freelancing on the West Coast.

² David Baker was voted Best New Artist in *DownBeat Magazine* 1962 and recorded as a member of the George Russell Sextet on Ezz-thetics, At the Five Spot, Outer Thoughts, The Stratus Seekers, Stratusphunk and ten recordings under his own name, as well as many more.

entrepreneurial risk in 1967. He invested in recording sessions and a series of LPs and drove from music store to music store to set up a few copies on consignment as publishers didn't think there was interest in the concept. Adapting to the need of controlling production costs but still providing superior musicianship, Aebersold created a space in his basement with the needed recording technology and asked his musician friends to jam and record. The LP covers were hand-drawn pictures by his sister. It took nearly ten years, nine volumes, and creating editions with music by popular contemporaries before the business finally became profitable. However, once it reached the tipping point it became the foundation of a multimillion dollar publishing empire (with 153 volumes to date) and a prime example of the effectuation approach for entrepreneurship (Read et al., 2016).

When David Baker was charged with creating a jazz studies program at Indiana University in 1966, he realized that there was a lack of teaching materials and a resistance to integrating jazz courses in the conservatory music curriculum. Because of his improvisational training he took the risk, created his own materials, and built a curriculum through trial and error:

I remember a man who unfortunately is dead now, because he was a good man, but he was pretty staunch in his belief that, "as long as I'm here, jazz band will never be a major ensemble." Two weeks later, on a Thursday morning, it passed as a major ensemble (Smithsonian, 2000).

3. Establishing a Mentoring System and Role Models

During the first fifty years of jazz history, very few institutionalized learning was available. Experienced players shared their information through mentorship on and off the bandstand through a modeling approach. Evidence for effective learning through mentorship is documented in a study by Dean Keith Simonton (1984) with positive correlations between a successful artist career and large numbers and diverse models of mentors.

In the case of the ABCs, we have an interesting cycle wherein they mentored each other. Initially, Jerry Coker recommended that Dean William Bain at Indiana University hire David Baker when he accepted a position in Miami. Coker had mentored David as a young performer and provided opportunities to play and teach. Jamey Aebersold was a student of David Baker and discovered the foundation for his *Anyone Can Improvise* philosophy and materials during his first lesson with Baker. All three implemented the principles of mentorship in their entrepreneurial work in creating summer workshops and pedagogical materials. Jamey Aebersold recalls his revelation about the principles of jazz improvisation during this first lesson:

I took lessons from David. I can't remember how long. And I remember the first one. He was on the piano and he asked me what to play. I'm pretty sure it was "I'll Remember April." We played the whole tune and then he stops and I improvise. I don't know if he let me play or he stopped me but he pointed out that the second scale was G dorian minor. And I can remember I was thinking—I didn't know anything about dorian but I remember thinking standing there in his living room up there on Burdsal Parkway "I thought this was going to be fun." So then he played the scale and I played the scale. As soon as I played the scale I could tell that one note

difference between pure minor and dorian minor. It was just perfect. And then my next thought was, “Why hadn’t someone told me this before now?” ‘cause that’s what they were playing on the records. I could tell that sound. And that was the beginning, and we kind of just went on from there. And he’d give me assignments and stuff. And I can remember the day also—I don’t know if I was married or if I was dating my wife—but I can remember driving back to Bloomington and telling her “When I get back, I’ll go over to the music building and I’m going to take ‘Stella by Starlight’ and I’m going to learn every scale and every arpeggio because I’m tired of playing through that tune and being lost here and being lost there and not knowing the scale that goes over that G7#9, you know, whatever.” I said, “I’m going to start doing this.” So that’s when I started to think differently (Aebersold, 2009).

4. Democracy and Collaboration

The process of performing jazz music together requires a true democratic give and take of leadership and group support. While one performer improvises a solo the rest of the group members provide the best support for an ideal group sound and exchange leadership roles equally throughout the process. Similarly, this factor of democracy and collaboration is evident in groups when group members alternate between listening and taking the lead during discussions (Hatch & Weick, 1998).

In 1965, Aebersold was asked to help teach at the Big Band summer camps at Indiana University. After a few years, he realized that there was little opportunity for the participants to hone their improvisational skills in the confined environment and started integrating combo opportunities. Eventually he took the risk and started leading his own summer combo camps in 1972. The Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshop has grown into the longest-running summer camp to date and become the blueprint for similar jazz combo camps around the world. David Baker and Jerry Coker co-led these workshops from the beginning. The factor of democracy and collaboration in this entrepreneurial venture is most evident in the way they used the time together at the camps to exchange their current book projects and new educational materials. Through the process of providing feedback and taking turns sharing their ideas and strategies with each other, this group of educators developed the curricula and materials fundamental for the learning of jazz music around the world:

Because that meant that when we came in the summer, we knew that time was precious and that there were going to be two weeks, three weeks, maybe four in the old days, when we would be together. And so we tended to exchange what we’ve been doing and new books we were working on or looking at compositions, whatever it might be (Jerry Coker, personal communication, 2008).

5. Leaders and Sidemen

In order to take care of all managerial aspects of organizing a jam session or performance, usually an experienced performer takes on a leadership role, functioning as liaison between the

venue management, the house band, the jam session participants, and the audience. The other musicians should not interfere with the managerial tasks once a leader is identified and rather provide their musical skills to be the ideal sidemen. The skills required in this role are high musicianship, versatility, and strong personal skills. Barrett refers to this factor as provocative competence (Barrett, 2012, p. 139).

When David Baker accepted his position at Indiana University, he transferred his leadership skills from managing groups and jam sessions to the task of creating a new program. Based on his role as a band leader in Indianapolis, including his experience finding jobs for the group, hiring the personnel, writing the music, and marketing the performance, rather than waiting for the invitation to join an existing group and contribute as a musical sideman, he knew what it took to be a leader in his field. He had developed a strong vision for a possible program that was published in 1965 in an article entitled *Jazz: The Academy's Neglected Stepchild*. Baker was extremely detailed in documenting the ideal jazz program, as exemplified in this excerpt:

The student must be made aware of the importance of pacing himself, of working toward specific climaxes in a solo. He must be taught the concepts of tension and relaxation, of understatement and subtlety, of mixing the novel and the old to heighten musical interest. He must be constantly reminded of the value of economizing, getting the most from the material available to him. A student needs to know from what sources he may get material on which to improvise. He should know that often the tune itself (melody, rhythm, etc.) can be his best source of solo material.

As a result of his strong leadership and vision, he was able to overcome resistance and barriers as discussed earlier in this paper. In fact, his courses became extremely popular—beyond expectations. In his *Smithsonian* oral history interview (2000) he recalls: “One year I taught a course over in the business building because there were so many students, probably 500 students in the class, as well as the fact that it was then sent out over TV to other branches of our campus.”

6. Community Support

The effectiveness and outcome of a jam session is influenced by various community support factors beyond the internal circle of musical interaction. The sound of a room, the audience reaction, the service, the promotions, financial resources, cultural perceptions, geographic location, availability of educational resources all play a role in the level and outcome of a jam session gathering.

David Baker grew up in the segregated black community clustered around Indiana Avenue in Indianapolis during the 1930s and 1940s. Despite limited resources, the community was extraordinarily supportive and full of opportunities to engage in artistic learning. Indiana Avenue was lined with more than forty clubs hosting nightly jam sessions and the teachers at Crispus Attucks High School believed in and supported the creativity and potential of their students. A host of legendary jazz musicians including Wes Montgomery, Slide Hampton, Freddie Hubbard, J.J. Johnson, David Baker, Larry Ridley and many more were the result of this community

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investment (Herzig, 2011).

Jerry Coker's comments in a 1984 interview for the *Jazz Educators Journal* exemplify this symbiosis of intrinsic drive and community apparent in their entrepreneurship approach:

I think we would have taught jazz improvisation and jazz whether or not a university had ever invited us to do so. I offered classes in 1956 and 1957 when I was in San Francisco. I taught 36 students a week plus I gathered them all together one night a week for special improvisation classes, listening classes, bringing in a guest professional artist on how to play their instrument and that sort of thing. The university has really only given us space and time. That is really all that we have ever asked from them. We tend to bring in all of our own materials, we have to design the curriculum that is used, we do all of the teaching. But, we needed that space.

7. Continuous Evaluation Systems

Research on brainstorming techniques by Feinberg and Nemeth (2008) documents a relationship between active debate and critical feedback on ideas and meaningful results. Similar feedback shapes the jam sessions with facial expressions, body language, comments, cues, and common vocabulary, as well as response to audience feedback.

When Jerry Coker was charged with developing the jazz studies curriculum at the University of Miami in 1966, he worked from a blank slate. Initially he was willing to take the risk based on his training in improvisation, but he also knew from his jazz training that finding the ideal curriculum would include a period of trial and error. Hence, he solicited continuous evaluations from students, colleagues, and experts and incorporated their feedback towards the ideal result:

And we waited for five years asking the students every year what went wrong. Was there anything that was needed? Anything missing? And for almost five years, there were things. And we had to change them. And then we'd talk with the faculty and the grad assistant and ask them the same questions. And at the end of five years, I posed that question at the meeting—what needs to be changed? What's wrong? Nothing. No one had anything. And then I asked the faculty the same question. The same thing happened, nothing. In other words, we knew we had it then. (Jerry Coker, personal communication, 2008)

Discussion

Organizations in the arts and beyond recognize creativity and team collaboration as a crucial element for economic success (Amabile, 1988, 2018; Florida, 2014; Ford, 1995; Kim & Mauborgne, 2005; Nonaka, 1991). With inconsistent findings in research on team creativity, it has been suggested to look at models outside of organizational behavior. The Jazz Jam Session Model (Herzig & Baker, 2014) provides such a model, emphasizing especially the role of cultivating improvisational abilities and extracting seven factors that facilitate group creativity. This case study exemplifies each model factor by tracing the team entrepreneurship by three arts entrepreneurs who had extensive training in jam session environments and successfully

demonstrated the transfer of this skill set into their innovative work. Several suggestions for teaching and cultivating group creativity and entrepreneurship can be extracted from this case study. These include acquiring the highest level of competency in the chosen field, ideally daily engagement in improvisational activities, providing a strong mentorship system, cultivating truly democratic group interactions with continuous evaluation systems in place, a supportive community and environment, as well as guidance in choosing roles and careers.

But beyond direct teaching applications, this study helps us connect the dots between entrepreneurial improvisation and the jazz model. Sarasvarthy's (2001) work on effectual entrepreneurship uncovered a natural tendency of expert entrepreneurs to use resources at hand in order to achieve initially unknown ends. Effectual entrepreneurship is often compared to explorers setting out on a voyage of discovery, a process that requires participants to be adaptable and open to surprises. This exact mindset is needed to engage in a jam session with a common goal of creating something new using the process of improvisation and constant adaptation. However, many business schools base their pedagogy on a causal, linear approach that does not support the process of effectual discovery.

This case also aligns with evidence that improvisational capacities can be trained. Repeat entrepreneurs rated higher on measures of improvisational behavior than novel entrepreneurs in a study by Hmieleski and Corbett (2008). Duxbury (2014) concluded that embracing the process is an essential trait of improvising entrepreneurs. Daily engagement in improvisational behavior while honing their craft as jazz musicians provided the ABCs with the confidence to embrace change and turbulence as they developed new materials and teaching approaches. One such example is Jamey Aebersold's quest to find buyers for his play-alongs, which entailed struggling for several years when approaching distributors, selling out of his trunk, and eventually developing the summer camp concept and the publishing company, all the while constantly adapting and refining the product and the process. His extensive training in improvisation provided the confidence and persistence needed to succeed. Thus frequent opportunities to practice improvisational behavior in arts entrepreneurship pedagogy can strengthen capacities to adapt and overcome obstacles, considering the risky and ambiguous nature of the field.

Further cues from this case study are the favorable composition of this specific team, who had the needed expertise and problem-solving capacities, as well as supportive contextual conditions, including frequent personal proximity, an inclusive social climate due to the Civil Rights movement, and institutional interest that provided infrastructure and financial resources. The entrepreneurship literature confirms the influence of contextual factors, identified as factors of networking and community support in the jam session model, on the creative output of research and development teams (Herzig & Baker, 2014; Vera et al., 2014). Effective entrepreneurial training thus depends on contextual resources and opportunities. Examples are networking opportunities, financial resources and role models, fostering team spirit, and strong community support systems.

Overall, the literature on measuring improvisational dispositions is still underdeveloped. Many questions remain on the similarities of and differences between artistic improvisation and entrepreneurial problem solving. Furthermore, improvising can take place in very structured

formats, i.e. applying learned patterns versus open engagements with free reactions to the moment overriding restrictions by form, etiquette, and expectations. How do these different types of improvisation manifest in entrepreneurial activity, how can they be fostered and measured, and how can they be incorporated in pedagogy? Many questions remain also in relation to the direct transfer between artistic improvisation and entrepreneurial training in creativity and problem solving. An effectual approach to developing curricula—often compared to cooking a meal without a recipe, combining the ingredients available in the refrigerator (Sarasvathy, 2001)—may answer some of these questions over time and lead to an innovative outcome, similar to a delicious meal created on the fly. Nevertheless, studying cases like the ABCs provides important cues and lessons for combining the ingredients in the best way possible.

The teaching of entrepreneurship and creativity is a rather new field, but it is rapidly growing due to an increasing valuation of for ideas, problem-solving skills, and innovative approaches. Especially artists and arts organizations need to adapt quickly to changes in consumer technology and behavior. The jazz jam session model has been developed and refined for a century and this case study exemplifies a successful entrepreneurial unit that implements the factors of the jam session model during group innovation. Similar implementation of these factors in classroom settings and entrepreneurship curricula can foster the skills needed for group creativity and innovation and the jazz jam session model has the potential for guiding effective teaching methods in the arts entrepreneurship classroom and beyond.

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