

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the
Award of a Masters Degree in Management from the
NOVA – School of Business and Economics

Leading Teaming: evidence from Jazz



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A Project carried out on the Management course under the supervision of
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7th of January 2013

Abstract

In this research we conducted qualitative analysis to study the team dynamics of jazz combos in order to explore deeper the leadership behaviors in a creative environment where teaming occurs. We found evidence of a dual leader, one that shifts his/her role between 'leader as leader' and 'leader as member', embracing both leaderfulness and leaderlessness according to momentary needs, thus allowing for a delicate balance of freedom and control to enhance creativity and real time coordination. Additionally, we propose that the leader and team members have important roles in either enabling elasticity or preventing plasticity of a flexible structure that is ideal for innovation.

Keywords: Teaming, Dual Leader, Creative Teams, Flexible Structure

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Introduction

Friday, 11h30 p.m. at the Hot Club in Lisbon, the performing quartet has just played a composition by its pianist and arranged by the bass player. After ten minutes of improvised music, the saxophone player thanks the listeners and presents the musicians – after all it is his name on the program so he has to make sure the performance is pleasant to the audience. While playing, no one could tell which was the musician with the most importance or responsibility, not even the musicians, once they constantly went after each other’s musical suggestions and adapted to one another’s behavior with no previous combination of what was to be made. The audience could see them building the music as they played and interacted – in creative settings like these there is often a “collaborative and emergent” process (Sawyer, 2000). Jazz musicians come together to “generate new ideas, find answers, and solve problems” (Edmondson, 2012), and teaming is often set in live performances and in front of an audience, situations where real time coordination and mutual adjustments are crucial to perform.

At the Hot Club, the music was composed by the piano player but arranged by the bass player, and seeing the program would lead us to expect the saxophonist to have the greatest responsibility within the group as he was its public image, but that was not happening after all. During performance, great levels of interplay, mutual influence and apparently undirected exploring were achieved while everyone could shape the music according to his own personal esthetic and experience. Our interest in studying the team dynamics of a jazz combo¹ is of several natures: we seek to gain an understanding of what characteristics has the person who is leading; what is the team structure that allows such dynamics; and what is the leader and each member’s role in the whole setting of the combo in maintaining those dynamics.

Jazz has been studied as an illuminating metaphor for many years since Weick (1990) approached it as a focalized example of management best practices. Many researches have turned

¹ According to the New Grove Dictionary of Jazz, combo is derived from the word “combination”, used of a group of musicians and applied principally to small ensembles.

into jazz as a source of knowledge as it can provide useful insights on ideal organizational structures (Kamoche and Cunha, 2001; Bemiker, 1998; Pasmore 1998; Weick, 1998), enhance the understanding of minimal hierarchy within teams, innovative work and improvisational environments conducive to learning (Vera and Crossan, 2005; Zack, 2000; Barrett, 1998), and leadership behaviors, much through what is mentioned in the literature as the “jazz mindset” (Barrett, 2012; Bernstein and Barrett, 2011). An important note on this study is that we do not try to build on the jazz metaphor departing from jazz combos. Instead, aligned with Klein et al.’s (2006) call for deeper understanding of team leadership in dynamic settings and its enabling team structure, we will study actual jazz combos and their dynamics, building on qualitative data collected from different sources such as semi-structured interviews with professional musicians and observational data of both rehearsal and live performances. After framing our study in the existing literature on shared leadership and relevant teaming behaviors, we will set clear our method and discuss our findings in the following section.

The role of the Leader

Wide research has been dedicated to the role of the leader and its importance in team effectiveness and outcomes of group work settings. Different models of leadership have been developed over time, but what remains constant across the literature is that, despite existing some key functions of leadership, it is difficult to find a single right way or formula to become a good team leader (Klein et al., 2006; Hackman, 2002). Emphasizing this notion once more, De Meuse (2009) has mentioned team-leader fit as an important characteristic to look for when evaluating team effectiveness, once different teams will require different types leadership with specific behaviors, much in the lights of a contingent leadership frame of mind. Thus, leader behaviors may vary in many ways as to generate effective teamwork.

According to Hackman and Wageman (2005), these behaviors include “structuring the team and establishing its purposes, arranging for the resources a team needs for its work and removing organizational roadblocks that impede the work”, while providing team coaching to

collectively use team's resources to pursue specific goals. Depending on the leader's preferences and the team's needs, these behaviors will be put in practice to generate better overall outcomes. As studied by Srivastava et al. (2006), coaching is also viewed in the literature as an empowerment leadership behavior. Their study suggests that increasing participative decision making and coaching will increase knowledge sharing. This result offers important conclusions to teams in general, namely in creative environments such as the jazz combos here studied: once it is known that improvisational performances are fundamentally collaborative (Sawyer, 2000), leaders must create the conditions that enable such behaviors of knowledge sharing. This was recently shown in Pentland's (2012) work with teams, where the importance of great amounts of communication within all levels of the team is shown to be a key factor in the best performing teams.

Shared Leadership

As Pearce and Conger (2003) have noted, empowerment implies a decentralization of power, an important step for collaborative, creative outcomes to be achieved, but it remains a necessary but not sufficient condition for the leadership process to be shared at the team level. Creating the conditions for a team's effectiveness to flourish, leadership is often at its best when shared (Hackman, 2002). The proposed idea is that leadership can be broadly distributed among team members instead of being under the umbrella of a single leader who acts like a superior (Pearce and Conger, 2003). The previous authors describe this type of leadership as a "dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both". Pentland (2012) refers that a team's performance can fall significantly when the leader dominates the flow of information or when there is little or no input from other members, thus a growing importance has been given to what can be seen as fully developed empowerment (Pearce, 2004) in recent years. This type of leadership occurs when one is able to "influence and guide their fellow team members in an effort to maximize the potential of the team as a whole" (Pearce, 2004) so that there is mutual influence in the ongoing work. It is relevant to point out that the need for a vertical leader – influencing

downward a third person – is still crucial for the success of a potential shared-leadership approach in a team. Pearce (2004) clearly signals the importance of a leader that, regardless of sharing his role with team members, must include typical vertical leader's behaviors such as managing the team's design. As we will see, this is of great relevance for our findings and the proposed model.

Klein et. al (2006) describe effective leadership of extreme action medical teams² as a hierarchical, deindividualized, and dynamic system of shared leadership. This study shows that effective leadership in such settings may be achieved through the contribution of different members and not through a single team leader. What makes this happening, they say, is dynamic delegation: the passage of active leadership on to senior or junior leaders in accordance to the team's needs. Providing strategic direction when required, different team members embrace the leader's role and take action in guiding the medical team.

Teaming

In order for shared leadership to raise team effectiveness, great levels of coordination and communication are needed. Once this type of leadership can be seen as an ever-changing balance between taking the lead and being led, being responsible for the team and its opposite (Pearce, 2004), it is crucial for team members to constantly adapt to each other in order to find synergies between them. In her recent book, Edmondson (2012) presents a way of working that seems to fit more and more the changing competitive working environment and the above mentioned characteristics: teaming. According to Valentine and Edmondson (2012), teaming is the process of “coordination and mutual adjustment that occurs during episodes of interdependent work”. While one still needs teamwork skills such as clarifying interdependence or establishing trust, says Edmondson, teaming is seen as a dynamic capability that enables work in a lively setting where there is a need to process information, synthesize and put it into good use quickly or when pre-planned coordination is not possible given the nature of the work (Edmondson, 2012). Being so,

² The authors define these as teams where highly skilled members cooperate to perform urgent, unpredictable, interdependent tasks.

jazz combos offer an appropriate microenvironment to study team dynamics, leadership behaviors and teaming in action in the specific frame of mind of a creative context. Here, improvising plays an important role in the final outcome, pre-planned coordination diminished, and the team structure is setting the conditions for such creativity and dynamics to be achieved.

Method

In order to gain a deeper understanding of a jazz combo's team dynamics and its leadership behaviors we conducted qualitative research. This research method has already been proved effective to study the dynamic nature and the enabling structure of teams (Klein et al., 2006), so we sought to collect context-specific (Khodyakov, 2007), "live" data that could assist hypothesizing (Glaser and Strauss, 1965). By studying phenomena and processes in their natural settings (Hallber, 2006), qualitative research allows one to build a deeper understanding of a person's perspective and attribute meaning to the studied phenomena through the discovery of patterns in data (Hallberg, 2006; Fossey et al. 2002; Weston et al., 2001; Ambert et al., 1995; Feldman, 1995). We built an emergent, flexible research setting that was responsive to context (Fossey et al., 2002). In fact, as it often happens in qualitative research (e.g. Klein et al., 2006; Weston et al. 2001; Ambert et al., 1995) there was a cyclical relation (Fossey et al., 2002; Glaser and Strauss, 1965) between the construct of the conceptual idea of the presented model, data collection and its analysis until a robust model was reached and verified.

We used semiotic clustering analysis to make sense of the surface signs our interviews and observational data suggested: it was assumed that these signs were related to an underlying structure yet to be discovered (Feldman, 1995). This approach tries to build deeper layers of knowledge clustering dimensions of one level into another, increasing the significance of the data and putting all the pieces together in a pattern (Feldman, 1995). This process begins with the first order concepts, taken directly from the interviews, our richest and main source of data. Evidence taken directly from the interviews to support the first order concepts can be found on tables 1 to 3 in the appendix section. As the number of interviews increased and analysis was done, we were led to

consider relationships that were not previously acknowledged (Feldman, 1995), thus being able to move on to the second order themes. Only after constantly going through the data and the existing literature were we able to reach a higher level of abstraction and conceptualize the meanings that lied beyond the musicians words in the third order concepts or overarching dimensions. This process allowed us to usefully interpret laymen's words (Feldman, 1995) and build a conceptual framework that was not initially visible in the first level of analysis. Consequentially, we found that, in jazz combos, there is a presence of what we call a dual leader – as it joins both leaderfulness and leaderlessness – and a flexible structure. Adding to this analysis process, we then investigated what were the links between the mentioned conceptual frameworks in order to find the “umbrella” conditions (Klein et al., 2006), the enablers of the flexible structure coming from both the dual leader and team members, that allow for the final model to be constructed.

Sampling process

The present study included twenty professional jazz musicians, all with ten years of professional experience or more. A pool of musicians was first developed in order to have the most diverse sample given the specifications of the population³ in order to challenge our own views (Fossey, 2002) and gain newer perspectives on the subject. Having resolved the homogeneous sample problem (Fossey, 2002), we could then rely on snowball sampling to enlarge the sampling relevantly as interviews were being done.

Data collection

To increase the quality of the collected data and posterior validity of our interpretations, data was gathered from multiple sources (Khodyakov, 2007; Klein et al., 2006; Fossey et al., 2002; Ambert et al., 1995). We conducted semi-structured interviews, varying from thirty minutes to two hours. These interviews (interview protocol can be found in the appendix section) began with

³ Thus, selecting diverse jazz styles and a wide range of instruments such as saxophone, guitar, double bass, drums, piano, trombone, and vocals.

broad, open questions in order to better understand the underlying structure of the teams and the present leadership behaviors (Klein et al., 2006). As the analysis was done, the construction of the emerging patterns demanded changing some of the questions posed (Hallberg, 2006). All interviews were transcribed for better and more detailed analysis. Ambert et al. (1995) noted that the quality of collected data might be positively correlated with how close a researcher is to studied subjects, emphasizing the importance of a direct and personal experience while entering the world of those studied (Charmaz, 2004) in delivering “fresh insight”. Consequentially, being an amateur jazz musician allowed for a better understanding of the musicians discourse (Fossey et al., 2002) and to read between the lines of the used jargon.

In addition, observational data was also collected. Both rehearsals and live performances were observed in a total of fifty-four hours, while notes were being taken. This was done to strengthen the interpretation of the primary data and to deepen the analysis of team’s structures and member’s interactions, which proved to be essential. The interpretations and results were discussed with several of the musicians in an informal setting, serving as an important reliability check (Klein et al., 2006), completing the triangulation analysis process (Fossey, 2002). Only when the patterns construction was in solid form, meaning that these were recurring or no new information was added with more data collection – theoretical saturation (Hallberg, 2006; Fossey, 2002) – did we stop collecting data.

Dual Leader in a flexible team structure with the right enablers

Our findings suggest a presence of a dual leader and a flexible team structure in jazz combos. The dual leader is one that takes his/her role as a leader mainly by providing strategic directions, choosing the team, and setting the appropriate work conditions, but also one that takes the role of a member with no difference towards other team members. Within the flexible structure, the roles are defined but not limitative, and members have the incentive to go beyond them for great levels of creativity to be achieved. What allows for such team dynamics are the enablers of the flexible structure – enhancing elasticity and preventing plasticity – having as a source both the

dual leader and team members. In the following section we describe each of these findings in detail and present the overall model built from there.

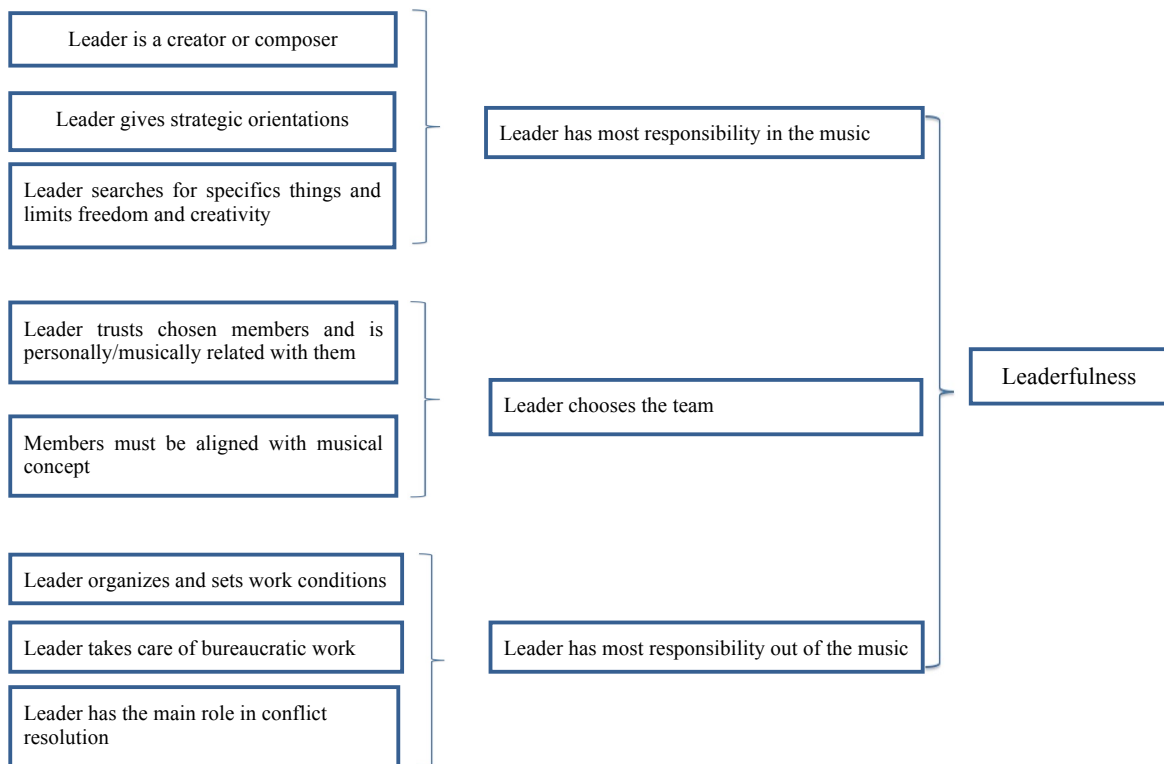
Leaderfulness

When answering our question “When someone leads a jazz combo, does he/she have greater responsibilities?”, musicians frequently referred to main characteristics of a leader such as diverse things as composing the themes to play, defining the musical concept of the band and choosing the right team to put it in practice, taking care of the band’s agenda or organizing rehearsals. When analyzing the transcribed interviews more in depth, we were able to cluster these leader behaviors in three main categories: behaviors regarding the music, concerning things outside music and related with choosing the team (related to things both inside and outside the music), thus elaborating a ‘leader as leader’ profile, one that embraces ‘leaderfulness’. A general look of the construction of this overarching dimension can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Firstly, the leader was most responsible in what musical specifications were concerned. Most of the times, there was an implicit need for writing or composing themes in order to become the bandleader, and he was in charge of framing the conceptual construction of the work. The leader is the one who initially chooses the feel of the music, he is in charge of the concept creation. As one musician put it, “The one with a concept is the one capable of leading something [...], he brings a new vision and leads because he saw a way in a path where others were not capable of going”. This can take him to limit creativity among team members once he might be looking for some specific approach in a given context, exerting some vertical leadership behaviors from time to time (Pearce, 2004). Moreover, the leader was in charge of providing strategic directions to the musicians. Even though this is interestingly not exclusive of one person in the band, as discussed below, this is the main characteristic shaping leadership behaviors in jazz combos. In fact, setting a vision or giving a strategic orientation is commonly seen as an important characteristic of those leading (Larson and LaFasto, 1989) and providing a challenging direction for the team is a crucial factor for its functioning as a whole (Hackman, 2002). When directing strategically the combo, the

leader is able to frame the whole work and to launch the necessary conditions for great levels of experimenting to be achieved within that frame. Secondly, the leader is the one in charge of choosing the musicians that will be playing together in the band. As most of the musicians called our attention to, this process is both based on musical and personal related issues, once the leader searches for musicians that fit his musical concept while having in consideration potential trust development and outside music personal relationships. In the words of a bass player: “The true leader is one that knows what he wants to do and, according to his preferences and aesthetics, will find musicians that identify themselves with the idea he is proposing”. Finally, a leader of a jazz combo was also responsible for several issues outside the music itself, such as setting the right work conditions for other musicians (doing the needed transcriptions, distributing the musical sheets and the audio), taking care of the bureaucratic work or even intervening in conflict resolution, thus being a crucial element in enabling the work to flow and building conditions for team effectiveness.

Figure 1 – Leaderfulness overarching dimension construction



Leaderlessness

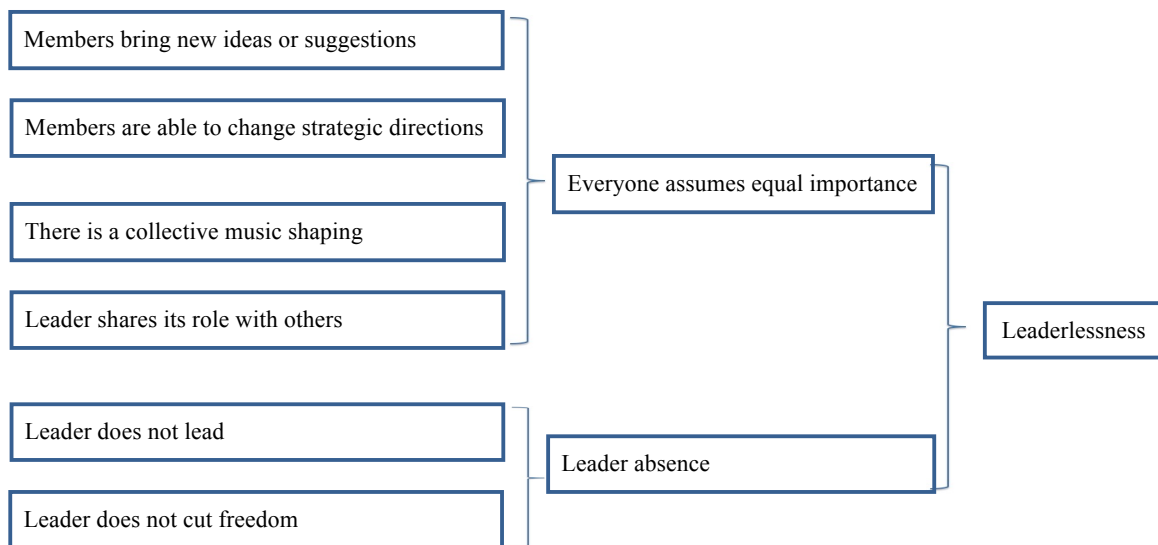
As we progressed with our data analysis and observed jazz combos playing and rehearsing, we came to the conclusion that the same person that was showing the leadership behaviors just described was also behaving like a non-differentiated team member. We came to consider the ‘leaderlessness’ overarching dimension of our model as two different things – everyone assumed equal importance and there was a leader absence – happened simultaneously, as shown in Figure 2.

To begin with, once the concept was defined, everyone in the team assumed equal importance in regards to strategic involvement and decision-making in what musical issues were concerned. In jazz combos, leadership is broadly shared among team members, recalling the “multiplier effect” mentioned by Larson and LaFasto (1989), where a leader allows for other members to take an active role in “shaping the destiny of the team’s effort”. This was highly noticed in the rehearsals where there was an endless flow of ideas and everyone shaped the final music to be presented live. Furthermore, all the interviewed musicians mentioned somehow the idea that a good leader leaves plenty of room for idea sharing and personal contribution of all the members in shaping the music and changing strategic directions: “A good leader is often the one that surrounds himself with people capable of offering those proposals”. This also shows that, as team members can learn from the leader and other members, so can the leader learn from any team member in equal terms. As all team members actively engage in the leadership process (Pearce and Conger, 2004), team dynamics and coordination behaviors are strengthened and the ‘leader as leader’ role faints.

In addition, the analyzed behaviors go beyond the shared leadership frame of mind mentioned previously. Here, not only everyone assumes equal importance, but also the leader totally abandons control in a conscious way and does not lead. As this flexibility depends on team and context specific characteristics (developed in the following section), this does not happen always and there is no specific moment where it is supposed or planned to happen. Some

musicians reported this state as a higher state they aim to achieve: “ In an ideal case, in a formation I idealize, the leader blurs. Each one contributes to the overall objective that everyone acknowledges”. When we verify that the leader both eliminates any control behavior and shows no sign of being strategically directing the team there is, in fact, no leader – thus the leader absence second order dimension of further abstraction in the data analysis. Being so, when everyone assumes equal importance in the team and there is a leader absence, the leader is seen as a team member just like everybody else, what we refer to as leaderlessness.

Figure 2 – Leaderlessness overarching dimension construction



Flexible Structure

In parallel with studying leadership behaviors, we focused our attention in combo’s team structures and its dynamics. Observational data proved once again to be important once it allowed us to further explore the patterns that were being constructed through the interviews analysis, giving useful insights on team dynamics and how musicians interacted with each other.

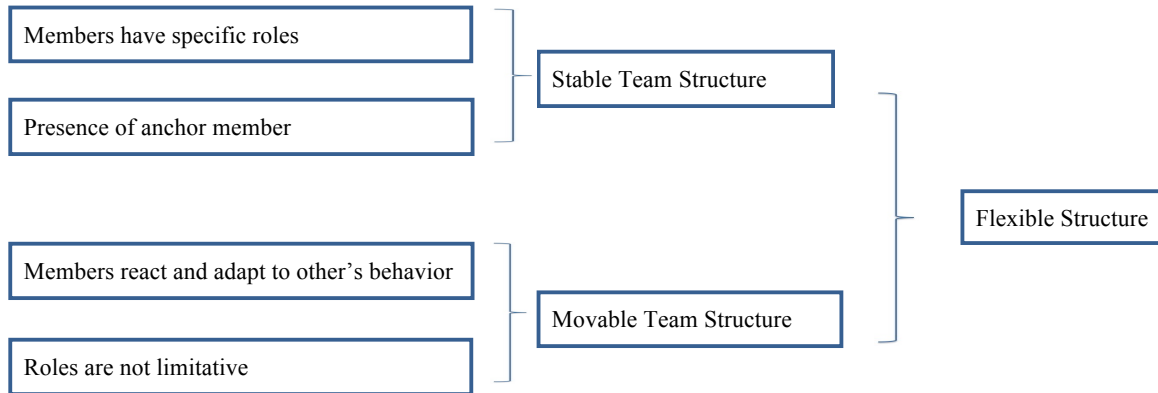
On the one hand, we found evidence of a stable team structure with clear, defined roles for each musician, and pivotal positions to be occupied by team members at specific times. This means that each musician is called in to play due to its contribution to the music as a whole and

because of the function he will be fulfilling. This role-based characteristic based on the instrument's functions in a jazz combo is one of the characteristics that allow for great levels of member rotation and for these ever changing teams to function effectively with high levels of cooperation and real time coordination. Moreover, the fact that musicians have specific roles to carry out in given situations gives the needed stability for creativity and improvisation to be taken further by other members of the team that, at that moment, are encouraged to explore grounds beyond their initial roles. Musicians often called our attention to the presence of an anchor member that holds the direction of the ongoing exploration of others, the pivotal position mentioned earlier. One of the musicians talked about this using an analogy of a situation where four people are willing to challenge a cliff. For this to happen, one of them must be in the rear holding the other three to prevent all four to fall in case of any slip. This stability is thus provided by whoever is not exploring different paths or going beyond its role at a given moment, allowing others to do so.

On the other hand, musicians strongly expressed the need to innovate and not to be restricted by their role in the band. Going beyond one's instrument limitations is highly regarded among musicians, and a drummer playing melodies (instead of rhythm) is a common example in our interviews: "When you hear him play, he is playing melodies. He understands what is happening harmonically in such a way that he can take the music to another dimension. I love to do trades with him, it is very frequent to hear musical phrases, that is not just rhythm". As there are no closed functionalities, creativity is the limit, and only a highly mutable team structure will allow for such levels of creativity to be achieved. Members are encouraged to go beyond their roles and explore unknown paths, balancing the excitement of innovation and the risk of failure in an unpredictable disclosure of events. One important characteristic of this movable dimension of the team's structure is that musicians are always adapting to each other's actions through constant listening and corresponding with mutual adjustment. This allows functions to be switched if there is a need to, and to obtain real time coordination through improvised musical moments, allowing continuity in the workflow and music making. When observing a quartet playing, we could report

high levels of coordination and mutual adjustment between musicians while each one of them experimented and improvised with no pre-planned coordination.

Figure 3 – Flexible Team Structure overarching dimension construction



Enablers of Flexible Structure

Pasmore (1998) argued that, in jazz, “the entire system and each of its many components make flexibility possible”. The mentioned distributed flexibility components led us to go deeper in our analysis, going through the transcribed interviews once more in order to find the enablers of this dynamic structure, both coming from the leader and team members. We were then able to categorize their contribution for the mentioned flexibility according to their relation with both elasticity and plasticity of the team structure⁴. As so, we identified a total of nine enablers coming from the ‘leader as leader’, the ‘leader as member’ and the team members that either enable elasticity or prevent plasticity. Evidence from the interviews supporting each enabler and a summary of these enablers and their corresponding function and can be found in tables 4 and 5 respectively, present in the appendix section.

Two main enablers emerge from the ‘leader as leader’, both preventing plasticity in the team structure. To begin with, the leader prevents plasticity with the suggested style or the

⁴ We will consider elasticity as the physical property of something returning to its original shape after being deformed by an external force, and plasticity as the property of staying in that deformed shape in a non-reversible manner once external forces cease to exert tension.

aesthetics given to the music played. This aesthetic frame is giving the musicians an important implicit border on where to explore and where to go, thus avoiding someone to go too far away from the set goal in musical terms. Additionally, the leader is seen as an ‘emergency anchor’: even though any member can serve as the anchor member at a given moment as described above, he is the one in charge of redirecting the course of action if there is any need to in an unexpected situation where no such support is found. This is done in order to prevent any irreversible change or damage in what is being accomplished as music, and can be made by showing where is the right time or showing when to go to the head of the theme, for example.

The ‘leader as member’ also shows two enabling characteristics for effective team dynamics settings to exist. To begin with, the ‘leader as member’ goes with the team, meaning that he searches an equality that serves as an incentive for other members to take risks and to feel comfortable with the possibility of failing and learning from there. This is allowing great elasticity levels in the team structure and enhancing its dynamics, as experimenting behaviors are greater when a psychological safety environment is set up (Edmondson, 1999). Besides this, when deliberately opting for leaderlessness, one is also preventing plasticity in setting an implicit common agreement that serves as a yield point, from which it is not supposed to go beyond. Even though this is a constantly changing agreement adaptable to the moment’s circumstances, when the leader abdicates its role and plays side by side with team members, the limits of exploration are set by this implicit agreement made between all of them.

Finally, team members are also one of the components enabling these dynamics to exist in the right balance, both making possible elasticity and preventing plasticity. We identified three enablers that were raising elasticity, one that prevented plasticity and one that contributed to both. Going through our interviews, we became aware that individual competence is, in the professional jazz scene, taken for granted most of the times. This does not mean it is not playing an important role, on the contrary: by controlling his own instrument near perfection, one is able to focus on things beyond technical skills and to search for a higher level of music making. The musician can

go beyond what is defined and challenge his own role – this is actually defining team elasticity. What is more, in jazz combos where high levels of elasticity were observed, musicians showed great levels of openness and acceptance of the present moment, and there were high levels of trust in oneself and among team members. The fact that a musician is intrinsically motivated to play that music and is self-confident to explore new paths and use its creativity at its most will provide the conditions for this elasticity to be developed, as long as there is confidence between all members.

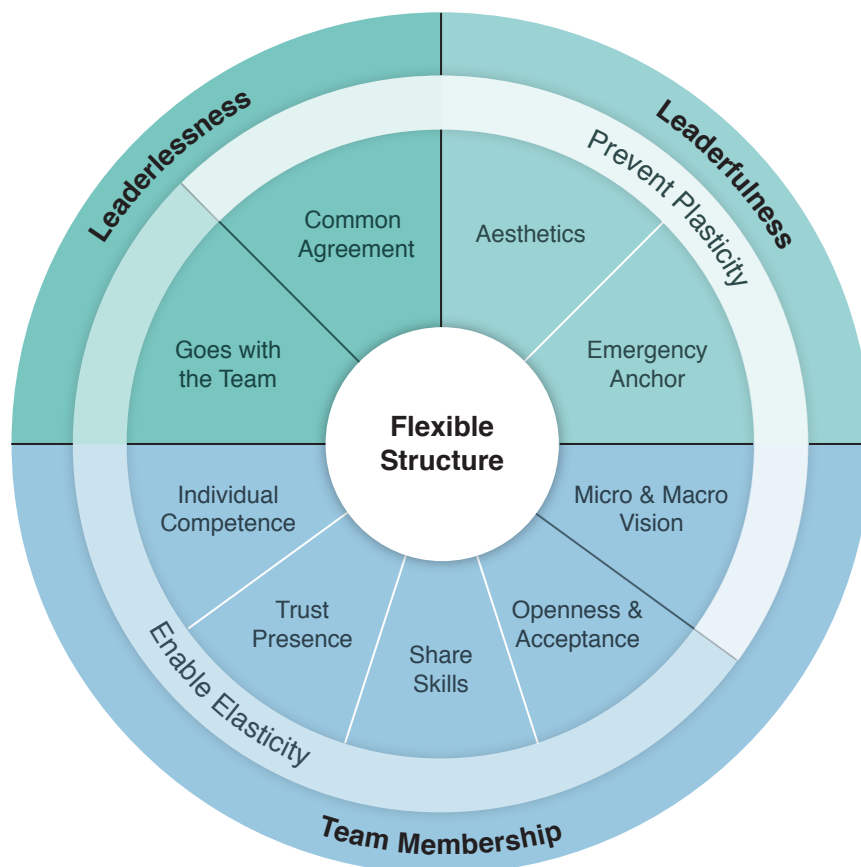
The answers to our questions “What is the degree of knowledge sharing in harmonic, melodic and rhythmic subjects between musicians? Is it a plus in improvisation and coordination between members?” allowed us to conclude that knowing about other’s roles and share the same skills was both enabling elasticity and preventing plasticity. On the one hand, just as individual competence, it allows for musicians to challenge their instrument and take it beyond its limits, overlapping or even substituting other musician’s roles sometimes once they know what they do⁵. On the other hand, it gives the musicians the perception of their instrument’s role in other member’s eyes, allowing them to have a clear idea of what was expected from them by others, preventing them to loose the scope of their function in an irreversible way and coming back to it when they feel it is necessary. Finally, the fact that a professional musician is able to have what we call a ‘micro and macro vision’ of what is happening musically prevents plasticity in the team structure once they know where should they stop exploring and detaching from the musical goal while concentrating on the details of their performance. This way, even when greatly involved in the moment and focusing on the micro vision of their improvising or interaction with others, a macro perspective is framing the creative and exploratory behaviors. In the words of a musician: "There is this image I have: you are in a car, with all the mess of the horns, the traffic lights, turning left and right, but at the same you are like in a helicopter seeing where did the car come from, and

⁵ It is observed during live performances in which roles are reversed at some point, as the pianist is in charge of keeping the rhythm and the melodies are defined by the drummer, for example.

where is it going. And you do that at the same time, because in the music we play you have to be reacting to the millisecond".

We are now able to build the final proposed model, one that presents the leaderfulness overarching dimension including two enablers of a flexible structure – ‘aesthetics’ and ‘emergency anchor’ –, both preventing plasticity; the leaderlessness overarching dimension also containing two enablers – ‘goes with the team’ and ‘common agreement’ – enabling elasticity and preventing plasticity respectively; and the enablers coming from team members that allow for a flexible structure to be achieved – ‘individual competence’, ‘trust presence’, ‘share skills’, ‘openness and acceptance’ enabling elasticity and ‘micro and macro vision’ preventing plasticity. This model presents a dual leadership behavior and the enablers of a flexible structure – coming from the dual leader and team members – that enhance instant coordination and cooperation, allowing teaming to occur more effectively.

Figure 4 – A model of a Dual Leader in a flexible team structure and its enablers



Discussion

Our investigation suggests a dual way of leading in jazz contexts, which may be of important contribution to knowledge on teaming, a theme that remains underexplored in the literature. In addition, we offer a possible explanation of how can the leader and team members relate effectively with a flexible structure that seems appropriate to raise creativity levels and enable spontaneity in the workflow with real time coordination and cooperation. Regarding leadership behaviors, overarching dimensions that characterize leaderfulness and leaderlessness resulted from our analysis, two seemingly opposite positions for one to be in. We suggest that instead of paradoxically seen, these dimensions should be taken as leader behaviors in a duality. This way, the leader will be providing the conditions for team members to work and framing directions on where to explore, while giving at the same time the opportunity to augment creativity levels and personal expression through exploring novel situations, both crucial components of innovative performance.

Firstly, we highlight the importance of leaderfulness to be present. Even though jazz is an environment that calls for flat hierarchies, our findings show that the existence of a musical concept framing the musical exploration and a vision that guides the group is of great importance. Hackman (2002) showed how important it is for a leader to offer a vision and a challenging direction for a team, and only when this is verified can we demand for higher degrees of freedom to foster creativity. Additionally, we suggest that the leader is the one responsible for designing the team composition, selecting members with the right balance of skills and competences. This is of great importance once it is an initial step to achieve the desired outcomes in what creativity and flexibility is concerned. As Wageman (2001) noted, a leader can have an impact on how prone a team is to self-management and performance effectiveness, so designing it and applying a rigorous selecting process plays an important role not only in the final outcome but also in how it is achieved. This happens because how something is achieved will be different from time to time as it is supposed to be shaped by all, reflecting one's personal characteristics. Consequentially, only having very competent team members is not enough, not for this type of teams. A leader should

search for potential team members that can take the lead and that are pro-active, initiate change without instructions and that can shape the ongoing process of setting a direction. In fact, in line with Ancona et al. (2007), we think that this is not a static thing coming from the leader only, but rather a continuous process that is collaborative and receives inputs from each team member.

This way, and knowing that “authoritarian control of knowledge workers can stifle the very innovation and creativity that one desires from them” (Pierce, 2004) we suggest that a leader must complement its functions embracing leaderlessness, that is, being a member with no difference whatsoever towards other team members. Given the high degree of interdependence between jazz musicians, sharing leadership seems like an appropriate behavior to be present in jazz bands, aligned with the idea that the more interdependent and creative the work is, the greater the need for an extreme participative leadership (Pearce, 2004). In fact, research has shown that improvisational and creative contexts ask for such a degree of interdependence and mutual influence that leadership is often shared and dispersed according to the situation needs (eg. Barrett, 2012; Vera and Crossan, 2005). What we see happening in the studied jazz combos is that the leader role can be diluted among team members, and the ‘leader as leader’ changes to and from the ‘leader as member’ as the conditions vary. We found evidence that the fact that the leader is seen as member in equal terms raises the psychological safety environment needed for one to innovate, take risky steps and boost creativity levels when interacting and sharing with others to pursue a common goal. Our findings lead us to think that an adequate type of teaming leadership, one that supports “speaking up, asking questions and sharing ideas” (Edmondson, 2012) might be found through the described dual leader. Different from what Edmondson (2012) describes in a teaming situation found at IDEO – a leader that “steps away” –, we observe a type of leader that goes “along the way with” in equal terms with team members. We consider this a small but important detail, once it defines the dual nature of the proposed leader. In a presence of such a leader, the conditions for expertise integration and interpenetration among team members are created, suggesting that these behaviors go beyond shared leadership and are closer to the relational

leadership proposed by Gittell and Douglass (2012). When the leader integrates the team as an equal member, he allows for such levels of openness and knowledge sharing that “each participant is influenced by the other to achieve a more integrated understanding of the situation”, instead of just adding upon the expertise of others (Gittell and Douglass, 2012). In order to increment the effectiveness of creative teams and to enhance exploration of novel situations, both leaderfulness and leaderlessness are needed, and none of them is more important than the other, they are two sides of the same coin. Once they are interdependent and interrelated, the role changes in an implicit way according to momentary needs, with no pre-planned coordination or timing, thus impeding the team falling into pure chaos while not giving it too much constraints that would prejudice creativity.

The “dynamic capabilities” (Edmondson, 2012) that allow for great levels of creativity are possible due to an ever-changing structure that is constantly recreating it self, depending on the behaviors of the musicians, offering the right balance between stability and flexibility. Teaming demands for “dynamic, flexible teams that combine employees’ strengths, experience, and knowledge to achieve organizational goals” (Edmondson, 2012), but this should not eliminate stability entirely. In innovative contexts, one aims at having great levels of elasticity where defined roles are just a starting point, once this will allow for creativity to be taken to an extreme and for novel outcomes to be achieved. At the same time, one must remain attentive, as this elasticity must be somehow controlled: the team structure must not stretch too much and break its limits, once it will create irreversible and unwanted changes. What we describe as flexible structures – ones that allow for innovation and reaction to surprise with real time coordination without, however, losing control of the ongoing work –, resembles the semistructures concept developed by Brown and Eisenhardt (1997). The authors propose that, with these semistructures, innovation is able to happen once they are “sufficiently rigid so that change can be organized to happen, but not so rigid that it cannot occur. Too little structure makes it difficult to coordinate change. Too much structure makes it hard to move” (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997). In the same way, Klein et al. (2006) and

Bechky and Okhuysen (2011) showed that the coordination needed for innovation could be obtained by joining bureaucratic role-based structures and flexible processes that provide the needed equilibrium of stability and flexibility. We add to the existing literature by providing an explanation on how can leaders and team members relate with these flexible structures, keeping them in constant reformulation without losing the delicate balance between stability and instability that they demand to be effective. The following described enablers are depending on each other, and all of them must be present for more effective levels of creativity and exploration to be verified.

The presented dual leader has an important role in enabling a flexible and organic structure, and shifting between his/her dual facets contributes to enable enough elasticity to incentive creativity and innovation while at the same time preventing plasticity that would lead the team to chaos and would impede the overall goal to be achieved. On the one hand, the leader prevents plasticity by situating the work with his/her aesthetics or style and by serving as an emergency anchor. By doing so, the leader is taking precaution from failing to provide a challenging direction for the team, which would lead to poorer performance (Hackman, 2002), while he/she takes an active function intervening in the team's work (Hackman and Wageman, 2005). This shows that, before developing mechanisms to augment freedom and uncertainty, a leader should set a common ground on where to develop work and, at minimum, suggest a path on where to start exploring. On the other hand, it is crucial that the leader goes with the team and places an implicit common agreement with team members, once he is setting an important yield point that gives the team a frame where a sense of security and risk tolerance is giving an incentive for innovative behaviors and enabling elasticity in the team structure. As noted by Pasmore (1998), flexibility is found within the limits of those agreements, and changes of responsibility and direction can now be made in uncertain paths in order to achieve greater levels of spontaneity and innovation, the ultimate goal of creative teams.

According to Edmondson (2012), “teaming occurs when people apply and combine their expertise to perform complex tasks or develop solutions to novel problems”. As so, our study also

underscores the importance of team member's enablers for such expertise to interpenetrate while responding to unexpected situations. For such dynamics to happen, we argue that trust and individual competence among team members must be present. In fact, Klein et al. (2006) have noted that environments where trust is present and members are individually very competent, one can seek for more dynamic work settings, and as members can embrace more uncertainty, the elasticity needed for originality is created. These are, in turn, necessary conditions for more elasticity to be presented and for real time coordination to be taken in an effective way, as they allow for the very nature of roles to be dynamic within the team. In line with Bechky and Okhuysen (2011), we propose that shared knowledge allows shifting roles, once knowing about other's roles and sharing the necessary skills to perform them are crucial enablers for continuity in a work with unexpected situations. In creative contexts, adjusting to other's behaviors might mean taking their role temporarily and this is only possible when "cross-member expertise" (Bechky and Okhuysen, 2011) is built. Equally important, this shared knowledge together with a micro and macro vision of the ongoing work keep the innovative behaviors in context and prevent too much experimenting leading to unstructured chaos (Brown and Eisenhardt, 1997). This means team members must develop skills that allow them to be aware of the general direction of the ongoing work while paying attention to the detail of their own responsibility. As intrinsic motivation has already been referred as a substitute for leadership (Kerr and Jermier, 1978), we also assert that one's openness and acceptance of moment is of great importance in creative teams, and should be present if one searches for a team that dives deeply in collective creative processes without a strong leader presence. This offers a possible explanation of how elasticity is enabled through the ongoing experimenting that a leader absence provides, as intrinsically motivated members are more willing to take risks and to embrace fully the ongoing work without the need of vertical impositions.

Conclusion

We proposed to study jazz combos to gain deeper insights on leadership behaviors in creative contexts and the enabling conditions for flexible structures that allow for teaming to be effective. We studied real time teams – teams with short room for trial and error that attempt to do things right at a first attempt, given the impossibility of going back to redo them (Hackman, 2002) – once this represents a highly demanding environment in which instant coordination and cooperation are key factors to perform the work and achieve the desired outcomes with immediate and irreversible consequences, a proper environment to study teaming.

Adding to the existing literature, we provide insights on how can leaders behave in order to raise the creative potential of a dynamic setting, developing a model of leading teaming. In line with Pearce (2004) and Klein et al. (2006), we emphasize the need to shift to and from vertical leadership to controlless behaviors according to the moment's needs, stating that a leader should embrace both leaderfulness and leaderlessness in a dual way. This suggests an addition to Kerr and Jermier's (1978) substitutes for leadership once, instead of considering external factors that neutralize the leadership function, we propose that the leader consciously chooses to be a self-neutralizer, thus creating an internal factor for substituting his own function. Moreover, offering a potential explanation on how can a desired flexible structure be enabled by the leader and team members, we emphasize crucial factors that need to be present to enhance elasticity while being cautious enough to prevent plasticity at the same time. This way, adding to the proposed "team scaffolds" by Valentine and Edmonson (2012), we suggest a possible enabler of teaming effectiveness, achieved through a flexible structure that is constantly recreated by team members, consequence of real time coordination.

There are boundaries in our study, meaning that the generalization of our results is limited by certain conditions. Firstly, we conducted qualitative research and were constrained to its analyzing methods, thus interpreting musicians words in way that is far from totally objective. Secondly, even though we were able to build our model on emerging patterns, we relied in a

substantial way in data from our interviews. Although we made an effort to complete a triangulation process with research and observational data, we are aware of the limitations of our analysis relying in a considerable way in a single source of data. We conducted our study in a setting that is improvisational and flexible by design: Jazz has improvisation in its very nature. In creative environments, especially in improvised music, the product is the creative process itself (Sawyer, 2000), making it difficult to generalize our findings to other fields where the product is the only focus of a collective effort and there is no room for spontaneity along the process, such as a mass production factory or a production line where one aims at zero error margin, a context where a big effort is set to minimize deviations from the set standards and low levels of flexibility are observed. Even so, we consider our findings an incremental contribution to leadership behaviors in knowledge work fields where the work process and the underlying team dynamics are important dimensions when considering the outcomes achieved. Being aware that there is no single way to be a good leader (Klein et al., 2006; Hackman, 2002), we suggest that these results may be extended to knowledge teams with a high degree of innovation where team members interpenetrate their expertise to find novel solutions.

Future research could be made to understand how trust is generated in settings where teaming occurs and what is its prevalence in highly changing and adaptive teams, once it was taken for granted in this study. Since it was not the focus of the present research, trust factors did not receive the main emphasis while analyzing the data, leaving room for future research to investigate the roots of trust in these teams and its relation with the mentioned flexible structure. Finally we hope researchers have a further incentive to explore a dual way of being a leader, both in creative contexts and not, and its consequences in team dynamics and group outcomes. If collection of empirical data shows that the proposed dual leadership is verified to go beyond jazz contexts and present itself as an effective leadership behavior for teaming in creative enterprise contexts or knowledge teams with a focus on innovation, one can then expand the achieved results to a broader set of teams.

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Appendix

Table 1 - Evidence for First Order Themes: Leaderfulness

1 st Order Themes	Representative 1 st Order Evidence
a. Leader is a creator or composer	<p>"If we think of leading a group, then we are going to play originals."</p> <p>"Now, the leader has an obligation in having written material of his own"</p> <p>"Mainly, the center of the question is my music. I was the one composing it, so it is natural that I become the leader of that."</p>
b. Leader gives strategic orientations	<p>"I like that there is a certain direction, a ground that a leader wants me to be in and other that I am not supposed to go to."</p> <p>"It is the leader that must provide the esthetic direction of the combo."</p> <p>"He has to say 'In this concert I want to play these songs and not that ones', the leader has to give a live to the group somehow. He has to give an orientation to the band."</p>
c. Leader searches for specifics things and limits freedom and creativity	<p>"But exactly because your homework as a leader has been done, there are suggestions that you know are not worth trying because you had already thought about them, or because it is not where you want to go."</p> <p>"Even the free jazz can be very restrictive. The leader may want a very specific thing from each player."</p> <p>"There are other players that want a certain thing from each of the players and there is not a lot of space for everyone."</p>
d. Members must be aligned with musical concept	<p>"You have to go there and find musicians that fit, depending on the esthetic idea you want to print in your project."</p> <p>"I want exactly those specific musicians and I know my music will sound good once they are the right musicians to do that."</p> <p>"As there is diversity in the jazz scene, people choose musicians according to their orientation lines."</p>
e. Leader trusts chosen members and is personally/musically related with them	<p>"You know already that their musicality will raise the musical level, but you also have to play with personal factors in order to be capable of being more honest and less nervous with questions that are not regarding the music."</p> <p>"Then, besides the musical factors, I will choose that person with whom I identify with and that have a certain empathy in a personal level, that is unavoidable."</p>

"The leader has to be careful enough to choose musicians with whom he feels good. Usually you call musicians that play well, but mostly those who you feel good around."

f. Leader organizes and sets work conditions

"As a leader, you are supposed to distribute the sheets, the audio as well. You have to maximize the rehearsal time not to lose time in simple details that should be viewed at home."

"To be a combo leader you have to be a very organized person. You have a lot of good musicians that are disorganized and that might not work very well."

"The leader of a certain group, firstly, has an obligation of taking care of all the logistics. That means he has to create the conditions for the other musicians that are playing his music to play it in the best conditions possible, being in a rehearsal or live performance."

g. Leader takes care of bureaucratic work

"And as the leader you have to [...] call everyone, negotiate the payment, figure out all the details, if you are going somewhere you need to take care of the logistics. So it is much more than just the music."

"The leader also has those small responsibilities such as making phone calls, schedule rehearsals..."

"And then you have to gather musicians, conciliate the agendas, schedule gigs, all those questions."

h. Leader has the main role in conflict resolution

"If you are the leader and realize there are some problems you talk or warn the musicians, or you just don't call them next time."

"When a leader is able to calm things down and provide the needed answers that is always a positive thing. Sometimes it happens [...], there might be conflicts and the leader has to take a decision."

"He has to tell 'This is my composition, I respect your opinion, but I hear it this way, let's try to make it sound like this', it is the leader's role in those situations."

Table 2 - Evidence for First Order Themes: Leaderlessness

1 st Order Themes	Representative 1 st Order Evidence
a. Members bring new ideas or suggestions	<p>"I was recording an album and we hadn't reached the final thing yet. Then the bass player, that was not the leader, suggested a different approach and that was the final take, because it was something fresh and new."</p> <p>"I just think it makes music more interesting when you have new ideas coming in, different ideas makes it a lot more interesting."</p> <p>"It is good to leave enough room, as all the elements can contribute somehow and bring things you didn't even imagine and that can have an influence in the final result."</p>
b. Members are able to change strategic directions	<p>"No, anybody in the band can do this [change strategic directions proposing new paths], and I think leaders who look for new things choose musicians that are open for new things and try to change things."</p> <p>"Maybe another musician in the band might think something could be done better so it doesn't have to be just the leader that says "let's try this in a different way".</p> <p>"There might be interventions from musicians to suggest new ways. It is such an open thing that changes every time."</p>
c. There is a collective music shaping	<p>"It can be a part of the process to be a democratic thing, in the sense that the leader gives the possibility to other musicians to say 'I think it would be better this way', it can be a product half cooked by each one."</p> <p>"I am extremely open to the drummer saying 'Man, let's play this in other way, what if...' and he suggests something and I say 'Cool, let's change'. I am always open for suggestions because I think the music only has to gain with that."</p> <p>"Even though I might have a clear idea, that does not mean the final result does not have a contribution from all the musicians."</p>
d. Leader shares its role with others	<p>"In that case it is a contextual leadership: who leads is the guitar player and who decides the entries is the saxophonist, it is a double leadership."</p> <p>"I just recorded Diogo's album, where there wasn't really any leader but at certain points someone would come out between improves. The leader sort of changes."</p>

"That is an interesting question because in my trio the other two musicians don't have a submissive attitude, like workmen. They are band leaders as well, it is a trio with three bandleaders."

e. Leader doesn't lead

"When we are improvising there is no one person who is leading, it is like an open group kind of thing."

"They are all pleasant musicians to be a leader of because I don't have to be a leader. That is the best you can ask for."

"It would be somehow contradictory if we would like to develop new languages and approaches and then say 'I am the leader'."

"With the trio I often cease to be the leader. If I present a music, I might talk about it, but besides that it is just three musicians, with no difference whatsoever."

f. Leader does not cut freedom

"I like that people have that freedom to express themselves and give something of their own - that is what makes the project more interesting and you notice that when you hear it."

"I think that is the beauty, that is not a risk, it is the beauty. It is the nicest thing that you give the space to somebody else to say what he wants to say."

"If I don't give you the freedom to express your personality, what happens is that I will want you to play something I pre-arranged in my head [...]. That makes me working with you or some other musician pretty much the same thing, and then you lose what is, in my opinion, the very essence of this type of music and what motivates me."

Table 3 - Evidence for First Order Themes: Flexible Structure

1st Order Themes	Representative 1st Order Evidence
a. Team with specific roles	<p>"There are also very specific roles in a jazz combo. A rhythm section, by its name, needs to have a very strong bond."</p> <p>"You need to have a leading voice and someone to back it up. We all have to understand how it works, we need to know that if we have three harmonic instruments, it will be musically richer if each one has a different role."</p> <p>"When putting it in these terms, if you call someone that is highly aware of his role in the group, that is depending on his instrument, then things will work out fine."</p> <p>"A very important thing in the combo is that each element must acknowledge his own place."</p>
b. Presence of anchor member	<p>"I think we always get lost, but never the three at the same time. A pianist I really like gave this image: if we are playing at the edge of a cliff, if one of us is holding the others, then we can challenge the cliff."</p> <p>"In a combo, the functions have always to be fulfilled, but not necessarily by all or just one."</p> <p>"A good solo is not just how one plays. A good solo is also how the others support him, how they go with him, how they help him."</p> <p>"We have total responsibilities, but there are focuses of responsibility."</p>
c. Roles are not limitative	<p>"Drums are essentially a rhythm instrument and you have, for the most part, to keep the rhythm, unless your are playing in more open things. For example, with Paula I don't play that much rhythm, it is an open frame of mind and her music asks for it. She keeps the rhythm somehow, so I don't think in rhythmic thinks like a support for music, it is more a painter kind of thing, you move here and there."</p> <p>"What happens is that the rules cease to be rules and there is total freedom to break them, and then the music can go anywhere."</p> <p>"It is a complicated music because the functionalities, especially in contemporary jazz, are not closed."</p> <p>"It seems to me that, even if he has a specific role, he will want to release himself from it, he will want a more active role. That can be great because any musician, whatever his instrument is, will want to be innovative and use his creativity."</p>

"Is there a specific role for each one? The objective is exactly not to be. The best scenario is that each musician does not 'wear the skin' of his own instrument."

d. Members react and adapt to other's behavior

"Sometimes I react by opposition: if they are playing a lot of notes and very destabilizing ones, I go for the opposite and play long and calm notes."

"Our only reference is to be listening to each other, without this we cannot do anything. We always have to be listening to each other, no doubt. You react constantly and see how is it sounding: you create dialogues and that is the most interesting because it is spontaneous."

"A jazz musician has to be open to adjust. We have to be sensitive enough to understand the paths each one is choosing and try to fit the best way possible in that. We try to find our place in the music wherever it makes sense, and the more susceptible we are to whatever happens, the better."

"Anything can happen and each musician, besides concentrating on his own role, has to be paying great attention to whatever happens around to be able to react to those details. And then, suddenly, you have magic moments happening."

Table 4 - Evidence for Enablers of Flexible Structure

Enabler	Representative Evidence
Leader as Leader	
a. Aesthetics or style	<p data-bbox="587 405 1372 495">"I am an apologist of freedom, but that should not over emphasize too much, as it can put at risk stylistic and creative factors."</p> <p data-bbox="587 517 1372 595">"In that sense you can see my leading presence more in the composed ideas, because I have a clear idea of what I want."</p> <p data-bbox="587 618 1372 730">"When we are playing the written material there is a leader presence. [...] He would choose the feel that he wants, specially if is his composition."</p>
b. Emergency anchor	<p data-bbox="587 757 1372 943">"In our case, as our themes are songs with structures, I would say I am the one that holds the structure in place. Even though there are big deviances in some themes, there is always a structure and a clear idea of what it should sound like. A lot can happen, but I am kind of the support"</p> <p data-bbox="587 965 1372 1043">"Giving tempos, deciding endings, little signs - that can be musical or even physical – that is for the leader to do."</p>
Leader as Member	
a. Goes with the team	<p data-bbox="587 1115 1372 1249">"I like to put in practice a kind of music that does not have people making backgrounds for the soloist - I like that everyone is equal, always in a dialogue. There is much variety and contrasts."</p> <p data-bbox="587 1272 1372 1417">"I have so much pleasure in the fact that I cease to be a leader bass player, I am just a musician that is appearing in equal terms and I am a listener at the same time - with the bonus that I was the one composing the song and I like to hear it."</p> <p data-bbox="587 1440 1372 1529">"I believe a good leader is only a good leader when he is a good sideman, when he knows how to be on the other side as well."</p>
b. Common Agreement	<p data-bbox="587 1547 1372 1693">"Most of the times in the projects I play in it is always very flexible, not always the final opinion is from the leader, but from a common agreement. A leader only has to gain if he is that flexible and the music will only beneficiate from that."</p> <p data-bbox="587 1715 1372 1794">"There is that openness and, mostly because I playing with such good musicians, it would be silly not to use their ideas."</p> <p data-bbox="587 1816 1372 1861">"It comes down to have an open mind, that's it."</p>

Team Members

- a. Individual Competence
- "They all have to be good musicians – to have a good sense of rhythm, to have a good sound and to have a good ear. If you are good at these three things then you are good a musician. If you are a musician that listens and if you have good taste you can play with anybody."
- "You study everything for then not to think on anything. You want as many tools to be able to express yourself without thinking - when you walk on the street you are not thinking you have to breath as well. [...] When you are playing you can simply be concentrated on the music, not in the technique."
- "When you have musicians that you know are very good it all becomes easier."
-
- b. Trust in self and others
- "Your self-confidence as a musician is the most important think in managing all this."
- "You always have to trust. I always give the benefit of doubt, in a good sense."
- "They are musicians that give me peace and trust in the sense that you know that, no matter what happens, there is always a solution. You can take it to different paths but it will flow. It is just like a shoal or a flock of birds, where everyone changes direction at the same time."
- "You know, I always go by the example that if you do your best, other people will do their best too, and if they do their best that is probably the most that you can ask."
-
- c. Know about other's roles and share skills
- "The fact that I know the harmonic part as well as the melodic helps me to have a bigger perception of the music's structure, like a frame. But when you play another instruments, then it all becomes much more solid. If I can play other instruments such that I can be on the other side, I can have a perception of how it is to be playing other instrument with a group."
- "That makes us much more like a team and makes us respect each other much more, even if it is just to understand each instrument's idiosyncrasies, that is much more rich."

“If we have that shared knowledge, together with the fact that we are able to play another instrument, we are able to understand much better our own function. If I play bass, what would I like to feel from the drummer? Being on the other side can give us a different perception, it can give us the notion of what other instruments demand from ours. I think it is fundamental that the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic knowledge of all the players is shared, the higher the level of sharing, the better.”

d. Openness and
Acceptance of moment and
music

"The willingness to play the music and to explore it – it is important the question of wanting to play that music, that is the essential factor."

"The capacity they have as a group, from the moment a music is accepted, from the moment that fact is assumed, is to serve that music, to search for the common goal."

"If you are open to anything you just don't care where it goes. Even if you don't like it, it might turn out that you do like it. You accept it, that is what is happening."

e. Micro and Macro Vision

"Well you are playing in a form, obviously. If you don't have that constant knowledge of where you are in the form then it all goes to crap. Like standards, going away from the form is good, but always having the knowledge where you are, that is the most important thing."

"There is this image I have: you are in a car, with all the mess of the horns, the traffic lights, turning left and right, but at the same you are like in a helicopter seeing where did the car come from and where is it going. And you do that at the same time, because in the music we play you have to be reacting to the millisecond."

"It is very positive and important to reach that state where you are much more attentive to others than to yourself. I am more alert to the music, to everything that is happening."

Table 5 - Enablers of Flexible Structure and their function

Enablers	Responsible	Function
Aesthetics or style	Leader as Leader	Prevent Plasticity
Emergency anchor	Leader as Leader	Prevent Plasticity
Goes with the team	Leader as Member	Enable Elasticity
Common agreement	Leader as Member	Prevent Plasticity
Individual competence	Team Members	Enable Elasticity
Trust presence	Team Members	Enable Elasticity
Know about other's roles and share skills	Team Members	Both
Openness and acceptance of moment and music	Team Members	Enable Elasticity
Micro and macro vision	Team Members	Prevent Plasticity

Interview protocol

1. What is the balance between freedom and control in a jazz combo? How is it defined?
2. When someone leads a jazz combo, does he/she have greater responsibilities?
3. How and by whom are conflicts resolved in a formation?
4. "Provocative competence" implies creating ruptures with the past and suggest new paths. Is this a leader exclusive role?
5. How do you feel when you hand on a solo to another musician? How do you manage this potential risk, being aware that the music might take a different path than what you were taking until then?
6. What happens when you play with musicians from different backgrounds?
7. Is there a group mind when you play or is it a sum of individualities? What is needed to achieve it?
8. A lot of the teamwork depends on affective factors such as trust. How do you generate this trust when playing with someone you do not know? Is the final result different?

9. Can a mistake in a live performance be a good thing? Has it happened to you already? How did the other members react to your mistake?

10. What are the main factors influencing the teamwork in a combo? Are they internal or external factors?

11. Is there any difference on innovation levels between live performances and rehearsals?

12. What is the degree of knowledge sharing in harmonic, melodic and rhythmic subjects between musicians? Is it a plus in improvisation and coordination between members?

13. If you have a gig tomorrow and have to replace a musician, what are the criteria you use to do it?

Interviews conducted between September and November 2012

Lisbon, 7th January 2012