

Working on goals

A goal is a conscious and tangible idea of something we want to achieve within a measurable timeframe.

By contrast, a vision has a greater direction, it's the path which we take. A vision is based on our values, which are the conscious or unconscious driving force in ourselves. Our values decide why we do or don't do something. They set the ethical frame within which we move.

This chapter is about goals in art mediation.

When we work with goals, the more basic and unconscious layers of thought always resonate. That's why the need to make goals deserves our special attention.

In our everyday mediation work, goals of many interest groups meet on many levels: personal goals, goals of the institution, professional goals, management goals, goals of the mediation department, goals of the room-cleaning service, goals of the curators, goals of the visitors, goals of the museum attendants, goals of the culturally disadvantaged, goals of the non-visitors, goals of the gallery owners, goals of the tourism industry, goals written down in the mission statement of the museum, marketing goals, budget goals, goals of the press department, goals of collectors ...

Some of these goals are written down in mission statements, in budget plans, on websites or in image folders. Other goals are unofficial and only few people are aware of them. Nevertheless they can create a strong unconscious tendency in the institutional structure.

Goals may have different grades of intensity and priority, and may even contradict each other, for instance:

This workbook chapter was created on the occasion of a workshop at the conference "Educational turn III" as part of the "Schnittpunkt" platform, which took place on October 13, 2011, in Vienna.

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- a museum's mission statement has been elaborated, but the practical goals pursued in everyday work are completely different;
- a mediation department believes it has to accomplish the goals of the institution, to the detriment of the ideas of the mediation department itself;
- the long-term political goals of a cultural institution remain unclear or are not fully communicated, which creates insecurity and irritation;
- in a team, the goal to satisfy a particular person is more important than working on the larger content, or more important than the ideas of the other team members;
- a museum takes the goal of having many visitors as more important than to address the target groups that best fit the exhibition / the institution.

Therefore, goals in exhibitions are not simple, but complex, stratified constructs with different people involved: the artists interpret their world in their art work, the curators interpret the art in their exhibition, the mediators interpret the exhibition from their viewpoint, the visitors interpret the mediation program through their personal view.

In an exhibition, we can choose to work on many possible themes. It saves a lot of energy to first decide where the mediation should lead, exactly on what we want to focus. It is essential to be aware of the position the mediation takes, and wants to take.

Conclusion: a mediator should have a clear idea of their own goals, as well as of the official and the

“hidden” goals of the other people participating in the project. To help with this, we have developed material which can function as a base for team meetings. It can support the formulation of goals and help to build a clear organisational structure.

**MATERIAL FOR THE CONSCIOUS PERCEPTION OF GOALS
IN A MEDIATION PROJECT OR PROGRAM:**

- 1** cut out the circle (represents the mediator or the mediation team)
- 2** cut out the cards (represents the other people directly or indirectly involved in the project)
- 3** write your individual concepts on the empty cards
- 4** lay out the cards in a structure according to closeness or distance to each other
- 5** establish the position (or motion) of the mediation within or outside of these cards
- 6** reflect on this

And how about overreaching goals? To go farther, to think farther than we did until now? To try what seems impossible?

MEDIATION

ART

**MAR-
KETING**

**NON-
VISITORS**

BUDGET

**PARTY
POLITICS**

**OWN
BELIEVES
AND
VALUES**

**SPARE
TIME**

**MINOR-
ITIES**

FUN

**UNI-
VER-
SITY**

**NON-
INSTITU-
TION**

CURATOR

SOCIETY

SCHOOL

**INSTI-
TUTION**

PUBLIC



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