

Introduction to 'Hidden and Forgotten Talents'

“Det duisse gewuuën” (“You just do that”)

If something seems obvious, it often isn't. To the person for whom it is self-evident, it sounds like 'a truism'. An obvious truth that apparently cannot be disputed.

Although.... MI professionals (including the authors of this book) from the aMI Foundation looked for the deeper motives and motivations of the Beesel villagers to organize a large-scale open-air theater once every seven years. Now the largest open-air theater in the Netherlands.

The aMI Foundation (Association of Multiple Intelligences) aims to deepen and spread knowledge about multiple intelligences (MI). Its goal is aimed at increasing knowledge and applicability of MI for a broader use of all people's intelligence in their work and life. In the story of 'Stabbing the Dragon' we found many examples of the application of all intelligences.

The authors, familiar with 'Stabbing the Dragon' and involved in its developments over the years as children, young adults and adults, asked themselves the following questions based on their profession. What drives these people, the participants, what do they surrender to? But also: to what do they commit themselves? After all, voluntary is not the same as without obligation. Why are they doing this? Why do they invest all these efforts that require so much preparation (more than 2 years prior to the performance), and a lot of free time, personal energy to keep the legend of Saint George and the dragon alive, in the form of an open-air play, since 1736?

When we posed this question to the board, directors and committee members of the Stabbing the Dragon Foundation, it seemed as if the question was surprising. We first thought about the why of this question. The assumption was that the answer, at least for these authors, was a question about the known path. “Well,” was the answer, “why? You just do this, it's passion, it's in your blood, that's what you get as a Beesel resident, this is what you're raised with.”

The answers seemed understandable and self-evident, but did not quench the thirst in the search for the deeper drives and motives to throw themselves (and together with many others) into this adventure once every seven years. One more reason for the authors to conduct research and, armed with MIDAS questions, to better understand the motivations of the participants.

To be clear: this book is not about the history of the Dragon Stabbing. It is not just another management book, nor does it pretend to describe how you should/could manage an organization with volunteers.

This book is about the intelligences and talents of the participants:

- with clearly demonstrable, but also hidden and forgotten talents;
- about amateurs and semi-professionals who share their talents, skills and use creativity in addition to their daily activities and obligations;
- who from their multiple intelligences, in the preparation, organisation and performance of this theater play, utilize unique opportunities and allowing stored and forgotten talents to come to the surface (again);
- who learn to deal with joy and disappointments, learn to look for possibilities and finding creative solutions to emerging challenges;

- who (learn to) develop in a large group, enter into relationships with other (unknown) villagers; who discovered that they were more talented than they thought and had more to offer than they previously thought or showed.

This also applies to participants who have regained their self-confidence.

Finally, 'Hidden and Forgotten Talents' is about what we can take with us as a learning point for ourselves as a person from the many examples of all these villagers, in our own environment, organization, foundation, school or company.

And what can be learned from the design and implementation of the largest open-air theater in the Netherlands, 'The Stabbing Dragon performance', with the application of multiple intelligences in daily practice?

On behalf of my co-authors, I wish everyone much learning and entertainment while reading this book.

Frits Schoeren MA

Chairman and MIDAS Master-Mentor

aMI Foundation

(Short explanation)

What are Hidden and forgotten talents?

The word talent is used in two ways in this chapter. On the one hand as a personality (someone is talented) and on the other hand as a characteristic that belongs to someone (someone has talent, can do something, is handy at something, is gifted). Colloquially we recognize statements such as: “we are looking for young talents who are good are in.....”.

When we talk about hidden and forgotten talents, we mean the characteristics, skills, of that person. Sometimes one recognizes the talents in people very clearly. However, it also happens that they are there, but you do not see, hear or experience them.

Hidden talents

are hidden from view. The owner of the talent knows and realizes that they are there, but they are hidden from the outside world. A bit covered, not immediately hidden, but they are present and are largely used in their 'own time'.

Forgotten talents

have been withdrawn from one's own attention. There are other things in life that have taken priority. And over time, the talent is no longer maintained and is forgotten.

During that 'own time', described for many as free time and time outside daily obligations, such as work, study or care for others, hidden talents often come to the surface. Then the preference for an activity comes out and the talent is literally given the space to show, be heard or manifest. Usually accompanied by a feeling of pleasure, satisfaction or a strenuous relaxation. It then seems as if it is something for yourself, or just doing something together with others. It is an inner need to give in to that special motivation that calls for action, to be actively involved in something, to please yourself. People who know you well often know about it and regularly appeal to it ("shall we work together...?").

Outsiders are surprised when they hear, see or experience that someone has certain talents. (“I didn't know you....”.)

When carrying out activities, for example the preparatory activities for the Dragon Stabbing, hidden talents come to the surface. Especially people from the older generation, those over 60, have skills that they no longer use every day, but which they can still use effectively.

While one person exhibits personal effectiveness in collaboration (interpersonal intelligence) from a previous profession (teaching or management), another shows how you can make texts come alive when speaking by working with volume, intonation and pitch. The former years acquired expertise (for example in providing sales training) are wonderful tools for the starting presenter.