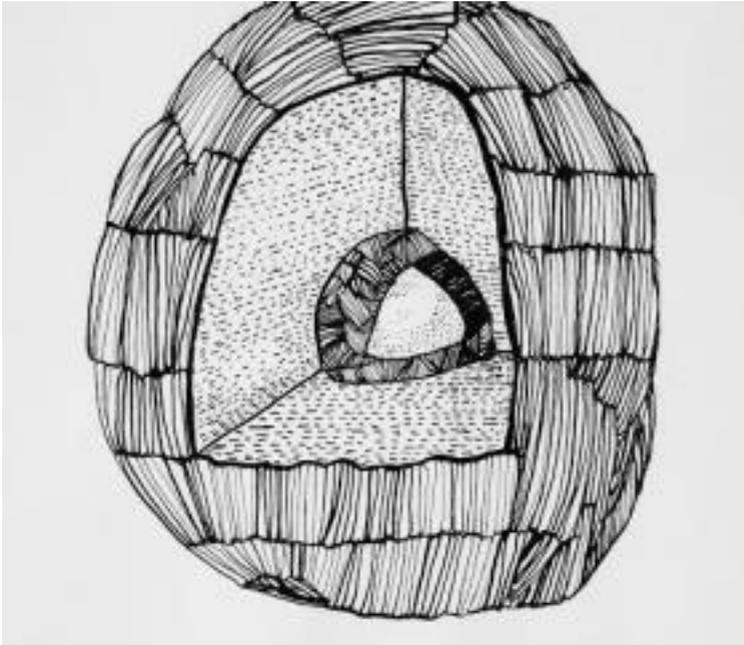

The nucleus of the cell - action



With your head full of thoughts and your body full of energy you can create your own recipe for creative activism. The way is open: experiment, find your own rhythm, your own way of operating, visualize the action and do it. There are some factors to consider before performing the action. These small details help the action to work and avoid getting lost into the mass of daily information or not reaching people.

"Art is not a mirror to reflect reality but a hammer to shape it"
Bertolt Brecht

Planning vs. No planning

Some people come up with an idea and the next moment it's already done. Acting spontaneously from the instant spot, improvising with what you have around you can work out really great. If planning makes you feel like it takes forever before anything happens and you'd rather not do anything at all if you have to plan it too much, then you'd better stop reading right now and get on with it!

However, thinking through your actions and making detailed preparations will not only prepare you for a range of different situations and outcomes but also possibly develop your actions and make them more powerful.

Planning & Preparation

There are a few simple questions you can ask yourself and your team to help solidify your idea and ensure that it works well.

Why

First of all, make sure you know why you are doing the action. Whatever action you plan on doing, it must make sense to you first. If you are convinced about what you are doing and how you will do it, it will work. If you cannot understand why you would do this action when you think about it a bit longer, it is probably a good idea to find a friend with whom you can discuss it or look for another idea which makes more sense. When doing actions you have to be prepared to receive criticism and if you have not thought of your motivation before, you can get lost when passersby approach you with arguments you did not think of beforehand. Also take a moment to think about what your aim is and what you would like this action to achieve, so that you will recognize your own success.

What

What is the essence of the action? If you formulate your action in a simple way, it makes it easier for others to understand and for you to explain. If you can find a positive angle or interesting ways to formulate your message, you will more likely find a good result. *A nice example is an action from the Notankers, a non-profit organization dedicated to banning oil tankers from Canada's Pacific North Coast. To raise awareness for their cause, they printed posters using an environmentally friendly, water-soluble ink and placed them around the streets. When it rained, the posters served as a reminder that oil spills affect everyone - driving people to "Notankers.ca" to take action. <http://vimeo.com/23338793>*

Who

Who do you want to be affected by the action? To know your target is important when thinking about how to design your action and your means of communication. Different targets will be reached by different channels. Some actions might be aimed at the staff of a corporation, others might be aimed directly at members of the public or at the media.

Where & When

Choose the place and time of the action. You can look for a symbolic place where it will be easy to do the action, where it will reach your audience or where it will get a lot of attention. The action might be perceived totally differently if it is takes place in a bus stop, a supermarket, in a museum or the main square. Pretty much the same goes for the timing: you might want to choose a symbolic date, same time as the visit of a prominent person or when there are a lot of people shopping or on the contrary - none at all. *Pussy riot's performance "Punk Prayer - Mother of God, Chase Putin Away!" in Cathedral of Christ the Savior, Moscow, is an example of using a controversial location to amplify your message.*

How

Think about how you act. There are infinite possibilities and many tactics you can employ. The purpose of using tactics is to find a critical perspective far from standard models of perception, facts and events.

After the action

Looking through the documentation, speaking with your team, talking about unexpected reactions from the public and the things that went wrong and right, will hopefully give you a good laugh and help you to be more prepared for future actions.

Concrete methods that helps to plan and evaluate actions can be found in the method chapter.



Visuals by:
Notankers.ca
