17th LILA Summit | June, 2023

Placemaking: Designing Organizational Attractors

Learning Innovations Laboratory at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

learninginnovationslab.org
We are a multi-disciplinary learning lab in which we learn with and from one another about the contemporary challenges of human learning & innovation in organizations.

We create social connections.

We generate practical impact.

We craft intellectual insights.
2022-23 Theme: Placemaking

This year at LILA, we turned to the theme of Placemaking in organizations to explore how we might navigate these place-based challenges not as passive recipients, but as agents who take an active role in the making of place.

Several of our guest speakers noted that our changing sense of place can actually offer organizations a chance to move from a feeling of precarity to one of opportunity; we can use then “spaciousness of uncertainty” to effectively navigate shifts of change and continuity around us.

At this unique moment, how might organizations use placemaking as a lens to assess the current state of their workplaces, and as a catalyst to imagine what it could be?

Placemaking offers us new ways to understand the future of work, and how these changes can impact us on both the individual team and organizational levels. Key questions that LILA members identified include

- How might organizations capitalize on this moment to reimagine the possibilities for work moving forward?
- How might we create supportive places that are flexible, imbued with purpose, and designed to meet the diverse needs of employees?
- How might we develop a collective sense of place and purpose for employees who are not located near each other?
- What specific aspects of place can help build, develop, and transmit organizational culture?
- What do our places reveal about power dynamics within our organizations, and how can placemaking help us understand patterns of inequality, and help us reshape power structures?
2022-23 Theme: Placemaking

During this year’s exploration we looked at how “places” of various kinds can support or undermine organizational engagement, thriving, and learning. We pursued the design of organizations that are inclusive, innovative, and learning-rich places no matter what the structure of work looks like.

We explored questions such as: What are the conditions that create positive placemaking at work? What has been and should be today and tomorrow the purpose of place? How do we bring (and keep) people together regardless of our geographical dispersion, our organizational structure, and its shifts? How does culture persist when we have a distributed workforce? What does "making work visible " mean in a distributed context so we can learn from others?
2022–2023 Thematic Arc

Our exploration included 4 two-day gatherings and 5 member calls where we dug deeper into member questions and challenges. Each of the gatherings featured the research of two guest faculty and each member call featured the work of additional faculty.

Members discussed the initiatives they are leading and explored ways to apply the research in ways that help advance their work.

October 2022
Trading Places—
Placemaking for Hybrid Worlds
Lynne Manzo, Ken Foote Faculty

December 2022
There’s a Place for Us—
Placemaking Through Culture & Leadership
Andrés Di Masso, Tim Cresswell Faculty

March 2023
Growing Places—
Placemaking for Learning and Thriving
Jody Hoffer Gittell, Dan Williams Faculty

June 2023
Creating Conscious Connections
Marissa King Keynote
We feel attracted to places that make us feel vibrant, joyful, connected, and playful (among other characteristics). The various styles of place or placemaking constitute “attractors,” drawing people into various patterns of behavior. How can we understand what brings people together in ways that provide a sense of place broadly understood, coordinating action, and creating a sense of a collective?
Guest faculty Lynne Manzo engages in a small group conversation with LILA members during the October 2022 gathering in Cambridge.
“Place is both the limit and the condition for all that exists... to *be* is to be in place”

—Edward Casey, 2009
December 2022: There’s a Place for Us—Placemaking Through Culture and Leadership

Andrés Di Mazo, Tim Cresswell Faculty

Particularly during times of uncertainty and transition, a leader’s role is to nurture the surfacing of organizing structures that facilitate collaborative and coordinated action. This session explored questions such as, what enables culture to survive and transform itself at times of substantial change in the environment? What are the cultural attractors that enable this type of transformation?
Lynne Manzo shares her research on Adaptive & Empowering Capacities of Place Attachment on day two of the October gathering.

Our collaborative documentation and work space in Miro for the December 2022 virtual gathering.
What would it look like if we placed learning and thriving at the core of our practices? When work is done in a hybrid environment, how do we enable, surface, and share this “knowing in being”, so it can transform the way we know and interact with colleagues? Enabling this type of learning and sensemaking is central to designing organizations for the future.
LILA Members engage in small group sensemaking conversations during the March 2023 Gathering in Cambridge.
Key Ideas from the LILA Brief

Learning briefs are one of the many tools we use at LILA to help members develop a foundational understanding of the topics we are exploring. Prior to each session, members receive a comprehensive review of the topic and speakers. These briefs help set the groundwork for shared inquiry, and provide the theoretical and academic scaffolding for our shared learning.

Highlighted here are some key ideas that were featured the Summit’s Learning Brief. The full document is accessible to LILA members here.

Members also have access to past Learning Briefs, spanning 21 years of inquiry on a wide range of topics related to human learning and innovation in organizations. These briefs can be found in the LILA Website.

LILA’s Working Definition of Organizational Placemaking:

Organizational placemaking is an intentional, creative, and collaborative process that sees people and place as interrelated and co-constructing agents with the power to influence and shape each other over time, in order to create and sustain value, meaning, and purpose for organizations and the individuals within them.

Our traditional conceptions of the “workplace” have been upended, as the very concept of “place” and the boundaries around it continue to change. Remote work has existed for a long time, but it has now been thrust upon us as a necessity; many people who may prefer to “go to work” in a physical place don’t always have that option. If we are working from home, or in a hybrid context, where does “the workplace” end, and where do our lives outside work begin? And more broadly, how might we create a sense of place where everyone feels like they belong?


A place has three defining aspects:

1. a specific geographic location (which could range from a lounge chair to a planet)
2. material form (either natural or human-made)
3. a sense of place (invested meaning and value)
Key Ideas from the Brief

How have we changed?

We constantly find ourselves in transient spaces, between things – and while we’ve traditionally thought of place as solid and fixed, Luz (2006) notes the importance of valuing in-between spaces as concrete places, too. Rather than viewing the in-between as a kind of limbo—caught between looking backwards and waiting for what’s to come—we can think of it as a valuable place itself, where we can discover new points of crossing and connection.

Hybrid Identities

One of the most obvious ways in which we have changed is in how we work together, whether it’s in person, virtually, hybrid, or a varied combination of all three. While virtual spaces can certainly be designed and facilitated to create genuine relationships and connections, there are fewer “loose” or transitional spaces for employees to interact informally and forge trust. To design an effective hybrid space, we should intentionally design with three things in mind: (1) the people physically present; (2) the people in the virtual space; and (3) the interaction between the two (Parker, 2020).

Place & power dynamics

Places embody and produce existing systems of power, and they can either perpetuate or intentionally resist the forces of oppression.

When thinking about place and power, ask:

- What’s fair? For whom?
- Who has the power?
- What’s fair? For whom?
- Who decides? How?
- What is being acknowledged? What is not?
- Who defines and redefines things?
Key Ideas from the Brief

What do we mean by place?

Discourse and Stability
Guest Faculty Andrés di Masso prompted us to ask how we might re-shape our understanding of stability, and how our organizations might find a sense of narrative continuity through change. We know that stories matter, but narration and discourse are essential for placemaking. Narration and discourse are active agents in constructing a place: there is power in naming and renaming, framing and reframing.

Place is a meaningful location, and has both a social dimension and a physical aspect:

Social Factors
Attachment to a place because of close relationships, neighborhood ties, rootedness in place, cultural qualities, strong symbolism or meaning in the place, personal or social involvement, identity, and other social factors.

Physical Factors
Attachment to a place because of physical assets like resources, amenities, proximity, natural beauty, environment, aesthetics, opportunity for recreation, rest, stimulation, or other physical or environmental factors.

Making space for place
Dave Perkins suggested that we must observe, listen, and then ask ourselves:
❖ What rhythms do we have?
❖ What rhythms do we want?
❖ Who is “we”?

Rhythms & Patterns of Place
Tim Cresswell notes that every place has a distinct choreography of rhythms, including rhythms that constructively come together, others that are dissonant in conflict; rhythms that exist without conflict, and a rhythm outside a standard norm that is controlled by external forces.
Key Ideas from the Brief

**What draws us to places?**

*Place attachment* is the emotional bonding of people to particular places.

*Place identity* refers to our relationship to the physical environment and is crafted and recrafted over time.

*Sense of place* is formed through individual and collective experiences, belonging, memories, strong community bonds, emotional attachment, place satisfaction, and dimensions of the physical environment.

All three are developed from a complex patterns of conscious and unconscious ideas, feelings, values, goals, preferences, skills, and behavioral tendencies relevant to a specific environment.

“What begins as undifferentiated space evolves into place as we come to know it and better and endow it with meaning and value.”

-Yi Fu Tuan

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**From “Roots” to Routes & Rhizomes**

In the past, we’ve often prioritized “putting roots down” in a place, but as the world grows more mobile, organizations and their employees are more geographically distributed, places are more transient and dynamic, and it’s harder to put roots down in just one place. While roots are fixed and sedentary, locking us into one place, rhizomes are more like a mobile and networked system of roots. His idea of rhizomes helps us conceptualize place as more moveable and adaptable, enabling us to think about more versatile and dynamic ways to approach placemaking in the new world of work.
Key Ideas from the Brief

How do we navigate place transitions?

As we navigate place transitions and a shifting sense of place, we need to create places that can adapt to change while maintaining some sense of continuity. Norberg-Schulz (2019) proposes the idea of genius loci, translated loosely to “the core spirit of a place”—comprising both meaning and structure.

What can we do?
If our aspiration is to build organizational places where diverse people can work, grow, and learn effectively, while feeling a sense of connection, belonging, and well-being, we need to carve out space for intentional placemaking.

Explore Multiple Scenarios
The goal of placemaking is not necessarily to define one path forward, but rather to imagine a future that takes divergent goals and needs into consideration. As Dan Williams reminded us, it’s important to have a “view from somewhere”: standpoint matters and only with multiple sets of eyes and perspectives can we imagine feasible paths forward that serve a wide range of employees and needs within an organization.

What can we do? (Continued)

Capture and Share What’s Working
When people in an organization know what is happening elsewhere, it enhances feelings of interdependence and solidarity, and builds momentum (Sharing the rhythms and patterns you notice throughout the organization can help employees see their place in the larger system (e.g., What’s working? What do we want more of? What do we want less of? How might we shift?).

Engage in Participatory Processes
Co-creation is a crucial part of placemaking, so it’s essential to identify diverse stakeholders in participatory processes.

Design for Social Interaction
Intentional placemaking involves both physical place and also the dimension of time. As we think about virtual and hybrid work, we need to be aware of the differences between synchronous and asynchronous work, and design strategically around that.

Placemaking through People
With new changes unfolding all the time, one source of stability is investing in people and relationships, creating a kind of interdependent “social architecture” of a place. Jody Hoffer Gittel suggest using relational coordination which helps people connect with each other around their work on both an emotional and practical level.
Summit Keynote:

Marissa King

Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania

Professor Marissa King’s research examines social networks, social influence, and team dynamics in health care. Her most recent line of work focuses on access to treatment for substance use disorders. She is also currently studying how to improve health care team dynamics to reduce burnout and enhance quality of care. Professor King is the author of Social Chemistry: Decoding the Elements of Human Connection. Her research and book have been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic, and National Public Radio, among other outlets. She was a professor at the Yale School of Management for more than a decade before joining The Wharton School.

LEARN MORE
MARISSA KING
CREATING MORE CONSCIOUS CONNECTIONS

Network Structures Matter

Social Relationships are the single most important predictor of well-being

Don’t let your network be accidental!

Conveners
- Trust
- Bandwidth
- Reputation

Expansionist
- Popularity
- Visibility
- Influence

Brokers
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Balance

Reconnection
- Reconnected ties beat current ones
- Dormant ties provide more novelty

How
- Thank
- Give
- Ask

Time
- Tie strength
- Interaction spaces
- Maintenance & expansion

Common Barriers
- Moral unease
- Anxiety
- Time

Carefully design projects & teams
- Behaviors
- Expansionists
- Brokers
- Conveners
- Innovation
- Creativity
- Balance

Launch teams w/ opportunities to create real connection
Virtual teams do not create enduring informal relationships (Gibson et al 2020)

Space shapes our networks

Unconscious decisions determine network strategy

Networking are everchanging & shrink over time!
Marissa King: Keynote Presentation Highlights

Professor Marissa King’s research examines social networks, social influence, and team dynamics in health care. The most recent area of her research focuses on access to treatment for substance abuse disorders. She joined us at LILA to share insights on social networks and the influence they have on human behavior along with insights about how we can more consciously support connection and network building in our organizations.

Creating More Conscious Connections
As we consider how we can intentionally design our organizations so that people can thrive, Dr. King asked us to consider:

- To what extent our professional and personal networks help us achieve both personal and professional goals?
- The amount of time spent consciously developing personal and professional networks and maintaining them.

Barriers to Building Conscious Relationships
Social relationships play a significant role in our well-being, job satisfaction, and a variety of other aspects of our lives. Despite the fact that we are aware of this, loneliness has become a growing epidemic in our society. As the Dr. King noted, the structure and quality of relationships are more important than simply knowing more people. She identified a number of barriers that people find in the way of thinking consciously about relationships:

- **Moral Discomfort:** Often, the idea of being intentional about relationships is morally off-putting to people, causing them to be less intentional about them.
- **Anxiety:** Thinking about relationships can trigger anxiety in the brain, since humans have a natural fear of being excluded. Because of this fear, people often have a fixed mindset about social intelligence, which inhibits the development of intentional relationships.
- **Time Constraints:** Many people are limited by time constraints, which leads them to underinvest in relationships, which in turn, makes them less likely to consider these relationships consciously.
What happens when we aren't conscious about connecting?

Social isolation triggers similar brain responses to physical pain, and humans have a natural fear of exclusion. This fear often leads to a fixed mindset regarding social intelligence, where people believe networking skills are either innate or unchangeable. This fixed mindset hinders engagement and intentional relationship-building both in and outside of the workplace. However, social intelligence is a learned skill, and understanding this can help reduce anxiety in social situations.

People tend to cluster in small groups rather than approaching a large crowd, as humans are hardwired to interact in diverse groups. Recognizing the basic forms of social interaction, such as dyads and triads, can help navigate different social circumstances and alleviate anxiety. Additionally, time constraints often cause individuals to underinvest in relationships, hindering conscious thinking about social interactions.

Instead of asking for more time, the focus should be on leveraging existing relationships effectively to maximize their value.

Accidental relationships do not provide the same benefits as consciously cultivated ones. Recognizing the importance of relationships and being intentional about them is crucial for individuals and organizations to thrive.

Research shows that approximately half of non-family relationships end within two and a half years. In the workplace, it's important to reflect on the frequency and depth of your business relationships with colleagues, particularly those you interact with on a day-to-day basis. You'll likely find that only a few individuals remain central in your life over time. This turnover in relationships is a common occurrence and happens across various settings. Feelings of closeness diminish significantly after three months without face-to-face contact, leading to substantial churn in our networks.
As we age, our networks tend to shrink, especially after the age of 30. This applies to different types of networks, including emergency contacts and job leads. The gradual shrinking of networks over time contributes to the issue of loneliness, particularly among older adults. Unless we consciously maintain and cultivate connections, our networks will continue to dwindle.

Space shapes our networks
The physical space we occupy plays a significant role in shaping our networks. A classic study conducted at MIT in the 1950s demonstrated that random assignment to apartments had a considerable impact on forming relationships. Close to 40% of relationships developed with next-door neighbors, and proximity within the same hallway or a few doors down also influenced connections. This pattern still holds true today within various organizational contexts, where physical location affects both face-to-face interactions and email communication.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique situation where physical interactions were limited. Early studies during the pandemic revealed a significant reduction in network size, with people interacting with fewer individuals. Interestingly, the reduction was more pronounced among men compared to women. The reasons behind this gender difference and its implications warrant further investigation.

Overall, these findings highlight the importance of conscious effort in maintaining connections and understanding how physical space influences our networks. By actively cultivating relationships and considering the impact of our surroundings, we can foster stronger social connections and mitigate the negative consequences of shrinking networks.
The research suggests two key components regarding relationships in the workplace:

- Women tend to experience a smaller reduction in network size compared to men during the pandemic. This is because men typically maintain relationships through face-to-face interactions, while women focus on conversation and communication, which was less hindered by the absence of physical interaction. Understanding these differences in relationship-building preferences is crucial for organizations to address individual needs effectively.

- Women tend to have a more accurate understanding of their social networks and the patterns of interaction within them. This heightened awareness stems from historical exclusion and the need for women to navigate social dynamics and access resources. Having a clear perception of one's network is essential for effectively maintaining and nurturing relationships.

Networks shrunk by close to 17% just a couple of months into the pandemic.
Marissa King: Keynote Presentation Highlights

Network Structures and their Properties
To explore these concepts further, it is helpful to consider network structures and their properties. Different network types include expansionists, brokers, and conveners. Expansionists have large networks and value knowing many people, while brokers connect various social circles, fostering innovation and work-life balance. Conveners have dense networks of interconnected friends, providing trust, emotional support, and bandwidth. By understanding one’s network type, individuals can consciously create connections and leverage their network’s properties.

Mapping one's network can provide insights into its properties and aid in understanding trade-offs and preferences. By identifying as an expansionist, broker, or convener, individuals can gain a better understanding of their network dynamics and consciously shape their relationships.

Overall, these insights highlight the importance of understanding relationship dynamics, preferences, and network structures within the workplace. By recognizing individual differences and consciously cultivating connections, organizations can foster stronger relationships and support their employees’ social well-being.

“Social relationships are the single most important predictor of wellbeing.”
–Marissa King
Networking in Organizations

The initial connections and introductions people make in organizations, have a significant impact on the size of networks and retention within the organization. Different types of networks have their own benefits and drawbacks, and organizations should consider the goals and career stages of individuals when promoting certain network structures. The workplace provides an opportunity to consciously design connections through effective organizational layouts and project assignments. However, in the absence of physical space, other tools and tactics can be used, such as consciously creating connections through projects and teams, considering behaviors that foster network development, and making efforts to reconnect. By understanding these strategies, organizations can create meaningful relationships and promote effective network building.

Network Types: Conveners, Expansionists & Brokers

- **Conveners** are individuals who tend to have friends who are connected to each other, creating dense webs of interaction. They often have long-standing relationships, live in the same place or work in the same job for a long time, and prefer stability and closure. Conveners are associated with trust and resilience.

- **Expansionists** focus on expanding their networks and knowing a large number of people. They are more likely to be open to new experiences, maintain a wider range of connections, and have a system in place to nurture their relationships. Innovation and Creativity.

- **Brokers** tend to span different worlds and are well positioned to be innovative and creative. They tend to promote work-life balance. In general, women tend to be more likely to be brokers than men, in part because of the work-life separation which then becomes manifested in their networks.
First moments matter. The first ten people someone meets in the organization has an outsized effect on how many people they know within that organization a one and a half years later. This has significant implications for onboarding, turnover, and retention.

Carefully design projects and teams. There’s no one best or right network. Stable teams bring the benefits of convening; rotations create brokers. Teams launched in person create lasting informal relationships that transcend the project. Intentionally launch teams with opportunities to create real connections.

Reconnecting with people not seen in a while can bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas. Reach out to people you haven’t seen in the past 2-3 years to express gratitude, share something valuable, or ask for help. Sharing ideas and opportunities within the community can contribute to personal growth and benefit others as well, bringing joy and maximizing existing networks.
Towards an Integrated Employee Value Proposition

Mark Mortenson, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior, INSEAD

Mark shared an integrated and data-driven approach to understanding the integrated whole of what employees want and what they think their organizations deliver.

What is the New Role of the Physical Workplace?”

Janet Pogue McLaurin, FAIA, FIIDA and Patricia Nobre, Gensler

New workplace research from Gensler, a global architectural and design firm, has found that the role of the office has shifted, and the workplace is no longer effective for what employees need most. How can we reimagine the workplace?

The Strategist as Bard—Strategy, Strategystories & Storytelling

Donald MacLean, Professor Adam Smith Business School, University of Glasgow

Donald's research has focused on how new ideas might help to overcome high rates of “implementation failure” in strategic management. In particular, he has used insights from complexity theory and creative action to develop new approaches to managing "emergent strategy."
Towards an Integrated Employee Value Proposition

Mark Mortenson, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior, INSEAD

Mark shared an integrated and data-driven approach to understanding the integrated whole of what employees want and what they think their organizations deliver. When organizations ask employees what they want from a workplace, flexibility (e.g., remote work) and autonomy were high on the list. When asked how strongly connected they feel to their organization given their remote working, most said not very. By offering more flexibility and autonomy, organizations were actually reducing loyalty to the organization.

In response to this paradox, Mark and his colleagues developed Integrated Employee Value Proposition Model which consists of four “pieces of the puzzle.” See image to right.

Click here to view the presentation.
Towards an Integrated Employee Value Proposition

Mark Mortenson,
Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior, INSEAD

Mark shared an integrated and data-driven approach to understanding the integrated whole of what employees want and what they think their organizations deliver.

Click here to view the presentation.

The research team is currently in the early stages of collecting data at scale from various organizations and industries:

- Data collection points: Asking why people want to join and stay at an organization; engagement; pride in the organization; satisfaction; performance; collaboration.
- Also ‘negative’ outcomes with negative correlation - turnover, burnout, isolation, loneliness.

The integrated Value Proposition Tool enables individuals to assess their needs/wants and how those are being met in their current organization, and correlate this with what the organization intends/thinks they offer.

Click here to find out more about how to measure your organizations’ Integrated Value Proposition.
Placemaking:
What is the New Role of the Physical Workplace?

Janet Pogue McLaurin, FAIA, FIIDA and Patricia Nobre, Gensler

Gensler Global Workplace Survey

The global workplace survey is based on 5 modes of how people work:

- Working alone
- Working with others virtually
- Working with others in-person
- Learning and professional development
- Socializing, connecting, and networking

Before the pandemic there was a decline in both effectiveness (space effectiveness and functionality) and experience (such as beauty) at the workplace, with only 43% of organizations being strong in both.

The percentage of time that people spend working with others, both in-person and virtual, is on the rise, currently at 42%, while time working alone declined to 35%. The general distribution of time across these 5 modes is similar worldwide but varies by industry.
Key Finding 1
**Hybrid is here to stay, but so is the office**
Employees spend half of their time at the office, regardless of what they are doing, but they only spend 18-25% of the balance of their work time at home. The remaining time goes to spaces like business travel destinations, client and customer sites, third places, coworking spaces—reflecting a shift from "flight to quality" (e.g., better building) to "flight to experience" (better surroundings). Employees are willing to come into the office more often for a new mix of experiences.

Key Finding 2
**There is a gap between current office utilization and what employees say they need**
Employees say they need to spend more time in the office than they are currently spending. Across the globe, employees report needing 56-68% of the week in the office, for themselves and for their teams. Given the mobility of employees, the conversation is not around days of the week but percentages, as they move between office, home, and third places even within a given day.

Key Finding 3
**People have choice but not the choices they need**
Choice about where to work once the employee is in the office is a powerful contributor to both space effectiveness and a great workplace experience. In 2016, 25% of employees said they had choices in where to work, and that number rose to 73% in this most recent study. Still, these choices do not include the ones they need to do their work.
As humans, we connect through stories. Generally, stories have three acts:

- **Act 1** defines the who, what, when, and where
- **Act 2** shows the conflict
- **Act 3** shows the resolution.

When determining strategy, leaders tend to start with Act 3—the resolution. But strategies should be the end point.

It is necessary to start with act 1—defining the who, what, when, and where—to understand what the story is and then move to act 2 to understand what is the tradeoff/dilemma/dispute that the story is portraying.

Act 3 is where the focus turns to the development of a strategy. This is an emergent strategy. It reflects the cultural patterns of the organization. People tell stories of things that have stopped them, things that frustrate them, things that give them joy, things that have worked, things that don't work; and gradually a picture of the emerging strategy comes into view.

In mainstream strategy literature, it's all about coming up with a formula, then executing it, and finally implementing the strategy. The strategy is handed down to other people to implement, which is usually when it fails. The storytelling version works in reverse. You start with what people do, and then you sculpt it, so there are no implementation issues.
“We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us.”

—Winston Churchill, 1943
Key Takeaways: Placemaking

1. Create the space for place attachment and identity.
2. Understand the dynamic components of your places.
3. Broaden your thinking from “roots” to routes and rhizomes.
4. Stay alert to the role of anchors and magnets in placemaking.
5. Manage the tensions of fixity and flow.
6. Construct places through discourse.
7. Nurture places to process grief and loss.
8. Use relationships as a source of resilience and coordination.
9. Co-create the view from somewhere.
10. Promote holding environments in uncertain times.
Learning on the Edge

The frontiers of change – political, social, technological - are “edge” places: places of both excitement and uncertainty, where the future becomes the present, for better or for worse. Organizations live on these edges daily: navigating the transitions emerging from Artificial Intelligence, remote work, digital transformation, social and environmental justice responsibilities, as well as edges that have yet to come into view. To do this strategically requires fostering a workforce that is continually learning. In fact, we could say that learning is the future of work.

*Learning on the Edge* will draw from the fields of sociology psychology, neuroscience, entrepreneurship, and educational theory to explore such questions as: How do we spot the “edge places” and know which are paths to push forward, vs. cliffs to step back from? What are the new ways of thinking about capability development that support learning on the edge? How can formal and informal learning structures evolve along specific business edges? How might learning amidst “edgy” uncertainty expand continuous improvement and improve engagement, productivity, and retention?
For further documentation and information, we invite you to explore the following:

**October 2022**
- Photo Gallery
- October Brief
- Insights, Puzzles, Actions

**December 2022**
- Guest Faculty and Conversation Café notes
- Recordings of live Faculty presentations
- Miro Board
- December Brief
- Day 1 Community Sensemaking Clusters

**March 2023**
- Photo Gallery
- March Brief
- Insights, Puzzles, Actions

**June 2023**
- June Brief
- Full length summaries of presentations

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**Year-to-Date**
- Visual Harvesting Gallery
- Community Poems

Learning Innovations Laboratory
at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

learninginnovationslab.org
Visual Harvesting
From in-person and virtual gatherings

Learning Innovations Laboratory
at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
THE POWER OF PLACE

LYNNE MANZO & KEN FOOTE

PLACE ATTACHMENT
- Psychological
- Social
- Emotional
- Functional

PLACE IDENTITY
- Role of inter-generational, historical trauma
- Individual vs. collective experiences

PLACE BEINGS
- BEING
- BELONGING
- BECOMING

SENSE OF SELF
- Participation, co-creation, customization
- Safety, comfort

PLACE PRIVILEGE
- Power
- Control

PLACE HUMANIZATION
- Emplacement
- Displacement
- Inside
- Outside
- Fixity
- Flow

RELATIONSHIP TO PLACE
- Sensory experiences
- Emotional connections, feelings
- Nature
- Catalytic moments
- History, memory, nostalgia

PLACE
- Place can elevate. It can also harm.

"WHAT BEGINS AS UNDIFFERENTIATED SPACE EVOLVES INTO PLACE WHEN WE COME TO KNOW IT BETTER AND ENJOY IT WITH MEANING AND VALUE." - Y. P. TASH

Learning Innovations Laboratory
at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

Fall Gathering | October 12-13, 2022
There is no need for nostalgia... we need to look ahead...

New places are emerging

Addressing trans-generational trauma.

As our values change, our places should change...

Ken Foote

Learning Innovations Laboratory at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

Global reach (Princess Di)

Increase in scale (World Trade Center)

Comfort/discomfort movable/permanent individual/communal sacred/secular

Placemaking continues to be critical in processing & transforming loss & grief

Hybridity

Affirming

Honoring

Recognizing

Assuming new meaning & function

Reconciling

What about the COVID pandemic?

What do we need to unlearn?

What's most important?

How do we embed learning... something that helps us understand what we can be...

Memorializing

Sometimes these smaller ways of memorializing hold more meaning... less compromises...

Fall Gathering | October 12-13, 2022
In the spaciousness of uncertainty there is room to act.

**Senses of Place**

- Ecological regime change
- In the spaciousness of uncertainty there is room to act.

**Socio-Spatial Precarity**

- Ontological security (now unsettled)
- Transformational anxiety
- Singular notions of space are problematic

**Change**

- Everywhere, at all scales, of all kinds, all the time...

**Milieu Therapy**

- We're navigating 3 critical dialectics:
  - Emplacement / displacement
  - Fixity / flow
  - Inside / outside

**Identity Affirmation**

- Co-creation: Do we need a new ward or do we need to shift our thinking?

**Cultural Connection**

- Naming & framing

- Expansion / retreat

- Power in naming & framing

- Leaning into place attachments & local senses of place

**Understanding**

- Emotional responses to disruptions
- Transformational anxieties that change provokes
- Negotiations communities make & respond
- Can help us navigate & sound way forward

**New Possibilities in Regrounding**

- Language can be used to oppress or uplift, who is choosing the words really matters...

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**Lynne Manzo**

Learning Innovations Laboratory at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

Fall Gathering | October 12-13, 2022
Tim Cresswell

Placemaking and the Workplace
Danger in Thinking Design Is the Answer
A Meaningful Segment of Space
A Field of Care, a Center of Meaning
A Way of Thinking About Our Attachment to the World

Place

Processes
Performance/Doing

Materialities

Meanings
Stories/Narrative

Futures

Routes

Assemble/Gather
Places Gather 'Things'
Animate & Inanimate
Experiences Histories Languages Thoughts Moods Atmospheres Stories

Deterritorializing

Forces That Cohere
Legal, Social, Architectural, Aesthetic...
- Things Being Brought into Relation to Location
- Gathered in a Meaningful Way
- Coherence
- Identity Stabilization

Forces That Pull Things Apart
Media, Decay, Boundary Destabilization, Identity Erosion...

"We are placebound creatures. Your biography is a geography." (Tim Cresswell)
TIM CRESSWELL

HOME

WORK

MOBILITY

RHYTHM

PATTERN

DO 21ST CENTURY WORKPLACES NEED TO SERVE TRADITIONAL FUNCTIONS?

WHAT IS THE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

HOW DO THESE PLACES SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER?

WHAT RHYTHMS DOES THE WORKPLACE IMPOSE WITHIN ITSELF IN RELATIONSHIP TO OTHERS?

EURHYTHMIA

ARRHYTHMIA

POLYRHYTHMIA

IDIORHYTHMIA

RHYTHMANALYSIS

RHYTHMIC HOMOGENEITY

CONSTRUCTIVE COMING TOGETHER

OF RHYTHMS.

DISSONANT RHYTHMS

IN CONFLICT

CO-EXISTENCE OF DIFFERENT

RHYTHMS WITHOUT CONFLICT

A RHYTHM OUTSIDE THE NORM

CONTROLLED BY THE GROUP

(ROLAND BARTHES)

regulated

time governed

by rational laws

in contact with

what is least

rational in human

being...the body.

—HENRI LEFEBVRE

Learning Innovations Laboratory
at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
PLACE-DISCOURSE
RE-NARRATION, FRAMING, RHETORIC & POWER

ANDRÉS DI MASO

PLACE MEANINGS?

UNFOLDING PLACE EXPERIENCES

PERSONAL CHANGES

LOCAL CULTURAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, ORG DYNAMICS

SPATIAL CHANGES

GLOBAL CHANGES

RE-NARRATION
RE NARRATING ENABLES INTEGRATING PLACE STABILITY & PLACE CHANGE

RE-NAMING
MASTER NARRATIVES
EMPLOYMENT

NARRATIVE INTEGRATION & SENSE OF PLACE CONTINUITY

DISCOURSE PRACTICE
ACCEPTANCE & RESISTANCE OF/TO PLACE CHANGE RELATES TO DISCURSIVE PRACTICES & MEANING-MAKING CONSTRUCTION

DISCOURSE FRAMES

SHARE PERCEPTIONS, EVALUATIONS & PREFERENCES

DO NOT MEAN THE SAME TO EVERYONE

“SAFE SPACE”

ENTANGLED IN BROADER PLACE ASSEMBLAGE, WHOLENESS

PLACE DISCOURSE, RHETORIC & POWER
PLACE-RHETORICS MOBILIZE, WARRANT & CONTEST NORMATIVE VIEWS OF SOCIAL RELATIONS THAT ARE SPATIALLY ORGANIZED

STORYTELLING DEMANDS MORE THAN WORDS...
NARRATIVE/DISCOURSE/STORIES ARE JUST ONE PART OF THE STORY...

“WORDS CAN MOVE MOUNTAINS”

—McNAUGHTEN

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Social Interaction is Key in Physical & Virtual Places

Listening
Meeting
Sharing
Surfacing

Allowing & Enabling Multiple Narratives on Common Ground

Co-Creation

Participatory Processes Open Channel to See Power Relations

Reexamine Hierarchy Place As Equalizer

It Takes Time & Resource to Properly Identify the Who...

Space Becomes Power in the Form of Territory

Definition of “Work”

Outcomes Based

A Shift

Who Has Power

What’s Fair for Whom?

Who Decides (How?)

Co-Creation

Honing Voice is Not the Same as Doing What Someone Wants

Assessing Risk

Feeling Listened To Can Make All The Difference.

How Much Conflict Does an Organization Want?

How Much Can It Hold/Support

Feeling (Authentically)
RELATIONAL COORDINATION

WE LIVE IN A HIGHLY INTERDEPENDENT WORLD
WE LIVE IN A HIGHLY INTERDEPENDENT WORLD

RELATIONAL MODEL OF ORG. CHANGE

CHARACTERISTICS ARE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX & GLOBAL IN NATURE
CHARACTERISTICS ARE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX & GLOBAL IN NATURE

RELATIONAL COORDINATION

MEASURING RC
- FREQUENT COMMUNICATION
- TIMELY COMMUNICATION
- ACCURATE COMMUNICATION
- PROBLEM-SCANNING COMM
- SHARED GOALS
- SHARED KNOWLEDGE
- MUTUAL RESPECT

MATTERS MOST UNDER CONDITIONS OF:
- UNCERTAINTY
- TASK INTERDEPENDENCE
- TIME SENSITIVITY

RELATIONSHIPS AS A SOURCE OF RESILIENCE

SHARED GOALS
- MUTUAL RESPECT
- SHARED KNOWLEDGE

RELATIONSHIPS AFFECT OUR BRAINS

STANDPOINT MATTERS
ONLY TOGETHER CAN WE SEE A LOT.
WHEN YOU SEE BOTH YOUR WORK & CONNECTED TO THE WHOLE.
YOU CAN SEE BETTER WAYS TO DO IT.

CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE IN A HYBRID WORLD
THE ROLE OF RELATIONSHIPS

JODY HOFFER GITTELL

LEARNING INNOVATIONS LABORATORY
AT THE HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

March 7, 2023
Intervening to Strengthen Relationships in a Hybrid World

Jody Hoffer Gittell

6 Stages of Change

1. Explore Your Context
2. Create a Change Team
3. Measure RC
4. Reflect & Findings
5. Develop Interventions
6. Implement & Assess

Principles for Leading RC Change
- Be the change; you can't use an old culture & create the new one
- Use data to open up conversations, not to close them down
- Engage people in doing the work for themselves rather than doing it for them
- Respect relationships at home & build relationships at work

Learning Innovations Laboratory
at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

March 8, 2023
Characterizing and Measuring Relationships to Place

Daniel R. Williams

Place Attachment

Measuring Attachment

Beyond the Commodity Metaphor

Learning Innovations Laboratory at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
WHAT IS THE WORK OF PLACE?

- A TIME OF DYNAMIC CHANGE
- NOTHING FEELS SOLID
- A FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT IS UNDERWAY

WHAT IS THE INFO PEOPLE CAN TRUST WHEN MOVING THROUGH THIS TIME WHEN NO ONE KNOWS THE ANSWER?

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONNECTION & PLACE?

- TRUST
- DECISION MAKING

BALANCING EMOTION & THE HUMAN FACTOR...

FUNCTIONAL SOCIAL CULTURAL

- ON-BORDING
- INCULTURATION
- ACULTURATION

ON-BOARDING
- PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY
- MOOD & PRODUCTIVITY
- TEAMWORK BROKEN DOWN

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF PLACE TO THE EVOLUTION OF EXPERIENCE, A POSITION OF POWER?

- WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF PLACE RELATE TO THE CHANGING NATURE OF WORK & ITS CONNECTION TO PURPOSE?

- HOW DOES OUR UNDERSTANDING OF PLACE RELATE TO THE CHANGING NATURE OF WORK & ITS CONNECTION TO PURPOSE?

- HOW DO WE ENSURE WE DON'T LOSE WHAT WE GAINED?

- INTEGRATION
- MOOD & PRODUCTIVITY

- THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

- CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR PEOPLE TO MAKE MEANING IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR WORK.

- HOW ARE WE DEFINING THIS?
- CAN MEAN MANY THINGS...

HOW DO WE ENSURE WE DON'T LOSE WHAT WE GAINED?

- VISION
- MINDSET
- EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

- REVISIT & REFRESH END TO END

REDDEFINING LEADERSHIP

- ADAPTIVE, ANTHROPOLOGICAL CHALLENGES
- REQUIRE ADAPTIVE COMPETENCIES AND EXPECTATIONS

- SHIFTING POWER

- NEW MODALITIES OF LEARNING

- CULTURAL ARTIFACTS

- HOW DO WE INNOVATE & SUPPORT LEARNING & CONNECTION

- WE NEED TO ADDRESS UNDERLYING ISSUES...
- NOT JUST GET THE PAIN TO STOP...
- AND AVOID TRYING TO SOLVE NEW PROBLEMS WITH OLD SOLUTIONS...

Navigating Uncertainty & Nostalgia for a Time Pre-Chaos

Learning Innovations Laboratory at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

September 22, 2022 | Member Call
ALENKA POPLIN
EMOTIONS & CHARACTERISTICS
OF WELL-BEING EVOCATIVE PLACE

- Green & Blue Spaces
- Micro Places
- Objects
- Infrastructure
- Size & Shape
- Accessibility
- Openness

- Activities
- Feelings & Restoration
- Comfort
- Stimulations & Stimulating
- Subjects
- Wild Life & Animals

PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

WELL-BEING EVOCATIVE PLACES

AN EVOCATIVE PLACE IS
A PLACE THAT EVOKES
EMOTIONS, IMAGES, AND MEMORIES

VALUES
- Memories
- Culture, History & Architecture
- Religion
- Stories
- Images

EXPERIENCES
- Visuals
- Sounds
- Smells
- Tastes

SENSES

FUNCTIONAL PLACES
LOW POSITIVE NON-PHYSICAL
HIGH POSITIVE PHYSICAL

EVOCATIVE PLACES
LOW MEANING
HIGH FUNCTIONAL PLACES

HOW DO WE WANT PEOPLE TO FEEL?

USED RUSSELL'S CIRUMPLEX MODEL OF AFFECT

AROUSAL
DISTRESS
EXCITEMENT
PLEASURE

DISTRESS
MISERY
COMFORT
CONTENTMENT

AVERSION
DEPRESSION

SLEEPINESS
THriving at Work
Anne-Kathrin Kleine, LMU Munich

What Actually Makes People Happy and Confident at Work?

1+1=3... Greater than the sum of the parts

THE OBVIOUS:
1. Increased job satisfaction
2. Increased productivity
3. Improved health and well-being
4. Higher job security
5. Enhanced company culture

The Obvious

THE CLEARER EXPLANATION

Energizing Motivating Resources Support

New Knowledge and Skills
Formal and Informal Training

What is Thriving at Work?

Learning

VITALITY

LEARNING

What is Learning?

Learning involves new knowledge and skills gained through formal and informal training.

What is Vitality?

Vitality involves happiness and confidence at work.

Balance is a Key

ORG LEADERSHIP
TEAMS INDIVIDUALS

A Collective Effort

THriving

VITALITY

Learning

A spotlight on what matters

Leaders shine a spotlight on what matters.

TRhiving DOes not happen in isolation

Trickle up and Trickle down

Question of Trust and control

"I work for you!"

"The team I support is..."

Question of trust and control

"Be the team you support is..."

Thrive in about exchange

Thrive while working remotely

Thrive during Organizational Change?

Encourage Collaboration

Establish Clear Expectations

Prioritize Communication

Lean on Vitality since learning demands are high during change

Learning Innovations Laboratory
Member Call | January 2023
BRIANNA CAZA
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, GREENSBORO

EXPERIENCES
- FUNCTIONAL
- SOCIAL
- SENSORY
- TEMPORAL

SENSEMAKING

IDENTITY MOTIVES
- SITUATED IDENTITY
- SELF-ENHANCEMENT
- BELONGING
- SELF-COHERENCE
- SELF-CONTINUITY

COMPOUNDED ABSTRACTION
- CONTEXTUAL BINDING
- SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

WORKPLACE IDENTIFICATION
- INTERNALIZATION
- EXTERNALIZATION

WORKPLACE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS CAN...
- FACILITATE ADJUSTMENT TO OFFICE CONTEXT
- INCREASE HAPPINESS & WORK-BASED WELL-BEING
- BOOST POSITIVE WORKPLACE ATTITUDES (LIKE SATISFACTION)
- ENABLE WORKERS TO MANAGE BOUNDARIES OF MULTIPLE IDENTITIES (HELPING THEM REALIZE WHO THEY ARE & WHO THEY WANT TO BECOME)
- ALSO NEGATIVELY IMPACT INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS (TERRITORIALITY)

WE PROJECT OUR SENSE OF SELF ON THE WORKPLACE

WE INCORPORATE ASPECTS OF THE PLACE INTO OUR SENSE OF SELF

WORKERS & PLACES BECOME INTERTWINED OVER TIME

THE INTERNALIZATION & EXTERNALIZATION OF PERCEIVED WORKPLACE IDENTITY — THE WORKPLACE REFLECTS HOW ONE SEES ONESELF (AT LEAST IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK)

WHO DO I WANT TO BECOME?
WHO AM I @ WORK?
WHERE PEOPLE MEET

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE NEED NEXT

AVATARS
- INCLUSIVE
- NOT JUDGEY
- ELBOWS, KNEES, ETC INFERRRED

NODDER WANTS TO BE THE LOBSTER
I WANT TO BE MYSELF, ONLY BETTER

PLACEMAKING IN VIRTUAL WORLDS WITH JAMES MAHONEY

VIRTUAL PLACES
- NAVIGATE
- INTERACT

MISSING

PEDAGOGICAL POTENTIAL IS HUGE

IMMERSION & PRESENCE
- VERACITY
- SENSORY INPUT

LEARN TO BUILD ENVIRONMENTS

LEARN VIRTUAL THEATER
- SIMULATED
- LIKE ECENCY
- VIRTUAL STONEHENGE
- INTERACTION ROOM

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Member Call w/ James Mahoney | April 20, 2023