

# A Drum Circle as a Training for an Innovative Workplace: A Case Study of Leadership Development in a Japanese Company

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to build and implement a workshop for managers who want to improve their skills in developing an innovative environment. What is unique about this workshop is that it aims to introduce management concepts based on a session using percussion instruments (Drum Circle) for developing skills and utilizing them as tools for developing an innovative workplace. This session is called a drum circle and is defined as a rhythm ensemble that participants improvise using various percussion instruments.

The workshop was held between July 7 to July 28 in 2018 (four Saturday afternoons) and in total 86 people in and outside the school participated. Each week consisted of drum circle sessions and mini-lectures regarding management theories such as leadership and communication. Participants were asked to identify some commonality between the essence of a drum circle and that of management theories. Results from the questionnaires distributed each week indicated that participants were generally satisfied with the contents and the skills introduced in the workshop. However, there is room for improvement especially in terms of ways of addressing management theories in the context of a drum circle for filling a gap between the theory sessions and the practical (rhythm) sessions.

**Keywords:** A Drum Circle, Innovative Workplace, Leadership Development, Communication

## Introduction

In a world where innovation and creativity are more important than ever in the workplace, not only each individual but also companies are striving to draw possibilities out from them in various ways. In addition, the impact of COVID-19 is expected to continue, which forces Japanese companies to change their business models in more drastic ways. Developing an environment in a workplace that creates new connections among existing ideas and technology (= innovations), therefore, becomes an issue that cannot be ignored. While some companies have already introduced practices such as “20% rules (Jarvis, 2012)”, design thinking (Brenner, Uebnickelm, & Abrell, 2016), ideation, and pitches (Sakiyama et al., 2020) to enhance employees’ power for innovation, others have tried to connect other businesses by having open-innovation laboratories, opening patents, relocating R & D to the metropolitan area, etc.

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In the business world, making things from 1 to 2 is often called incremental innovation, and turning 0 to 1 is destructive innovation (Christensen, Raynor, & McDonald, 2013), and it is said that Japanese companies have been much better at incremental innovation than at destructive innovation (Maskus & McDaniel, 1999). For an innovative workplace, managers must consider an environment in which both managers and subordinates 1) have the ability to take an initial step and 2) enjoy/accept trials & errors of new ideas. Since managers in Japanese companies have too much focused on incremental innovation, however, they do not have cumulative knowledge to develop an innovative environment. Therefore, everything related to human resource development and environment creation that generates innovation seems to remain at a knowledge/conceptual level – “I know what innovation is, but I don’t know how to do it”.

## **Research Objective**

The purpose of this study is, therefore, to build and implement a workshop for managers who want to improve their skills in developing an innovative environment (e.g. middle class, senior managers, teachers/instructors). What is unique about this workshop is that it aims to introduce management concepts based on a session using percussion instruments for developing skills and utilizing them as tools for developing an innovative workplace. This session is called a drum circle and will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

## **Literature Review**

### **1. What is a Drum Circle?**

A drum circle is a rhythm ensemble that participants improvise using various percussion instruments (e.g., drums, maracas, and other instruments that make sounds by “tapping, striking, shaking, and rubbing”) (Hull, 1998; Best of Success, 2020). Rhythm refers to regularly repeated movements and sounds, or their strength (Best of Success, 2020). Drum circles may also incorporate other instruments, such as dances and songs. The essence of drum circles is not to practice and perform in public, but for everyone to play on the spot without practice. Another characteristic of a drum circle is that there are no mistakes/failures.

There are several types of drum circles, but this study focuses on a drum circle guided by a facilitator. In the facilitated drum circle, the purpose of the participation is not to learn how to play drums or improve the sense of rhythm, but to enjoy or experience the moment of playing them. The facilitator encourages participants to play the music “at the moment (Hull, 1998)” and strengthens the “sense of unity” and “communication” among the participants. Musical instruments are not limited to folk instruments and real musical instruments, but also include handmade ones and body percussion as well. Arthur Hull is known as the “father of the drum circle” and the creator of the facilitated drum circle (Best of Success, 2020).

The act of human beings forming a circle and carving rhythms has been practiced for a long time, but the drum circle used in this study refers to those that originated on the West Coast of the United States in the early 1970s. It can be clearly seen that a drum circle is a combination of the word’s “drum” and “circle”. In terms of a “drum (= percussion instruments)” part, the most distinctive feature is the fact that anyone can make sound immediately. Also, in a drum circle, it is not necessary to assume that the sense of rhythm must be good or that it should be good enough. The most important thing is to follow the rhythm in your heart. The sense of unity at that moment is similar to the sense of accomplishment when a team in an organization makes a successful project. Furthermore, the state of concentrating on producing sound is similar to the state of “flow” (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). At the drum circle, you can experience a different kind of mindfulness.

On the other hand, the “circle” represents the layout of the people who play the drums. Recalling the layout of seats in workplaces and classrooms, there are very few workplaces and classrooms where seats are laid out in a ring shape. However, in a drum circle, it is important to lay it out in a “circle”. First of all, it is possible to keep the hierarchical relationship away from consciousness by forming a circle. Also, when you form a circle, you can look around everyone, which allows all participants to express their thoughts directly through eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures.

Many studies have shown how to drum circle activities (especially rhythmic exercises) can affect the brain and psychology (e.g. activation of serotonin). To take advantage of these benefits to the mind and body, many workshops are held all over the world for the purpose of recovering and maintaining health such as brain activity and repairing stress. Also, a drum circle is used for new employee training in companies and organizational development training for management, particularly for multi-national companies. However, the effectiveness of the organization from an academic (especially management) perspective remains unspecified. Therefore, the rest of this chapter describes how some elements of drum circles can be explained by the theory of management. In particular, the following section will focus on items related to creating a work environment that creates innovation, “trust in relationships at workplaces” and “communication through observation”.

## **2. Trust in Relationships at Workplaces**

Many people find it difficult to build relationships of trust with their subordinates, bosses, and colleagues. It is said that 30% of young workers in the Japanese workplace will leave their jobs within three years, but the reason is often not dissatisfaction with salaries but poor relationships in the workplace. Many (particularly elder) people criticize this turnover rate as “young people are not patient enough”. but is that really the case? Rather, the cause may be the inappropriate environment created by managers who are unaware that the content of their works is essentially changing.

The most surprising thing for those who participated in the drum circle is that people who have just met can create a sense of unity in a short time. Interestingly, this sense of unity also includes some kind of “trust”. Why can drum circles build such a relationship in such a short period of time? Managers who are good at building relationships of trust in the workplace are said to be taking some common actions. For example, in the area of business administration, the following actions are listed (Robbins, 2001).

- Open
- Fair
- Express emotions in words
- Tell the truth
- Show consistency
- Fulfill your promise
- Keep a secret
- Show ability

It turns out that things in this list greatly overlapped with the parts of the drum circle activities, and thus they contain a lot of trust-building elements. For example, during a drum circle, the facilitator may ask a participant to take solo the rhythm or to be entrusted with the duty of the facilitator in an unintended manner. When taking on such an unintended role, the individual is exposed to a situation where he/she has to “self-disclosure” in a sense. And the people around him/her are driven by feelings similar to trust at the moment when they get a glimpse of their true nature and identity. For the individual him/herself, there may be a negative moment when he/she is struck by impatience and excitement, but this “load” turned into unintended “added value”. It is considered that such a series of emotional flows and their

reactions are a combination of elements such as “openness”, “Express emotions in words”, and “Tell the truth” In the above list.

Looking back to the workplace, exposing yourself may become more difficult as you get older. But if the person recalls what you lost after self-disclosure on the drum circle which is nothing, the answer is clear. Compared to the positive reactions and praises of the participants obtained from self-disclosure, it can be said that the amount of burden on the person seems small enough to handle. Kegan states that the best way to increase people’s feelings and trust in “change” in the workplace would be by first tackling “showing weaknesses” by the most powerful people in the organization. In this way, a drum circle can greatly contribute to gaining the trust of workplace leaders and building relationships of trust.

Related drum circle activity – “Follow the leader”: A group of 4 people is arranged in a diamond shape, the person at the top of the diamond shape is the leader (see the picture below), and the others are followers. Start stepping on the rhythm and start the activity when you are in step. In the first two measures (4 beats x 2 times), the leader has to create and show the movements that are easy for followers to imitate (while the leader is not allowed to look behind). In the next two measures, the leader repeats the movement, and the followers imitate the movement. After 4 bars, move to the next 2 bars and switch the leader and followers.



Figure 1 A Slide Explaining “Follow the Leader”

Source: Cited from the Lecture Handout

### 3. Communication through Observation

The part of a body where individuals get tired the most while joining the drum circle may be hands and arms. The next most common parts may be the ears. Though it is hard to notice while playing, however, eyes must be the second most tired part of a body. In the drum circle, participants always observe the movements and facial expressions of their participants and facilitators. For example, while the rhythm is being carved, the sign from the facilitator is often judged not by the voice but by the gesture. It means that the information that comes from the eyes is the only thing for judging. This is why the eyes get tired. In fact, the eyes are used not for just seeing, but for observing with the will to take something from it.

During the drum circle, participants sometimes concentrate on carving their own rhythm, and the eyes tend to drop to the percussion instrument at hand. Then, when the session changed before knowing it, people feel a little awkward and embarrassed since the rhythm is

out of sync with the surroundings. As this example tells, the moment you lower your line of sight, information would be a groove created between you and your surroundings, blocking information from other participants and a facilitator will be blocked (Hull, 1998).

Understanding the other person's thoughts in a drum circle begins with raising their face, looking closely at the other person, and carefully "seeing" the other person's facial expressions and overall body movements. When looking back to a workplace, do people in an organization really try to see what the other person is trying to convey? Do bosses listen to subordinates' reports while they work? Do they seriously observe how their subordinates work?

It is said that people are generally enthusiastic about sending something around, but not so enthusiastic about receiving what is sent. In his article on active listening, Itzchakov and Kluger (2018) describe the reasons why managers refuse to listen in three ways: 1) fear of losing power; 2) time and effort required, and; 3) fear of change. These three causes of Kruger also apply to the above-mentioned example.

As the speed of business accelerates and its content changes day by day, evaluations and feedback that accompany each employee are becoming the main concern in terms of human resource development. Many people feel that the role of managers in companies has expanded, including the development of subordinates, and the burden of their work has increased. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder that many managers feel overwhelmed to spend their time with each subordinate in person. Also, as mentioned above, there are some pains and risks for managers in terms of "observing" properly. In the process of noticing what you did not know by looking closely, one's values and perspectives may be threatened (cognitive dissonance). But what's really scary the most is the number of things you lose at the moment of looking down, and the disconnection from the environment that begins at that moment, so much that you avoid those pains and risks.

Related drum circle activity –" Call and response": As mentioned above, a drum circle has a facilitator (Beat of Success, 2020). In the activity called call and response, call means the rhythm created by the facilitator, and response means the rhythm that participants repeat or recreate. At first, a facilitator nominates a person who will make a base rhythm, and the person will continue to play the same rhythm during the activity. By listening to the base, the facilitator creates and plays new rhythms harmonizes to the base, and then asks other participants to reply to the new rhythm. This activity can be expected to have a stronger sense of unity through two-way communication (Pluznick, 2014).

#### **4. The possible effects of applying the essence of a drum circle to a workplace**

The target participants of the workshop is corporate managers. Their roles are 1) to allocate the management resources of people, goods, money, and information and 2) to create seeds for future business. Since managing the entire department to create an innovative environment is one of the main tasks for managers (especially for upper managers), conveying to them the significance of having the workshop may increase the possibility to hold workshops within their company. For such target participants, it would be more appropriate to design a workshop by inducing awareness rather than by providing knowledge.

The purpose of the workshop is therefore to 1) provide a framework for organizing the knowledge, skills, and things that they have accumulated from the experience of the field, and 2) to make them meaningful in a new way. The intention is to lead them to go in a new direction (taking in a new perspective) while affirming the attempts that they have made so far.

There are two possible effects of implementing a drum circle for corporate managers. The first is, as mentioned above, to provide an opportunity for them to organize knowledge and skills acquired through the experience. By systematically understanding the methodology of drum circles and explaining how this methodology is organized within the framework of management, the possibility would be increased for them to find a way for better management. The second is the provision of tools. By knowing the facilitation method and the way of

thinking in the drum circle in this workshop, managers can 1) know how to control your own mind and body (heal your exhausted mind) and 2) learn how to introduce a drum circle into their own work and aim to improve the quality of the work itself.

## Methodology

This chapter describes detailed information regarding the workshop named “Team building with rhythm (Table 1)”. This workshop was offered as a practicum class for the School of Management and Technology (MOT), a professional graduate school of SIT. At that time, the two authors were faculty members of this graduate school and were in charge of planning and executing this class. Although it was a practicum class, it opened the door to people other than students. The goal of the workshop for participants is to realize the effects of a drum circle at first, and then to be able to take the lead in team-building and innovation environment through the creation of original programs.

**Table 1** About the Workshop

Day	Week 1: July 7, Week 2: July 14, Week 3: July 21, and Week 4: 28, 2018 (total 4 Saturday afternoons)
Time	14:40-17:30 for all workshops
Place	Shibaura Institute of Technology (SIT), Shibaura Campus, Tokyo, Japan
Staff	Facilitator: Mr. Masahito “Pecker” Hashida Lecturers: Prof. Hasegawa and Prof. Kato (Authors of this paper)
Target audience	- Those who are interested in team-building and innovation in the organization - Those who are interested in revitalizing the organization using rhythmic activities (no music background or experience required)
Participants	Total 86 participants Week 1: 26 people Week 2: 16 people Week 3: 29 people Week 4: 15people
Demographics of the Audience	Faculty and staff of SIT- 23 people Students and Alumni of SIT-29 people (Alumni 27) Faculty and staff of other schools-11 people Other-23 people

The facilitator of this workshop is Mr. Masahito “Pecker” Hashida (Chairman of DCFA: Drum Circle Facilitator Association, Japan: Figure 3). He is one of the pioneers in the Japanese percussion world. After staying in the US for several years in the 70s, he came back to Japan and formed a salsa band named Orchestra del Sol. He has had thousands of sessions with Japanese popular musicians, and the number of recorded songs has exceeded 25,000. In recent years, he has been focusing on “mental health care” by rhythms and music and is focusing on training drum circle facilitators. In 2004, he established the “Drum Circle Facilitator Association” and became the first deputy director (extracted from the official website). The following table (Table 2) shows the contents of the workshop.

The two lecturers (Prof. Hasegata and Kato) have had a training session called “training beat” held by Beat of Success (BOS) in which they learned the concept, history, and practical

skills for becoming a facilitator. Based on the knowledge from the training they designed the 4-week workshop by integrating the management theories with playing the drum.



**Figure 2** Mr. Masahito “Pecker” Hashida

Source: <https://www.bos1.org/> with his Permission

**Table 2** The Contents of the Workshop

Week	Details
Week 1 (7 <sup>th</sup> )	<Creating an environment and membership> To experience what is a drum circle?
Week 2 (14 <sup>th</sup> )	<Leadership> To experience various drum circles such as using voice, body, and self-made percussion Main activity – Follow the leader
Week 3 (21 <sup>st</sup> )	<Communication> To develop an original Shaka-Shaka program and to make it a try Main activity – Call and response
Week 4 (28 <sup>th</sup> )	<Reflection – Look back at yourself> To reflect what you’ve learned

Week 1: At the first workshop, participants experienced the drum circle from the beginning. This design was intended to make it easier for them to realize their honest feelings, attitudes, and actions by experiencing the drum circle without prior information. After that, Mr. Pecker Hashida explained about the drum circle and gave a lecture on its effect. In the final session, activity was done to find out practices for creating a friendly environment incorporated in this workshop. Based on this activity, participants had a homework assignment in which they design a session to facilitate a friendly environment of the workshop. Another homework was to make their own shaker (music instrument) with materials at hand.

Week 2: The second day of the workshop began with a review of the last time. After having a drum circle session, a mini lecture on leadership was held in which participants looking back on some of the activities in the last session. In particular, the mini lecture focused particularly on the concept of “servant leadership” in which the lecturers (= the authors) tried

to explain it along with the role of the facilitator of the drum circle, and participants discussed and confirmed it through group work. In the second half, participants showed off their handmade shakers and shared episodes of how and why they made it in that way. The homework of Week 2 was to design their own drum circle session with their own handmade shaker.



Figure 3 Activity “Follow the Leader”

Week 3: The third Week of the workshop also began with a review of the last time. After the drum circle session, a mini lecture on “communication” was held. This week, the lecturers explained organizational communication through the drum circle activities. Whether or not communication is effective depends on whether a person is aware of the difference between “speaking in a way to make it understood” and “speaking without a thought of audience”. Mr. Pecker Hashida explained the nonverbal causes of effective communication, and the lecturer explained its linguistic causes.

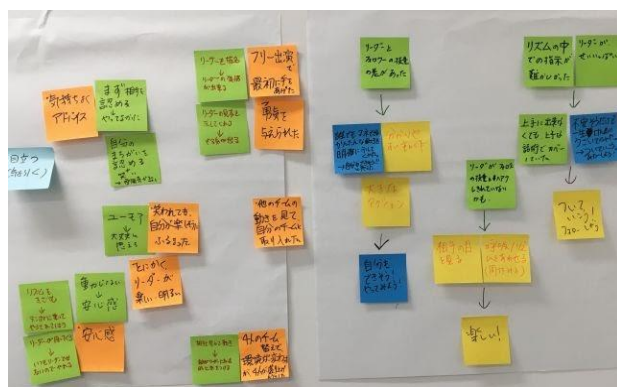


Figure 4 and 5 Group Discussions in Week 3

Week 4: Week 4 workshop began with a look back from the Week 1. After the drum circle session, a mini lecture on the theme of “looking back at yourself”. Lecturers introduced three findings from the previous weeks and named them “magic”. The first one is the magic of percussion instruments that makes everyone play a sound immediately, play with the own rhythm of each participant, and have a sense of unity at the same time. The second is the effect of “being in a circle” where everyone feels equal and can see/communicate with each other by

observing. Also, in an equal environment there is no mistake nor failure. Rather, people created a sense of making rhythm together. The third is the magic of facilitation. The facilitator is not a leader or commander, but a guide. The role of drawing out the power of the participants (= empowerment) and responding to the situation are common to the concept of servant leadership that is currently attracting attention. Such magic can also be applied in the workplace. For example, for organizations with weak cohesion and worried leaders, the action of admitting the other person through the drum circle at the beginning of the weekly meeting will make a team would be filled with smile and empathy. At the end of Week 4, the drum circle formula developed by the lecturer (Mr. Hasegawa) was introduced. Though it is a conceptual (not a real) formula, it represents the essence of a drum circle well (Figure 6).

ドラムサークルの公式 (案)

(なんちゃって方程式ではありますが、)

$$DCv = \sum_{i=1}^n (R \times Ci)^f$$

Drum Circleの  
value(価値)は

参加人数 =  $n$ が増  
えた分増大する

人数分のCircleに  
なってRhythmを叩  
く価値を  $f$  facilitator  
がガイドし引き出す

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**Figure 6** The Handout Explaining the Formula for a Drum Circle, where DCv = Drum Circle Value, n = sample size, R = rhythm, Ci = Circle, f = facilitator



**Figure 7 and 8** Lecture in Week 4

## Results

A questionnaire was distributed at the end of each week, and participants were asked to choose and write their impressions. The questionnaire consists of two simple questions: 1) Would you like to recommend your friends and colleagues attend this workshop? And 2) Please look back on this workshop and mention what impressed you (either positive or negative). The response rate was high because of repeatedly encouraging participants to answer to it and remind them of returning it to the staff at the exit. The results of multiple-choice question are shown in Table 3. About 89% of answers were fall either in “strongly recommend” or “slightly recommend”, indicating that many participants got something from this workshop and it was a meaningful time.

**Table 3** Questionnaire Results (Multiple-Choice Question)

Question: Would you like to recommend your friends and colleagues attend this workshop?							
Week	Strongly recommend	Slightly recommend	Neither	Slightly not recommend	Strongly not recommend	No answer	Response ratio
Week 1	17	6	2	0	0	1	100% (26/26)
Week 2	10	5	1	0	0	0	100% (16/16)
Week 3	16	7	3	0	0	0	90% (26/29)
Week 4	11	2	1	0	0	0	93% (14/15)

The following table (Table 4) is a list of answers excerpted from the questionnaires. Looking at the responses of Week 1 in the table, some of the participants said they were confused at the beginning of the workshop. However, in the end, they seemed to have fun playing the drums and a sense of unity with the other participants. Since the lecture part was short on Week 1, participants seemed to have stronger impression on drumming in a circle, rather than the lecture.

About the answers of Week 2, many of the participants mentioned leadership within the framework of a drum circle. It was because there is an affinity between the concept of servant leadership and the role of the facilitator of the drum circle. In addition, it became easier for them to understand the concept of leadership by actively moving their body through the activity called “Follow the leader”. By introducing the style of servant leadership, participants can understand that there is more than one form of leader and realized that leadership is simply a role that anyone can play.

As shown in Table 4, many participants mentioned the mini lecture of communication on Week 3. Some commented that Week 3 had a good balance between the drum circle session and the mini lecture. It seemed that for those, it was good to have more time listening to the lecture than simply playing the drums. The reason for these positive comments may come from the fact that the participants have got accustomed to the two-part workshop in which drum circle sessions played a role in explaining nonverbal communication and a mini lecture played a role in communicating verbal communication. The results also indicated that many participants have got used to playing the drum and enjoyed its environment.

Table 4 Questionnaire Results (Free Description)

<b>Question: Please look back on this workshop and mention what impressed you (either positive or negative). (Extracted)</b>	
Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was impressive that Mr. Pecker carefully looked at each person to give them a role properly and facilitated it.</li> <li>• When I saw the other person’s face when applauding, the other person also saw me.</li> <li>• Simple, easy to understand and fun.</li> <li>• Immediately after it started, I was refreshed with a smile.</li> <li>• The sense of unity at the end was more than I expected.</li> <li>• I found that everyone unknowingly evaluated hospitality.</li> <li>• It was good to have a reflection time.</li> <li>• When drumming repeatedly with a same pace, I felt that I was in a trance state.</li> <li>• The concept of relationship with the surroundings was condensed on the drum.</li> <li>• Somehow, I feel that I was able to act positively.</li> <li>• I feel that my five senses have been stimulated and my sensibilities have improved.</li> <li>• I was confused because I had no experience with percussion instruments. The session should be short.</li> <li>• I was confused at first, but it became interesting to be gradually drawn in.</li> <li>• It was a surprising experience to change the performance to suit the surroundings without being aware of it.</li> <li>• I was having this workshop while thinking about how to incorporate it into my class and how I could do it.</li> <li>• By performing the same movements in a state where we do not know each other and in a space, we do not know, we felt reassured and wanted to get ourselves out of it.</li> <li>• I thought it was a very good method for team building.</li> </ul>
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The story of servant leadership left an impression on the relationship between followers and leaders.</li> <li>• Creating a place where no one feels alienated</li> <li>• Follow the leader: I got lost in my turn and bothered followers</li> <li>• I’m sorry I couldn’t take a step in the session</li> <li>• It was interesting to look back on various things that are non-verbal and what is leadership.</li> <li>• I found that if I hold down the points, I can play the role of a leader.</li> <li>• I was impressed by the fact that I was aware of myself as a leader and organized servant leadership.</li> <li>• I thought it was amazing to see the participants facilitating in the middle of the circle.</li> <li>• It was good time for me to rethink leadership.</li> <li>• Importance of easy-to-follow movement</li> </ul>

**Table 4** Questionnaire Results (Free Description) (CON.)

<b>Question: Please look back on this workshop and mention what impressed you (either positive or negative). (Extracted)</b>	
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'm glad I could listen to the lecture about language communication, not just the drums.</li> <li>• There is a person who plays something different from others, which affects other people and creates a new ensemble ⇒ I found out that the person who can make this flow can be a pioneer.</li> <li>• The positive attitude of the participants was impressive.</li> <li>• It was helpful to hear that there is a lot of information that can be conveyed not only in words but also in appearance and sound (non-verbal).</li> <li>• The balance between lecture and performance was good.</li> <li>• Drum circles enhanced my understanding of communication.</li> <li>• Drum circles have shown that it is important to form a community through a little work as a way to form a good team.</li> <li>• Team building with music</li> <li>• I was refreshed at the participatory workshop.</li> <li>• I thought I was just hitting the drums, but it was refreshing to think about communication and team building through music.</li> <li>• Even for the first time, I felt the sound and the power of the circle that I could put in the circle immediately.</li> <li>• I felt that I understood better because I used not only my brain but also my body.</li> <li>• It was so fast that I couldn't remember what I did because it was fun.</li> <li>• Thinking about how to use a shaker is a unique attempt, but I doubt if it can actually be used.</li> <li>• (Mental) walls could fall down by drumming in a circle.</li> <li>• Working the non-verbally as well as verbally is important in every week communication.</li> <li>• My shaker was better than I expected.</li> </ul> <p>Creating an image in the other person's head = transmitting</p>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I thought I have not had enough courage to jump-in the center of the circle.</li> <li>• I learned the importance of creating a warm and comfortable place.</li> <li>• I didn't really see "looking at myself" session today. The strongest impression is however that it ended in a blink of an eye.</li> <li>• I wanted to know everyone's homework about the making an original shaker session.</li> <li>• Other participants' performance is amazing.</li> <li>• Today was the quickest workshop that I've ever done.</li> <li>• It has been fun all the time throughout the workshop.</li> <li>• When I was full of ideas, I realized the fun of being in the group rather than an individual.</li> <li>• Even though a typhoon is coming, it's amazing to gather such number of participants!</li> <li>• I felt at ease in a simple rhythm. Now I don't feel hesitated to jump-in!</li> </ul>

**Table 4** Questionnaire Results (Free Description) (CON.)

<b>Question: Please look back on this workshop and mention what impressed you (either positive or negative). (Extracted)</b>	
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was nice to have the certificate. Great hospitality of staff</li> <li>• It was impressive that both the drums and Shaka-Shaka were developed by your ingenuity.</li> <li>• It was impressive to see everyone playing with their hearts when the facilitator jumped in.</li> </ul> <p>I felt the fun as well as some difficulty in terms of organizing teams as the team came up with various ideas and the content changed steadily.</p>

## Discussion

This section discusses several findings from the results described in the previous sections? The first finding is the fact that the title of the workshop was not unifying: “Team building with rhythm” for poster announcements, “Team building with music” for SNS, and “Team building with music/rhythm” for handouts and slides. Though the intention was valid, the content of the lecture was expanded as the content of the workshop developed which eventually caused the axis being a bit off. In addition, it is important to reconsider whether the theme “team building” matched the purpose of this workshop. In any way, setting a clear purpose and a goal would become a basis for having a successful workshop.

The second point is somewhat related to the first point. The workshop content was slightly different from the prior guidance. Since this was the first time to have this type of workshop (workshop with music instruments) on campus, there might be some incidents that are unavoidable. However, the deviation of the content would confuse the participants, so it must be minimized. On the other hand, due to the nature of a drum circle, there are many moments that require participants to become flexible depending on the situation. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully examine what kind of program guidance should be used in advance. It is also necessary to clearly inform participants in advance that flexible improvisation and changes are the characteristics/nature of a drum circle.

As a third point, it is necessary to reconsider whether the themes of each week (e.g. “Creating an environment”, “leadership”, “communication”, and “reflection-looking back at yourself”) were appropriated. Especially, the Week 1 and Week 4 workshops seemed difficult for participants to feel that they acquire something from them. In the future, it may be useful to carry out activities that have tangible goals, such as “being able to do XXX by attending the workshop”. Adding a few more elements for facilitator training, such as recording a video to look back, may also effective. As for the weekly homework assignments, it seemed difficult to convey because the homework was presented only verbally and on slides. Asking participants for following up closely by email as well as preparing for resumes would be a solution. It may be a good idea to set up a dedicated site/FB temporarily and put in homework assignments and video links, too.

The fourth point is the fact that the expectation regarding the content varied depending on the participants. While those who emphasized the experience were highly satisfied, those who were looking for application and teaching methods seemed slightly dissatisfied with the workshop. The issue is how widely one workshop can cover the needs of participants. As for one solution, the workshop may be divided into experience-centered activities and theory/concept-based lectures. Also, the latter half of the workshop can be divided into group discussions in which each group have different purposes and themes. Another way is to make the workshop

a long-term program so that it can include variety of themes and have time to get feedback from the participants.

It was good that we named the sound effect of shaking handmade instrument “Shaka-Shaka”, which became a sub-theme of the workshop as a consequence. This sub-theme was in fact used in various occasions. For example, the homework assignment that participants make their own session was named “Shaka-Shaka Program”. Also, participants were awarded the original certificate (signed by Mr. Pecker) “Shaka-Shaka Meister” on the final day. This may be one of the features of the SIT workshop. How to develop this sub-theme as SIT original is an issue for the future study.

## **Conclusion**

This study constructed and conducted a drum circle workshop using management theory for manager-level people who want to improve their skills to create an innovative environment. The purpose of the workshop was to (1) provide a framework for organizing the knowledge, skills, and things that they have accumulated from the experience of the field and (2) to make them meaningful in a new way. The intention is to lead them to go in a new direction (taking in a new perspective) while affirming the attempts that they have made so far. Before implementing the workshop, we assumed two possible effects: 1) providing an opportunity for participants to organize knowledge and skills acquired through the experience and 2) providing tools for introducing a drum circle into their own work.

Overall, the results from the questionnaires provided in each session verified its effects. In some weeks such as Week 2 (leadership) and Week 3 (communication), participants realized that the drum circle session did give them some tips for solutions to workplace challenges. The comments that they want to apply in the workplace and to use in training seem to reflect their understanding of the essence and its application of a drum circle session. On the other hand, some participants answered, “I still don't know how to apply it in my actual workplace (classroom in her case)”, indicating that there is still a gap between theory and application that needs to be filled. However, there is room for improvement especially in terms of ways of addressing management theories in the context of drum circle for filling a gap between the theory sessions and the practical (rhythm) sessions.

For future research, more practical sessions (e.g. a mini session intended for using at the beginning of a daily meeting at a workplace) as well as more time for participants to practice by themselves should be considered in order to deal with the comments mentioned above. It would be more likely to make participants feel that they have “gained something from the workshop”. In addition, particularly in Week 4, the content covered in the lecture was not necessarily linked to the drum circle session. This can be resolved through close collaboration between the facilitator and the lecturer. As mentioned above, it is important to first identify the target audiences and purposes of the workshop, which make it possible for both the facilitator and instructors to work closely for a common goal. Though the conducted workshop showed the possibility of applying the drum circle to innovative team building, continuous improvement is necessary to become the truly effective and versatile one.

In addition, the design of the workshop should be reconsidered for improving the effects that we intended for the workshop. One example is a homework assignment. In the workshop, not all participants could share their homework with others due to time constrain. Since many participants have taken the homework assignment seriously, it would be good to take enough time for everyone to show off their ideas. Alternatively, it would be good to have so-called “off-line” meetings where participants can share ideas after seeing other members’ performance.

Such combination of on-line and off-line meetings/lectures would bring a better attendance rate when targeting busy businesspersons. For future study, it would be interesting to enable online follow-up (web supplementary courses) and remote attendance in the future.

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