

The relevance of the PhD experience for a non-academic career: Personal experiences

Contribution to the Plenary: Quality and Relevance of graduates

Dr. Martin Dehli

actori GmbH (since 2010) – providing consulting services for cultural institutions

- **actori: leading consultancy for cultural institutions** in Germany, Austria and Switzerland



- Two business units: **consulting** and **marketing** for cultural institutions

- Current position: Director Consulting Services

■ Project examples

- Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe: assessment of productivity of the theatre; development of future strategy
- Berliner Stadtmuseum: development of the thematic and organizational strategy for the next 10 years
- Gewandhaus zu Leipzig, Oper Leipzig, Schauspiel Leipzig und Theater der Jungen Welt: Calculation of financial needs for the next 5 years; development of structural options for the four cultural institutions
- Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst Baden-Württemberg: Development of benchmark criteria to define the quality of the public music schools in Baden-Württemberg

The Boston Consulting Group (2005-10) – getting into touch with business



- **2005 – 2010 consultant at The Boston Consulting Group**
- **Multiple projects in diverse industries:** steel industry, telecommunication, insurance, finance, chemicals industry, mining, non-profit, pharmaceutical industry
- Topics (selection):
 - **Strategy and market analysis:** development of a transcontinental export strategy for a steel producer, assessment of an export strategy for Turkey and Russia for a speciality chemical company, revenue assessment for an acquisition target in the pharmaceutical market
 - **Customer service and sales:** customer interviews for a chemicals company in Northern Italy, moderation of workshops with the sales staff of a telecommunication provider and analysis of main points of criticism by customers
 - **Controlling:** development of marketing key performance indicators
 - **Organization:** merger of the service units of two companies in the energy sector into a shared-services-center; calculation of the financial benefits of the merger of the European branches of two financial services providers and discussion of the consequences with the affected managers, analysis of communication dysfunction of an insurance company

Artistic director of a string orchestra (since 2008) – exploring new horizons in music

- **Since 2008 conducting classes** with Peter Berné (Hanns-Eissler Music School), Martin Wettges (Opera North Leeds) and Georg Christoph Sandmann (Carl Maria von Weber Music School Dresden)
- **2008 Foundation and conductor of the string orchestra “Die Neuköllner Serenade”** in Berlin
 - 15 concert programs twice a year
 - Artistic focus of the orchestra: string repertoire of the 19th and 20th century
 - Organization and financial development of the orchestra from a project orchestra to a institutionalized musical body
- 2009 artistic director of the opera production “Così fan tutte” of the opera company “Aoide” in Berlin



Academic record and PhD experience

- **Magister in History and Philosophy (2000):** Universities of Tübingen, Paris and Bochum
- **PhD History of Science (2005):** European University Institute, Florenz
- **Research interests:** History of concepts, History of Psychoanalysis
- **Publications:**
 - **Leben als Konflikt.** Zur Biographie Alexander Mitscherlichs, Göttingen 2007
 - (as editor): Sigmund Freud: **Sulla storia della psicoanalisi**, Turin 2006
 - **Dissidenten. Geschichte eines Begriffs weltanschaulicher Pluralisierung**, in: Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte, hg. H.-G. Gadamer, K. Gründer und G. Scholz, 2001
 - **Shaping History: Alexander Mitscherlich and German Psychoanalysis after 1945**, in: Psychoanalysis and History, hg. J. Forrester, 2009
 - **Vom „Untergang des Abendlandes“ zum „Unbehagen in der Kultur“. Spuren des Konservativen in Mitscherlichs Sozialpsychologie**, in: Psychoanalyse und Protest. Alexander Mitscherlich und die „Achtundsechziger“, hg. T. Freimüller, Göttingen 2008
 - **Emancipation or Adaptation? The contested Role of Psychoanalysis**, in: Normalising Diversity, hg. P. Becker, European University Institute 2003.
 - **article „Wachstum; wachsen II“**, in: Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie, hg. J. Ritter, K. Gründer und G. Gabriel, Basel 2005



Why did I leave academia?

- **Anecdotal evidence: Getting angry is not bad to explore new horizons**
 - **Underlying reasons: Without compelling role models and a developed network there is no way into a German university**
 - **Existentialist motivation is enough for a PhD, but not for an academic career**
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The BCG experience

- Consulting is not about truth, but about impact
 - Consulting is about timing
 - Great colleagues are the key to successfully face professional challenges
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The actori experience – political asesment of non-monetary effects



The relevance of the PhD for my (professional) life

- **Content-wise, there is no relevance**
 - **The soft-skills acquired with the PhD pay off only on the managing level (and first, you have to get there): story-lining, defining the core of a problem, assessing pro and cons with inner distance, developing an understanding of different, also non-economic perspectives on an issue**
 - **The main relevance of the PhD for my professional life is one of attitude: it is part of your personal accomplishments untouched by professional challenges**
 - **Main deficit of the PhD-program in the Humanities: No preparation for later professional life, no discussion of job perspectives outside academia**
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