



OPERAČNÍ PROGRAM
LIDSKÉ ZDROJE
A ZAMĚSTNANOST



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1. Introduction

Examples of best practice in the Czech Republic, their analysis and description are the third major activity within the project realised by the Union of Employers' Associations of the Czech Republic. The project titled Thematic Network for Employability of Artists from the Performing Arts Field (Second Chance for Performing Arts) has been financed by the European Social Fund through its Human Resources and Employment Operational Programme and co-financed from the Czech Republic state budget. The project follows on a seminar on the topic of transition (second career) held in 2012 and organized by the Union of Employers' Associations together with *Vize tance*, the Dance Association of the CR and the Arts Institute – Theatre Institute. On that occasion an important written work by Roman Vašek and Václav Riedlbauch was published under the title of *A follow-up study of employability of artistic personnel (focusing on selected artists from the performing arts field)*. The study built on extensive dance surveys carried out in earlier years.

The analysis and examples of best practice in the Czech Republic focus on individual stories of artists who have already experienced career transition or are currently undergoing such a change. In the field of performing arts, the second career issue concerns mainly dancers or dance performers, to a lesser extent also opera singers or musicians. The choice of individual artists was motivated by the ambition to find such people who became successful in their second career and established themselves.

Given the fact that the dancing field is considered to be the most pressing of all (second career is an indispensable part of every dancer's professional life), most examples are taken from the dance practice.

At the very beginning it has to be noted that there is no organisation in the Czech Republic that would primarily focus on providing support to artists at the point of career transition. Besides, there is no system of financial support for artists in their career change period. That is why we consider all examples presented here to be individual and non-systematic by their nature. This should be borne in mind in case of generalising.

The authors gathered all information in structured personal interviews with artists in the period between May and July 2013. Their choice of artists was based both on their personal knowledge of the performing arts field as well as recommendations. The artists took part in the project in their free time and for free, mainly motivated by their own interest in the issue and their will to share experience. The study could not be carried out without this openness and positive attitude and therefore our acknowledgements go to all participants.

2. Examples of best practice

2.1. Employment with the former employer on a different job position (except for teaching positions)

There are common examples of career transition with the same employer usually represented by a theatre. It mostly happens with dancers, but other artists who end their career early are no exception too. Typically, circus artists find a different job in the same circus. There is a wide range of job positions for former artists including both positions requiring no higher qualifications and skills and jobs where high qualification is expected. Former dancers often take teaching positions, e.g. as dance instructors in dance ensembles or dance prep schools, or as dance masters. This specific group of dance teachers is described in a separate chapter. Job positions within an ensemble or a theatre company where former dancers can find their second career include among others: artistic directors, choreographers, directors, assistants to choreographers or directors, accompanists, script editors, dramaturgy instructors, producers, PR managers, lighting directors and stage managers.

In the same way former opera singers can work in their theatre as directors, assistants to a director, producers, PR managers, script editors, stage managers, prompters, etc. All these positions take the advantage of good knowledge of ballet or opera ensemble practices, hence the whole theatre life.

However, it is no exception that former artists find a job with their original employer at positions that require no qualification at all – e.g. as porters at the theatre.

Here follows an example of best practice presenting Lubor Kvaček, a stage manager at the National Theatre.

2.1.1. Lubor Kvaček

Born: 1972

Education: Dance Conservatory Brno (graduated in 1990)

Artistic career: Slovak National Theatre Bratislava, ballet soloist (1990-1993), Army

Artistic Ensemble (1993-1994), National Theatre Brno, ballet soloist (1994-1996), National Theatre Prague, ballet soloist (1996-1997, 2002-2006), Prague Chamber Ballet (1997-2001), Prague Festival Ballet (occasionally in 1993-1997)

Czech nationality, currently residing in Prague (Czech Republic)

Description of the solution – a life story

Dancer Lubor Kvaček worked with major ensembles in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. He was awarded the Thalia Award in 2001 for his performance of Rabbi in the Golem. His active dancing career lasted for 25 years and ended in 2006 with a serious injury during his American engagement. This accident terminated his career as he couldn't dance any longer.

The artistic director of the Ballet of the National Theatre in Prague Petr Zuska offered him a job as an assistant director of the ensemble as soon as his recovery was over. Mr. Kvaček accepted his offer and spent four years on the position. He has known Petr Zuska for years and his support meant a lot to him after the accident. Generally speaking, all dancers finishing their active career consider support from their theatre company to be one of the most important things.

“The end of career is a *small death* for every dancer. Your life so far is over, your dancing dreams die. I was very lucky to be allowed to stay with the theatre as it is my love and I cannot imagine my life without it,” Lubor Kvaček confides. His recovery after the accident

took six months and the fact that he could return to the theatre to work on a different position as soon as he was ready was very important from the psychological point of view. “My new work was a stimulus for faster recovery. I was looking forward to it. And I also knew that this work would enable me to pay my bills. I didn’t have to worry about my future,” he adds an important practical aspect of the whole problem.

In 2012 he was offered a position of a stage manager at the National Theatre and he has been doing it up to this day. “When I changed to the stage manager, neither of my previous jobs was of any help to me. I had to learn all the technical things – how the stage equipment works, how to prepare a stage for a performance, how these things work during performances and what needs to be done after the performance is over,” he says. It is a continuous learning process as he needs training e.g. in fire safety procedures, occupational safety, and so on. However, for a stage manager position he considers his ballet career as a great advantage because he knows what happens in any ballet scene even though he cannot directly see the stage.

To the contrary, his dancing career provided him with enough experience for the assistant director’s position. And yet, he decided to leave the job after several years. He didn’t proceed to directing or choreography because, as he says, he doesn’t have a knack for choreography. As an assistant director he was in charge of the National Theatre, the Estates Theatre, the Kolowrat Theatre and the New Stage (i.e. the four stages of the National Theatre). When the National Theatre was about to merge with the State Opera, he was supposed to take over the fifth stage. At this point he felt really tired or even exhausted with all responsibilities on the current position and finally accepted the new offer.

“In my job as an assistant director I was responsible for smooth operation of all the stages, providing dancers with everything they need for their performance and for keeping the quality of all performances on top level. My positive attitude towards the stage manager position was born at this time. As an assistant director I had to communicate with stage managers and operating managers and I liked their work a lot,” he mentions.

During his dance life he wasn’t interested in the theatre and performance operating processes at all. He didn’t realise the amount of background work. All of this materialized for him later on the positions of assistant director and stage manager. “It is hard work and it is poorly paid,” as he puts it now. The end of his dancing career and changing to a new position also meant a significant economic decline. Even these days, as he claims, both he and his colleagues search for extra work to make additional money.

During his active dancing career he didn’t take much time to consider his future after the dancing is over. He admits though that all dancers know that their dancing time is limited. Ballet is a hard and beautiful labour. All dancers want to dance as long as possible and few of them consider their life after the career is over. As Mr Kvaček says, “dancers keep learning until they are 25, the peak comes between 25 and 30.” If they stay healthy, they can keep dancing for a relatively long period of time, but soon after they turn 30, the body starts aching and the recovery gets much longer. These days all dancers can seek numerous opportunities for travelling or studying in various courses during their dancing time to facilitate the career transition in future. He thinks that there are two basic ways how to face this situation: the first one means that an artist at the end of his/her active career leaves the theatre and starts something completely different. Or he/she cannot imagine their life without theatre and they try a career transition with the same employer. He finds it essential that everyone make their own decision about the future as well as that everyone considers thoroughly their realistic prospects (including the financial point of view). As he says, it is crucial to stay humble, keep the desire to learn, prevent resentfulness and give a chance to life without dancing.

The accident happened at the time when he already knew that his age would not let him dance for many more years and the end was close anyway, so the change was not that nerve-wrecking. However, from the physical point of view, he experienced a huge difference as he was used to everyday practice, rehearsals and performances that suddenly came to an abrupt end. As a consequence of his former life, he needs to exercise every day, seek therapy for his aching back and knees, and so on.

"I am stubborn and I don't like failure." This is how Mr Kvaček answered a question about his personality traits that helped him most through the change and starting to work on different positions. Even though he continues working in the theatre and meets his younger ballet colleagues every day, none of them has ever been interested in his experience with career transition.

According to Mr Kvaček, the transition period requires an artist to admit that his/her active dancing career is over. He considers it rather bad that there is no systematic support provided for dancers approaching the end of their dancing careers - such system exists e.g. in Germany. Slovakian singers, dancers or wind players are also entitled to a special allowance.

These provisions are aimed at preventing the artists from falling down too fast before they are able to cope with the new situation, and potentially retrain themselves and start a new job. It is crucial to create a system of a helping hand that provides dancers with support and offer them assistance during the transition period as an acknowledgement of their hard work a salary that is very often inadequate.

During his studies at the conservatory he had never heard of the second career issue. It was mainly due to the fact that he graduated at a time when all dancers were eligible for a retirement pension based on the years worked. Therefore it was not a big issue then. Most problems in the ballet world arose when these retirement pensions were cancelled without compensation (in 1995, editor's note).

Mr Kvaček says that he does not mind being a mentor and share his experience with others.

Description of the solution - summary

Description of the solution: Career transition with the original employer – first he changed to the position of an assistant director, now he works as a stage manager.

Implementation of the solution: The new positions were taken up without any preparation; he learned things by doing and went to various trainings.

Solution basis: He used his knowledge of the theatre to get an opportunity to start a different non-dancing type of work.

Reasons and objectives of the solution: He had to end his career due to a serious injury and got a new working position at the theatre.

Major obstacles: The need to adapt quickly to the new profession, learning by doing, worsened his financial situation.

Responsibility and people involved: The National Theatre Prague, the Artistic Director of the National Theatre's Ballet Mr Petr Zuska.

Support from: Petr Zuska and colleagues working in the technical and operating departments of the theatre.

Outcomes of the solution

Description of the artist's current situation after career transition: The career change was successfully completed. The then artist works on a qualified position of the stage manager

with his original employer. He fully accepted the change and his new profession satisfies him entirely.

Specific factors affecting success of the solution: Support provided by his boss and later by the theatre turned out to be the most important aspect of the change.

Transferability of best practice

The most important skill/experience gained through the implementation of the solution: Implementation of any solution implies personal commitment that facilitates fast training in the new profession as well as continuous acquisition of new knowledge and skills. End-of-career situation requires support from the employer. It is also highly desirable to establish a support system that helps artists through the difficult period of transition.

Advice to those interested in similar solutions: Keep interested in the theatre operation and truly accept the end of career.

2.2. Employment in the field of artistic education

Employment in the field of artistic education is a common example of transition for former dancers, musicians or opera singers. This type of career solution is also specific by the fact that a lot of artists start with some teaching already during their active artistic career. We can find teachers at conservatories, private schools, academies of art, elementary schools of art, as well as in dance ensembles, private dance studios or sports clubs focusing e.g. on figure skating or gymnastics. It is the advantage of teaching practice that artists make maximum use of their practical experience and that they can fructify contacts established during their active career.

Artists are authorised to become educators by the simple fact of graduating from a conservatory and they can also easily complete specialised higher education. In terms of freelance work or business activities in the field of dance training, the Czech legislation, including the Trade Act, is relatively permissive.

And now follows an example of best practice presenting Miroslav Hajn, a teacher at the Dance Conservatory Prague.

2.2.1. Miroslav Hajn

Born: 1960

Education: Dance Conservatory Prague (graduated 1980), internship at the State Dance College of A.J.Vaganovova in Leningrad and at the Palucca Schule in Dresden; Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague – Dance Department – dance teaching specialisation (1995-1998)

Artistic career: the National Theatre Prague (1980-1992, a soloist since 1988)

Czech nationality, currently residing in Prague (Czech Republic)

Description of the solution – a life story

Miroslav Hajn spent his entire artistic career at the National Theatre Prague where he worked together with his twin brother Luboš. Both of them became soloists in the ensemble. His dancing career was prematurely terminated by a serious ankle injury that happened on stage during a performance. After an operation and a follow-up rehabilitation he came back on stage but his injury required further operations and after that he was no longer able to get back in ideal shape. His active dancing career therefore ended when he was 32 years old. This situation didn't traumatize him in any way as he had already started a simultaneous career in the field of dance teaching. He had created a vision of his second profession some

time ago and when he got to the top of his dancing career (at the age of 30) he had already become an external teacher of partner dance technique at the Dance Conservatory of Prague. After the end of his dancing career he tried running a restaurant for several months but according to his own words this work was not satisfactory and he did not feel free there. "If possible, people should do things they feel related to," he says. This belief made him become a full-time teacher at the Dance Conservatory of Prague. He newly started teaching classical dance and scenic dance. These specialisations lead him to extend his qualifications by studying a Master degree in dance teaching at the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. Even though this specialisation usually requires 5 years of studying, he managed to get the degree in 3 years, mainly thanks to support and understanding on the side of his employer (i.e. the management of the conservatory) as well as due to the Dance Department of the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts. They were very helpful and let him pass some of the exams based on an individual study plan. The situation became even more complicated due to the fact that he had just started a family.

The career transition did not have any influence on Miroslav Hajn's financial situation. The salary he got as a dance teacher was not much different from what he had as a soloist of the National Theatre Ballet.

Also, he did not miss anything special from his active dancing career. In his new job he continued with physical trainings, although they were limited by the history of his injuries. After some time he even got back on the theatre stage in less exposed roles – both in ballet performances of the Conservatory and in miming roles in drama performances (e.g. a performance of Double Agent at the Vinohrady Theatre).

As we mentioned before, graduating from the Dance Conservatory entitles any graduate to become a qualified dance teacher. However, Miroslav Hajn thinks that the teaching work is definitely not suitable for everyone. It requires talents and attitude. In this respect, he took an important lesson from the teacher of his main specialisation Mr Jiří Taclík, former director of Dance Conservatory of Prague. Back in the times of his studies, they built a sort of friendship, as he says. His model provided an important stimulus for Miroslav Hajn's further focus on dance teaching. He taught dancing not only at the Dance Conservatory of Prague, but he also started working in a private ballet school Pirueta where he shared his experience with both children and adults having no ambition to succeed in professional dance. In 1995 he participated in the preparation of the Czech national women's gymnastics team getting ready for the European Championships. He also co-operated with the world champions in both Latin and classical dance in the Astra club of ballroom dancing. His career includes dance teaching in various theatres and ballet ensembles, e.g. in the State Opera Prague, with Pavel Šmok's Prague Chamber Ballet or the Czech Singing and Dancing Ensemble. He taught at the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts where he shared his knowledge of classical and partner dance with his students. It is rather interesting that Miroslav Hajn's brother Luboš Hajn also teaches dancing at the National Theatre Ballet.

Miroslav Hajn's non-dancing career so far has come to its current peak in 2009 when he became a deputy director of his "home" Dance Conservatory of Prague. Apart from dance and teaching skills this position requires him to develop his knowledge of organisational and administrative issues as well.

Miroslav Hajn's transition to dance teaching career was relatively effortless and that is why he finds it difficult to assess needs of dancers with no clear idea of their future career.

He points out several not entirely positive examples: numerous dancers stay with the theatre ensemble on unskilled positions of porters, members of the cleaning staff, etc.

Despite the fact that his career transition was rather smooth, Mr Hajn mentions several difficult moments at the end of his career. He recalls the then situation with disability pensions, how complicated it was to get this rarely accessible type of allowance. He was finally granted a full disability pension after a serious injury followed by several operations (there have been 12 of them up to date – due to his injured ankle, both knees, sprains, torn meniscus, etc.). This full pension was later reduced to a partial allowance and finally taken away from him completely. In response to this Miroslav Hajn took a legal action and his case eventually got the High Court of Justice in Brno. However, he chose this way just of the principle and to draw attention to unscrupulous argumentation of the state representatives. On the other hand he was aware of the fact that disability pension was taken away from more helpless people than him.

And how does Miroslav Hajn perceive transferable qualities, skills and knowledge of dancers? He notices mainly the teacher training all dancers complete at the conservatory. If they have talents to it, dancers are able to work with children not only during preparatory dancing classes. He also mentions that numerous regional elementary art schools search for dance teachers among graduates from dance conservatories.

Description of the solution - summary

Description of the solution: smooth transition to dance-teaching work at the Dance Conservatory of Prague

Solution basis: After several months of working in a restaurant he realised that he needed to do something connected with dancing. That was why he extended his contract at the dance conservatory. This step was followed by achieving higher qualification at the dance department of the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts. Thanks to his education and skills he later became deputy director at the dance conservatory.

Reasons and objectives of the solution: His dancing career was prematurely terminated by a serious injury. His new aim was to give all energy to dance teaching which he tended to follow already during his active dancing career.

Major obstacles: It was really hard to get a master degree while he had a full-time employment, especially due to the lack of time. It got even more complicated by the fact that he started a family at that time.

Responsibility and people involved: Dance department of the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts, Dance Conservatory of Prague

Support from: Jiří Paclík, Jaroslav Slavický – both former directors of the Dance Conservatory of Prague, their examples were an inspiration to Miroslav Hajn in his dance teaching practice, they both helped to develop his teaching career at the dance conservatory

Outcomes of the solution

Description of the artist's current situation after career transition: Miroslav Hajn has successfully adapted to his new career, it provides him with satisfaction and it is comparable with his former dance career in terms of the financial situation. He was promoted on his new position.

Specific factors affecting success of the solution: Studying a college was not essential for his future career but it proved to be extremely contributory. However, he wouldn't be able to graduate from the Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts if his employer (the Dance Conservatory Prague) did not provide him with the much needed support.

Transferability of best practice

The most important skill/experience gained through implementation of the solution:

The importance of individual attitude to his students and adopting organisational skills.

Advice to those interested in similar solutions: If you want to be a good dance teacher you need to be not only a great dancer but also have talents for teaching and be able to create positive relationship with the students.

2.3. Employment in a different art or in a field connected with an artistic career (either as an employee or an entrepreneur)

This is a relatively common solution. However, its key assumption is that a particular artist has another talent or a strong interest in a field different from his main artistic career. He also needs to cultivate this interest and related knowledge during his active career. Another assumption for a successful transformation of such interest into a profession is the ability to communicate, stay open to the world and, last but not least, have a strong ability to make and develop contacts and social networks. According to their individual skills particular artists usually pursue their second field of interest in parallel with their main profession and they organise their working life based on the opportunities coming.

We can now learn about an example of best practice depicting Oldřich Kříž, opera and musical director.

2.3.1. Oldřich Kříž

Born: 1960

Education: did not finish a secondary technical school, the State Conservatory Prague (graduated 1987)

Artistic career: a soloist of the National Theatre Prague opera ensemble – baritone (up to present); he also was a soloist of the South Bohemian Theatre opera ensemble in České Budějovice; since 1994 a soloist of the State Opera Prague; he performs in musicals and operettas; so far he has performed in Germany, Ireland or France.

Following jobs: opera and musical director, producer, partly also art agency activities Czech national, currently residing in Prague (Czech Republic), working in the Czech Republic and abroad

Description of the solution – a life story

Mr Kříž never planned directing to be his second career. He came across it randomly. He intended to change to agency activities in case his active singing career ended. Still an active singer he established his own art agency and started to realize individual projects (concerts, performances, etc.). „I began to realize that this work might become my future career that could even bring me enough money to live on,” he says. Later he expanded his activities to representing artists – he could use his personal contacts with directors and artistic directors of theatres as well as good knowledge of the situation at the Czech singing scene. “I own an extensive database containing information about our singers – who sang what and where. Good contacts are essential part of the know-how in this field. However, I also had to study various opera documents to get a better view of things that I didn’t know anything about,” he adds. This allows him to give prompt advice on a performer for a stand-in or recommend a range of artists suitable for a particular role. These days Mr Kříž also works as a producer in co-operation with a German agency. Regarding his production activities he mainly had to orientate himself in the financial matters, e.g. to be able to prepare well a project budget.

Despite the fact that Oldřich Kříž's father is a director, he never thought of trying a director's job himself as he didn't study for it. In the 2004/2005 season he was offered to become a director for the first time at the F.XŠalda Theatre in Liberec (the offer came from Martin Doubravský, Director of the Opera Liberec). "I took time to think about it. I was afraid of it and did not feel courageous enough to say yes to it. My son persuaded me by pointing out the fact that the quality of directing in our country is rather variable and there was no reason why I should not give it a chance. So I tried it and it worked out well. It actually resulted in co-operation with the National Theatre Prague," Mr Kříž remembers his beginnings as a director. His first successful premiere was followed by more job offers and at that time he even started seeking them actively. So far he has directed twelve performances but still considers himself as a beginner even though established director.

Oldřich Kříž currently works part-time in the National Theatre Prague as an opera soloist. He reduced his working hours to be able to do other things as well. His activities as a director, producer and art agency manager prevail and he does not sing major roles any more. He does not have problems with managing all his activities in time because for him it is just a question of good organisation and hard work. However, he had to learn to take into account certain distinct differences. Singing is in some ways ultimate – you learn a new role and then you rehearse it repeatedly (even the rehearsing does have its limits, it follows a clear procedure). "On the other hand, directing and work in the agency are never-ending. You can work on and on, think of new opportunities, develop new ideas," as he describes. Nowadays he adapted to this difference mainly thanks to the change in his personal values system. Also, considering his age, he tries to find more time to relax. At first the never-ending work was killing him – he felt a constant urge to work and when he was relaxing he kept thinking about the work waiting for him. He admits that occasional envious attitude of some colleagues reminds him of Dale Carnegie's words "when people kick your ass that's because you're ahead of them." He also says that "everybody can work the way I do. Many people complain about not having a job but they do not do anything to get it. They don't try, they don't study, they don't start their own projects," Mr Kříž thinks. He also feels that qualified directors think he takes up their job.

He also sees a major difference in the fact that opera singers simply follow directors' instructions, while directors are on the stage to decide what would be going on there. Directors have to be creative and fully concentrate on their work. He considers as a great advantage that his experience enables him to get a perfect idea of how singers think on the stage. "I know what is still possible and what is beyond feasible, you simply cannot sing while standing on your head," he concludes.

Oldřich Kříž did not start thinking about his second career from the very start, but as an established opera soloist. "At the beginning I devoted myself to singing and didn't consider any other options," he claims.

He basically grew up in the theatre; he sang in the children's choir, did extras as well as built props. He spent seven years in the choir and then started singing as a soloist. Gradually, he became familiar with the world of theatre from all its perspective and later utilized it in his directing. What he found totally unfamiliar was technical issues – hand-over meetings, technical rehearsals, lighting rehearsals, etc. He did not experience these situations before and had to learn about them as a director. "I learned by doing," he says. He also used his good relationships with other directors and asked them for help. "At lighting rehearsals I got a lot of initial help from Daniel Dvořák, an experienced stage designer. Nowadays I am not afraid of this job anymore." Some time ago he even considered studying light design but he did not find time for it.

He has a humble attitude to directing. „I wouldn't dare saying I know everything,“ he says. He is aware that there are different opportunities for extending one's qualification, however, he doesn't think that Czech universities nowadays could teach him anything new – as they do not offer enough specific follow-up education. He would appreciate if our higher artistic education offered a wider range of courses for artists with years of practice who want to move forward. “There are so many people whose active career ended or does not take the planned direction”, he points out. In his current situation he could learn more, for example, by working as an assistant director to a top opera director somewhere abroad. His directing work is based on what he learned by doing. He also refined his approach and attitude by observing directors working with him as an opera singer.

At the age of 32 Oldřich Kříž arranged a life insurance with high rate of savings. He was making very good money at that time¹. However, he could see a lot of colleagues who turned 50 and clung to their job to survive until the retirement age. At the same time no one wanted to work with them as they could not sing well any more. “I told myself that I would never allow myself to end up like this,” he claims. He set a limit of 50 years of age and made sure that he would not have to sing when he gets older than 50 and cannot sing well anymore.

He finds this financial security that he planned in his thirties essential. He realises that not many people get a chance to do the same thing. He sees a problem in the fact that most people do not think ahead and they do not realise the necessity to plan their finances and save some of their money for future, especially in times when their salary is high. “Then they turn 50 and they get into situation where they have nothing and fall into a big trouble.” This is what he often experiences around himself. A good voice is never a certainty, regardless of the fact that singers often do not take a good care of it. Young singers recover very quickly and they do not need to think about their lifestyle that much. However, very often they perform extremely difficult roles that can harm their voice. “That is the main reason why many singers lose voice too soon and they have to end their career when they are 35 or 40; if you put it simply, they scream it down.” The condition of every singer's voice is also influenced by a genetic disposition – some people have a fine voice that does not bear much. It is therefore very important to think ahead and plan one's second career in time, stop living from one day to another. Many singers, for example, study at a university to become teachers. “I also received several offers for teaching positions but I do not want to teach. It is because I highly respect the teaching profession and I know that if someone's approach is wrong they can ruin a student's voice as well as mental state down in a year and there is no remedy to it”, he explains.

Nevertheless, if people have an idea of their future career they can try to extend their qualification even during their active artistic career, if they find time to do so.

According to Oldřich Kříž mental crises are a common part of artists' life and he has also experienced a couple of them. Artists are very sensitive people – when they are busy they feel the work to be overwhelming and when they do not have enough work they think nobody appreciates them. “Artistic work is simply different from office or manual jobs – they are clearly scheduled, unlike the work of artists”, he explains.

1 Oldřich Kříž also talks about financial aspects of his profession and opera contract: in České Budějovice, where he started as a young soloist in the ensemble, his salary was 2500 CZK (a national average income); top singers earned 4300 CZK in regional theatres and 6500 CZK in Prague (stars of the National Theatre); today his soloist's salary in the National Theatre – State Opera amounts to 22 600 CZK.

Studying did not motivate him to think about his second career. However, he went to school in times when artists were entitled to a retirement pension, so there was actually no pressure to consider his life in a perspective. He says he was lucky not to become a superstar at the conservatory like many of his schoolmates supported by their teachers. "These stars are later somehow lost in everyday theatre life," he thinks. He sang before he started studying at the conservatory and then continued during the studies.

"The fact that I am an optimist makes my life much easier," claims Oldřich Kříž. His life experience and education help him find good things even in troublesome issues. Nowadays he is able to use his free time when there is not much work to do sports, for example. He is proud of the fact that he is by nature precise and always well prepared.

"All my failures enabled me to make a step forward." This is what he answers to a question of what mistakes in his career he would now change if he could. When he was at the end of his tether and all he did went out wrong, he simply put himself together, gathered all his energy to risk and started something new.

Considering the fact that his career transition was gradual and in parallel with his singing work, he never experienced any financial slump. As a matter of fact directing in regional theatres is rather badly paid, he could not making living by just directing. He gives an example from his career: if he directs four performances in regional theatres in one year and gets an above average payment for it, it makes 320 000CZK gross revenue, but he needs to pay for transport and accommodation himself.

These days Oldřich Kříž does not despise film making either. "When I reached certain age, I realised that all new things were attractive for me," he explains his attitude. He, for example, participated at a reading in public. These are pleasant activities that he makes for free but at the same time he forms new contacts, broadens horizons or finds inspiration for new work. He is not afraid of changes.

Description of the solution - summary

Description of the solution: He had an original plan to start an art agency but then he was asked to direct and he accepted the offer. He keeps expanding in his directing profession and uses both experience from previous jobs and his wide network of contacts in the Czech Republic and abroad made during his career as an opera singer. At the same time he still does opera singing.

Solution principle: Utilize knowledge and contacts from his professional career, direct connection to his artistic career, a chance to stay a part of the theatre world.

Reasons and objectives of the solution: He started with an art agency when still an active singer; he wanted to realise his own projects and use know-how, knowledge of the opera world and contacts made. Transition to directing happened at random, he just took a chance (even though directing is a tradition in his family). He basically wanted to find another job, realise his dreams and make living with perspective, i.e. not to be dependent on singing and have the freedom to finish with it depending on the condition of his voice.

Major obstacles: No obstacles experienced on the way.

Responsibility and people involved: Mostly his own responsibility, the National Theatre Prague.

Support from: Colleagues and family.

Outcomes of the solution

Description of the artist's current situation after career transition: Oldřich Kříž still works part-time as an opera singer and spends more and more time with directing. He works

as an opera and musical freelance director, realising his projects both in the Czech Republic and abroad. He also started producing activities. He uses his know-how and profound knowledge of the opera world, including his own database of contacts and opera roles.

Specific factors affecting success of the solution: It is mainly the assumption that the artist has another talent, in this case a talent for directing.

Transferability of best practice

The most important skill/experience gained through implementation of the solution: He had to orientate himself in a new field and give a lot of energy to self-study in fields that he did not have a chance to learn as a singer (light design, etc.). He also had to get used to different work style.

Advice to those interested in similar solutions: It is prudent to think ahead and consider one's second career early enough.

2.4. Employment in the field that has no connection to the artistic profession

Many artists end their artistic career and head for something totally different from art. In case they become successful businessmen or get an attractive job in a more lucrative field, they often find themselves in a lot more favourable financial situation. It is very difficult to generalize this solution – artists make decisions according to their personal dispositions, interests and their future life can be also influenced by the contacts they made outside of their original job where they can, for example, meet future business partners. This solution is also one of the most difficult ones as it puts great demands on an individual. Not only need they introduce themselves to a new field but also, in case of starting a business, to learn about legislative and administrative issues. It is also not exceptional that artists complete their formal education in another field, usually at the university level, to be able to develop their new career and reach the level that satisfies their ambition. Therefore this solution is not for everyone.

We can now learn about examples of best practice depicting Vendula Kredvíková (Kohoutková), Karolína Polášková Kováčsová and Jaroslav Roubal.

2.4.1. Vendula Kredvíková (Kohoutková)

Born: 1976

Education: Dance Conservatory of Prague (graduated 1995)

Dance career: National Theatre Brno (1995-1997), Slovak National Theatre (1996-1997),

Finnish National Ballet (1997-1998), National Theatre Prague (1999-2000)

Czech national, currently residing in Prague (Czech Republic)

Description of the solution – a life story

Vendula Kohoutková's dance career was very short but yet rather ample. Within six years she worked with four ensembles, two of them abroad (in Finland and Slovakia). Her career ended at the age of 24 due to injury. It was a sudden twist and she had to start looking for a new job at short notice. She briefly considered university studies but eventually made a different decision. Her participation in the selection procedure for air stewardesses with the Czech Airlines was just accidental. She even says that it definitely was not her dream job, mainly because of the fact that during her dancing career she was a frequent flyer and she could see how demanding the air stewardesses' job was. Ms Kohoutková explains that

she could become a dance teacher and assumes that, with respect to her previous artistic career, it would not be a problem at all but she decided to change to a completely different field. She saw an advertisement in the newspaper and decided to give it a chance. She successfully went through several steps of a complex selection process and at the end of a three-month training became an air stewardess. Her good knowledge of languages, especially English and French, was her most valuable asset she could use in the new job. The position of an air stewardess also places stringent requirements on appearance, psychological resilience as well as physical condition. Vendula Kohoutková's ballet career might have provided her with an advantage in the above mentioned aspects, despite the fact that she does not see it this way. On the contrary, she considers her previous ballet career as an aggravating factor, especially in terms of her physical condition as she was handicapped by her injury. She worked as an air stewardess for three years and then went on a maternity leave. She did not eventually return back to work, again due to health reasons. Permanent walking on high heels was getting more and more painful – she could feel escalating pain in her ankle ligaments repeatedly injured during her dance career. As a result she was even granted a disability pension for a short period of time.

Despite the fact that Vendula Kohoutková ended her career in the National Theatre Prague at the soloist position, her career transition ironically brought a significant improvement of her financial situation. Almost immediately her salary as an air stewardess doubled her monthly income compared to the money she earned in the National Theatre. She also compares the demands of both professions: “Air stewardesses suffer from the long-term presence in an air-conditioned aircraft and totally disordered biorhythms. It is not a Monday to Friday job; you often have to get up at three o'clock in the morning, etc. Air stewardesses have a difficult job but I remember my dancing to be even much harder work”, she says. She also reminds of the risks brought both by the ballet and airline transport – women can have difficulties with getting pregnant.

Her not so long dance career caused a lot of physical pain – several protracted injuries leaving traces till today. These days she cannot do any sport intensively as it could have fatal effects on her health. “I have had long-lasting problems with my shoulder and I don't want any more operations. My body is slowly deteriorating. I also have troubles with my ankles and toes. I have had my knee successfully operated in Sweden, but still it does not work as well as it should”, she provides details on her health martyrdom. She has been to eight operations so far.

Her career transition brought a significant change in life values. As a dancer, her only priority and target in life was her artistic career. Her current priorities are more like a pyramid that builds on a more solid basis and cannot be broken down so easily in contrast with her total devotion to ballet. Based on her experience she also explains why she did not want to be a dance teacher. According to her words she did not want to become a tool for “destroying other dancers' bodies”. She thinks that the ballet formula is very often as follows: “Either you work as hard as possible and you succeed at the expense of your own health or you do things more cautiously and then you cannot get to the top.” Compared to the times when she was focusing on her career success she now feels much more satisfaction. At first she compensated for the absence of physical exercise by doing boxing but now she only does sport for pleasure.

Vendula Kohoutková was an air stewardess for three years and after her maternity leave she started doing business together with her husband. However, working with children is still of major importance to her and she is an actively participating parent in her children's Waldorf School. Their family company called *Dobrá vína* imports quality wine, mainly from France. Her husband is a sommelier and provides quality guarantees while Vendula manages the company's daily business. She updates the website, arranges advertising,

organizes recruitment; she also prepares tastings, selects complementary products as well as she plans and implements strategies for the company development. The company currently employs ten people. It focuses on prominent clients, participates in public tenders and follows the path of quality. The competition, however, is tough. *Dobrá vína* company tries to succeed by taking the advantage of good relationships with smaller co-operating wine producers and also by keeping low profit margins that allow selling good wine for a reasonable price. Most of Vendula Kredvíková's everyday work involves management and operating activities. She has not received any training in it. According to her words she uses her common sense and learns by doing. Has ballet taught her anything she could use these days? "Tenacity and discipline", she says.

Looking back at her career so far, she doesn't think she would do any significant changes to it if she could. She sometimes thinks about how to effectively help dancers ending their career. She cannot recall a moment during her studies at the Conservatory when students were encouraged to envisage their future after their dance career was over. She considers this to be the core of the problem. Children should talk about this at school and dance conservatories should increase the quality of their language education as well as provide students with basic knowledge of computer usage. That should be a solid basis for any job position. Vendula also considers useful to provide leaving dancers with a list of current job offers that would ideally be linked with a choice of requalification courses. According to her opinion career advice is absolutely necessary and financial help should be considered as well. She also agrees that mentoring makes a lot of sense. She has experienced its true importance at her children's school where mentoring is used to share teaching practice. She would agree to help a dancer find a new job based on her own experience if she had time for it. Regarding her second profession of an air stewardess she mentions the fact that air travel business has changed a lot and many air stewardesses have lost their job as well as their working conditions and salaries have worsened over the time.

Description of the solution - summary

Description of the solution: After the end of her dance career she worked as an air stewardess with the Czech Airlines and later on she started her own business of importing and selling high quality wine.

Solution basis: Vendula Kohoutková responded to an advertisement seeking air stewardesses for the Czech Airlines and went through a challenging selection process. After her maternity leave she started a business of importing and selling wine together with her husband who is a sommelier.

Reasons and objectives of the solution: Vendula Kohoutková had to finish her dancing career at the age of 24 due to an injury. She chose a new job position of an air stewardess as she felt to have relevant pre-requisites for it. Later on she started her own business.

Major obstacles: Her previous dance career proved to bring both advantages and drawbacks to her position of an air stewardess. The drawbacks were mainly of health nature and forced her to leave the airline after three years.

Responsibility and people involved: the Czech Airlines carrier

Support from: her husband with whom they started a family company.

Outcomes of the solution

Description of the artist's current situation after career transition: Vendula Kredvíková (Kohoutková) is satisfied with her current business activities. Her work is creative and diverse and she has enough time to take care of her family. Her career transition brought a change in life values and she feels considerably happier compared to her dancing times.

Specific factors affecting success of the solution: To get the position of an air stewardess with the Czech Airlines it was crucial to possess perfect knowledge of two languages,

as well as to comply with the requirements for appearance, physical condition and mental resilience.

Transferability of best practice

The most important skill/experience gained through implementation of the solution: Doing business taught her how to deal with advertising issues, she also learned about organising work and creating good working atmosphere.

Advice to those interested in similar solutions: The air transport field has gone through significant changes and the position of an air stewardess is no longer as attractive as it used to be in times when Vendula Kredvíková was there. Both for starting a business and for getting a qualified working position it is advisable to improve one's knowledge of foreign languages as well as to become computer literate.

2.4.2. Karolína Polášková Kováčsová

Born: 1984

Education: Dance Conservatory of Prague (graduated 2002), Masaryk University in Brno, Faculty of Law (2005–2010)

Dance career: member of the ballet ensemble of the National Theatre Brno (2002 – 2010) Czech national, currently residing in Prague (Czech Republic)

Description of the solution – a life story

For 8 years she had a contract with the National Theatre Brno. She danced, for example, pas de quatre in the Swan Lake, four Little Snowflakes in the Nutcracker, a duet named Pointless fragility within the ballet evening of The World of Desire or the role of a nymph in the ballet Sylvia. After three years in her contract she was accepted for studies to the Faculty of Law of the Masaryk University in Brno. At first she considered finishing her contract because her legal studies became her priority (mainly in view of her future professional career). The Director of the ballet, Mr Karel Littera, offered her a chance to study along with her dancing career. One of the reasons for accepting his offer was the fact that she learned about her admission in July, i.e. when the auditions for the coming season were already over and the ballet ensemble would not have anyone to take her place. They finally agreed on a 0,8 work contract – it meant that four days plus Saturday were assigned to the theatre and one day she spent at school.

“Several members of our ballet ensemble were university students. Most of them studied dance teaching at JAMU (Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts). Their contract with the theatre was not cut in any ways and after some time I agreed with Mr Littera that I would return to my original full-time contract as well. It turned out that the legal studies did not have any negative impact on my ballet career,” she explains. According to her words the beginning of her studies was hard but gradually she found the way how to organise her school responsibilities and it finally went well together with the work in the theatre.

The then director of the theatre Mr Zdeněk Prokeš supported dancers in their studies; he understood and appreciated their effort to further develop their skills.

Soon after she finished her legal studies she also ended her contract with the theatre as well as her dance career. She was 26 then. Since 2010 she has been working as a junior lawyer in the Law Office Kavinek & partners. She is now preparing for her attorney exams. „Law undergoes constant changes. If you want to be a lawyer and develop your career in law, you have to keep doing it,“ she claims.

During her studies at the Conservatory she did not consider the fact that dance career is always limited by age. “Everybody at the Conservatory wants to be the best. All dancers always try hard at almost any cost. On the other hand, students are not foolish and they are

aware of the fact that their dancing will have to end one day and it is not forever. They do not give a thought to what they would do after their career is over and their teachers do not make them think about it either,” she recalls. She did not consider a legal career at the time of her studies at the Conservatory, but her mother is a lawyer and she got a chance to learn what her work was about. She chose law because legal studies did not require her to do mathematics, chemistry or physics as she knew that Conservatory did not give her enough background for these subjects. “However, even this thing does not have to be an obstacle for further studies. One of my former colleagues went to study medicine. I admired her because she had to learn so many things for the admission tests”, she explains.

Her knowledge from the Conservatory, on the other hand, was good enough for her admission tests at the Faculty of Law. She even feels that for one part of the exams focusing on logic she was prepared extremely well as this part required her to use fantasy. „The admission tests also included some counting, but I knew how to do it from my preparatory courses I attended prior to sending my application to law school,“ she says.

She started her university studies early, when she still had her theatre contract. She wanted to start with it as soon as possible so that her brain was “still fresh”, as she puts it.

“When people decide to go for studying they should probably start as soon as they can. I experienced a three-year break between the Conservatory and my legal studies and I could tell the pause. You simply stop thinking as a student. I could see how better my classmates who started university right after their secondary school were”, she recalls. She had to learn how to study again. The longer the break, the more difficult it is to start studying again.

On the other hand she acknowledges the fact that when someone becomes a successful dancer it would be a shame not to use the talents for a dance career. Moreover, when a dancer starts doing something else, he or she simply denies all hopes and hours spent by training at the Conservatory. This is an important psychological aspect. There are two different things opposing each other – an active career and a preparation for the second career. Everybody has to choose their priorities.

When she thinks about the time when she finished her dance career and started working at the law office, she admits missing physical exercise. Her body had to get used to long hours in front of the computer, but she did not find it that much difficult. Everyday work on the PC, however, had an adverse effect on her sight. In the office she also misses the team spirit known from the theatre where people become closer friends. She perceives a certain distance between people in the law office. The positive aspects of legal work compared to the theatre include free Saturdays and Sundays. On the other hand, her week days are always very long.

She considers as her strength the fact that dancers are really strong, they love their work, are not afraid and can quickly react to any new situation. These qualities reflect in their second non-dancing careers. “When I take down to some work in the office I always try to make my best even though it sometimes means to stay much longer than just my working hours,” she provides an example from her current career. She is also capable of coping with the stressful and demanding job thanks to her experience from the theatre where stress and psychological tension were rather common. She came to the law office as a graduate from a law school but she feels she had the advantage of both working and life experience from the theatre. Thus her starting line was a bit different from other graduates who went from their secondary school directly to the university. “I also owe to the theatre the benefit of being able to orientate myself in interpersonal relationships,” she reflects.

Due to the fact that her work in the law office followed immediately after her theatre contract ended she did not have to solve any financial issues as her salary remained at the same level.

Despite the fact that she never needed any services or support in her career transition, she considers these things as rather useful for dancers leaving their careers because of age. “Such people find themselves at a crossroads. They spent their life so far solely by dancing and even though they might have considered their future life very often they did not have the chance or energy to start getting ready for their second career during their active dance career. They also might not know what to do next or they are unaware of how to get a different job,” she thinks.

In spite of the fact that her career is totally different now, she follows the news from the ballet world and keeps in touch with her ballet colleagues from Brno and Prague. However, she does not dance any more.

She would be willing to become a mentor if her schedule allowed her to do so.

Description of the solution - summary

Description of the solution: After ending her dance career she became a junior lawyer. She is currently preparing for attorney exams.

Implementation of the solution: During her dance career she studied at the university and graduated from the Faculty of Law. After finishing school she finished her dance career and started working full-time in the new field.

Solution basis: Find a new career in a prospective field.

Reasons and objectives of the solution: Karolína Polášková Kováčsová made her legal studies a priority. That is why it was natural for her to end her dance career after graduating from the law school.

Major obstacles: She did not experience any.

Responsibility and people involved: National Theatre Brno, Law Faculty of the Masaryk University in Brno.

Support from: Karel Littera and Zdeněk Prokeš.

Outcomes of the solution

Description of the artist's current situation after career transition: Karolína Polášková Kováčsová works as a junior lawyer in a law office and is currently preparing for attorney exams. Her new career is a successful one and despite its being rather demanding she finds her work satisfying.

Specific factors affecting success of the solution: Her ability to combine demanding studies at the university with a full-time contract with the theatre.

Transferability of best practice

The most important skill/experience gained through implementation of the solution: It is necessary to learn how to study again in case people start studying at the university after a longer break from the Conservatory. Some people might find this rather difficult.

Advice to those interested in similar solutions: Start studying as soon as possible.

2.4.3. Jaroslav Roubal

Born: 1972

Education: Dance Conservatory Brno

Dancing career: National Theatre Brno

Czech national, currently residing in Brno (Czech Republic)

Description of the solution – life story

Jaroslav Roubal was a member of the ballet ensemble of the National Theatre Brno where he mainly danced group and smaller soloist roles. Later on, when he became 30, he changed to the operetta ballet ensemble to be able to follow another professional career concurrently with dancing. He ended his dancing career at the age of 33, mainly because he saw no perspective in being a dancer. He had no health problems that would force him to leave dancing.

An important preparation for establishing his own company came with the contract for the Billa Company. In 1994 he took up his father-in-law's firm with minimum property. His job was to take part in the construction of 48 supermarkets and provide technical supervision of engineering preparation. As he says it was not exceptional for ballet ensemble members to make extra money somewhere else: "If they had a family, the salary from the theatre was not enough to make living. Some people worked in shops, others in restaurants." During the time when he was expanding his business activities the management of the ballet ensemble supported him, especially its artistic director Zdeněk Prokeš. As a result of expanding business he later had to change from the leading ballet ensemble to the operetta ballet ensemble where the workload was smaller.

Later he found a new business opportunity in the field of fire protection. He and his wife – also a former ballet dancer – developed their company Perspektka specialising in equipment for fire-fighters and fire safety from the scratch. To be able to work in this field he had to study a specialised course in management development and fire protection issues. Otherwise he was a self-taught. "I learned by doing, he says when talking about the beginnings and development of the Perspektka Company: "At the beginning I consulted a lot of things with lawyers, I had to put together a team of people that would help me, rent premises, etc. For 5 years we had been renting, nowadays we own 75% of all our business premises. We have our own sewing department and we also do various related jobs. We are in black numbers and we do not have any loans." In the early days of his business he had to invest but it did not have any influence on his financial situation. All extra money earned in the business he invested back into the company. In the process of developing the business he also used governmental funding. He got a subsidy of 100 000CZK to open a new branch on condition that he employs a new person for at least two years and pays regular levies on health and social insurance to the state budget. He also received funding from the European Union to open a training centre. The Perspektka Company now has 11 employees and closely co-operates with around 50 others. It runs six branches and a certified training centre. They focus on beating their competition with quality and not quantity, as well as by providing complex services in the field. There are approx. 5 other companies of the same size and 20 smaller in the region.

When he was asked if he could use some experience from the ballet career in his current business his answer was no surprise: "Working in the ballet ensemble taught us responsibility and discipline. These qualities are rather valuable in business." He could also transfer the art of presentation, manner, co-operating with others, or the art of communication. "Today when I have to give a presentation in front of 150 fire-fighters I have no problems with that," he says.

What does Jaroslav Roubal see when he turns back and thinks about things he could do differently? „I would end my ballet career earlier. The three years of dancing in the operetta and parallel working in the company were useless." If he had an opportunity to participate in some courses that would facilitate his beginnings in business he says he would appreciate a good management training.

As far as his relationship with his former career is concerned he hasn't cast ballet away and still follows the trends. He even went back to the theatre as an inspection engineer. Apart from his wife who works in the company he also employs another former dancer – Petr Klubal. And how would he compare his two careers? “The commitment is different. At the ballet a dancer works with his body while in business you have to think more, anticipate, find numerous solutions, and communicate with employees.” Regarding his ballet career he misses physical exercise and tries to compensate for it by doing sports – an activity that was partly forbidden for him in the dancing times. Today he plays a halfback in a football team playing a regional league, goes skiing, etc. Business and company ownership brought a significant improvement of his financial situation compared with his dancing career and he also feels more freedom in spending his free time.

And what would he recommend to dancers ending their artistic career who would like to follow a similar path as him? It is important, above all, to start thinking about the second career in time. It is essential to have at least basic knowledge of economic issues and have some computer literacy. However, the new generation would probably see this as a matter of course. He would find rather useful if the theatre organised a two-hour computer course per week for all interested dancers as he sees computer skills to be absolutely essential for any business. Dancers could also use a certificate from such a course in their future career search. On the other hand, he does not think that psychological help available at the end of a dancer's career is the most important thing. And a piece of advice to beginners in business? “Don't be afraid. It is always a risk and you have to calculate all the time,” Jaroslav Roubal points out. He sees a major obstacle in the fact that the legislation keeps changing all the time. This takes businessmen a lot of energy and brings loss. When he turns back there are a lot of things he would do differently. If someone asked him for help he would definitely share his experience.

Description of the solution - summary

Description of the solution: Starting a business career in the field without any connection with his original career.

Solution principle: Jaroslav Roubal decided to change his career gradually. Because of his business activities he first changed from the leading ballet ensemble to the operetta ensemble where the workload was smaller. Later on he quit dancing and developed his business career, first working for the Billa Company and then focusing on the Perspektiva Company that specialises in fire protection equipment. With the aim of business development he went through several training courses, used governmental funding to create a new work position and EU funds to establish a training centre.

Reasons and objectives of the solution: End of the dancing career due to age and focusing on the business activities.

Major obstacles: Constant changes in legislation that drain energy from entrepreneurs and require extra costs.

Responsibility and people involved: the Czech State and EU as providers of funding

Support from: Zdeněk Prokeš, artistic director of the National Theatre Brno Ballet who let him develop his own business during his employment as a ballet dancer.

Outcomes of the solution

Description of the artist's current situation after career transition: Jaroslav Roubal is working on a successful development of his company with 11 employees. His financial situation is much better compared with his dancing career.

Specific factors affecting success of the solution: It is important to make the right decision about the field of business where you want to work and accept certain level of risk.

Transferability of best practice

The most important skill/experience gained through implementation of the solution:

He could use some of the knowledge and skills gained during his dancing career – tenacity, diligence, the art of presentation.

Advice to those interested in similar solutions: Start thinking about a business career in time. Learn the basic computer skills and get an idea of elementary economic issues. At the beginning it is necessary to carefully invest profits back into the company and think twice about the use of loans or subsidies.

3. Conclusions

Analysis of the best practice examples indicates two key conclusions. Firstly, we have successfully described strengths that artists developed during their artistic careers and, as we assume, could become their asset in the second career. Secondly, we captured a more detailed overview of aspects that could help artists in the process of transition to their second career. We also succeeded in drawing more precise outlines for the ideal support to artists changing their career.

3.1. Strengths and experience transferable to the second career

Strengths that artists can use in the transition period as well as experiences that (as they think) might become their comparative advantage in future can be used both in the job search and in starting a business. These strengths and experiences are further summarised without being classified according their potential use for individual solutions. Artists thus may offer:

- Large network of contacts that can be further exploited
- Good knowledge of theatre world
- Ability to sustain drill, distinct self-discipline, tenacity – all of these being universal advantages for a new career
- Responsibility and discipline – advantageous for many other fields including entrepreneurship
- Creativity
- Ability of self-presentation completed by communication skills (only true for some people); most of them are extroverts
- Basic teacher training, if they graduated from a conservatory
- Ability to orientate oneself well in social and personal relationships
- Ability to work in team
- Significant empathy
- Willingness to take risks
- Mental and physical strength

3.2. Support in career transition

Various artists have different reasons to end their careers. The most common cause is their health condition (it can either be an injury or damaged health as a consequence of their profession), economic reasons, and loss of perspective in the field or age.

Any career transition is greatly affected by the personal character of an artist, his abilities, interests and ideas of future life. It also turned out that artists are very often strongly influenced by an example given by their model and his/her experience motivates the artist's own solution. In the process of changing to the second career advantage sides to those developing another interest of theirs parallel with their artistic career – i.e. they are better prepared for future. We also cannot underestimate the fact that career transition often means a totally new character of work (the most visible example are dancers who work physically, using their bodies and then in their second career often have to change to mental work).

Based on the collected examples of best practice a system that would provide support to artists in their career transition could be drawn as follows:

It is necessary to focus both on active artists as well as on artists already in the process of changing their profession. The work with active artists should be carried out at three levels: work with students (conservatories or specialised schools), work with artists in ensembles and with freelance artists. Students yet preparing for their future career should be aware of the fact that deciding about their second career is a common part of every artist's professional life. At all three levels there is space for awareness raising and communication about the topic of transition, as well as for an offer of practical support and services. The need for such support and related services is, of course, individual. (Nevertheless we have to add that artists very often mention bad financial conditions during their active career. That is why it is important not to give up continuous communication of the necessity to improve financial rewards for active artists, both those working on the basis of an employment contract and independent professionals.)

Support to artists in the transition area:

- Psychological help – to artists who experience difficulties with accepting the change and suffer from related psychical problems.
- Career advice, coaching – for artists who need to get an idea of their own future, consider all realistic opportunities and make up a plan concerning their future career.
- Informational support – information about offered positions in the job market, or information on available positions in theatres and other cultural organisations; recommendations on associated education, course and retraining.
- Offer of courses for artists where they could improve their knowledge and skills in the field of computer literacy, management, economics, human resources, leadership, communication, marketing, new media, etc. Language education is also very important. This offer includes both common courses and retraining.
- Mentoring using experiences of artists who successfully went through the career transition
- Financial support (preferably systematic) to those preparing for a new career
- Advice on funding and subsidies for beginning entrepreneurs.

All the mentioned aspects will be further analysed and investigated in the follow-up parts of our project.