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Cultural Economics & Entrepreneurship

Laddering as a method to measure consumer behaviour in the arts

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Laddering as a method to measure consumer behaviour in the arts

An exploratory research into the laddering technique as a relatively new method in the field of cultural economics to measure non-market consumer values and their relation to consumer behaviour; revealing the relevance of measuring this for strategic decisions of cultural organizations, by using a performing arts organization as a test-case.

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ABSTRACT

This research is a study into the laddering technique as a method to measure consumer behaviour in the arts. Laddering is a method stemming from psychology and is aimed at uncovering values of people and how they relate to their behaviour, in this case consumer behaviour. It is a method used in marketing and management, but not in the field of cultural economics. By setting laddering off against more common methods to measure consumer behaviour and the results they gained in the arts, the relevance of laddering is shown from a theoretical perspective. To also provide practical knowledge about the method, a test-case is performed, using laddering to study the consumers of a performing arts venue and their values relating to customer loyalty. The test-case shows how laddering leads to core values, clear communication paths able to be used by marketing and a new categorization of the audience. Even though there are limitations to laddering, for example that it is time consuming and requires skill from the researcher, it is still a way to gain more understanding about consumers than most common methods offer and therefore valuable for the arts.

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"No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude."

- Alfred North Whitehead

A big thank you goes out to all who have helped getting this thesis together. It was an intense a process, asking a lot from myself, but also from my environment and without their support, it might not have come together, let alone with me in a sane state. My friends cooking dinner, my mother and mother in law doing laundry and my partner accepting the occasional mental outburst: thank you for being there.

Besides this, it would not have been possible without the opportunity to perform the test-case for my employer, the Toneelschuur Haarlem. All the information was made available and freedom was granted to contact the visitors. It is much appreciated and a summary of results will be presented by me as soon as possible.

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Merel Zuiderduin

Haarlem, 09-06-2013

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation

In December 2013 Prof. Dr. Johan van Rekom presented his method to extract core values of organizations to a group of Cultural Economics students. This so called 'laddering technique' stems from psychology and is aimed at making people reveal the true motivations for their actions or decisions, it reveals their values. As most of the student's thoughts wandered off to holiday preparations, one girl's mind was particularly provoked by the presentation. The concept of 'values' had been a central theme throughout her time at the Cultural Economics faculty, but so far no satisfying method to measure them had surfaced. Could this be it? The girl in this story is yours truly and the presentation discussed was the start of this research. As the months went by, many different research angles (across the different cultural industries) were discovered and abandoned, yet all this time one thing remained and stood tall: the method. Until finally it became clear that all the newly found angles were merely an attempt to use the laddering technique and were not close to the heart. The true central question was about the method itself; if one performs it right, what can it mean for the arts?

1.2 Relevance

The result is that this thesis is a research in reverse: while normally a method is used to tell us something about a practical situation, in this case a practical situation is used to tell us something about the method. The implications of the research are therefore primarily academic, but not exclusively. By using reality as a test-case it also becomes clear what the practical implications are if one would apply laddering on a larger scale, without the errors that this exploratory application obviously endures. Therefore the relevance of this research expands at two levels; there is 1) a scientific relevance which relates to exploring a relatively undiscovered research method in relation to the field of cultural economics in which the emphasis on values is increasing and 2) a societal relevance for the cultural practitioners and policy makers who struggle with decreasing public funds and are in need of a better understanding of themselves and their consumers if they want to increase their own earned income and survive.

1.3 Research Aims

Laddering can be applied on different levels to serve the arts; roughly it can be said that values of cultural organizations can be measured internally to help create a focused strategy and they can also be measured externally to find alignment with consumers and / or public or private funders. Besides this, general values of a particular cultural good or industry can be extracted and compared; which can lead to improved policy and marketing strategies. This research is not extensive enough to incorporate all of the possibilities of laddering; therefore a case is used to show the added value of using this technique in real life. Since the field in which subsidy cuts in the Netherlands hit the hardest is the performing arts; complemented by the fact that is it the cultural industry in which demand studies are the most common and therefore comparable results can be obtained, the test-case in which the laddering technique is applied is a performing arts venue, the Toneelschuur in Haarlem (NL). Within this industry, there is an increased urgency to understand the performing arts from the consumer's perspective (Joostens, 2013), therefore the emphasis of this test-case lies on laddering as a way to measure consumer behaviour; more specifically motivations for customer loyalty. The larger aim of using this test-case is to show the benefit of using the laddering technique over, or supplementary to, more common methods to measure consumer motivation and to show the implications it has on a larger scale. The smaller aim, within the test case itself, is to obtain a deeper understanding about the values that motivate visitors to choose this particular venue over its direct competitors; and by doing so being able to adjust the marketing strategy towards a more consumer-based design.

1.4 Research Questions

The logical result of performing research on these two levels is not one single but two different research questions, one for the general purpose of the research; and one which guides the field research in the test-case study. The general research question is: *What is the added value of using the laddering technique in relation to more common methods of measuring consumer behaviour in the arts?* The research question guiding the test-case is: *What values motivate core visitors of the Toneelschuur Haarlem to visit that theatre so frequently?*

1.5 Methods & Structure

The general question is answered by first explaining theoretically what the most common methods to measure consumer behaviour are; which basically comes down to three main movements of methods, based on pure economic methods, social economic methods and economic methods with a more psychological layer. The concepts, models and most frequent results are discussed in chapter 2; as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each method. After this, the laddering technique is proposed as an alternative method in chapter 3; the relevance of using this method instead of the others is explained as well as the strengths and weaknesses, followed by a step by step description of how to apply the method, by weighing the opinions of different scholars who have written about the technique. To be able to provide an in depth answer to the main research question, a test-case is included which will show the perks and pitfalls of working with this method in practice. Chapter 4 is a short description of the case, explaining the function and mission of the company, as well as its main marketing strategy. In chapter 5 the application of the laddering technique for this case is discussed, followed by the test-case results analysis in chapter 6. The results are analysed next to the most common results from previous research on customer loyalty in the performing arts; and will thus answer to the main question and find the added value of using the laddering technique for understanding consumer behaviour in the arts. Concluding this thesis is chapter 7: an analysis of the research in total, reflecting on challenges and prospects of using laddering in the arts; based on theory and own experiences of working with the method.

2. MEASURING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN THE ARTS

To understand the need for laddering as a method to measure consumer behaviour in the arts, this chapter is aimed at explaining the more common methods of measuring this. The term consumer behaviour might be a bit contradicting to what we think of in relation to visiting a museum or performance, but Towse (2010) defines art consumers as follows: "The buyers, audiences, visitors and viewers of the whole range of cultural products of the creative industries can be thought of as 'consumers' when they buy an item such as a ticket to go to a concert or to visit a monument or when they buy a book." (p.135).

2.1 The difficulty of understanding consumer behaviour in the arts

Understanding consumer behaviour is a goal to which many marketing specialists and economists have committed themselves. It is always difficult to understand why people decide what they decide and for cultural goods, like paintings or performances, this is even harder than for 'regular' goods. This has to do with the characteristics that typify them. For starters most cultural goods are heterogeneous, meaning one of a kind, making it difficult to assess value or quality due to a lack of perfect substitutes. Karpik (2010) argues that for unique products like this, the standard economic rationale does not apply and that the valuation process needs more than the interaction between the market forces. His 'economics of singularities' describes different value-systems, such as the 'expert-opinion regime' in which prizes, reviews and rating devices determined by experts are typical for assigning quality and value; and the 'common-opinion' regime, in which sales or download numbers and hit-charts determine success and therefore value and quality. It differs per artistic discipline what regime is dominant, but overall we can see an information gap in the market, filled by a type of intermediary to increase market efficiency.

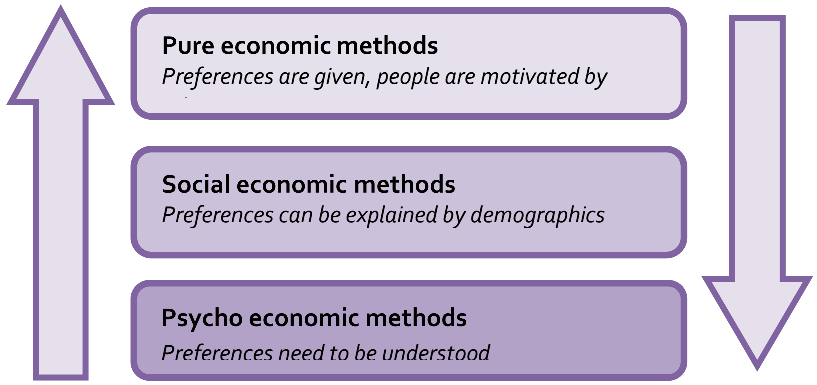
Caves (2000) explains this information gap as well; and relates it to one of his seven properties of the cultural industries; the *nobody knows* property. Where as in most industries there is a problem of asymmetric information between buyers and sellers about the quality of the good, leading to an advantage for the seller; in the cultural industries there is so called 'symmetric ignorance'. Not only the buyer is uncertain about the quality of a cultural good, but so is the seller. Quality of most cultural goods is not intrinsic to the good itself, but is determined by its users. Cultural goods can therefore be seen as 'experience goods' of which the value can only be determined by experiencing it (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Just like Karpik (2010), Caves (2000) argues that there is a need for intermediaries to fill the information gap in the market and provide quality standards and value judgements. Some, like Velthuis (2003) go one step further by stating that cultural goods are not only experience goods, meaning that value is added after the experience, but that they are 'credence goods', meaning that value is not even attained after the experience, because consumers do not really know the value at all. Goods like this often gain value by opinions of others, making the value socially constructed.

With all this insecurity in the market, is it actually useful to try and make sense of consumer behaviour to understand the value of art; should we instead just look at expert opinion or mere sales numbers? Or does this insecurity only increase the need for thorough demand studies, because the value of art is not captured by expressed demand alone? We can see that throughout the years, no matter how difficult, many have attempted to make sense out of consumer behaviour in the arts and generally we could say that three broad movements of methods have evolved, using tools from different academic disciplines.

2.2 Three movements of studying consumer behaviour

There are pure economic methods, which look at expressed consumer behaviour by letting loose econometric models to calculate demand and how this is influenced by things such as price changes and income level; but also methods like contingent valuation, used to assess social demand, unexpressed by markets (Frey & Meier, 2006). Then there are social economic methods, focusing on who the consumers are and categorizing them by means of demographic features such as age, gender and income level. In this category also studies focusing on cultural differences are included, as well as studies focusing on how consumers consume; are they cultural omnivores or not and does past cultural consumption influence present consumption? The third movement adds a psychological layer and goes one step deeper in the understanding of consumers and looks for motivations for their behaviour; here it matters less who they are and when they buy what, but rather why they buy it. There is no accepted overarching name for these types of studies, so for now they are called psycho economic methods. Studies looking for intrinsic motivations and values belong in this category (Towse, 2010). Figure 1 displays the three movements of studying consumer behaviour in the arts and shows how with each step down, some of the generalizability gets lost, yet some understanding is gained. This is caused by the purpose of the methods and the possibilities of performing them. The more qualitative the approach, the less generalizable the results, but the more understanding is gained. In a nutshell we can say that pure economic methods see consumer preferences as given and put them aside to look at economic motivators, social economic methods try to explain what causes consumer preferences to exist and psycho economic methods want to understand the preferences themselves.

Figure 1: Three movements of studying consumer behaviour in the arts



2.3 Pure economic methods

The first to study consumer behaviour were economists, in attempts to understand the general laws of demand to get a grasp on the workings of markets. The focus lies on uncovering patterns, which lead to reliable laws to be used over and over until proven wrong (Brown & Deaton, 1972). Pure economic demand studies in the arts therefore have the aim to find such patterns or to prove or disprove existing laws. To do this, econometric models are used to assess hard data, i.e. facts and numbers to understand the economic factors influencing consumer behaviour (Towse, 2010). Within these movement of methods we can see a divide between those taking existing economic models and applying them to the arts, i.e. make the arts fit the model; and those adjusting the model to make it fit to explain the economic workings of the arts.

The most common 'applied' model is to study different types of elasticity of demand: price, income and cross-price, to understand the slope of the demand curve and how it will react to changes. To understand this properly, it is crucial to define what economists exactly mean when they speak of demand and how a demand curve comes to be. "Demand, in economics, is the willingness and ability of consumers to purchase a given amount of a good or service at a given price" (CFA Institute, P.8). The quantity demanded can be influenced by many different factors, the most important of which are the price of the good itself, the price or related goods, which can either be complementary goods, or substitutive goods; and the income level of consumers. Together these variables make up the demand function and determine the slope of the demand curve. In principle this curve is always downward sloping, as economists assume rational choice among consumers meaning they will always look for a way to increase utility, i.e. buy as much as possible for a price as low as possible. This principle is called the law of demand (Krugman et al, 2007). As we shall see later, for cultural goods, this law not always upholds.

Elasticity describes the sensitivity of the demand curve as it responds to certain changes in price or income. Price elasticity is incorporated in the demand curve and determines the steepness of the curve. Goods with a price-inelastic demand are things such as oil, for which the quantity demanded is not influenced much by changes in price. People demand a certain quantity of it, no matter the price, due to a lack in perfect substitutes. This leads to a relatively vertical demand curve, as opposed to goods with a more price-elastic demand, like most foods and utensils, for which a price increase leads to a big decrease in quantity demanded, as explained in Figure 2 (Krugman et al, 2007).

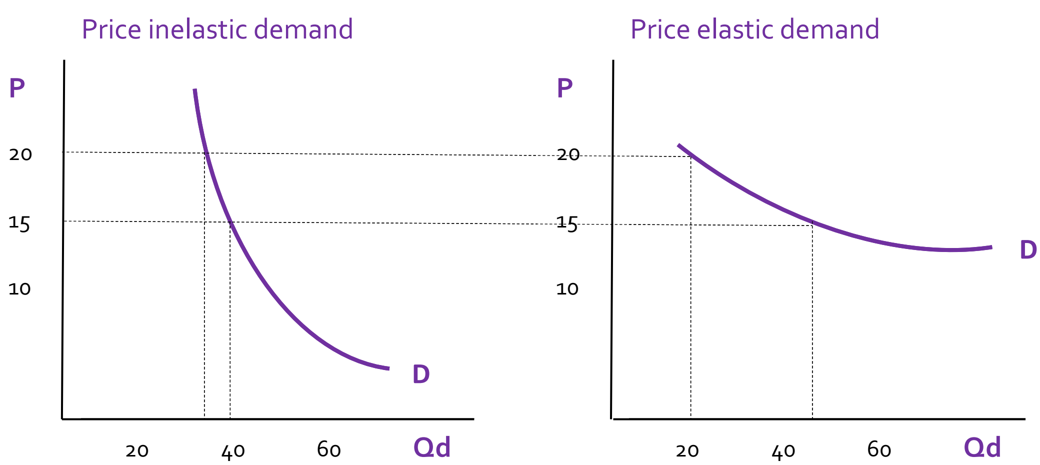


Figure 2: Inelastic vs Elastic demand

Income and cross-price elasticity calculate how the demand curve reacts to changes in either of the two, leading to a shift in the demand curve, or a change in steepness of the demand curve. In times of crisis, like now, we can see that income level changed and this has its effect on the demand of certain goods, like expensive cars or real estate. Goods like this, which are very income-elastic, are luxury goods and art is often seen as such. Cross-price elasticity explains the matter of responsiveness of the demand for one good to the change in the price of another. The elasticity can either be positive or negative, which reveals the nature of the relationships between the goods; whether they are substitutes or complements (Krugman et al, 2007). To give an example: the recorded music industry ran on albums and when online downloading of MP3 files became available on a large scale and provided the same music for free, the demand for physical albums dropped dramatically, meaning they are substitutes. At the same time, demand for MP3 players went up; meaning MP3 files and MP3 players are complements.

Towse (2010) recognizes a few problems which occur when performing research like this in the arts. First of all, to perform it right, a lot of data is needed to get generalizable results. Many performing arts organizations have ticket sales data, so the studies that do exist mainly focus on price-elasticity in that cultural industry, but of course researchers do not always have access to this data; let alone to income numbers or prices for substitutive or complementary goods. Secondly, as explained before, each performance is different, elasticity therefore can only be measured if we put all performances on one pile and look at the influence of price. Yet can 'theatre' be considered one good with one market? As a result to these problems, the studies that have been done do not agree on whether or not performances are price elastic. Seaman (2006) puts many of these studies next to each other and finds that over the years 12 studies found strong evidence for price-inelastic demand in the performing arts, while only 4 found evidence for price-elastic demand. Other found mixed results, like Krebs & Pohmerehne (1995) and who found "low short-run and high long-run price elasticity" (Seaman, 2006, P.424). What shows is that when, how and where the research was performed makes a big difference in the elasticity found; proving that speaking of one market for performing arts is too blunt. Seaman (2006) also explains how income elasticity is mostly positive, but not in a very significant way. In economic terms this would signal that performing arts are luxury goods (Towse, 2010). Cross-price elasticity research is not common in the arts.

With all these inconsistencies in results, many have criticized the relevance of performing such research for the arts; does looking merely at financial indicators really explain consumer behaviour? One of the problems non-economists have with models like this is that in order to make them fit for real-life they assume rational choice by consumers. In general one might wonder if consumers really think that way; and in markets with such an information gap as the cultural industries, this assumption is even more doubtful.

Different consumption patterns than usual are therefore assumed when we talk about the arts. For starters some claim that particular cultural goods (like paintings) are so called Veblen goods; which in definition have a reversed demand curve (Velthuis, 2003). While normally demand for a product goes down when price goes up, for Veblen goods demand goes up when price goes up. Thornstein Veblen himself explained this kind of reversed demand by his notion of 'conspicuous consumption', with which he means consumption aimed at requiring social status by signalling wealth through acquiring and showing off expensive products. Towse (2010) also gives another reason for the existence of reversed demand for goods for which quality is hard to determine objectively and therefore a high price is seen as a quality signal.

Now, even though demand studies are carried out in the arts, in many cultural industries, there is a general lack of demand, leading to market failure. The explanations for this lack in demand vary, from the assumption of the superstar effect making demand spread out unevenly over de different producers in the market, leading to excess demand for a few big producer's goods and excess supply for the many smaller ones (Schulze, 2011); to the assumption that cultural goods have public good characteristics and cause positive externalities (Towse, 2010). In this logic, Frey & Meier (2006) argue that many cultural goods should not only be assessed by focusing on expressed demand, but also by social demand; characterized by the reasons people value these goods without actually spending money on it, often expressed by tax investments.

All these problems is why some cultural economists have adapted or supplemented existing economic models; or came up with new models to be able to incorporate the inconsistencies of cultural goods. Throsby (1990) for example, incorporated quality perception into the demand function for performing arts. He composed nine quality criteria, to be able to assess quality in an as objective as possible manner and looked at the influence of quality perception on the demand for arts and he found that people are willing to pay more when their quality perception is higher. Although adapting the demand function like this, does more justice to what a cultural good is, and what moves a cultural consumer; it does not measure externalities; and thus social demand.

There are a few models though, which are aimed at doing exactly that, by looking at indirect expressed demand. One of which is the hedonic-price method, which calculates the value added of culture in a place, by calculating the amount citizens pay extra to live in a place like that over a rural area and take that difference as the extra 'cultural' value a place has (Ready et al, 1997). A similar method is the travel-cost method, which instead of housing prices takes the extra cost into account people pay to participate in a cultural activity; such as hotel, restaurant and public travel cost. Together with for example the entrance fee, these costs make up the real willingness to pay of the consumer (Bedate, 2004). What is strong of such methods, compared to models of elasticity is that they try to measure the social demand, yet the results are doubtful. How can we know if the extra costs incurred by consumers are exclusively paid for the cultural good in question?

To overcome this bias, another method got developed to assess willingness to pay (or sometimes willingness to accept), namely contingent valuation. The idea is to survey people, either by phone, mail or in person and ask how much they would be willing to pay for a certain cultural good. This method is most used for cultural or natural heritage sites, which are public goods and are dependent on public funding because of the impossibility to cover costs with entrance fees. The strength of contingent valuation is that it is able to assess social demand for goods with high positive externalities and measure it for exactly that good. The weakness lies in the trustworthiness of the results as it asks a very hypothetical question. It is hard to know if people were to actually pay what they claim to pay when they answer the questions. People tend to give socially desirable answers when it comes to culture.

These pure economic models have their strengths, as they lead to generalizable results and thus create some general assumptions about what motivates consumers. However, what all these models lack is more explanation of who visitors are and why they make certain choices besides economic reasons. Taste for example remains a great mystery, as economists see it as given that people have different preferences. There are those though, who attempt to unravel some of this mystery.

2.4 Social economic methods

Social economic models of consumer behaviour focus primarily on categorizing consumers by means of social demographic variables, such as age, gender and level of education. By doing so, they explain consumer behaviour on a more human level than pure economic models of demand. When we look at some of these studies, we can see that they as well focus mainly on the performing arts, extended with museums. The data is often gathered via ticketing systems in combination with cross-sectional surveys among visitors (Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette, 2011). The results for this type of research, as opposed to the economic models of demand, do agree on the determining demographics. The typical museum and theatre visitor is either a tourist or a middle-aged woman from the middle or upper class, with a higher education and moderate to high income level (Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette, 2011; Seaman, 2006). Of course, it differs what type of performing arts venue or museum is measured and which performance or exhibition is taken. If the question is what type of person is seen the most and who go most often, the typical visitor described above is the result, but when we look at certain genres and set them off against each other Abbé-Decarroux & Grin (1992) found for example that older people take less risk in their choices and prefer well-known artists and visit the larger theatres or museums, while the younger audience prefer the more innovative and experimental pieces and venues.

Besides just the classic demographic variables, some added more social variables, like racial and cultural differences (Dobson & West, 1989; Gray, 2003) or marital status or sexual orientation (Lewis & Seaman, 2004). Here we can see in general that the classical or 'high arts' is mostly attended by Caucasians, while some types of live music like Jazz is mostly attended by African Americans and museum visits and musical theatre and dance is attended by people with very mixed ethnical backgrounds. Being lesbian, gay or bisexual appears to have a positive relation with arts attendance (Seaman, 2006). Andreasen & Belk (1980) where the first to include lifestyle factors into their study. These factors include 'general lifestyle dimensions' such as the level of traditionalism versus modernism and 'leisure lifestyle characteristics' like whether or not someone is a cultural patron or is part of a culturally active community. The dependent variable in their research was future theatre attendance and what they found is that all the traditional social demographic variables are not significant predictors for future attendance, but some of the lifestyle factors are, like: cultural patronage, attitude towards attending the theatre, interest in theatre while growing up and attendance in the last year.

Although doubt has been cast on their quick discarding of traditional demographics, their research does show that (early) exposure to theatre leads to more attendance in the future, which relates to the dominant theory about how taste for art is developed. Lévy-Garboua & Montmarquette (2011) explain how many believe that taste can be cultivated: the more exposure to art, the more time and money a person would want to spend on it. Economically, this idea implies that art is something which has to be discovered and once done; the rate of participation keeps on rising with every visit. These economic assumptions relate to Bourdieu's (1986) concept of 'cultural capital'. Besides economic capital, he claims that in life we also acquire a certain amount of social capital and cultural capital. The latter is crucial in his eyes to be able to understand arts and culture and is primarily acquired early in life in ones upbringing. Cultural capital has an embodied state, which is the capital we carry as a person and this grows by interfering with the objectified state of cultural capital, i.e. cultural goods, which are presented to us by the institutionalized state of cultural capital, i.e. museums or schools. These institutions are crucial in modern times to the classical or 'high' arts, because many low or middle class parents do not participate in arts themselves, so will not expose their children to it, which makes the threshold to go larger for these children. This is the reason why arts education is part of the educational system and subsidized artistic organizations are so often obligated to have an educational department. These theories is where the ideas of art as an addictive good comes from, meaning that the more a person consumes, the more he wants to consume (Schulze, 2011).

Over the years, scholars have been wanting to test these theories and attempted to find empirical evidence for it, by including a variable of previous art consumption over the last year before the survey (Houthakker &Taylor, 1970; Oteri &Trimarchi, 1990; Krebs & Pohmerehne, 1995; Kawashima, 2000). In each case, the variable tested significantly positive in relation to present art consumption. Kurabayashi & Ito (1992) show differences in these patterns between musical genres. Being exposed to classical music leads to increased consumption of classical music, but not to increased consumption of other genres. Favaro & Frateschi (2007) gained a slightly different result as they concluded that (in Italy) people who are musicians themselves tend to listen to all kinds of music, while non-musicians mostly listen to popular music alone. They assume this has to do with exposure to all kinds of music during musical education.

For cultural organizations, understanding these types of analysis can be crucial for marketing and programming strategies. Knowing who your consumers are and how they consume helps to fine-tune and characterize a target market. Many organizations want to increase customer loyalty for instance, is it then a matter of having them diversify their taste, or to expose them to similar performances? (De Rooij, 2013). Social economic studies like this can answer more of such questions than pure economic models do; and can provide in part an explanation about how taste is developed, which is the great lack of pure economic models. However, social economic studies are more eager victims to subjective bias, caused by smaller sample sizes and less 'hard' data. There are questions that remain though: answering to who consumers are and how they consume still leaves out why they consume: what is the meaning of art in people's lives and what motivates them to make certain consumer decisions?

2.5 Psycho economic methods

These types of questions are answered by models of consumer behaviour with a more psychological layer; trying to figure out why people behave as they do, looking past pure economic motivators such as price and income, or social economic motivators such as past behaviour and social demographics. What motivates people personally? De Rooij (2013) explains that people can be motivated both intrinsically, with motivation relating to the artistic good itself with which they have a certain connection; or externally, with motivation relating to social motives such as having a night out with family or friends. Several authors have performed studies to capture these motivations, either using quantitative surveys or qualitative interview techniques. For the results and the implications of the results, it matters which of the two methods is chosen. Quantitative survey methods lead to more generalizable results, but interview techniques lead to an increase in understanding and give room for unexpected answers which possibly relate more to true motivations than when the possible answers are pre-determined by the researcher. With the idea of art being a credence good, both methods can hold a challenge. If consumers are never aware of the value of a good, providing them with possible answers makes it easy for them to find an answer which logically makes sense to them, yet by asking open questions, they might still look for the first logical answer which pops to mind, or give the most socially desired answer without thinking of alternatives. In the end there is nothing left to do but trust the answers to be true.

To give an example of a survey research in this movement, Swanson et al (2008) performed a study in which they had people rate certain behavioural activities on a scale from 1 to 7 in how they connected to it. These activities each related to one of six potential motivations for visiting a performance: aesthetics, education, escape, recreation, self-esteem, social interaction. They based these motivations on literature research; and related them to demographic features and attendance numbers of visitors. Their research showed many relationships between all these variables, but overall they found that education as a demographic, together with attendance numbers are strongest determinants of motivation. Being educated by a performance is a motivator for all visitation groups, but more significant for subscribers than non-subscribers, escapism is a strong motivator for all attendance groups and so are social interaction, recreation and aesthetics. Self-esteem is a motivator for either the lower or higher educated visitors, but not so much for the moderate group.

Similar survey research is done by Boorsma (1998) and similar results were found, although two strong motivations showed significant which are missing from the list of Swanson et al (2008); namely 'distinction' and 'novelty'. Johnson & Garabino (2001) performed a motivation survey as well and found that in general personal enrichment motivations are more important for subscribers and frequent visitors, who are in general higher educated, than for incidental visitors, who value entertainment motivation higher. De Rooij (2013) put all these types of research together and formulated eight general motivations for performing arts visitation, which incorporate all studies: aesthetics, cognitive stimulation, reduction (from life), transcendence, bonding, distinction, entertainment and variety & novelty. He also explains how these motivations relate to the primary product of performing arts venues, being the performances. If one would want to understand customer loyalty, as he is aiming at, the secondary product is also of influence. This would be all things related to the venue, such as the staff, certain policies, the seating and the accessibility of the place. Looking at different visitor groups as determined by De Rooij (2013), incidental visitors (1 or 2 visits per year) put much more importance on this secondary product and tend to focus more on social motivations and relaxation and entertainment, while the core audience (5 visits or more) ascribe more importance to the quality of the performance and are motivated most by motivations related to that, such as 'transcendence' and 'cognitive stimulation'. The 'interested participants' (3 - 5 visits per year) as De Rooij (2013) describes them, have characteristics of both the incidental visitors and the core audience. In conclusion we can state that the more frequent the visitor the more internally motivated.

This type of research, looking at motivations to attend performances or venues, is a step further than looking at demographics alone, but some go even one step further down the ladder of understanding and attempt to look at the values behind consumer motivations. This value-based approach is represented by some in the field of cultural economics, of whom Arjo Klamer (among others: 2002, 2013) is a pioneer. The main rationale is that the value of art exceeds the market value and holds more meaning to people and society. There are different types of values and they are often divided in categories, like social or societal values, cultural values or spiritual values. In general values are seen as ideals or beliefs which determine a person's sense for right or wrong or their life goals and are of direct influence on their behaviour. Examples of values are 'respect', 'equality', 'freedom' and 'honesty', values like this often what binds people in a community (Zanoli & Nespetti, 2002; Van Rekom, 2006). When we look at the intrinsic motivations as summarized by De Rooij (2013) we can see that some of them, like 'reduction' and 'transcendence' do not differ so much from what are believed to be values.

The limitation of the value-based approach as known in cultural economics, is that measuring these values is very difficult, which has to do with the idea that people are often unaware of them. Giving them a list of values to choose from will possibly generate quantifiable results, but will we ever know if these are the real values that motivate consumers, or if they just checked the box because it was there. However, when we look at the fields of marketing and management, a method has developed to reveal such values in a psychological way, using the laddering technique. Since the nineteen seventies, different approaches to this technique have been developed, even applying models to quantify results (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; Van Rekom, 2006). Theoretically speaking, working with this method can fill the need to better understand consumers in the arts and the role of values as a motivator. Being able to know this; as a contribution to economic models of demand and sociological studies of consumer behaviour, leads to a market with more information and less uncertainty of demand. Besides, it offers opportunities for cultural organizations to adjust their marketing strategies.

3. THE LADDERING TECHNIQUE

The general aim of this research is to study the laddering technique as a method to measure consumer values in the arts, as an alternative to most common methods of measuring consumer behaviour, like those discussed in the previous chapter. Laddering can be seen as an extension to psycho economic methods. Theoretically speaking, the application of this method can have far reaching implications for the marketing, financial and organizational strategy of cultural organizations, since it provides the much demanded possibility to measure and quantify non-market values of cultural products and organizations. This chapter is dedicated to outline the existing theories about the method and the precise manner of executing it; the next chapters are aimed at exploring how relevant it is to use laddering in practice.

3.1 Origins of laddering

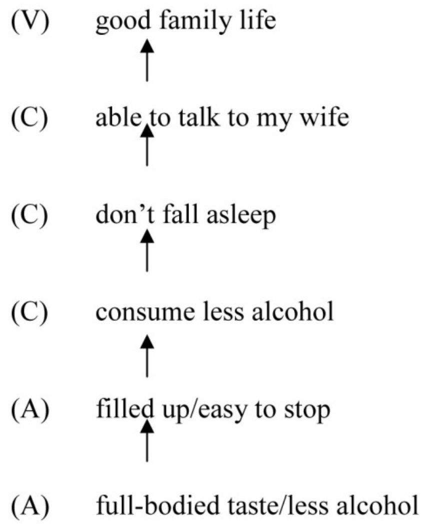
The originators of the laddering technique as a method in marketing are Reynolds & Gutman (1988). The type of interviewing, however, stems from psychology and was introduced by Dr. George Kelly in 1955 as the repertory grid interview; an in-depth personality test to reveal the constructs people use to give meaning to their experiences, without actually asking about these constructs, but by talking about concrete experiences (Johnson & Nádas, 2012). New was the open-end interview method, which was aimed at constantly poking the subject with 'why' questions which makes them reveal their true values (Corbridge et al, 1994). After its introduction, researchers in many different fields embraced the method and developed it to apply to their own area of expertise. It has been used in education, healthcare, journalism, sales, but was mostly adopted in marketing and management. The reason for this, is that the human aspect was put in a central place and many more disciplines were struggling to find a way to do this; besides this, the method provides an understanding that goes deeper than previous methods and sometimes even deeper than the subjects consciousness as it can reveal hidden character traits or preferences, i.e. their personal values.

3.2 Laddering in marketing

Reynolds & Gutman (1988) discovered the interview technique and developed laddering as the missing link in existing marketing methods: "Missing are the key defining components of a positioning strategy—the linkages between the product and the personally relevant role it has in the life of the consumer" (P.11). They added this psychological, personal factor and gave an extensive description of their new method. Their approach is based on earlier research by Gutman (1982) in which he explains his means-end model. In short, this model sees the consumer with its intrinsic values (the end) and the attributes of a good (the means). These attributes have certain consequences for the consumer and these consequences can lead to value satisfaction. Therefore we could state that in this rationale, all consumer decisions are influenced by the values of the consumer. Understanding these values would therefore lead to understanding the needs and demands of the market and have implications for product development, marketing strategies and refined segmentation of the market. However, the consumer is not always aware of his or her own values and therefore there is no use in asking for values straight away; which is why Reynolds & Gutman (1988) took inspiration from the Kelly grid interview method and adapted it according to the means-end theory.

Every small detail of Reynolds & Gutman's (1988) technique is discussed in their paper, from the perfect interviewing environment, ways to relax the respondent, how to pose the questions and how to behave when something unexpected happens; to a clear overview of the coding process and examples of interviews. This makes it easy to apply the technique, as well as make adjustments to use it outside the field of marketing. The main idea is to start the interview by asking the respondent to make a distinction between objects and then keep asking different variants of the 'why is that important to you?'-question. Not only the final answer is important, but also the path leading to that answer, which can help in communication expressions. The name 'laddering' refers to the chains of answers found which consist of a step up the ladder from attributes to consequences to values. After the interviews, these answering chains are transformed into actual ladders (Picture 1).

Because these interviews are structured in the sense of the questioning; and because of extensive coding methods, performing laddering interviews like this leads to more trustworthy results than most unstructured interview techniques. The results however, remain very qualitative. In the field of management, though, we can find a method to quantify the results of laddering.



Picture 1: Example ladder from hypothetical wine cooler study (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988)

3.3 Laddering in Management

Van Rekom et al. (2006) describe their method, which stems from the same repertory grid interview technique, as: "A method that is able to extract company specific core values, while at the same time being able to ensure the representativeness of these values for the organization." (P.177). The most important difference is the aim of using the method. Whereas Reynolds & Gutman (1988) use it to understand consumer behaviour, Van Rekom et al (2006) use it to assess values in organizations. Although the basic idea of using the interview technique is the same: reaching values of people by talking about something concrete; the application leads to small differences with implications for cultural economics. Van Rekom et al (2006) use this method to find core values, implying that there are many values that can be found and only those that are most frequently mentioned are 'core', the path leading to these core values is of less importance. When using the technique for marketing purposes, the whole of the ladder and the relationships between the answers matters: it reveals a way to communicate from the product towards people's values (Neimeyer et al, 2001).

Although laddering originally is a very qualitative method, Van Rekom et al (2006) propose to increase the generalizability by testing the results of the laddering interviews by means of surveys that question the values found. They do not mean to ask people how important certain values are for them, because of the risk of social desirability. Instead they ask about the relationships between individual concepts of the means-end chain that were found by the laddering. If they have found that people procrastinate checking their mail because they fear rejection of ideas, they can check this relationship in the survey and see if the value 'fear of failing' is as common as found in the interviews. Doing value-research like this leads to a mixed-methods approach, making the laddering technique a more reliable empirical method, with more quantifiable results.

A research like this has once been applied to the cultural industries; by Jansen-Verbeke & Van Rekom (1996) as a sort of combination of the two application options of laddering. They studied the values of museum visitors (consumers) and used the 'core value' method stemming from management, followed by a survey to get quantifiable results. The main conclusion of this research was that the most important values a museum visit satisfies, are 'the cultural enrichment of life' and to gain 'food for thought'. This research so far stands alone in the cultural field when we look at this type of value-research. To change that, a better understanding of how the method works is required.

3.4 Performing the interview

Over the years, different researchers started to work with laddering and disagreements on how to best perform the interview grew to be. Zanoli & Nespetti (2002) make a distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' laddering techniques. Soft laddering is the original technique in which the flow of the interviewee is limited as less as possible in a face-to-face interview; hard laddering can be either an interview or survey or both, forcing the interviewee to make hierarchical ladders by assigning attributes to goods. Logically, hard laddering is more appropriate for product-based laddering as used in marketing research, since activities are more difficult to assign attributes to. Soft laddering has the advantage of generating a deeper understanding of the interviewee by manipulating the answers as little as possible, the answers are mostly more unexpected and more 'true'. It is also more difficult, however, because it requires the interviewee to talk about what really matters without much input from the interviewer; the results will therefore be more random. This makes the coding process more complicated and it influences the generalizability and reliability of the results. Still, most researchers do prefer soft laddering over hard, because the whole aim of laddering is to have that 'revealing' effect, which survey or structured interviews manipulate (Blake, 2004).

When doing an interview, the interview environment should be a quiet place, where the respondent feels comfortable and the chances are high that he or she will talk about personal issues. Blake (2004) explains how it is important to comfort the respondent at the start of the interview to prepare him or her for what is coming. It helps to make clear to them that the interviewer is not there to judge and that the questions, which can be a bit obvious, are only meant to get understanding and that there are no right or wrong answers. Reynolds and Gutman (1988) developed a few tools to help an interview that gets stuck somehow. If an interviewee for example claims to 'not know' why they find something important, it can help to reverse the question and ask how the respondent would feel if the desired object or effect was not there. In case the respondent starts stalling or wandering off when questions get too personal, it can help to start talking about a hypothetical situation in the third person to create some distance between the person and the discussed subject. If that does not work, the interviewer can try to disclose some personal information about him- or herself. If there still is no answer, the ladder will be left alone and a new chain of answers is tried to be gained by talking about a new subject.

It is therefore crucial at the beginning of the interview to make sure to have a base of potential ladders to build. To do this, Reynolds & Gutman (1988) give three different options to start the interview. The first one is by *triadic sorting*, which entails presenting the respondents with three different products, places or activities and have them explain how one of the three differs in any particular way from the other two. A second way is to have them determine *preference-consumption differences*, meaning to have the respondent rank a certain amount of brands, or products, or activities and explain why they prefer one thing over another. The third method is to have them determine *differences by occasion*; which entails providing a personally meaningful context to start talking about certain products or brands. Each occasion asks for a different use of the product and can therefore relate to different values.

When either of these approaches is set in motion, it is the task of the interviewer to be sharp and listen very carefully to what the respondent is saying. During the interview, the interviewer is constantly looking for answers which could lead to a value and when an answer like that is found, the why-probing begins. After that it is key to know when a value is found and a ladder can be made out of a chain of answers. Even though the actual ladder is built after the interview, the interviewer needs to be able to recognize possible ladders in order to know when to stop probing and move on looking for the next ladder. Probing too long can cause the interviewee to get irritated and sabotage the interview. The academics writing about laddering did not provide an answer into knowing when this point is reached. The approximated time for a laddering interview is 60 minutes. It is a necessity to record the interview, because the coding process is very precise (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988; Blake, 2004).

3.5 Coding the interview into ladders

The coding process of laddering, whether hard or soft, is traditionally based on making vertical, hierarchical relationships between answers given by the interviewee. One interview can generate multiple ladders, based on answering-chains. The different ladders from all the interviews together, will lead to more general results, by looking at the frequency of the individual answers and relationships between answers. If certain ladders are produced more often, the ladder is very strong and the implications of the result far reaching. This does not happen very often though. What does happen is that certain end-values are given often in relation to a product or process, and even that certain relationships between values and consequences are common. These bottom-up relationships are what most researchers using laddering aim to find (Reynolds & Gutman, 1998; Zanoli & Nespetti, 2012; Blake et al, 2004). Van Rekom &Wierenga (2007), however, found that practice deviates from theory. In their studies, some relationships between values and consequences work in one way for one person and opposite for another; and what for one person is the end-value, can be the consequence that leads to another end-value for another person. This is why Van Rekom & Wierenga (2007) introduced a different, networked coding manner; in which not the hierarchical relationships are the aim, but finding similarities in answers and putting them in a matrix in which the central answers are the core values. It is up to the researcher to decide what the focus of the research will be, what type of laddering will be used and whether or not they believe in a means-end chain laddering.

What all approaches to laddering have in common is that the coding exists out of determining the values and extracting the chains of answers leading to these values: the ladders. For means end-chain laddering, this consists of distinguishing between attributes of goods, consequences these attributes have and the values they relate to (Reynolds & Gutman, 1998; Zanoli & Nespetti, 2012; Blake et al, 2004). This is best explained by an example. The following fragment comes from one of the interviews in the test case:

What makes the Toneelschuur so special?
The building, the history of a group of alternative people who found something like this, the program and the own productions [...].

Why is the history of the place important to you?
Well, actually it is the program, which is very different from commercial cinemas and the City Theatre.

Why is that more special to you?

It is much more stimulating, far less middle if the road. That is in general something we are looking for in our choices; things which are different from the average. […]

Why is that important to you?

It makes you think about things you hadn't thought about before and confronts you. You are being challenged.

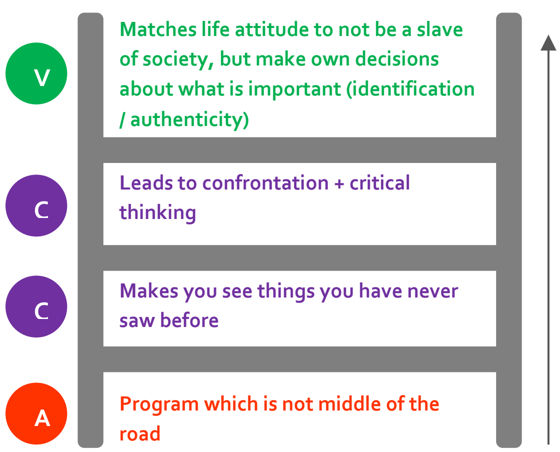
Why do you want to be challenged?

I think it is important in life. Yeah…that is how I choose to live my life. I do not want to get dragged along by society, but like to row against the stream. That is politics, but also the choice of performances you see. I just like to think critically about many things.

Why?

Yes, well to make sure you do not become a play-thing. I do not like to feel like a play-thing in other people's minds and political ideals. I want to determine for myself what I deem important and where I want to go and what I want to learn and that kind of stuff.

This fragment leads to a four-step ladder (Picture 2), with the programming as an attribute of the theatre, the seeing new things and confrontation and critical thinking as consequences and 'authenticity' or 'identification' as values.



Picture 2: Example ladder from test-case

3.6 Processing the ladders

Processing the ladders in a hierarchical way consists out of several steps, the first of which is a content analysis of the ladders, consisting of making a summary content code table. Each attribute, consequence and value named in the ladders gets a code, starting at one for the first attribute, then moving down to number the other attributes, followed by the consequences and then the values (Picture 3). The next step is to put all the ladders and the content codes gained in each ladder into a raw data map (Picture 4). Each interview leads to several ladders (in the test-case on average 5 per respondent) and each ladder gets one row in the data map, each step on the ladder gets a column and the number relates to a content code. Therefore the raw data map can become very long, depending on the sample size of the study.

Values	Consequences	Attributes
(20) Accomplishment	(8) Quality	(1) Carbonation
(21) Family	(9) Filling	(2) Crisp
(22) Belonging	(10) Refreshing	(3) Expensive
(23) Self-esteem	(11) Consume less	(4) Label
	(12) Thirst –quenching	(5) Bottle shape
	(13) More feminine	(6) Less alcohol
	(14) Avoid negatives	(7) Smaller
	(15) Avoid waste	
	(16) Reward	
	(17) Sophisticated	
	(18) Impress others	
	(19) Socialize	

Picture 3: Example of content code table (Blake, 2004)

Respondents	Content codes					
1	1	10	12	16	20	0
2	1	10	16	0	0	0
3	1	10	12	16	16	23
4	3	6	20	0	0	0
5	4	17	20	0	0	0
6	2	10	12	16	18	22
7	1	12	16	20	0	0
8	3	8	20	0	0	0
9	1	12	16	18	23	0
10	1	10	16	0	0	0
11	3	8	20	0	0	0
12	2	10	12	16	18	22
13	1	12	16	20	0	0
14	1	12	16	18	23	0
15	1	10	12	16	20	0
16	3	16	20	0	0	0
17	1	10	12	16	20	0

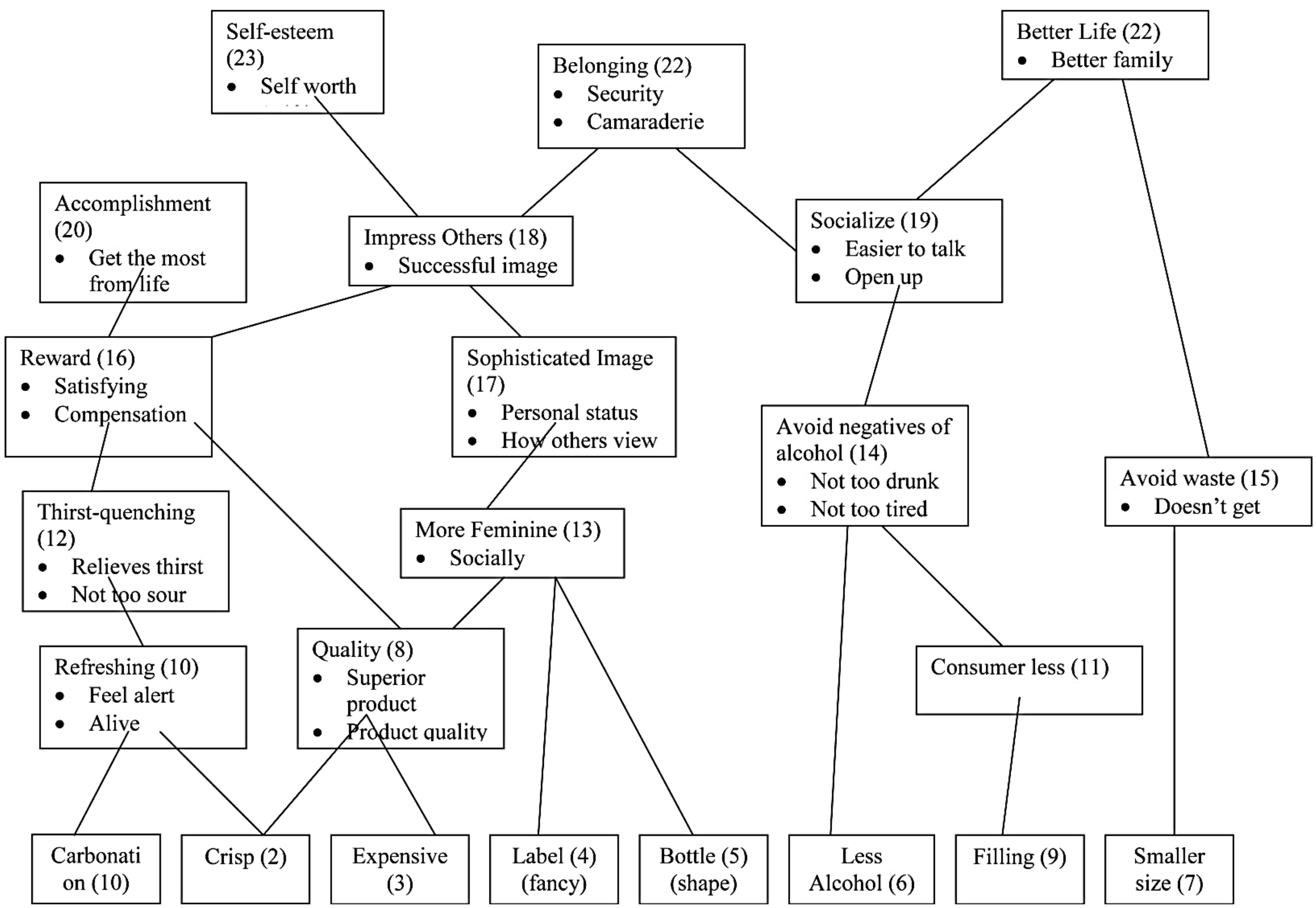
Picture 4: Example of raw data map (Blake, 2004)

Step 3 is to generate the implication matrix, which makes relations between different ladders to be able to draw general conclusions about a study. Each element in the matrix represents an attribute, consequence or value and the matrix displays the number of times each element is mentioned in relation to other elements either directly or indirectly (Picture 5). The whole numbers refer to direct relationships between answers in the ladder and the decimals relate to indirect relationships within a ladder. In this case, 'carbonation' leads to thirst-quenching 4 times directly across the different ladders and 6 times indirectly, meaning with another consequence in between.

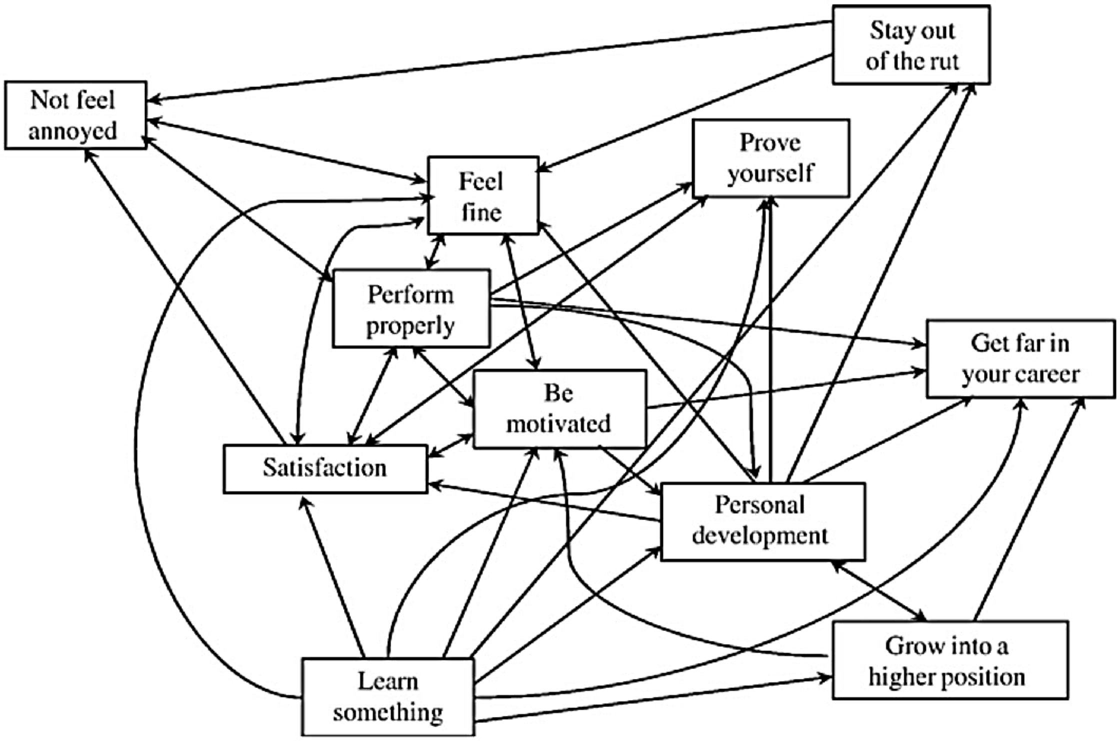
		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1	Carbonation	1.00		10.00		4.06			.01	.14		.04	
2	Crisp	3.00		4.00		.04				.04	.03	.04	.01
3	Expensive	12.00								2.04	1.01	1.09	
4	Label	2.00					2.02				2.04	.02	
5	Bottle shape	1.00		1.00			2.02				1.03		
6	Less alcohol			1.00		1.00		5.00		.01		.01	1.01
7	Smaller				1.00			.01	3.00				.01
8	Quality						3.00		1.00	4.00	4.03	4.04	.01
9	Filling				4.00			.04					
10	Refreshing					10.00	1.00			5.10	.01	.06	
11	Consume Less							5.00					.04
12	Thirst-quenching									14.00		.08	
13	More feminine										7.00	.02	
14	Avoid negative											1.00	5.00
15	Avoid waste												
16	Reward											11.00	
17	Sophisticated											4.00	1.00
18	Impress others												
19	Socialize												

Picture 5: Example of implication matrix (Blake, 2004)

The fourth and final step of the processing of ladders is making a hierarchical value map in the case of hierarchical coding or Van Rekom & Wierenga's (2007) networked representation of values. Either way it is essential to determine relationships between answers that are mentioned the most. What are the values most mentioned and what are the attributes and consequences leading to these values? In case of hierarchical coding, the implication matrix serves as a blue-print for the value-map. The variations on building and presenting such maps are wide. Picture 6 shows an example by Blake (2004) and picture 7 shows an alternative networked map by Van Rekom & Wierenga (2007). In the latter the most central values in the map are seen as core values, while in the first the top ones are the values and the rest the consequences and attributes. The arrows therefore mean something different as well. In Blake's (2004) map, the lines stand for the relationships between answers and the numbers represent the number of times an answer is given. In Van Rekom's (2004) map, we have to count arrows to see how many times an answer is given. The one with the most answers is the most central value, in this case to 'be motivated'. It also shows how some arrows go only one way, meaning for example that people answered that learning something gives them satisfaction; while other arrows go back and forth, meaning that someone said they need to be satisfied to perform properly, while others mentioned that performing properly gives them satisfaction.



Picture 6: Example of Hierarchical Value Map (Blake, 2004)



Picture 7: Example of networked value map by (Van Rekom, 2004)

3.7 Analysing the result

When the value-map is made, conclusions can be drawn about the implications of the results for the good or organization that has been studied. For organizations one can wonder if the values that employees or consumers have are the ones that management desires; or whether or not the internal values match the external ones. If this is not the case and values deviate a lot from the ideal situation, it might be a call for a change in management strategy (Van Rekom, 2006; Van Rekom & Wierenga, 2007). From a marketing perspective the implications are also far reaching, as said before, communication strategies can be more focused and enable organizations to reach people in a new and more direct way, relating to their personal values. The analysis of the results differs per case, but often the results analysed lead to a direct change in strategy, or a new market segmentation (Reynolds & Gutman, 1988). The following chapters show how laddering works in practice and disclose these implications, leading to a more thorough discussion about them.

4. TEST-CASE: TONEELSCHUUR HAARLEM

The Toneelschuur in Haarlem is a medium to small sized theatre and art house film theatre, combined with a production house, producing its own theatre performances. The unique charm of the company is the high quality program and modern architecture of the building, which is designed by a locally famous comic book animator. The theatre is located in the city centre of Haarlem and in close walking distance of hotels, restaurants, bars and shops. Its closest competitors are all outside of Haarlem, making the Toneelschuur the place to go to for smaller, more alternative performances and art house films. Within the city, there is a city theatre, a classical concert hall and a pop temple for the performing arts; and a large commercial cinema for movies. Toneelschuur Productions is the only performance producing company in Haarlem. This makes the supply of cultural activities very diverse and research by the city government has shown that all the venues share the zip code area of the city centre when looking at audience residence, but are not competing over the surrounding neighbourhoods. Therefore we cannot speak of harsh competition between the venues, if anything there is collaboration. This leads to a relatively high degree of customer loyalty, leading to over 4.500 friends of the theatre and a high degree of repeat visits (Toneelschuur Yearly Report, 2012).

4.1 The mission

In the 2011-2014 marketing plan, a mission was composed, stating:

"The Toneelschuur is a **service oriented** theatre, film and production house in the heart of Haarlem. Locally, as well as regionally and nationally, the Schuur wants to be a **leading** organization. The performances and films are **inspiring**, **innovative**, **open** and **different** and are shown to a **varied audience**, matching the concerning film or performance.

Every year Toneelschuur Productions offers **a select group of theatre-makers** the possibility to develop their **artistic talent** in a customized process. The productions are **diverse** en **surprising**, with **quality** and **professionalism** as base principles. Both Toneelschuur and Toneelschuur Productions want to offer a **constant contribution** to the **diversification of the performing arts.** The Schuur is a house in which there is always something going on, where employees, the audience and performers feel at home and like to come back to. " (Toneelschuur Marketing Plan 2011-2014, P. 3)

4.2 The history

The Toneelschuur started out as an action group against the established theatre scene in the Netherlands. A small group of hippies, under the leadership of Frans Lommerse (director of the Toneelschuur to this day), squatted different vacated buildings in the late 1960's with the deletion of the stage as the central aim. Producing alternative and experimental performances on a flat floor, the Toneelschuur became one of the pioneers in the reformation of the Dutch theatre field. After a few years the group began to expand and moved into its first permanent home: the attic of a narrow, dark building in which different small companies, such as a pop stage and a shooting club were housed. The Toneelschuur produces alternative performances and organized workshops. Every week a meeting was held to discuss next week's program. After a while, the interest in the program began to expand and in weekends the pop stage was used for performances. In the early 1970's plans were made to develop the entire building into a theatre. These plans came real in 1975 when the whole building was remodelled into the first professional Toneelschuur. Presenting performances by alternative theatre companies and showing independent movies became extra activities and the three pillars on which the organizations still leans, were born. More and more alternative theatre companies started to produce independent productions, which made it easier to present performances and show own productions throughout the country. Because of this revolution in the Dutch theatre scene it became easier to gain public funding, which led to increased growth of the Toneelschuur. The development of young talented directors and actors has always been an objective and is still high on the priority list, even though the Toneelschuur went through a lot of growth. After 1990, the old building became much too small, as it was able to house around 20.000 visitors per year. Understandably, the 40.000 actual visitors needed a new home (speech Frans Lommerse, director Toneelschuur).

4.3 The new building

To make this happen, around 10 years were needed of location scouting, attracting funds, sponsors and donations and designing and building the new theatre. The old printing house Joh. Enschedé moved to the industrial area of the town, so a spot in the middle of the city centre, next to the concert hall became available to build the new Toneelschuur. In 1996 comic book animator Joost Swarte drew a concept design to realize a theatre that would stand out as an architectural landmark in the city. Together with an architectural firm and close involvement of management the sketch became a technical design. In

2001, when all the finances were in order (part city council funding, part sponsorship, part private donations), the actual building began and on May 10th 2003 the new building opened its doors (see Picture 8). With two theatre and two film halls, the new Toneelschuur offers the possibility to house almost 400.000 visitors per season (Toneelschuur Yearly Report, 2005).

Picture 8: The new building of the Toneelschuur

4.4 The people

With the new building and the extra space it offered, there was also a need for extra staff. So far, director Frans Lommerse had been able to run the company with only few employees on his payroll and a bunch of volunteers. Although the amount of paid employees had grown over the years along with a rise in performances and visitors, the new building asked for a staff almost twice as big as the existing one. Over the years the number of employees grew, especially in the marketing department. Table 1 gives an overview of the staff in 2013. The numbers do not take into account the employers of Toneelschuur Productions, or the bar staff. The ownership of the bar is outsourced, so officially they are not employed by the Toneelschuur. However, they are seen as a part of the team.

Many of the employees have been working in the Toneelschuur for quite some time; it is common to grow in your career within the company. Together with a small group of loyal visitors, journalists and theatre companies who have been performing in the Toneelschuur since the beginning, there is a sort of community surrounding the place. However, by the flow of young part-time employees who work in the theatre as a side job, variation in the team is guaranteed. There is a good mixture of male and female employees in general, yet it differs a lot per department where this variation is found. Management consists of mostly men, while marketing is all female, just like the information en register desk and the floor managers. These front office employees are the ones in close contact with the visitors, which means that what visitors generally see is the male director, a few older women who worked there for a longer time and many young part-time women. The wardrobe staff is mixed though, as well as the bar staff. The plus behind the FTE's of Frans Lommerse indicates that officially he works just one, meaning full time, but in reality he works much more. The Toneelschuur is his life, his legacy and what will happen to management of the company after he retires (he turns 65 in May 2014) is a mystery to all. (Toneelschuur Yearly Report 2013).

Function	No. of employers	No. of FTE's
General director / theatre programmer / artistic leadership	1 (m)	1 (+)
Artistic assistant	1 (m)	0,5
Corporate leader	1 (m)	0,8
Film programmer + assistant	1 (m)	1,1
Financial administration	1 (f)	0,6
Marketing & Education	5 (f)	3,4
Human Resources	1 (f)	0,5
Facility manager	1 (m)	1
Theatre technicians	7 (m/f)	5,9
Fundraiser	1 (f)	0,3
Film operators	4 (m/f)	1,9
Floor managers	7 (f)	2,6
Register & Information desk	7 (f)	3,6
Reception & administration	2 (f)	0,9
Wardrobe	11 (m/f)	1,2
Total	**58**	**32**

Table 1: The staff of the Toneelschuur in 2013

4.5 The exploitation: Toneelschuur

The core business of the Toneelschuur is the exploitation of the building, which is executed by the presentation of performances and occasionally the organization of large scaled events. The performances presented, differ in genre; they can be dance, musical theatre, cabaret or drama and on Sundays there is often a children's performance. What they all share though is a certain level of quality. This is of course not an objective criteria, but more commercial and entertainment-like performances are not shown; there would not even be room for that because the big theatre room holds 280 seats and the small one 130. This results in most performances being from subsidized theatre companies, which makes the financial model difficult. Especially because governments executed major cutbacks in funding for the performing arts, giving both less resources to receiving theatres, such as the Toneelschuur, as well as to theatre producing companies who occupy the stage. This makes it difficult to ask more form the companies, besides it made part of the presenting companies that had been playing the Toneelschuur for years go bankrupt and disappear, leaving open spaces in the programming. Together with the fact that the economic crisis made consumers spend less in general, and specifically on the luxury goods such as the arts. All in all it can be concluded that in order to survive, things needed to change. One of the things that happened was an increase in renting out the spaces, both to external parties as to amateur theatre companies and rehearsal and building days. The programming did not change too much, because management did not want to be a sell-out. However, collaboration with the city theatre did result in cabaret on Tuesday evenings. Besides this, the number of premiers decreased, because they make it hard to fill up the room without press attention and attract many free tickets. Also there is a small shift towards plays with a little more familiarity in either actors, directors or playwrights – not only from the side of the Toneelschuur, but also on the side of theatre companies. (Toneelschuur Yearly Report, 2012)

4.6 The films: Filmschuur

Because films are cheaper, this second pillar of the company, the Filmschuur, did not get hurt so badly by the effects of the economic crisis. Consumers do not save on attending films, if anything this leisure activity became more popular because people shifted from more expensive activities towards film attendance. This pillar is therefore the most stable one of the three and one of the reasons why Toneelschuur survived the cutbacks in an easier way than most competitors in the performing arts who lean purely on the exploitation of theatre productions. The film program is made on a weekly basis and is, just like the theatre exploitation, really dependant on the supply, in this case by film distributors. There are a few distributors with whom the Filmschuur has a contract and they all operate in the art house genre. No blockbusters are shown, yet sometimes, when an independent production becomes really popular, like with ‘Intouchables’ in 2012, the two film rooms with a capacity of respectively 110 and 75 seats, are too small to house the entire demand for the film in Haarlem. These types of movies, on the verge of commercial, often are also shown in the large cinema. Besides this, there is no competition. The Filmschuur is opened 364 days a year (only closed on Christmas day), playing 8 movies per day from around 2 p.m. until midnight. This accounts for 71% of total visitors of the theatre being generated by film. (Toneelschuur Yearly Reports, 2012 & 2013)

4.7 The productions: Toneelschuur Productions

Visitors are not only attracted in the Toneelschuur itself, the productions produced by Toneelschuur Productions always premier in the Toneelschuur and go on tour around the Dutch speaking area afterwards. Making these performances is what started the company way back in this creative force is what makes the Toneelschuur unique. For young directors, graduating from art school, it is hard to make it on your own: larger theatre companies do not know who you are so they will not easily work with you and starting you own company is a financial undertaking for which most directors do not have the resources. Toneelschuur Productions serves as a stepping stone for them to make their performances in a safe environment, with the help of the production and marketing team of the Toneelschuur. They get almost unlimited artistic freedom. Only in case of a creative emergency, the Toneelschuur-team granted itself the right to intervene, but this hardly ever happens. Over the years Toneelschuur Productions has collaborated with many of the larger theatre companies (in the subsidized field), granting the young directors the opportunity to work with experienced actors and learn from that, plus benefit of their fame to get known. It often happens that directors move after a few years to these larger theatre companies, to be signed as a director. This way the flow in the artistic labour market is stimulated. (Toneelschuur Productions funding request, 2014)

4.8 The finances

As said before, the financial situation of the company has been instable due to external changes. Luckily the Toneelschuur's own income ratio is 64%, which is more than the national average. This has to do with film, but also with a loyal group of visitors who keep coming even when times are hard. The rest of the income came from the city government, who decided to cut back in the first place and stopped increasing the subsidy on a yearly basis to take inflation rates into account. Salaries keep rising, but funding does not, leading to an income gap, increasing by almost €200.000 each year. To fill such gaps, of course there are two things a company can do: save money on expenditures and increase the income. Toneelschuur tried a little of both and saved cost by cutting hours shorter and combining certain function in staff, as well as saving on superfluous luxuries such as free consumptions for employees and giving away free tickets. Besides this, the marketing budget decreased with the assignment to save on print and do more online. But the most emphasis was put in increasing the income level. For starters, a fundraiser was hired, to apply for grants from foundations, look for sponsors and work on the friend-program. The friend program had been around for years, but only provided one type of friend who paid around €20,- each year. Now people can also become 'close friends' for €100,- per year and 'friends for live', who give €1.000,- each year and record Toneelschuur in their will. Since 2012 when these type extra friends were introduced, the Toneelschuur has made around 85 close friends and 8 friends for life. Normal friend account a number close to 4.000. In return for their friendship, friends get a small discount, early booking advantages, all the brochures delivered to their home, occasional free tickets, and the option to take someone with them. Each year there is a special friend evening and of course they get eternal thanks from the organization since the real motivator is supposed to be philanthropy. (Yearly Report, 2013)

4.9 The marketing strategy

Even though these friends contribute to over €80.000,- each year, they are not able to fill the income gap which was explained. Therefore a lot is expected from the marketing department. The only way to survive in these times is to generate more ticket sales. Recently the marketing departments of the Toneelschuur and Toneelschuur Productions were combined into one big department, called: Marketing, Education & PR. This is done to create more unity in the publicity expressions and to combine skills of the two departments and increase communication. This is an example of one of the most important challenges the marketing department has to balance: to conduct an overall marketing strategy or to focus on individual performances. The latter was the original way of working, which led to weak branding strategies. Now unity is strived for with a sharp eye on individual performances, under the supervising of one particular employee who carried responsibility for the performance. Targets of visitor numbers are used as an incentive to stimulate the employees to actually carry this responsibility.

Another big challenge is to find the balance between maintaining the existing audience and finding new audience. The Toneelschuur is known to have a relatively loyal audience, which is good and they deserve to be treated with the respect they deserve. However, this audience is very similar in terms of age, ethnicity and educational background. On average the typical visitors of the Toneelschuur do not differ much from the stereotype performing arts visitor: they are slightly older, come from the richer zip-code area's surrounding Haarlem. This is why many attempts are undertaken to diversify the audience and involve new types of visitors, such as students and lower income groups. An example of how this is done, is by introducing a last-minute discount card for everybody under 30, giving them the opportunity to visit films and performances for a small amount starting one hour before the commencement of the performance. This card is slowly taking ground, but the numbers are not spectacular, which holds true for many of the attempts to diversify the audience. Therefore the question remains how much attention from marketing this deserves. Perhaps the loyal existing audience needs more attention and their motivations could give insights into ways to improve marketing expressions and increase audience numbers. Research in this area would therefore be helpful, which is why the laddering study focuses on this target audience (Toneelschuur Marketing Plan, 2011-2014).

5. TEST-CASE: APPLICATION OF METHOD

In this test-case, laddering is used from a consumer perspective, to find the values that relate to the motivation to visit the Toneelschuur. As explained in chapter 2, The Toneelschuur is made up out of a primary product (the performance) and a secondary product (the venue and its attributes). This is why part of the multi-phased interview is aimed at the primary product and the other part at the secondary product. In the final result the two are put together since they relate to the same values, the primary product is then seen as the attribute 'good performances'.

5.1 The sample

The population of this test-case is the total of theatre visitors of the venue. The venue is also a film house, but film visitors are excluded for the purposes of this research. There is some overlap, as part of the visitors visits both film and theatre; the questions however focus solely on theatre experiences. To sample the visitors into a representative sample, purposive sampling is used; a non-probability sampling method. The population of theatre visitors can be divided according to visitor frequency. To use this in the sampling as a variable, however, is not that valuable. The scope of this research is too narrow to interview the full range of visitors, so a choice has to be made between visitor groups. Which group provides the highest value for a deep understanding of its motives? The method works best with visitors who already have a strong connection with the venue; by revealing their preferences the venue can find its core consumer values and use them to upgrade consumers with a lower visitor frequency. Therefore the focus will be on core visitors that have attended a performance at least four times this season at the start of this study in March 2013. The season runs from September to June, those who have already gone 4 times in March will be likely to visit at least once more and therefore belong in the core visitor category of De Rooij (2013). The ideal sample size for a research like this to be valuable in real life is around 20-25 respondents. However, since this is merely a test-case, a smaller sample will suffice to show the workings and implications of laddering. The sample therefore consists of 11 respondents. This sample size is too small to imply any kind of generalizability; the results are therefore valuable on a smaller level, as a first step to gain insights in the values of the organization from the consumer perspective and to understand the importance of laddering. The ticket-sales database of the Toneelschuur is used to collect the information needed to select the possible respondents. They are approached by telephone to ask for their participation.

5.2 The interview

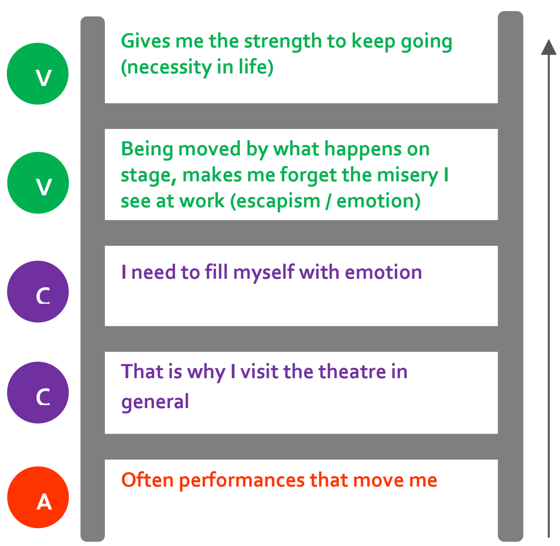
The respondents are given a choice to have the interview either in the comfort of their own home, or in a separate room in the Toneelschuur. They are also given the option to remain anonymous towards the university and the Toneelschuur. The interviews comprise three phases, the first of which focuses on getting information about the respondent's demographic features and attendance behaviour. The aim of this phase is firstly to get to know the interviewee and start the conversation and secondly to register some test-variables to find out if new segmentation according to values is gained in the end. The variables are: gender, age, marital status, education, income and art consumption pattern (do they participate in many cultural activities besides visiting the Toneelschuur?), whether or not they are friend of the theatre and how many times per season they visit the venue for a theatre performance. These last two are registered in the database and are asked in the interview as a check of the system.

The whole of the second and third phase of the interview is aimed at extracting the independent variables: the attributes, consequences and values. For this test-case, the choice has been made to use the means-end chain model and look for hierarchical relationships as explained in chapter 3. The reason for this is the strong consumer focus and the usefulness of finding the communication paths as well as the values alone. In the second phase of the interview, the respondents are presented with three pictures, one of the Toneelschuur, one of the Stadsschouwburg Haarlem, the big city theatre, and one of a smaller theatre in a different city which programs the same kind of performances (several back-up cards for this are present at the interview). Triadic sorting tactics are used to ask the respondents how the Toneelschuur differs from the other two. A few attributes are supposed to follow, which form the base of the first round of questioning. When the interview gets stuck, or the desired values are reached, the interview moves on to phase three.

The third phase is similar to the second, but shows three cards displaying pictures of performances the respondent has attended in the last months. The respondent is asked, by preference consumption difference, to rank the three and explain why the one exceeds the other. This leads to a new line of questioning in which the respondents link their performance experience with the overall experience in the theatre. The interviews last for approximately 45-60 minutes and are all recorded with permission. After the interview, each recording is transcribed. All transcripts are available at request, via Erasmus University or the researcher.

5.3 The coding

As said before, means-end relationships are assumed, and therefore hierarchical coding is applied. Ladders are therefore built from the raw interviews, followed by the content code table, raw data map, implication matrix and finally the hierarchical value map. Because the representations of these outcomes differ a lot per academic who used laddering before, a new representation is designed to present the results in a clear and attractive manner. The ladders, and how they are constructed from the raw interview, has already been shown in chapter 3, important in this process is that some of the answers can be given with questions in between, making the chain divided over several fragments of the interview. Picture 9, for example, presents a ladder about the performances of the Toneelschuur. The first three answers were given early in the interview, which led to an incomplete ladder. Then in the end of the interview the respondent came back to this subject and put words to his values, making the ladder complete. Because this can happen, it is important during the coding, to also keep track of incomplete ladders.



Picture 9: Example of ladder based on spread out answers

When all ladders are constructed, the summary content code table, as explained in chapter 3 is built, labelling all the answers given in the ladders with a number. What is important here is that many of the answers given can be summarized into one type of attribute, consequence or value. The ladder in picture 9 for example consists the value 'necessity in life', which is made up out of all answers which relate to satisfying a life-need; but also of answers leading to values which were composed at an earlier stage of the research, but were combined while making the summary content code table. Values combined with emotion were for example 'satisfaction' and 'to recharge'. The same is true for the attributes and consequences. Different from the summary content code table as presented by Blake (2004) is that in this test-case also the number of mentions per A, C or V is shown (Chapter 6, Table 2).

The summary content code table leads to the implication matrix, which is built in the same way as Blake's (2004), which is shown in chapter 3, with the exception of starting the columns with attributes instead of consequences, because the researcher noticed how in some ladders certain attributes lead to other attributes and not yet to consequences. The implication matrix is the blue print for the hierarchical value map, which looks like the one presented by Blake (2004), with a bit more attention to aesthetics. Only the significant relationships are shown, which means that there have to be at least two direct relationships between the answers. This number is a bit divergent from Reynolds & Gutmans (1988) proposal of 3 to 4, but this was caused by the large number of indirect relationships found. Different from Blake's map is that it shows, by means of colour (relating to the colours used in the ladders), if a certain answer shown is an attribute, consequence or value.

5.4 Expectations

Because the respondents in this test-case are all core visitors, the expectation at the start was that the result would yield mainly positive values. This is a bias, since of course no organization is only positive. This bias is recognized, but not that relevant for the purposes of this research. The strongest implication is for marketing, which is not aimed at transmitting negative values in the first place, so they would not be the most useful result. The results gained will not be generalizable due to the small sample size. A new segmentation of the audience is therefore not expected, even though this is an expected result if the scope of this research was larger. However, there is an expectation that the values found will lead to a start of a new categorization of visitors based on their motivation to visit. If a categorization can indeed be started, then categories of visitors need to be composed based on the results and then people need to fall into these categories.

Although a different interview method was applied, a few of the results found by De Rooij's (2013) research about customer loyalty towards performing arts venues in the Netherlands are expected to be found in this study as well. First of all, it is expected that that the visitors will be mostly internally motivated, this will be confirmed if the values found relate mostly to the self, or if they are general or related to the Toneelschuur. Secondly the expectation is that the most importance will be put on the performance, the primary product, than on the secondary product. This expectation is confirmed if most of the ladders found relate to the attribute 'good performances'. In line with the same research, it is expected that values relating to the performance will therefore be more present in the result and that they will relate more to higher purposes such as emotions or cognitive stimulation than to entertainment or relaxation. The main thing this study will produce over that of De Rooij (2013) is that it offers clear communication paths for the marketing strategy, flowing from attributes towards consequences to values – this distinction is not made in his research, all is called a motivation.

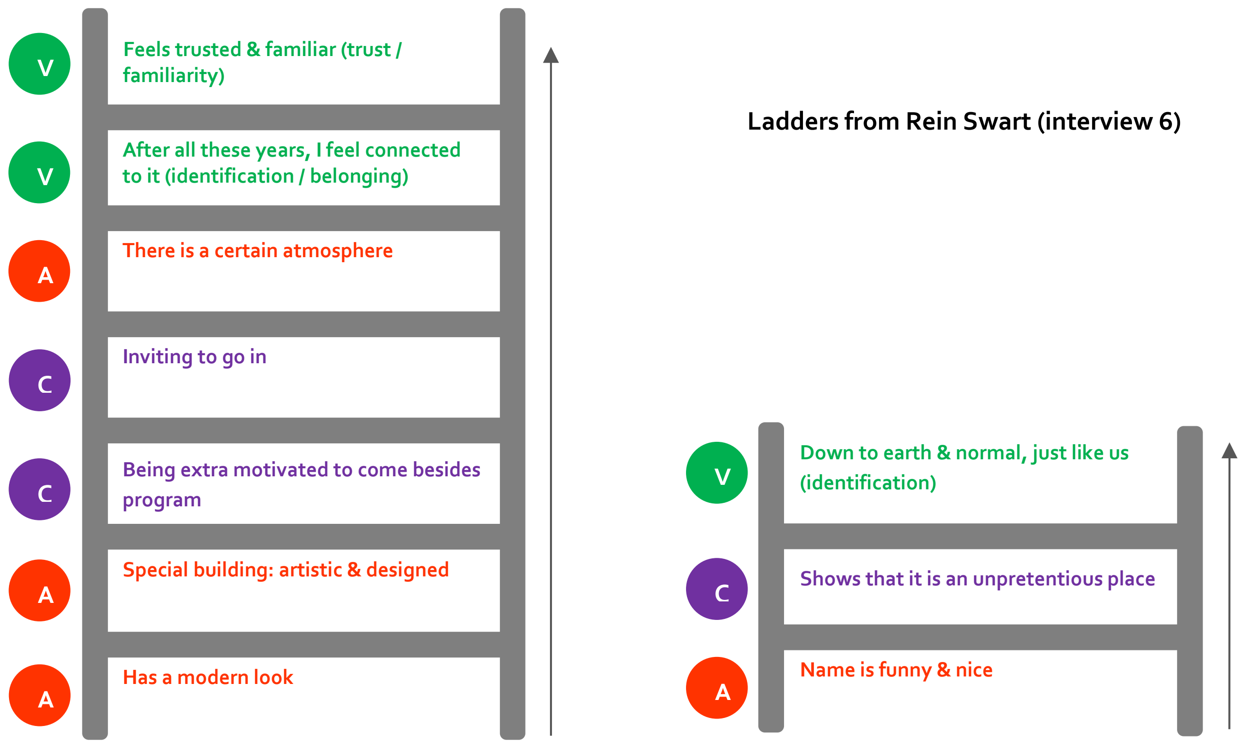
6. TEST-CASE: RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Halfway through the interviews, the first results already began to show. The respondents grossly mentioned the same kind of motivations for visiting the Toneelschuur: they feel at home, like it because it is different from other theatres, but mainly they come for the quality performances. From these performances, respondents wanted different things, but these differences are able to be categorized into a few different values: to feel an emotion, to escape from everyday life and to be inspired. To understand these general outcomes, and what they consist of, the results are analyzed on a step by step basis from here. All the respondents are mentioned by name, because of the qualitative nature of the research and the consequently small sample size. Some of the names are the actual names and in these cases permission was granted by the respondent to use their name. Those wanting to remain anonymous have been given a fictional name. All the ladders that were generated from the interviews are enclosed in the appendices.

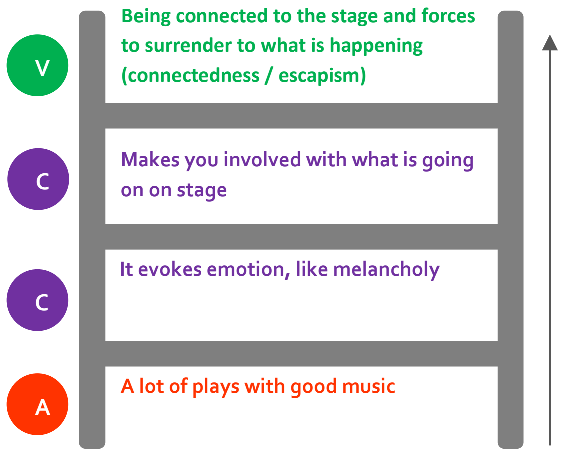
6.1 The ladders

The first step, as mentioned was turning the interviews into ladders. The 11 interviews in total led to 55 ladders, meaning that on average each interview generated 5 ladders. The number of ladders generated by each respondent differed, some generated 6 or 7, others 4. None of the interviews led to less than 4 ladders. Besides the number of ladders coming from each interview, the length of the ladders varies as well. This can have several reasons. First of all, some of the respondents were more open to talk about personal issues in general and therefore went from attribute to value quite easy. Other respondents were comfortable talking only about certain values and were more closed about others. The ladders on the next page, for example, are from the same respondent, Rein Swart (interview 6). It is easy for him to explain how the Toneelschuur matches his own self-image, but harder to explain what that means to him: a sense of belonging and a trusted feeling.

The longer ladder shows how more than one type of attribute or consequence is sometimes needed to come to values. It also exemplifies that ladders are indeed not always hierarchical; about which Van Rekom & Wierenga (2007) are right. In practice people do not answer according to theory. Rein Swart already went from the modern look and beauty of the building to what that does to him: it gives him extra motivation to come and it is inviting to him to come in. Theoretically he would then move up to the value-level, but in practice he needed the step in between and say something about the atmosphere. The fact that not all ladders are hierarchical though, does not mean there is no hierarchical relationship between the status of the answers; therefore it does not mean that hierarchical coding needs to be overthrown. As can be seen in the following steps, the non-hierarchical ladders are processed in the coding



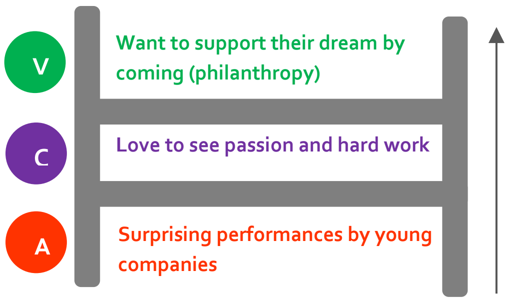
The ladder of Rein Swart also shows how important it is to think about what is an attribute, what a consequence and what a value. It could be said that the atmosphere is a consequence of the building, this is in part so, but there is more that contributes to atmosphere than the building alone. Besides this, it is important to realize the difference between a basic consequence of an attribute and a personal consequence of an attribute, the latter is what is the most relevant for laddering. The fact that Rein Swart is extra motivated to go in because of the building is a personal consequence, the atmosphere is not. This consideration led to the atmosphere being considered an attribute, which messed up the hierarchical structure of the ladder, but is more true to how a certain answer is meant by the respondent. Each answer was carefully weighted like this, which is necessary because these ladders are the base of the rest of the data processing. This also means that during the processing in the next steps, sometimes realization was found that something assigned the status of consequence was actually a value, or an attribute. It can also differ per ladder if similar answers are assigned a certain status. The context of the answer: the words used, the sentences surrounding it, the path it leads to, can determine that sometimes similar answers are assigned a different status. The ladders below for example both refer to emotion. In the first ladder, belonging to Bert Bouquet (interview 1) 'it evokes an emotion' is seen as a consequence, because it leads to another consequence and eventually to a value. In the second, belonging to Jeroen Westra (interview 3) it says 'want to be moved and feel something', here the fact that emotion is evoked is not stated as a certainty, but as a desire – therefore here it gets the status of value.



Ladder from Bert Bouquet (interview 1)

Ladder from Jeroen Westra (interview 3)

Some respondents, like Jeroen Westra (interview 3), made for 7 ladders easily, while others, like Karen Hillegers (interview 2), had trouble generating 4. Besides the trouble generating ladders in the first place, the ladders that were formed, were similar to each other, but different from most other ladders generated by her fellow respondents. Her ladders show that she just has been coming to the Toneelschuur for a long time and is accustomed to it, she likes to see actors from TV and feel like she is part of 'something special and real'. This led to the value 'inclusion' two times, which nobody else mentioned. In the small sample of this research, she can be seen as an outlier, but there is no way to be sure that she is in the total population of Toneelschuur visitors. Her answers are therefore interesting to understand for the organization, but because of the coding process, they do not turn up in the overall results. Another noticeable ladder which did not make the final result is this one, by Jeroen Westra (interview 3):



Ladder from Jeroen Westra (interview 3)

Are ladders like this; and the values mentioned, exceptions? Or are they perhaps more common, but unarticulated by the others? Either way, these answers are only to be found in the ladders and will disappear in the next step.

6.2 The summary content code table

After building the ladders, steps were made to transform all the 55 ladders into one clear overview. As explained in previous chapters, the first step in this process is making the summary content code table, in which all attributes, consequences and values are summarized and assigned a code; the table also contains the number of mentions per item. The final summary content code table as presented below, however, is not how it originally looked.

SUMMARY CONTENT CODE TABLE

Attributes	Consequences	Values
1- Good performances (44)	9- Enjoy emotional benefits of performance (27)	21- Emotion (14)
2- Sit close to (absent) stage (5)	10- Enjoy cognitive benefits of performance (11)	22- Enjoyment (6)
3- Beautiful modern building (7)	11- Fulfil cultural need (7)	23- Escapism (11)
4- Customer friendly (9)	12- Enjoy nice environment (19)	24- Belonging (22)
5- Social venue (5)	13- Enjoy good service (6)	25- Distinction (6)
6- Good ambiance (6)	14- Meet similar people (3)	26- Necessity in life (5)
7- Nice name (1)	15- Taste development (1)	27- Inspiration (12)
8- Been there long time (1)	16- Aesthetics of performance (6)	28- Remembrance (5)
	17- New / different things (8)	29- Sureness (2)
	18- Influence visitor behaviour (6)	30- Philanthropy (1)
	19- Better overall experience (12)	
	20- Custom to come here (3)	

The first attempt was much larger than this one, containing 23 attributes, 35 consequences and 29 values. Along the process it became clear that this was an unrealistic table to work with and would not yield any results, because the relationships between items would not be strong enough. Besides, it showed that many answers given, who then had separate content codes, could be seen as one and the same, especially when they would lead to similar consequences or values. The first attribute, 'good performances' for example is made up of the previous attributes 'different programming', 'good dance performances' , 'good Flemish program', 'experimental performances' and 'well-acted performances'; the attribute 'customer friendly' is made up out of 'not too expensive', 'good return policy', 'seats are predetermined now' and 'friendly staff'. The attributes 'nice name' and 'been there long time' did not match any other attributes and remained in the table with a single mention. The same can be seen in the consequences column with the consequence 'taste development'. Here the consequence 'enjoy emotional benefits of performance' is the most mentioned consequence, which is made up out of, among others, 'being drawn in', 'evokes emotion', 'involvement with what happens on stage' and 'makes me laugh'.

In the value column some compromises had to be made as well, the value 'belonging' for example is made up out of 'to feel at home', 'identification', 'familiarity', 'trust', 'authenticity', 'inclusion' and 'belonging'. 'Inspiration' is a combination of 'novelty', 'spiritual', 'to be challenged' and 'inspiration'. For a complete understanding of the 'shrinking down' process, the original summary content code table can be found in the appendices. What it means though, is that a lot of the nuances between answers disappeared in order to get the result: 'to be challenged' does not mean the exact same thing as 'to be inspired'; both do however lead to a mind-opening effect caused by seeing something unexpected. Therefore, the content codes and related variables can be seen as categories of similar attributes, consequences or values.

6.3 The raw data overview

The content codes are subsequently transformed back into an overview of the ladders, by making the raw data overview. All ladders are represented and by labeling the answers as a content code, the relationships between the answers become clearer, which is the base for the implication matrix and hierarchical value map. Added in this version of the raw data overview are the alternating colors of the ladder-numbers, making clear which ladders belong to the same respondent. This will eventually help the researcher in categorizing the respondents according to their values. Because of the summarized content codes, some of the ladders in the raw data overview have the same code twice in succession. This can be found back in the implication matrix, which shows significant relationships of variables to themselves. These relationships are left out of the final result, because they are irrelevant.

RAW DATA OVERVIEW

Ladder	Content Codes						
L1	1	10	25	0	0	0	0
L2	1	2	9	27	0	0	0
L3	1	17	10	24	25	0	0
L4	1	9	10	23	0	0	0
L5	5	4	19	24	0	0	0
L6	1	19	9	24	0	0	0
L7	8	20	20	29	0	0	0
L8	1	4	20	24	0	0	0
L9	1	9	21	23	28	0	0
L10	1	16	9	27	26	0	0
L11	1	9	23	21	26	0	0
L12	1	9	9	27	0	0	0
L13	5	14	24	0	0	0	0
L14	1	9	30	0	0	0	0
L15	6	4	4	19	24	18	0
L16	3	12	12	2	24	0	0
L17	1	6	5	12	12	12	24
L18	1	19	17	17	27	0	0
L19	4	13	24	18	0	0	0
L20	5	11	24	0	0	0	0
L21	6	12	14	13	24	19	24
L22	1	10	19	1	2	9	24
L23	3	12	12	24	0	0	0
L24	1	9	10	9	21	28	0
L25	3	3	12	12	6	24	24
L26	1	9	16	16	21	23	18
L27	7	12	24	0	0	0	0
L28	1	9	1	17	9	21	22
L29	4	13	13	9	29	0	0
L30	4	19	12	12	24	0	0
L31	2	12	9	21	0	0	0
L32	1	11	11	22	22	0	0
L33	1	1	19	27	0	0	0

L34	3	12	25	19	0	0	0
L35	1	17	17	19	25	27	0
L36	1	11	23	22	26	0	0
L37	1	10	17	27	0	0	0
L38	1	9	28	0	0	0	0
L39	1	5	10	14	24	0	0
L40	1	9	23	9	23	22	0
L41	2	9	21	0	0	0	0
L42	1	9	9	21	0	0	0
L43	1	1	10	10	23	21	0
L44	1	9	21	27	18	0	0
L45	1	19	18	6	24	0	0
L46	1	16	27	21	28	0	0
L47	3	6	12	24	18	0	0
L48	4	17	15	21	0	0	0
L49	1	11	11	23	21	26	0
L50	1	11	9	27	25	21	0
L51	3	12	19	12	25	0	0
L52	1	10	16	27	0	0	0
L53	4	13	13	12	24	22	0
L54	1	9	10	23	26	23	0
L55	1	16	9	27	21	28	0

6.4 The implication matrix

With the raw data map, the implication matrix could be drawn up, which, as is explained in previous chapters, shows all the relationships between the different variables. The colors of the number in the base row and column of the matrix, shows if the content code presented relates to an attribute, consequence or value. Constructing the matrix is a very precise undertaking, since it consists of counting not only all the direct relationships between the content, but also the indirect relationships. The task requires precision and perseverance, because it is deemed to happen that along the process, a previously made mistake is found. This happened more than once creating this matrix, until finally it was right. Once the matrix is created though, the final result is actually already there, all that needs to be done is put it into a more understandable form. This is done with the hierarchical value map, which comprises all the relevant relationships found in the implication matrix. For this value map, all the relationships which had a number of 2 or more were seen as significant, these are labeled yellow in the implication matrix.

IMPLICATION MATRIX

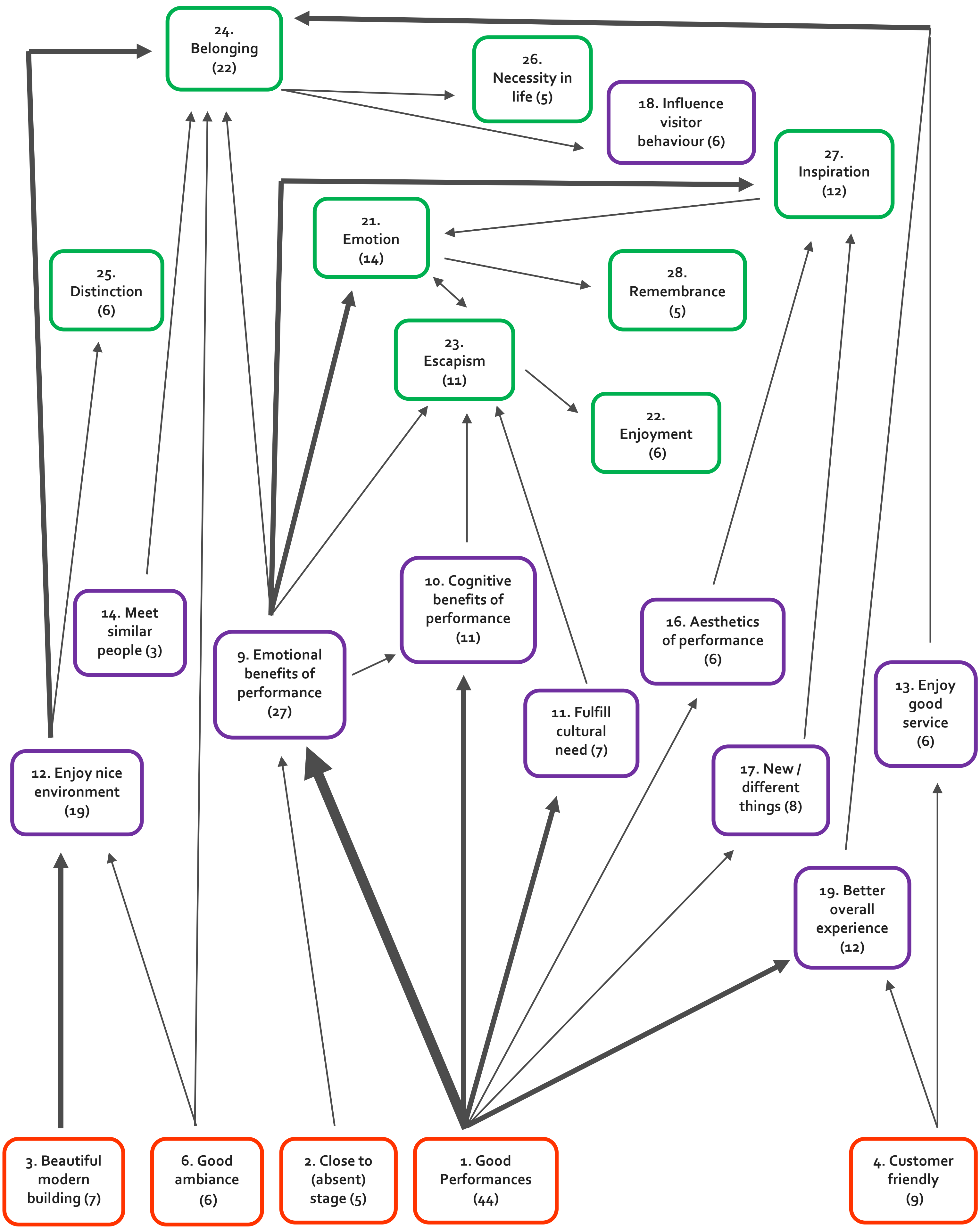
CC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1	2,02	2,01		1	1,01	1,01			13,1	5,07	4,02	0,03		0,01		3,03	3,05	0,04	4,03	0,01	0,12	0,05	0,11	0,07	0,04	0,05	0,11	0,05		0,01
2									3,01			1									0,02			1,01			0,01			
3		0,01	1			1,02						5,06						0,01	0,02					0,07	0,02					
4				1					0,01			0,03	3,02		0,01		1	0,02	2,01	1	0,01	0,01		0,06						
5				1						1	1	1,02		1,01					0,01					0,05						
6				1,01	1							2,03	0,01	0,01				0,02	0,02					2,06						
7												1												0,01						
8																				1,01									0,01	
9	1								2,03	3						1,01	0,01	0,02			6,07	0,03	3,06	2	0,01	0,03	5,02	1,04	1	1
10	0,01	0,01							1,01	1				1		1	1		1		0,03		3,02	1,02	1,01	0,01	0,02	0,01		
11									1		2										0,03	1,04	2,01	1	0,01	0,03	0,01			
12		0,01				1,01			1			6,02	0,01	1				0,01	1,02		0,01	0,01		6,11	2,01					
13									1,01			1,01	2					0,01	0,01			0,02		2,03					0,02	
14													1						0,01					2,02						
15																					1									
16									2							1		0,02			1,03		0,02			0,01	2,02	0,02		
17									1	1					1		2		0,01		0,02	0,01		0,01	0,02		2,02			
18						1																		0,01						
19	1	0,01				0,01			1,01			2,01					1,01	1,01						3,04	1,01		1,02			
20																				1				1					1,01	
21																		0,02				1	2			2	1	3,01		
22																						1				1				
23									1									1			3	2,01	0,02			1,03		1		
24																		3	1			1		1,01	1					
25																			1		1						1			
26																							1							
27																		1			2,01				1	1		0,02		
28																														
29																														
30																														

6.5 The hierarchical value map

The hierarchical value map only consist the relationships which are deemed significant. The map shows 5 remaining attributes, 10 consequences and 8 values. This means that 7 of the variables that were included in the processing so far did not make it to the map. The status of the variable in the map is shown by the color of the border of the square they are presented in. Again all orange borders indicate attributes, the purple borders consequences and the green ones values. The relationships between the different variables are indicated by arrows, showing the direction of the relationship. Building the map was a puzzle, because in order to make it readable the arrows are not supposed to cross each other. The thickness of the arrow shows the significance of the relationship, based on the scores in the implication matrix. Scores up to 2 are not included in the map. All relationships which have scores from 2 to 3,99 (at least 2 direct relationships) in the implication matrix are presented with a thin arrow, all relationships with scores of 4 to 6,99 are presented by a medium sized arrow and all relationships with scores of 7 or higher are indicated by a thick arrow. When we look at the map, only one such thick arrow can be found, going from the attribute 'good performances' to the consequence 'enjoy emotional benefits of performance', when we look at the implication matrix we can see that this relationship scores a 13,1, which is remarkably high, the relationship was direct 13 times and indirect 10 times more. However, the relationship is not surprising; it is quite self-evident, what other attribute could lead to this consequence? A few medium-sized arrows can be found, but most are thin.

Studying the map a few things are striking, because they deviate from the expected. First of all there is one arrow that goes from the attribute 'good ambiance' directly towards the value 'belonging' without going through a consequence first. This is a result of this attribute being mentioned late in ladders more often, after having already mentioned other attributes and consequences, like in the example shown in paragraph 6.1. The path towards this attribute differs too much across the ladders to generate a significant relationship and therefore it is not included in the value map. Another striking thing is the floating consequence 'meet similar people'. The relationship between this consequence and the value 'belonging' is significant and therefore shown in the map, but the attributes leading to this consequence vary too much to lead to a significant path.

HIERARCHICAL VALUE MAP



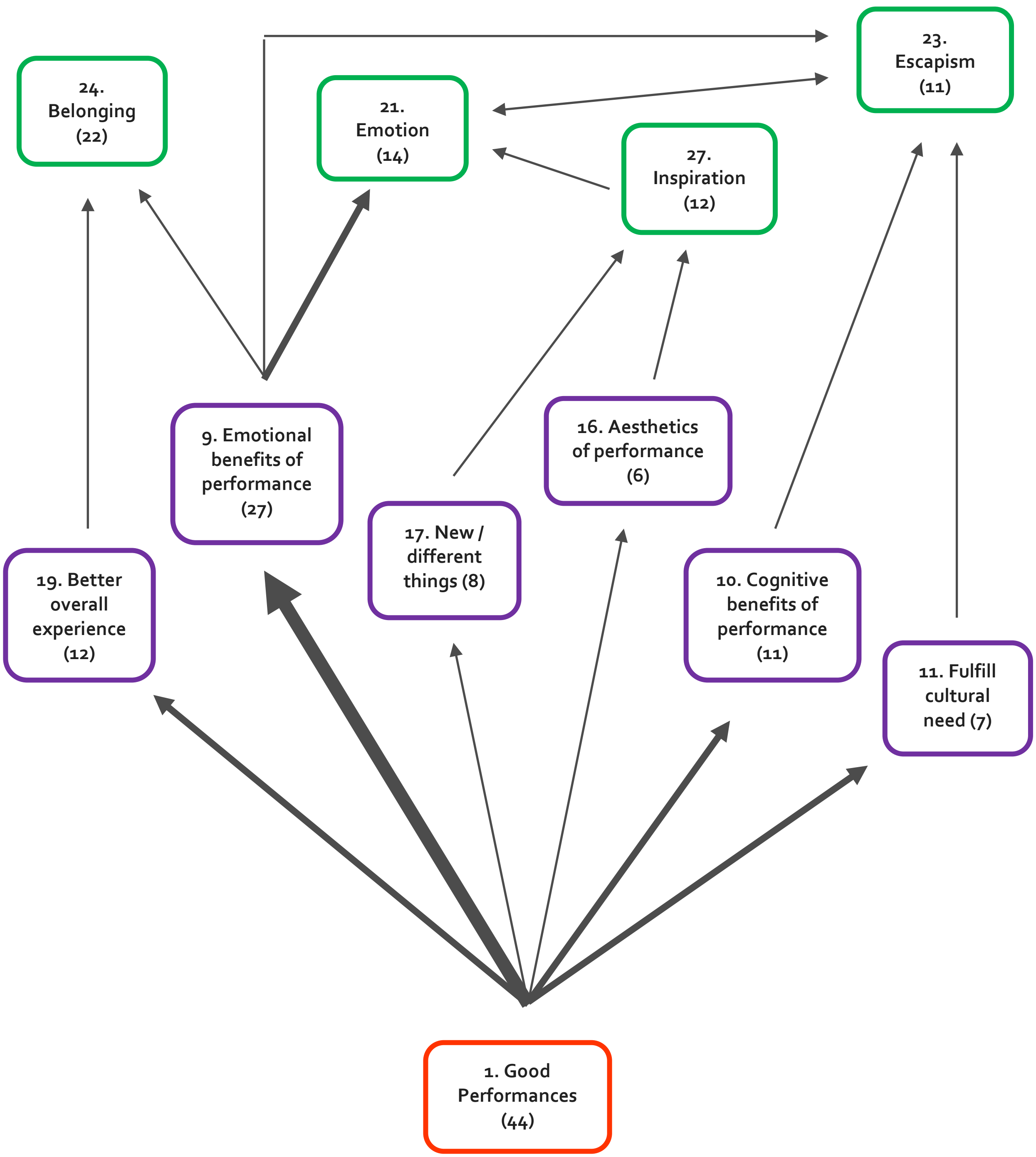
Looking at the top of the map, it shows a consequence between the different values: 'influence visitor behaviour'. The cause of this wandering consequence is quite logic, in many cases this consequence was the end of a ladder, following from a value. The only significant relationship is from the value 'belonging' towards this consequence, but looking at the indication matrix, we can also wee that it also follows once from the values 'emotion' and 'inspiration'. In most cases, the ladder stops when a respondent reaches the value level. During the interviews, other consequences tended to follow from values in the, but they were left out, because they were not relevant. This consequence however was seen as particularly relevant to the organization, which wants to increase ticket sales, so much so that it was included in the ladders. The map shows that it is indeed mentioned enough to lead to a significant relationship with belonging. In words it means that visitors tend to come back to the Toneelschuur because they feel at home, or feel trusted.

The last deviation is that one of the arrows runs both ways. Over the different ladders, some respondents go from the value 'emotion' to 'escapism' and others answer the other way around. Although it is common that certain values lead to other values, these values are the only values that have a mutually significant relationship.

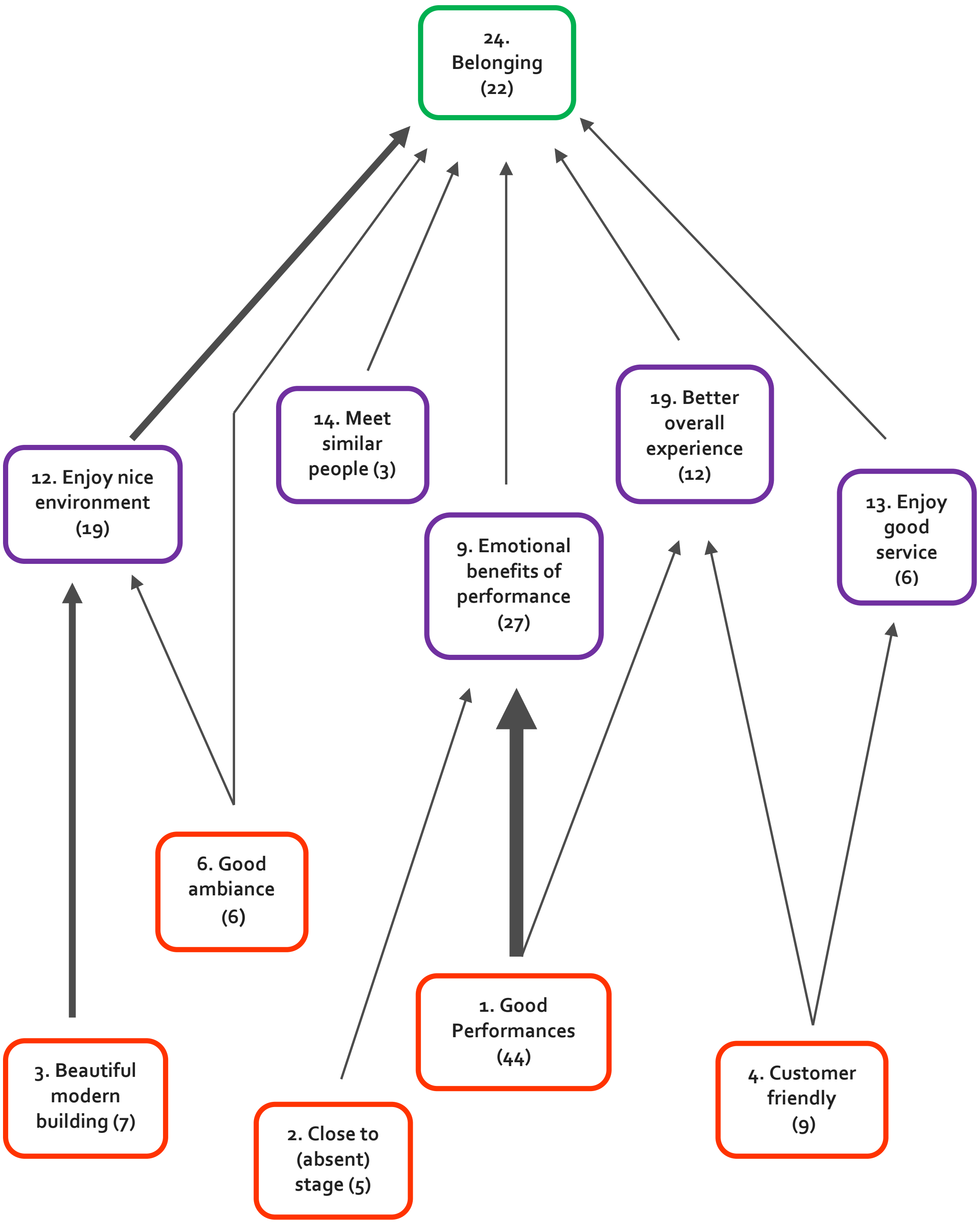
6.6 Most important paths

Overall, the HVM shows a few paths that are the most common among the respondents. The two most significant overarching paths work in opposite directions: one starts at 'good performances' and goes up towards a few different values and the other one starts at different attributes and goes up towards 'belonging'. The sub-maps on the following pages present these paths. Within these sub-maps, the thickness and number of arrows tells us more about the exact relationships within the paths. The performance path show us the most significant relationship, which flows from 'good performances' to 'emotional benefits of performance' to 'emotion', which is some cases leads to 'escapism'. Looking back at the implication matrix we see that 'good performances' leads to 'emotion' 12 times indirectly, to 'escapism' 11 times and to 'inspiration' 11 times more. 'Belonging' is good for 7 mentions. The most significant path towards belonging however does not start at 'good performances', but at 'beautiful modern building', which flows towards the consequence 'enjoy nice environment' and together with the attribute 'good ambiance' generates the most flows towards 'belonging'. Besides this, sitting close to the stage and enjoying the good service are beneficiaries of this value.

PERFORMANCE PATH



BELONGING PATH



6.7 Meeting the expectations?

From this it can concluded that this 'belonging' path is more focused on the secondary product as explained by De Rooij (2013), while the first path, starting at performances, is aimed at the primary product. This divide is indeed clearly found in the results and the attribute 'good performance' was the most mentioned one. Even if all the other attributes are put together, they make for 27 ladders, against 44 for 'good performances'. This is consistent with the formulated expectation stating that these core visitors would be motivated most by the primary product and values relating to that. However the secondary product is too important to discard, especially since it does relate to the most important value 'belonging'.

Another expectation was that the respondents would be more internally motivated than externally. When we look at the values found, this is indeed true. The internal values 'emotion', 'enjoyment', 'necessity in life', 'inspiration', 'remembrance' and 'sureness' are the result of 44 ladders in total (this number is coincidentally the same as the number of ladders starting with 'good performance)'. The external values 'belonging', 'distinction' and 'philanthropy' are the result of 35 ladders (several ladders lead to more than one value). The difference between internal and external values however is not that large to say that these core visitors are primarily internally motivated. This expectation is therefore not completely confirmed.

The same is true for the expectation that the values found would mostly relate to a higher level of being. Some of the values found are on the edge of this, like 'emotion'. This value is comprised of answers relating to liberation caused by laughing, but also to being drawn in and being moved. Therefore this value is only partially seen as a 'higher' value. Those which are rated higher are: 'inspiration' and 'necessity in life'. The rest: 'remembrance', 'philanthropy', 'distinction', 'sureness', 'enjoyment' and 'belonging' are seen as 'lower' and clearly make up for the majority of values found. This expectation is therefore invalidated by the results generated from this test-case.

In line with the expectations, it can indeed be concluded that the results are only positive, with the mere exception of ladder 26, formulated by Rein Swart (interview 6), and based on the idea that sometimes performances are also disappointing. This means that so far the expectations are met only partially and especially those based on the research by De Rooij (2013) are not confirmed. This can mean two things: either laddering yields a different result than the interviews held by De Rooij (2013), or the Toneelschuur is very different from the performing arts venues included in the study done by De Rooij (2013). Only more research in this area could give a decisive answer to that. One more expectation remains: the expectation that a start for a new categorization of the audience can be made based on the result.

6.8 Categorization

To confirm this expectation and be able to start a categorization from these results, categories of visitors need to be composed first and then people need to fall into these categories. The two main paths outlined earlier are the base for such a categorization. The performance path can actually be divided into two categories, those who focus more on the emotional effect of performances and those who aim at a cognitive experience. All respondents who fall in the category 'emotional performance' are those who mainly have ladders which start at 'good performance' and go towards 'emotion' and those who go through 'emotional benefits of performance' towards 'escapism'. Escapism can be seen as both a cognitive value and an emotional one, depending on the context. All those going to 'escapism' through 'cognitive benefits of performance' or 'fulfil cultural need' fall in the 'cognitive performance' category. All those going through 'new/different things' and 'aesthetics of performance' towards inspiration also fall in the 'cognitive performance' category because this process takes place mostly in the mind. Those who go from 'inspiration' to 'emotion' on the other hand belong to the 'emotional performance' category. The path through 'better overall experience' towards 'belonging' is left out of this categorization, because it is more relevant for the third and final category: all the paths towards belonging. Those ladders running through 'emotional benefits of performance' towards 'belonging' are part of the category 'emotional performance'.

Most ladders running towards belonging are based on everything but 'good performances' and therefore comprise the third category: those visitors who mainly come because they feel at home at the venue for any reason whatsoever, except the performances.

Table 3 shows the categorization schematically, showing the content code paths. The raw data overview, showing which ladders belong to which respondent, helps in determining if actual categories are found among the interviewed visitors. Because the hierarchical value map does not show all relationships between values, some ladders do not fit the scheme of the categorization. In this case, a consideration of the whole ladder determines if the ladder fits one category best or if it is irrelevant for the outcome of the categorization.

Emotional performance	Cognitive Performance	Belonging
1 - 21	1 - 10 -23	All - 24
1- 9 - 23	1 - 11 - 23	~~1 - 9 - 24~~
27 - 21	1 - 16 - 27	
1- 9 - 24	1 - 17 - 27	

Table 3: schematic categorization of visitors

Looking at the raw data map, there are 8 out of 11 respondents who fit in one of these categories by means of having a majority of ladders that meet the categorization. Two respondents are divided equally among the categories 'emotional performance' and 'belonging' and one respondent, Johan de Winter (interview 7) does not fit the categorization, his most important value is 'distinction'. Because he is alone in this, his ladders are seen as an exception and the categorization is accepted. The largest category is 'belonging' with 5 respondents, followed by 'emotional performance' with 4 and 'cognitive performance' is the smallest category. Table 4 shows the division of the respondents over the categories.

	Emotional performance	Cognitive performance	Belonging
1. Bert Bouquet		X	
2. Karen Hillegers			X
3. Jeroen Westra	X		X
4. Anke van Sleeuwen			X
5. Henk Griep			X
6. Rein Swart	X		X
7. Johan de Winter			
8. Letizia Baas		X	
9. Elizabeth Druijf	X		
10. Frank Gijsen	X		
11. Sonja Hoogerveen		X	

Table 4: respondent categorization

By considering the demographics in relation to this categorization, we can see some similarities among the visitors within certain categories. This has to be said with care though, because the sample does not differ that much overall. All respondents are over 45, most even over 55, almost all of them are higher educated. All but two are married, mostly with children and all of them are cultural omnivores. What does differ between them though, is their gender, their income level (either moderate or high) whether or not they are a friend of the theatre and the number of visits per season. All respondents fall in the category of core visitors, with a minimum of 5 visits per season, but some go far beyond that number.

If we look at the 'emotional performance' category, we can see that the visitation number lies between 6 and 8 visits per season, three out of four are not a friend of the theatre and three out of four are male. These three men earn a moderate income, as opposed to one woman with a high income level. The 'cognitive performance category' consists of two females and one male, all are friend of the theatre and the visitation numbers lie between 10 and 15 visits per season, all income levels are high. In the category 'belonging', all the variables are almost equally divided and the visitation numbers are quite spread.

What is most interesting to see is that those who value cognitive stimulation earn a higher income, which of course could relate to a higher level job and therefore a higher degree of cognitive power in general. Besides this, all of them are a friend of the theatre and all visit 10 times or more per season, which is very loyal. This group stands out most over the other two and might therefore need to be reached differently.

6.9 Implications and consequences

The implications of this categorization and of all the results shown here, are the most relevant for the marketing department of the Toneelschuur. As stated in the expectations, the main contribution of laddering over studies like that of De Rooij (2013) is that it offers clear communication paths flowing from attributes to values. It gives handles to communicate to the hearts of visitors, by communicating from the 'why'. Sinek (2009) explains how this is fundamental for organizations to do. All great leaders, he says; and leading organizations start their communications by telling people why they do what they do, then they tell how they do it and at the very end they explain what it actually is they do. This is the opposite of what most organizations do, who start with telling what they do, followed by how they do it and then in many cases completely forget about the why. By reversing this and explaining why, it is easier to touch consumers and gain their trust. Especially if an organization aims at customer loyalty, this is important. Of course the organization can communicate its own 'why', but to win consumers, what better 'why' to communicate then their own? If we take the three categorizations as a base, the communication paths to reach them would look something like those in Table 5.

	Why?	**How?**	**What?**
Emotional Performance	*We want to touch you and make you feel something*	*We do this by drawing you in to what is happening on stage*	*We offer good performances with great actors who can move you*
Cognitive Performance	*We want to give you the opportunity to let go of everyday life and inspire you*	*We do this by keeping your attention on the stage and make you think about new things*	*We offer good performances about interesting subjects*
Belonging	*We want to make you feel at home in our theatre*	*We do this by being a place with a nice, accessible environment in which you can meet people and be yourself*	*We have a beatifull modern building, with a good ambiance, we offer good service provided by friendly staff*

Table 5: Communication paths per visitor category

These paths are based on the core visitors of the Toneelschuur, which of course need to be treasured, but one of the main objectives or the organization is to diversify the audience. The paths for communication outlined here can be used to focus on new audience groups which match the profile of the core visitors, to try and upgrade them from incidental to core visitors. Because the focus on ticket sales is increased within the organization, making this upgrade is essential, because new audiences will not come in masses and as we have seen, visitors are in general loyal to this particular venue.

However, looking for new audiences remains an important aim and the paths provided might not work in the same way for younger people for example, or for lower income groups, or people with different ethnicities (all respondents are Caucasians). To reach these audiences, different communication paths can be tried, focusing on the core values found in this study: emotion, enjoyment, escapism, belonging, distinction, necessity in life, inspiration and remembrance. It is up to the marketing department to determine these communication paths per target audience.

The listed core values can also be used in the financial strategy of the organization. First of all to communicate the value of the organization from a consumer's perspective towards governments, foundations and other grant awarding institutions. Secondly it is useful to have arguments to increase private donations, for example by means of the friend system. All in all, the Toneelschuur can use the information provided in this study to help reach a few of their organizational goals, however, it has to be stated again that the sample of this test-case is too small to draw general conclusions about the audience. The results therefore need to be seen as a start for strategies and perhaps for future research.

7. REFLECTION: IS LADDERING THE ANSWER?

Looking back on working with laddering in this test-case and its results, some of the aspects of laddering are strong, while others are problematic. In this reflection, the strengths and the limitations of this method are discussed based on the experiences with the test-case. Besides this, some prospects are given about the future of laddering in the arts.

7.1 Experience with laddering

Working with laddering in general led to the conclusion that it is not the simplest of methods. There are many steps involved in getting the result and many nuances which need to be understood. Making a mistake in one stage, like what happened with the summary content codes in the test-case, can sometimes set you back in your progress if you figure it out in a later stage. This was a first attempt to laddering; performing a research with the method again would probably make the results more precise and the process smoother. This means that experience with the method is a real performance improving factor. But then again, this is of course the case with all research methods.

Yet not only the coding process requires experience, especially the interviewing is where problems arise. Even though all the literature offers a clear description on how to perform the interview, some questions remain, like: what do I tell the interviewee about the aims of the research and about what type of questions will be asked? Blake (2004) does provide some answers to this as he says to tell the interviewee that questions can be a bit obvious or simple. This works, but experience showed that it also helps to explain a little bit about the research aims, so far as to mention that you are studying visitor motivations; and that questions therefore can get a bit personal. What also helps; and this is provided by Reynolds & Gutman (1988) is to tell the interviewee that all answers are correct and that they can just tell their own story. Experience showed that this calms the interviewee and makes him or her more open to talk.

There is also a tricky thin line in where to stop probing the interviewee with 'why?' questions: stop too early and the final value level might not be reached; stop too late and the interviewee might get irritated and start to shun personal questions from that point. This 'tipping point' is not found in any of the literature about laddering. In the test-case it was noted that it comes down to a bit of sensitivity and social skills. After a few interviews a handle was discovered to at least know when a value is mostly reached. Usually after the respondent starts talking about something personal and has said everything there is too say about that subject, he or she starts going back to more ordinary issues, this is often the tipping point and somewhere in the personal story a value is to be found.

The tips and tricks provided by Reynolds & Gutman (1988) to get the interviewee to talk when the interview gets stuck for some reason, have been tried and work indeed. Especially the trick to reverse the line of questioning and ask what it would mean to a respondent if a certain consequence is not reached, can help the interviewee to get back on track. Revealing something personal about yourself also helps when things get too personal for the interviewee. This often leads to a mutual laugh, or understanding, which bonds the two and helps relax the interviewee to start talking again.

Another thing which needs to be done during the interview and is not mentioned by any of the scholars writing about laddering before, is to keep track of incomplete ladders. Sometimes a question generates multiple attributes or consequences which can lead to a value. It is advised therefore to make notes on these while asking questions, to be able to come back to them later in the interview. This asks for a bit of skill, because taking notes and listening carefully at the same time, while making sure to look interested, is not easy. It will not come as a surprise therefore that this skill was developed during the course of the interviews in the test-case and that in the first couple; some ladders might have been lost because of this.

This is also important to realize during the processing of the interviews into ladders, because information for ladders can be found spread out over the interview. This is one of the reasons why building the ladders is a task which requires attention and precision. First ladders need to be recognized and then the steps of the answering chain need to be assigned the label attribute, consequence or value. In some cases this was clear immediately, but other answers have been labeled several times again. As explained in the previous chapter, it can depend on the situation sometimes which status is assigned to a certain answer. This is the first step during which mistakes can be made that need to be corrected later.

The same is true for the summary content code table, in which attention need to be paid to similarities between the different variables. This process has been explained before, so there is no need for repetition. However, it was the worst set back in this test-case and is therefore a main lesson for future laddering-researchers: make sure to pay careful attention to this step to prevent yourself from having to go back and correct it. Opposed to other methods, there is not computer program to generate results for the researcher. This precise work is to be done by hand and therefore takes a lot of time. Especially the implication matrix is a tough one to get right; and doing it twice because of errors is not desired.

Drawing up the hierarchical value map is quite the puzzle. To make the map comprehensible, there has to be a constant weighing about what to put in the map and what not. The significance boundary of 2 direct relationships that was determined in this test case, has shifted back and forth a few times. Besides this, the map needs to be readable and therefore crossing arrows are to be prevented, which makes for a few different versions of the map guaranteed. What helps is to write the relationships down in numbers and see where the numbers correspond to determine the location of variables on the map.

These last few steps are only encountered when the decision is made to follow the hierarchical coding process. If networked coding, as introduced by Van Rekom & Wierenga (2007) is preferred, then a different process is required to get to the results. This process is not attempted, so no concrete comments can be made in relation to that. What can be said is that it is import to understand the consequences of the decision when one particular type of coding is chosen. For example, in this test case, hierarchical coding was preferred, but some non-hierarchical relationships were discovered. At that moment one can either go back and change the method or incorporate those deviations into the method chosen. The latter was decided on, which had a weakening effect on the strengths of certain relationships in the hierarchical value map. This, together with the filtering effect happening in each stage of the coding process, makes that much information gets lost. This leads to comprehensible results, but also to a lack of understanding in a method which is aimed at understanding.

7.2 Limitations of laddering

This is therefore immediately the first limitation of laddering; the fact that information gets lost. The interviews provide much more information than the final result shows. Information about how booking decisions are made for example and how visitors mostly visit the museum (alone or in a company, with or without drink or dinner etc.) are provided, but not shown because this information is irrelevant for uncovering values. Except for information falling off the radar, the way laddering is used in this test-case does not provide the possibility to determine the importance of the ladders or values found. Some attributes could mean more to respondents than others, leading to more important ladders and values.

It would be an improvement to build in a mechanism for that in the laddering procedure, for example by rating the first mentioned answers as most valuable. The survey extension proposed by Van Rekom (2006) could offer a solution for this in the final result, as it test the values and relationships mentioned in the interviews on other respondents to get generalizable results. By doing so, the stronger values have a bigger chance at surviving.

The difficulty of working with the method in all stages is a limitation as well. Besides the fact that it is very time consuming, it can lead to bias, caused by the inexperience of the researcher. It is hard to be sure that all interviews are performed the same way; it might be that there is a development in the method, causing deviations in later interviews compared to earlier ones. This is one bias caused by the researcher, but another one is obviously that all the processing of the results depends heavily on the interpretation of the researcher. If another researcher would have performed this test-case the results might have been different.

The interview is very unstructured, which makes it difficult for the interviewer to keep track of possible ladders. Each attribute or consequence chosen in that exact moment, leads to the rest of the interview and the forming of ladders. Who performs the interview therefore matters, but even if the same researcher would perform the interview with the same respondent again, results might be different from the interview before. Not only because of the questions asked, but also because of the answers given. This has to do with the fact that it is unsure how well aware people are of their own motivations, let alone their values. People might be giving the answer which they think is expected of them, or which is the most socially desirable; or simply what comes to mind in that particular moment. This makes the reliability of the results low.

Next to this, the small sample size makes the results non-generalizable and even if the sample would double or triple, this would still be the case. The method is very qualitative and therefore generalizability is never an aim. The aim is to generate a deeper understanding, something extra over known, less time-consuming methods. The question is: is that aim met? What does laddering offer over other methods, which makes these limitations unimportant?

7.3 Strengths of laddering

To provide an answer to that question, a step back is required, to discuss the differences with the methods discussed in chapter 2, the pure economic, social economic and other psycho economic methods. To be clear: probably the best way to inform yourself as a cultural organization is to research all three; to use pure economic methods to determine price strategies, social economic methods to know who your audience is and psycho economic methods to understand why they do or do not visit. This last step however is crucial in determining the communication strategy of an organization. Besides this, it can contribute to organizational strategic decisions, as well as financial strategies. By now, it is established what psycho economic methods contribute to the whole of consumer behaviour studies. But why use laddering over other psycho economic methods, like the survey Swanson et al (2008) performed, or the interviews done by De Rooij (2013)?

The strength of laddering lies in the fact that it mixes the best of both these methods and does so with a clear theory behind it to make the results organized and therefore usable in practice. Where Swanson et al (2008) use a survey to get quantifiable results, aimed at using demographics to explain visitor motivation; laddering uses an open ended interview in which the respondent can tell his or her own story without pre-determined motivation. The matter of interviewing goes further than simply asking for the values, but by talking about something concrete is aimed at uncovering them, overcoming much of the bias caused by respondents being unaware of their own motivations and values. The results however are coded in an almost quantitative way, especially if the survey extension by Van Rekom (2006) is used. Sadly the scope of the test-case used in this research was too small to use this extension, but using it would generate results with an even greater benefit over survey techniques like that of Swanson et al (2008).

This also is true for the methods used by De Rooij (2013). He used interview techniques as well, but without the extensive coding and without the uncovering effect of the laddering interview. His focus lies on using demographics to explain the found motivations, while laddering lets the values speak for themselves. What we see from the test-case is that the results are different from what De Rooij (2013) found in several ways, most importantly in that it distinguishes between attributes, consequences and values instead of throwing them all on the pile ‘motivations’. These constructs of the brain, the ladders, are the base of the coding and the results, but are also the starting point for the application of the result by practitioners. It is important to understand what motivates people, but laddering also explains how this motivation works in the mind of the visitor and that is of high value for marketing strategies, because it offers a way to communicate into people's hearts by reaching out to their personal values. By providing these constructs, laddering indeed offers that extra layer of understanding it is set out to provide. This understanding is presented in a clear manner, which is usable directly; and is also presentable to external parties.

7.4 Is laddering the answer?

To conclude, laddering is a difficult technique to master and it takes some preparation and practice to use it. Besides, it is a very time consuming method, leading to non-generalizable results. It does however provide a deeper understanding of the constructs processed in consumer's brains and offers a clear communication path for marketers relating to the personal values of consumers. This leads the researcher to state that laddering is indeed a valuable method to be adopted by cultural economists and cultural organizations, especially with the survey extension of Van Rekom (2006) added to it, to lead to more generalizability. The method however, should not replace existing methods, it should complete them.

8. CONCLUSION

Laddering is a method aimed at uncovering people's values, by asking them about concrete subjects and probing them with 'why' questions about the importance of their answers. The method stems from psychology, but has been implemented in many fields, far and foremost in marketing and management. This research is aimed at understanding the relevance of the laddering technique as a method to study consumer behaviour in the arts. This relevance is first shown on the higher theoretical level, by explaining the most common methods for understanding consumer behaviour. To make it comparable, a tripartite division is made between pure economic methods, social economic methods and psycho economic methods. The main difference is the way consumer preference is regarded. Pure economic methods see them as given and focus on economic determinants like price as motivators of consumer behaviour, social economic methods try to understand how preferences come to be by studying differences in demographic features of consumers and psycho economic methods are aimed at explaining the preferences themselves.

Laddering is part of this third movement of methods, but differs from the existing methods by means of the interviewing and coding procedure and therefore also in the usability of the obtained result. The workings of the methods are explained first on the basis of different scholars who have written about working with the method. There are many nuances to choose from, like whether or not to believe in hierarchical relationships between answers; being attributes, consequences or values. All these nuances are put together and to study the workings of laddering in real life, are followed by a test-case using laddering.

This test-case studies the consumer behaviour of the visitors of a performing arts venue, the Toneelschuur in Haarlem, The Netherlands. The Toneelschuur is a medium sized theatre and film house, based in the city centre of Haarlem. The accompanying foundation Toneelschuur Production produces its own performances made by young directors. Presenting and developing talent has always been an important aim, just like offering an alternative program next to the larger, more commercial venues. The organization has been in financial difficulty so the pressure on the marketing department increased. More tickets need to be sold and a diversification of the audience is desired. A better understanding of the audience is therefore very valuable. To use laddering to get to know visitors in a new way thus contributes to the strategy of the organization.

The results show that first of all, visitors mostly come to enjoy the quality program and they do so to either have emotional benefits or cognitive ones. Values relating to this are among others 'escapism' and 'inspiration'. Another important value is 'belonging' and this value mostly comes forth of attributes based on anything but the performance, such as the beautiful building and the friendly staff. These results led to a new categorization of the audience and clear communication paths, which are implementable for the marketing department, but can also be used for organizational or financial strategy decisions, as they are representable to external sources and offer arguments for valuing the Toneelschuur.

Performing this test case has shown what laddering offers over existing methods of measuring consumer behaviour in the arts: a deeper understanding of the constructs in consumer's brains. Not only does it show motivation, it also shows how this motivation is reached. This is very valuable information and in the researcher's perspective makes the limitations of laddering light-weight. They have to be considered though when working with the method. Laddering is a time-consuming technique, which requires skill from the researcher and can lead to different kinds of bias caused by both the researcher and the respondent. This causes a low reliability of results, combined with a low generalizability caused by the necessary small sample size. However, the survey extension to laddering, as proposed by Van Rekom (2006) can overcome some of these limitations and make it into a promising method to use in the arts. If anything, artistic industries are the ones in which the 'why' of things matters more than then in most industries; and understanding this why better, can help eliminate much of the uncertainty ruling the market. This uncertainty and the failure of known economic methods is why the focus in cultural economics is shifting more and more towards understanding values. Laddering is therefore the logical answer to this shift and if handled with care, could and should be used more to understand the values of art consumers. More studies like this test case; especially more extensive studies than this test-case, are needed to show the true value of laddering; so let this study be a motivator for that.

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10. APPENDICES

Ladders interview 1: Bert Bouquet

Male
64
Retired
Highly educated
+ reasonably high income
Married with children
Cultural omnivore
Friend
+/- 15 visits per season

L1

- V — In general what looking for in life: not middle of the road (distinction)
- C — More intellectually challenging
- A — Experimental performances

L2

- V — Do not need to be tickled with safe choices (to be challenged)
- C — High degree of involvement with what is happening on stage
- A — The way the audience sits close to the stage (flat floor theatre)
- A — Interesting choice of subject + production form

L3

- V — Matches life attitude to not be a slave of society, but make own decisions about what is important (identification / authenticity)
- C — Leads to confrontation + critical thinking
- C — Makes you see things you have never saw before
- A — Experimental performances with crossovers (like gamelan-dance)

L4

- V — Being connected to the stage and forced to surrender to what is happening (connectedness / escapism)
- C — Makes you involved with what is going on non stage
- C — It evokes an emotion, like melancholy
- A — A lot of plays with good music

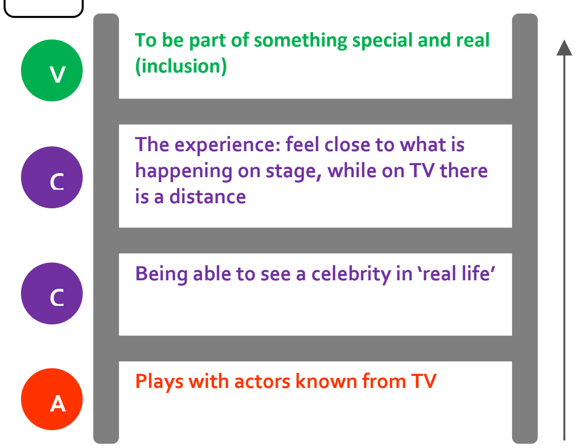
L5

- V — Makes you feel welcome (belonging / home)
- C — Better overall experience
- A — Greeted when you enter
- A — A place where you meet people you know and where the staff knows you

Ladders interview 2: Karen Hillegers

Female
58
Working
Highly educated
Moderate income
Married with children
Cultural omnivore
Friend
+/- 10 visits per season

L6



L8

L7

L9

Ladders interview 3: Jeroen Westra

Male	43	Working
Highly educated	Moderate income	
Married with children	Cultural omnivore	
Not friend	6 / 7 visits per season	

L10

- V — It feeds me; my mind and soul, which makes it more important than holiday (necessity in life)
- V — It inspires me as a person (inspiration)
- C — Able to see authentic passion on stage
- C — Don't have to see commercial stuff
- A — Appealing program: smaller, not so slick performances, more human

L13

- V — It's nice, it feels familiar (familiarity)
- C — It is a meetingplace for frequent visitors
- A — Many friends come here

L14

- V — Want to support their dream by coming (philanthropy)
- C — Love to see passion and hard work
- A — Surprising performances by young companies

L11

- V — Makes me recharge and feel satisfied (satisfaction / to recharge)
- V — Want to be moved and feel something (emotion)
- V — Enjoy to get carried away (escapism)
- C — Makes you 'let go' and be drawn in
- A — Good performances with strong acting

L15

- C — Makes Toneelschuur a good place to come often, against city theatre which is nice only once a year
- V — Lower threshold to come (accessibility)
- C — This is a good base to enter a performance
- A — Not that expensive
- A — Friendly staff
- A — Overall good ambianceGood performances with strong acting

L12

- V — Works in a connecting way for the audience (inspiration)
- C — I admire them
- C — Able to enjoy energy of dancers
- A — Present beautiful dance performances

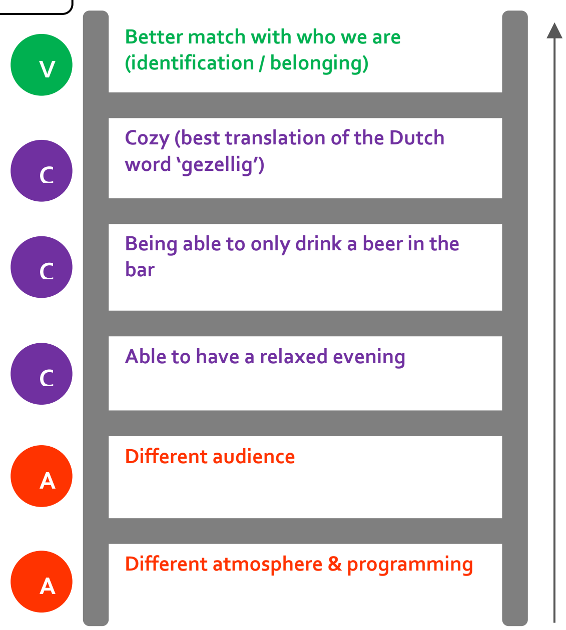
L16

- V — The whole just feels accessible (accessibility)
- A — Plus the fact that you are closer to the stage
- C — It is inviting to come in
- C — There is an open gage outside, which makes you feel part of the city
- A — Beautiful architecture

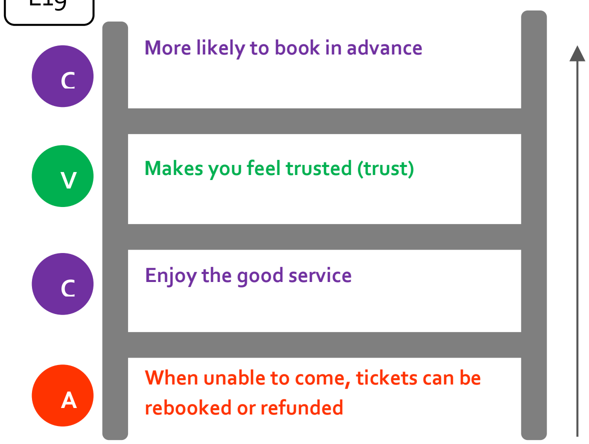
Ladders interview 4: Anke van Sleeuwen

Female
49
Working
Highly educated
Moderate income
Married with children
Cultural omnivore
Friend
+/- 10 visits per season

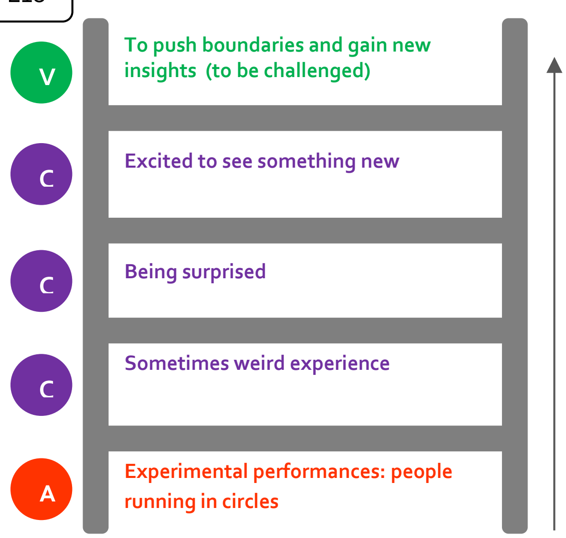
L17



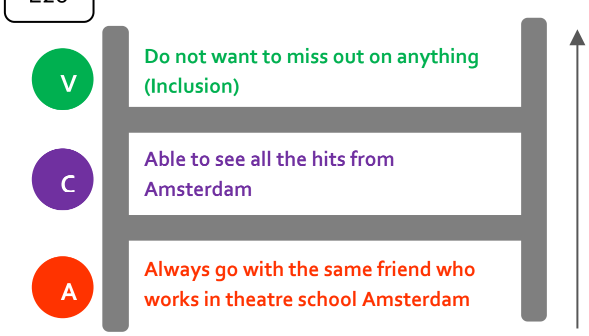
L19



L18

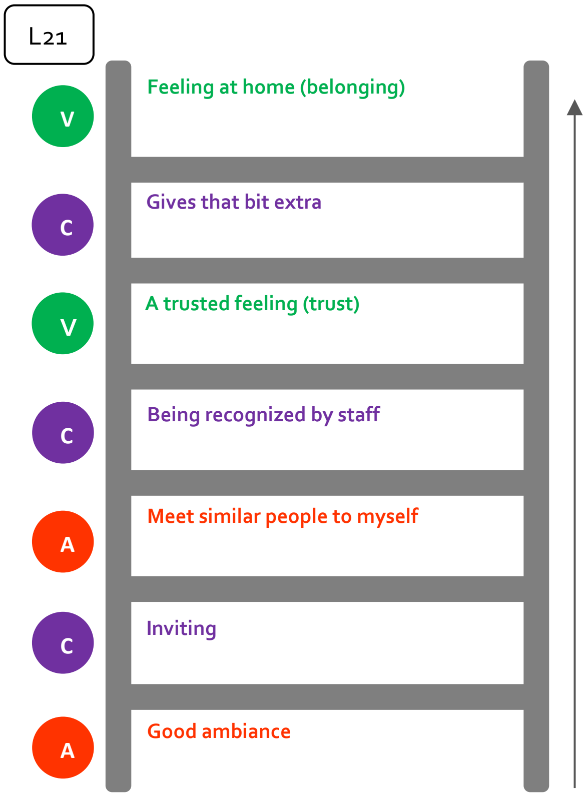


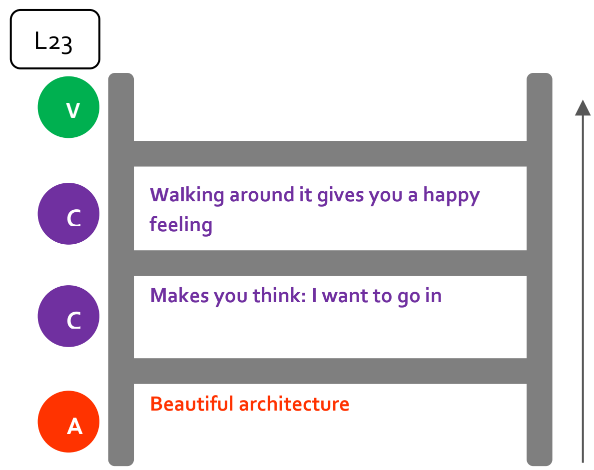
L20

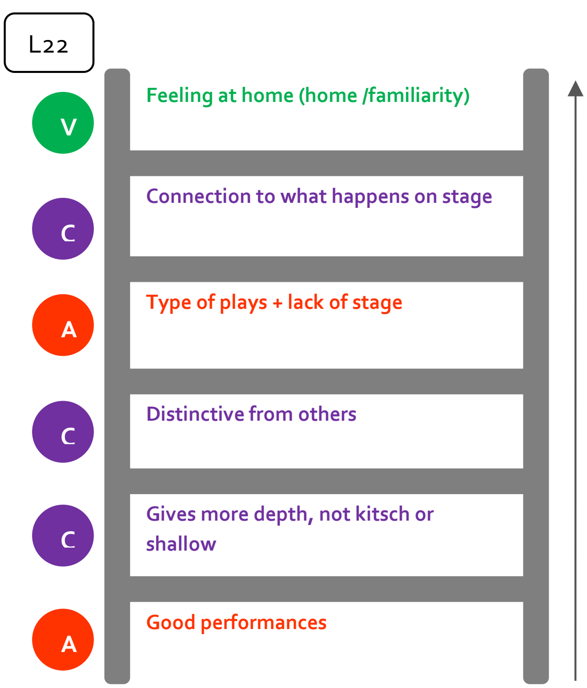


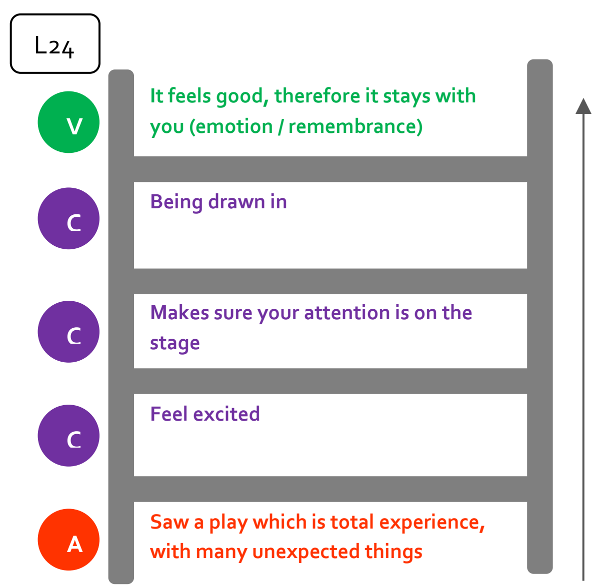
Ladders interview 5: Henk Griep

Male
71
Retired
Low education
Moderate income
Married with children + grandchildren
Cultural omnivore
Friend
8 - 10 visits per season









Ladders interview 6: Rein Swart

Male
60
Working
High education
+ average income
Married
Cultural omnivore
Not friend
+/- 6 visits per season

L25

- V — Feels trusted & familiar (trust / familiarity)
- V — After all these years, I feel connected to it (identification / belonging)
- A — There is a certain atmosphere
- C — Inviting to go in Being recognized by staff
- C — Being extra motivated to come besides program
- A — Special building: artistic & designed
- A — Has a modern look

L26

- C — Makes me visit less
- V — Then unable to win my heart & draw me in, which I like (emotion / escapism)
- C — Otherwise it is unconvincing
- C — Miss the unity
- C — Makes me laugh in a bad way
- A — Sometimes also disappointing performances

L27

- V — Down to earth & normal, just like us (identification)
- C — Shows that it is an unpretentious place
- A — Name is funny & nice

L28

- V — Laughing is a very good feeling, it is liberating (liberation / relaxation)
- C — Theatre I like, which makes me laugh
- C — Great to see: impressive, absurd & innovative
- A — Also good actors, they are calm and convincing
- C — I like the humour, it is so subtle
- A — Good Flemish program

L29

- V — It is too intense, I need a bit of distance to not get claustrophobic (control)
- C — Otherwise performance comes too close
- C — Able to book seats centrally
- C — Pushing in front of the door gave an uncomfortable feeling
- A — Good that seats are pre-determined now

Ladders interview 7: Johan de Winter

Male	67	Retired
Low education	Average income	Single
Cultural omnivore	Not friend	15+ visits per season

L30

- V — Like wallet-free evening, but would not fit here. Toneelschuur is 'normal', like me (identification)
- C — Makes it more accessible
- C — Bar is always open, so can just walk in without ticket check
- C — Different experience from City Theatre
- A — No wardrobe or intermission drink included

L31

- V — Easier to be touched by the play (emotion)
- C — The performances come closer
- C — This makes it more intimate
- A — There is no stage

L32

- V — Do not work anymore so need to spend time on something (anti - loneliness)
- V — Want to do something fun instead of being at home all day (recreation)
- C — When I go, I am really out for the day
- C — Able to fulfil cultural need in Toneelschuur
- A — Good program

L33

- V — Able to broaden my horizon by seeing things I am unable to see at home (novelty)
- C — A total experience
- A — Mix between traditional and modern
- A — Special performances

L34

- C — The building has its own charisma and it gives the experience that bit extra
- V — I like that it is very different from other theatres (distinction)
- C — Amazed every time that it is designed by a comic book animator
- A — Modern building

L35

- V — I like the weird stuff, it is different and it challenges you (distinction / novelty / to be challenged)
- C — Like a bit of spectacle, which I get here
- C — Able to see a bit of experiment even if that can mean disappointment
- C — Do have to see boring performances
- A — Able to find variation in performances (next to shows elsewhere)

Ladders interview 8: Letizia Baas

Female
55
Working
High education
High income
Married
Cultural omnivore
Friend
15 - 20 visits per season

L36

- V — It is sacred, nobody touched my art-moments (spiritual / necessity in life)
- V — It gives us total relaxation (relaxation)
- V — Otherwise work would drive me crazy (escapism)
- C — Very busy so need to be excited by art
- A — Able to fulfil cultural need in Toneelschuur

L37

- V — Admire professionalism (admiration)
- C — Often inventive: able to do much with little resources
- C — Being able to enjoy the language + style
- A — Good Flemish program

L38

- V — When that happens it stays with me, I remember it (remembrance)
- C — Being drawn in
- A — Good performances

L39

- V — Just like myself (belonging / identification)
- C — Audience is triggered by content
- C — More than just a good laugh
- A — Attracts smaller audiences
- A — Different performances than standard repertoire

L40

- V — This relaxes us (relaxation)
- V — Makes you forget about the outside world, even time (escapism)
- C — Need to use your brain differently: attention has to be on stage
- V — We recharge from our busy jobs (to recharge)
- C — When the door opens it feels like we are on a holiday
- A — Good performances

Ladders interview 9: Elizabeth Druijf

Female
62
Working
High education
High income
Married
Cultural omnivore
Friend
+/-6 visits per season

L41

- V — Makes me drawn in & feel something (emotion)
- C — Makes sure I am inside the play and not stand on the sideline to watch
- A — Able to be closer to the stage (small theatre)

L42

- V — It touches your soul (emotion)
- C — Theatre: mental emotion, is more intellectual
- C — Dance: physical emotion
- A — Offer dance and theatre which call on different emotion

L43

- V — Draws me in and touches me (escapism / emotion)
- C — Prevents my mind from drifting away from the stage
- C — Makes me do more than just watch
- A — Not so pretentious & old fashioned
- A — Nice, smaller performances

L44

- C — Makes you want to go again
- V — The last one is what you want: have recognition + something to think about (emotion / identification / challenged)
- C — Either fun to watch and that's it: no necessity, or it sticks with you and does something with you as a person
- A — Variation in program

L45

- V — It is more low profile, which makes us feel comfortable (accessibility / to feel comfortable)
- A — Also because of good ambiance
- C — Makes Toneelschuur a place to come back to, as opposed to city theatre which is fun only sometimes
- C — See other stuff sometimes, but only to broaden horizon
- A — Offer performances which interest me: dance and spoken theatre

Ladders interview 10: Frank Gijsen

Male
49
Working
High education
Moderate income
Single
Cultural omnivore
Not friend
+/- 8 visits per season

L46

- V — It stays with me, I take it home and act on it (remembrance)
- V — Want to be moved, feel something (emotion)
- V — Like when there are life-lessons which make me think (to be challenged)
- C — It impresses me
- A — Strong performances with good acting and theatrical form

L47

- C — Fun to go more often than just once a year
- V — More easy going, feel at ease here (to be comfortable)
- C — Always stay for a drink afterwards
- A — Non-elitist
- A — Beautiful foyer with good ambiance

L48

- V — Makes me appreciate good performances better, enables me to know what moves me (emotion)
- C — Contributes to my taste-development
- C — Makes me able to just try stuff
- A — Reasonably low price

L49

- V — Gives me the strength to keep going (to recharge)
- V — Being moved by what happened on stage, makes me forget the misery I see at work (escapism / emotion)
- C — I need to fill myself with emotion
- C — That is why I visit the theatre in general
- A — Often performances that move me

L50

- V — I identify more, the dance comes closer (identification)
- V — I like the realness of the dancers here (authenticity)
- V — I admire them (admiration)
- C — I get jealous of the bendiness and condition of the dancers, their bodies
- C — I remember it less than spoken theatre, but just have a passion for dance
- A — Offer small, modern dance

Ladders interview 11: Sonja Hoogerveen

Female
62
Retired
High education
High income
Married with child
Cultural omnivore
Friend
+/- 10 visits per season

L51

- V: Low threshold, more accessible than most modern theatres (accessibility / distinction)
- C: Cozy in a modern way
- C: Really distinctive from others
- C: When you approach, it makes you feel excited about evening
- A: Beautiful building

L52

- V: It inspires you, challenges you (inspiration / to be challenged)
- C: Want to feel like I am watching something special: more than TV or entertainment, more quality
- C: Higher level, more exciting
- A: Different program: smaller, more experimental

L53

- V: I feel comfortable, always have a nice evening out (to feel comfortable / recreation)
- C: There is a nice and normal atmosphere
- C: But not too exaggerated, like in De La Mar Theatre
- C: Like that I am always greeted when I walk in
- A: Friendly staff

L54

- V: Nice to forget everything and be in a different place for a moment (escapism)
- V: Makes me able to handle things (necessity in life)
- V: These type of performances make me recharge (to recharge)
- C: Makes you think, which is beautiful
- C: Provokes emotion, it moves you
- A: Well-acted performances

L55

- V: Makes me remember better (remembrance)
- V: I get goosebumps, it's emotional (emotion)
- V: Makes me think about my own life (identification)
- C: Crawls under your skin
- C: Special and impressive to see how so much can be done with so little
- A: Small, personal performances

ORIGINAL SUMMARY CONTENT CODE TABLE

Attributes (23)	**Consequences (35)**	**Values (29)**
1- Good performances (12)	24- Involvement with performance (7)	59- Distinction (me 1) (theatre 4)
2- Different programming (16)	25- Makes me think (8)	60- To be challenged (6)
3- Good dance performances (3)	26- See new things (7)	61- Identification (9)
4- Good Flemish program (2)	27- Evokes emotion (5)	62- Authenticity (me 1) (theatre 2)
5- Good acting (5)	28- See quality (2)	63- Connectedness (4)
6- TV actors (1)	29- See passion (2)	64- Escapism (8)
7- Sometimes disappointing (1)	30- Draws you in (3)	65- Belonging (5)
8- Variation in program (1)	31- Enjoy energy (1)	66- Home (4)
9- Sit close to (absent) stage (5)	32- To admire (1)	67- Inclusion (2)
10- Beautiful modern building (7)	33- Fulfill cultural need (5)	68- Sureness (1)
11- Seats are pre-determined (1)	34- Being surprised (1)	69- Inspiration (2)
12- Easy return policy (1)	35- See hits from Amsterdam (1)	70- Necessity in life (3)
13- Friendly staff (3)	36- Feel stimulated (2)	71- Emotion (12)
14- No wallet free evening (1)	37- Keep attention on stage (3)	72- Satisfaction
15- Not that expensive (3)	38- Meet frequent visitors (1)	73- To recharge (4)
16- Go with friends (2)	39- Audience triggered by content (1)	74- Philanthropy (1)
17- Different audience (2)	40- Have relaxed evening (1)	75- Accessibility (5)
18- Similar audience to self (1)	41- Can just have drink (2)	76- Familiarity (5)
19- Meeting place (2)	42- Enjoy good service (2)	77- Trust (3)
20 - Nice name (1)	43- More likely to book in advance (1)	78- Remembrance (4)
21- Total experience (2)	44- Can just try stuff (1)	79- Liberation (1)
22- Been there many years (1)	45- Taste development (1)	80- Relaxation (3)
23- Good ambiance (8)	46- Make me laugh (1)	81- Control (1)
	47- Make me laugh in bad way (1)	82- Recreation (3)
	48- Miss unity (1)	83- Anti-loneliness (1)
	49- Need to be convinced (1)	84- Novelty (2)
	50- Makes me visit less (1)	85- Spiritual (1)
	51- See celebrities / actors (3)	86- Admiration (2)
	52- Being recognized by staff (2)	87- To feel comfortable (3)
	53- Inviting to come in (4)	
	54- Be part of city (1)	
	55- Happy / excited feeling (2)	
	56- Intimate (1)	
	57- Feel at ease (2)	
	58- Amazed by design (1)	