Driving change through a project on managerial values: Concertation forums as an instrument for managing and innovating public action

Piloter le changement par un projet sur les valeurs managériales :
Contribution des espaces de concertation comme instrument
de gestion et d'innovation de l'action publique

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ABSTRACT

To modernize entrenched local municipalities requires changes that will affect the social, cultural, and institutional aspects of public management. Management by values in participative contexts can then provide opportunities, but these values can also be perceived as complex objects to use in managing change. It is thus necessary to understand how to make managerial values, as well as concertation, legitimate management goals (Godelier, 2009).

We present a longitudinal case study conducted in a municipality of more than 150,000 inhabitants that had not experienced political change for over a century to articulate how public managers can apply cooperation, change, and managerial values.

The methodological approach used is based on the theoretical framework of the actor-network theory (Akrich, Callon and Latour, 2006), which is most often used in management research to develop a comprehensive and retrospective approach to organizational change processes. We show how this analytical framework can be mobilized *ex ante* in the context of action research to consider the conditions of a change project anchored in managerial lvalues and based on the establishment of concertation.

Key-words

Values; Concertation; Change; Public action; Actor-network theory

RÉSUMÉ

La modernisation des collectivités locales constitue un enjeu de management public. Les différentes conduites de changement qui s'y opèrent peuvent impacter les identités sociales, culturelles et institutionnelles. Le management par les valeurs conduit dans des contextes participatifs peut constituer alors des opportunités, mais les valeurs peuvent également être perçues comme des objets complexes à gérer pour piloter le changement. Il s'agit ainsi de comprendre comment faire des valeurs managériales tout comme de la concertation un objet légitime de gestion (Godelier, 2009).

Nous proposons au travers d'une recherche conduite au sein d'une ville de plus de 150 000 habitants,

qui n'avait pas connu l'alternance politique depuis 102 ans, d'articuler concertation, changement et valeurs managériales. La démarche méthodologique mise en œuvre prend appui sur le cadre théorique de la sociologie de la traduction (Akrich, Callon et Latour, 2006) mobilisée le plus souvent dans les travaux gestionnaires *a posteriori* pour développer une approche compréhensive et rétrospective des processus de changement organisationnel. Nous montrons comment ce cadre d'analyse peut être mobilisé *ex ante* dans le cadre d'une recherche-intervention pour penser les conditions d'un projet de changement ancré sur les valeurs managériales et prenant appui sur la mise en place d'espaces de concertation.

Mots-clés

Valeurs ; Concertation ; Changement ; Action publique ; Sociologie de la traduction

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, numerous reforms have reshaped the architecture of French institutions at a sustained pace. Territorial administration is being led to develop a re-territorialization of spaces for public action with new principles of governance and coordination with actors guiding this action and performance. For Cappelletti and Khenniche (2017, p.37), the criteria for evaluating require "*a certain horizontality of management processes allowing the co-construction and co-production of the implementation of public policies*". It requires an ability of municipal managers to incorporate feedback from actors, users, and beneficiaries on new forms (e.g., islands, arenas) of projects and actions using, for example, design thinking approaches (Péché, Mieyeville and Gaultier, 2016). This style of public communication is more collaborative and participatory, more learning than expert, therefore constituting opportunities to construct new tools capable of supporting different points of view and assessing wider interest. Along this line, Cappelletti and Khenniche (2017, p.24) emphasize that "*the socio-economic approach to public management also shows that a local authority has considerable reserves of efficiency that can be converted into performance through structured participatory approaches*". The mobilization of these levers invites territorial managers to adopt a managerial stance that requires the assimilation of new markers.

It then seems interesting to study how is the construction of participatory process carried out in a context of organizational transformation by questioning its role in the development of strategic resources to be able to face the challenges of change.

Thus, we propose to show how a local authority of 5000 agents, which had not experienced political change for 102 years, was able to take hold of this new style of public management and operationalize it using a managerial values approach through a study conducted over 12 months.

After a synthesis of the literature on management by values, we present the context and the emergence of the municipal executive's request. We describe the methodological framework used in this project, from the construction of an action training course for 80 facilitators to the architecture of concertation implemented with a population of 300 managers in 23 departments. We then show how the analytical contribution of Actor-Network Theory, coupled with the engineering of the concertation spaces, made it possible to provide a heuristic framework for the approach. We also underline how the restitution of data using textometric software was a valuable resource to support the 23 directions in the construction of the action plans. Finally, we put into perspective the results of this approach at the institutional level, in its capacity to build the outlines of a culture of

concertation, and at the project office level, by developing learning through its integration into the project life cycle.

Our article offers several theoretical and managerial contributions. We show how the theoretical framework of Actor Network Theory (Akrich, Callon and Latour, 2006) can be mobilized *ex ante* in a research intervention framework to consider the conditions of a change project anchored in managerial values. However, in the majority of managerial work, Actor Network Theory is most often mobilized *a posteriori* to develop a comprehensive and retrospective approach to organizational change processes. Our research is one of the rare empirical works in management to highlight the contributions of the implementation of concertation spaces to the management and support of change in the context of local authorities. Finally, we suggest a number of avenues for thinking about the engineering and management of these concertation spaces by linking them to the different phases of the Actor Network Theory model.

1. CONCERTATION, A MANAGEMENT TOOL BASED ON VALUES

Management by values breaks with traditional management by rules and offers instead a source of cohesion, participation, and structuring of behavior. Creating concertation spaces seems to facilitate this approach because it leads to a co-construction of meaning and accompanies organizational change.

1.1. Management by values, an alternative to management by rules

Local authorities today are facing profound changes, marked by the advent of a reformist stance of modernization in public management (Kitiyi Kapou, 2015). These changes are characterized in particular by the movement from a classic bureaucratic management style to a participatory and transversal management style.

Although value is a concept that is highly thought of in multiple disciplines, it is not yet the subject of recognized and proven conceptual stability. Indeed, according to Bergery (2011, p.45), it is a "*fuzzy and fragmented*" notion that refers to a "*conceptual and methodological deficiency*". Nevertheless, numerous organizations – private and public – seek to display their values and share them with all members as a source of cohesion and mobilization, but above all as a collective commitment to give meaning to action. It therefore becomes necessary to question management by rules, which was built on the Taylorian models of work, but whose limits and negative consequences are nowadays in the news (demotivation, psychosocial risks, burnout, etc.). Values can therefore be seen as "*collective preferences that appear in an institutional context and participate in its regulation*", according to Boudon and Bourricaud (1983, p.664). These collective preferences are seen in the general characteristics of values, which may reflect the expression of a person (personal values) or a group or a society (social values), be more or less global, and are executed through a means (instrumental values) or ends (terminal values).

Values are structuring behaviors because they are relative and can vary from one person or entity to another (Schwartz, 2006). Thus, value-based management is presented as the art of creating human dynamics through developing a collective power that goes beyond the sum of individual capacities (Nifle, 2004). It can be linked to a change management project, according to Pesqueux (2007), in that the highlighted values constitute at the same time (Pesqueux, 2007 cited by Bergery, 2011) a system of appreciation and judgment, a truth that serves as a reference, a response to an expectation (real or supposed), a substitute or a complement to management by rules, a project to "*positivize*" the expression of the organization's aspirations beyond economic values, and a project to construct the meaning of the actions of each individual in the organization.

However, the challenges of management by values can create problems of appropriation, which is "*an interpretative process of negotiation and construction of meaning within which the actors question, elaborate and reinvent the models of collective action*" (Grimand 2006, p.17). Actor Network Theory (Akrich, Callon and Latour, 2006) proposes a framework for

the systemic analysis of appropriation by actors. Relationships within the collective are established through a translation operation in which actors act as spokespersons, that is, they translate the will of the actors while trying to enlist new actors. Thus, translation is a process that includes several stages: problematization, which is a collective identification of a situation likely to bring actors together; interessement, which aims to mobilize actors; enrollment, which integrates actors into the process; and mobilization of allies, which strives to create irreversibility of the change. The process cycle is punctuated by controversies that enable actors to translate their positions and thus co-construct meaning.

Mobilizing a corporate culture is a way of embedding long-term values in management by institutionalizing the members' ways of doing things and thinking. "*But social sciences also show that, contrary to the main conclusions that management draws from the notion of culture for action, there is no determinism between culture and action*" (Godelier, 2009, p.20). Indeed, each member has room to maneuver, even if the collective action seems coherent. It is therefore necessary to regulate the different interpretations by returning to the fundamentals of culture. Johnson and Scholes (2002), through their analysis of the cultural fabric, make corporate culture one of the main levers in any change project that can be a major source of inertia. They show that regulation by culture as an appropriation of strategy by the social body presupposes simultaneous work on the symbolic components of culture (myths, rituals and routines, symbols, etc.) and also its managerial components (impact of culture on control systems, internal organization, balance of power, etc.). Thus values are the stakes of any change project and are made up of the company's prior projects and practices, which in turn contribute to the general project of the organization. The meaning must therefore be translated into a concrete project and cannot be born only from an "*authoritarian*" act of management.

For Schein (2004), organizational culture, which refers to values, is inseparable from the exercise of the leadership function. Leadership thus requires new roles for managers, no longer assimilated into the operating belt of a bureaucratic apparatus, to become leaders who bring managerial innovation (Crozet and Desmarais, 2005).

1.2. Concertation spaces, a tool for supporting change

In this perspective, the setting up of concertation spaces led by leaders is likely to reconcile the long-established dimension of values with the essentially moving dimension of change. Management by values does indeed lead to participative contexts, but values can also be perceived as complex objects to be managed in order to steer change. It is thus a question of understanding how to make managerial values a legitimate object of management (Godelier, 2009). Concertation spaces could then represent a response in terms of capacities for action within the framework of change projects. According to Carassus *et al.* (2014, p.84), "*the nature of the systems and processes that frame and support a managerial innovation would determine its capacity to be adopted and implemented*", which could explain the key role played by concertation spaces.

For Place (2000), concertation refers to a "*kaleidoscope of meanings and representations*". Concertation, in its broadest sense, can therefore be defined as an emerging and dynamic process through which various actors with a different vision of a problem can constructively explore their differences and seek a solution that goes beyond their own limited vision (Gray, 1989). It therefore aims to move the initiatives of various actors to converge toward the same general (concerted) goal of orienting development, solving a problem, or carrying out a project (Belley and Divay, 2007).

Nevertheless, the concept of concertation in the scientific literature covers different meanings including mediation, negotiation, facilitation, and territorial dialogue (Barret 2003; Toussaint, Vareilles and Zimmermann, 2004). Quebecers frequently associate concertation with a negotiation process conducted by groups with a divergent interest but whose cooperation is essential to the project and where the actors do not exercise their power of confiscation (Rolland and Tremblay 1996, p.10). Concertation is therefore different from negotiation because it does not necessarily aim to reach a decision by mutual agreement. Furthermore, concertation aims to build common results essential for the future, which distinguishes concertation from consultation, information, or negotiation, because it presupposes a collective construction of objects that will become common to the

participants and will form the basis on which the initiatives and representations produced by concertation can be anchored. From this point of view, the network can be a resource for the development of concertation, as Beuret (2006) has shown through the theoretical framework of Actor Network Theory. This network can, however, take various forms: it can be limited to informal networking among individuals (Gazzoli and Sauermann, 2012) or it can lead to the development of a formal partnership. Finally, concertation must also be distinguished from consultation, which aims to build consensus and develop joint actions, but which does not integrate the actors in a co-construction process; therefore, the initiator of the process is not bound by the discussions, but rather retains the opportunity to make decisions alone (Ouellet, 1983; Rolland and Tremblay, 1996).

According Regini (1985), three components are necessary to define the fundamentals of concertation. First, concertation is a process that aims to harmonize the players around an object that involves a variety of issues. Second, it presupposes the participation of various stakeholders, internal and external, and the involvement, direct or otherwise, of public authorities. Finally, concertation is a decision-making process with a certain power of execution. Concertation, whether it is carried out between public services or with civil society actors and citizens, cannot be improvised; it is a process that is organized and planned on the basis of a specific demand (Schneider 1987). Its success factors thus seem to be conditioned by a series of planned stages (Fortier 2002).

In a context of public participation, concertation invites the preparation for and support of a decision but not the decision-making process. Beuret (2006) shows that concertation is based on a horizontal dialogue among the participants in a configuration of inclusion and empowerment, whose objective is the collective construction of visions, objectives, and common projects, with a view to acting or deciding together. Concertation thus requires the establishment of a favorable climate throughout the process with opportunities for dialogue among the parties involved. Certain characteristics seem to form the basis for the development of concertation in the context of social practices: the freedom to express oneself and to take initiatives, a climate of openness, competence of the partners, and coherence between objectives

and activities (Lebeau, Vermette and Viens, 1998). Nevertheless, a paradox is sometimes noted between a "*participationist ideology*" of a social myth made sacred by national governance (Bratosin, 2011) and the dynamics of implementation, which often translate to the birth of a decision made by compromise. For Pretty (1995), this contradiction can be explained by the sociologically naïve representation of the municipality on which participatory approaches are based, which erases the rough edges of local actions that often cover power issues and the logic of orthogonal means.

The history of project management and imposed change have shown their limits when they are not associated with a dynamic of the "*value of work*" and the "*recognition of the* [person] *at work*" (Honneth, 2000, 2006). In this configuration, the management of projects represents opportunities for change because they lead the actors to reconfigure their interactions and thus allow new experiences of functioning, organization, and governance. Fergelot (2015) specifies that concertation, which is a method made up of iterations, enables agents to mature projects and to firmly root the work of change.

Concertation is therefore rooted in an organizational and human context and is understood as a process that participates in organizational change. It can take different forms and involve different stakeholders (citizens, public actors, consumers, etc.). It can take on different meanings and is subject to many paradoxes. Thus, concertation is highly contextualized and is part of a system of organizational and individual values. In this case, in a context of public innovation, managerial concertation is part of a process in which concertation will itself become a management tool for managerial stakeholders. Thus, for our research, we will use the following definition for managerial concertation: a management approach that can be used to support change management and/or project management. It aims to shed light on decision-making processes by making explicit and visible the points of convergence but also the tensions and contradictions in the construction of a project. Ultimately, the implementation of managerial concertation is based on the establishment of a relationship of trust that facilitates the collective appropriation of the project by the various stakeholders involved.

1.3. The actor-network theory, an analytical framework supporting the action research

We use the actor-network theory – ANT (Akrich, Callon and Latour, 2006) – as a theoretical basis for thinking about the conditions of a change project anchored in managerial values and based on the establishment of concertation spaces. Indeed, ANT highlights the reasons for the success or failure of any managerial innovation and can be described as a "*quasi management tool and project management aid*" (Amblard *et al.*, 1996, p.130). ANT has been used by several management science researchers (e.g., Leca *et al.*, 2006; Dervaux *et al.*, 2011) to describe the emergence and implementation of projects. The first reason for using this framework is that it enables us to identify the conditions for setting up a concertation space. Indeed, ANT is above all an analytical framework "*useful for the a posteriori analysis of an innovation process: attention is then focused retrospectively on the various actions that led to the success or failure of this process*" (Flichy 1995 quoted by Dervaux *et al.*, 2011, p.5). Thus, this theoretical framework seems to provide clarity about the conditions for implementing concertation spaces:

- ANT makes it possible to understand the process by which actors get mobilized around a project or a common enterprise, regardless of the potentially divergent interests that drive them. It postulates that all innovation dynamics involve an active process of mobilizing allies within sociotechnical networks that link tools, discourses, and institutions. Translation is the process by which heterogeneous actions and issues are linked in order to reinforce the network and stabilize it. By translation, we mean "*the set of negotiations, intrigues, acts of persuasion, calculations and violence by which one actor or force is given the authority to speak or act on behalf of another actor or force*" (Akrich, Callon and Latour, p.12-13). The appointment of spokespersons, responsible for promoting the project but also for convincing the actors of the social group they represent, is also an integral part of the translation process. Like the translator, the spokespersons must satisfy a criterion of legitimacy.

- ANT is frequently used to study change and innovation projects and to explain how the controversies that mark this process can be overcome. Capable of explaining failure and success trajectories, it also appears to be consistent with a vision of change as a continuous process, deliberate and emergent, that deals with professional identities and power issues. It is congruent with a participatory ideal and a desire for collective ownership of the change project.

- Through the concept of "*actants*" (which can be both human and non-human), ANT pays balanced attention to the actors and tools in the conduct of collective action. It thus acknowledges that managerial artefacts play an important role in mediating and structuring social relationships.

As Dervaux *et al.* (2011) point out, ANT involves effectively articulating innovation, the context of its implementation, and the various uses made by actors. It takes into account the way the managerial innovation is appropriated by actors, particularly through the phases of enrollment and mobilization.

The translation process is structured on several generic phases, the salient features of which are summarized here:

- *Problematization* usually starts with a controversy involving stakeholders with different representations of the situation at hand and with issues that at first sight appear to be conflicting. The starting point of any change project is to try to translate the stakeholders' issues into a common objective or problem. Problematization is thus a powerful vector for constructing meaning on which relations among stakeholders are built. It usually involves a prior contextualization phase that consists of defining the situation, the salient features of the external environment, the actors concerned and their stakes, their potential gains and losses, what unites them and what separates them, and the games of influence and alliances that link them. Thus, problematization is an effort to anticipate resistance to change in order to consider the subsequent phases of interessement and enrollment. The problematization is the backdrop against which the actions linked to the project are carried out; it can evolve throughout the process.

- *Interessement* (from the Latin inter/esse: "*to place oneself between/to interpose*") refers to the deployment of discourses, objects, tools, and managerial artifacts (reference frameworks, steering indicators, meetings and spaces for sharing good practices, etc.) intended to attach the actors to the network. It covers the actions by which an entity strives to define and stabilize the identity of actors in line with the initial problematization. The interessement phase thus contributes to reinforcing the links and interactions between actors, just as it signals the appropriation of management tools and systems at the heart of the sociotechnical network (Akrich *et al.*, 1988).

- *Enrollment* consists of mobilizing all the stakeholders in the management of the process. It is therefore a matter of prescribing to the actors in the network what they must do to be consistent with the translation of their interests. In this context, the challenge is less to motivate the actors than to encourage them to act by projecting themselves into a role, which undoubtedly led Latour (2006) to analyze interest as "*a successful enrolment*". The appointment of a translator, responsible for translating the issues and interests of some into the perspective of others, is likely to facilitate the enrollment process. However, it is important to ensure that the translator is seen as legitimate and does not privilege the interests of one stakeholder to the exclusion of others.

- *Mobilization* is the process by which an increasing number of allies and spokespeople join the network in order to expand and consolidate it. Mobilization aims to create a form of irreversibility, so that innovation is no longer questioned and the project is now seen as part of organizational routines.

Several criticisms have been made about ANT. On the one hand, Callon and Latour (2006) place human and non-human actors (artefact, instruments, etc., according to the principle of symmetry) on the same level. However, for Boussard *et al.* (2004), only humans make the decision to design and mobilize—or not—the elements inherent in the non-human aspects for political purposes. Non-human actors are likely to participate only in the enrollment process if humans decide to do so. However, for several authors (e.g., Donnay and Koos, 2005), ANT tends to overlook relations and power games in the organization. For example, spokespersons can be led to exert forms of influence on other actors in order to enroll them. Finally, it can be noted that Modell *et al.* (2017) found that Actor Network Theory focuses mainly on the dynamics of change. Compared to traditional theories (agency and institutional theory), it seems less suitable for understanding more stable institutional contexts or more routine situations.

2. CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

This research stemmed from a request by the local authority, which led to the development of a method to evaluate managerial concertation.

2.1. An expectation of change emerging from the municipality

The 2014 municipal elections in Reziville led to a change in majority that had not occurred for 102 years. This event, described as "*historic*", was accompanied by fears and anxieties of the entire management team, producing instability in the organizational structure and uncertainty as to the quality of managerial relations (Ayache and Laroche, 2010). Concurrently, the new law had an impact on territorial organization. This context of change in municipal governance seems to have had an effect on professional identities that had been constructed and rooted in communal values within the historical trajectories specific to each municipal service. The challenge for departmental authorities was to create a culture of participative management within the local authority by training and supporting managers.

The CONCERTO'S Project[1] mobilized a mixed research design—quantitative and qualitative—and was conceived at the end of 2015 with the support of a research team. The aim was to understand the

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[1] CONCERTO's is an acronym for "*Concertation Organisation Santé*".

functioning of managerial concertation in terms of change and to study the capacity of concertation spaces to produce sensemaking among agents.

As an extension of this project, the general manager wished to organize a seminar for managers in December 2016, which brought together 180 top managers whose strategic intention was to build a cohesive culture that "*transcends negative representations of change and brings collective action towards the target of change*" (Soparnot, 2009, p.113). According to Bellinger (2016), "*all democratic functioning relies on the management of the values in the name of which decisions are made*". It is thus a question of giving meaning to values by mobilizing a managerial tool that comes under the democratic ideal of concertation. The local authority chose Johnson and Scholes's (2002) model of analysis of cultural web in order to articulate change and concertation among the different components participating in the institutional culture.

Fifteen workshops were set up with a facilitator responsible for introducing eight groups of questions relating to all petals of the sociological daisy, each of which was linked to a central object, that is, concertation (Appendix 1).

Each workshop leader then reported back to the group on these answers to see a common object emerge: "*We would like to create a methodological tool to identify the opportunity for concertation with other services. For example, we thought of a management charter to harmonize managerial values (priorities, frame of reference). This management charter could seek to harmonize points of view, references, and representations within a system of values that is common to all of us, which is the result of our respective histories*" (Executive).

2.2. Methodology

In most management studies, ANT appears as an analytical framework mobilized a posteriori to develop a comprehensive and retrospective approach to the processes of organizational change. From this point of view, the originality of our research lies in the fact that we mobilized ANT within the framework of an action research and transformation project aimed at

developing managerial concertation in a local authority. This project reflected the strategic intention of local politicians to modernize the municipal administration on both dimensions (internal and external) of public performance (Carassus *et al.*, 2011).

In accordance with the principles of action research, our approach went beyond mere observation and co-constructs psychological and technical tools to support the concertation process with the actors (David, 2012). This research mobilized an abductive mode of reasoning and was part of the collaborative research stream with a team of four researchers (Van de Ven and Johnson, 2006). The material was collected through multiple iterations constituting research loops, which helped to shed light on the case (Dumez, 2013).

The general management of the municipality wished to produce this tool through managerial concertation. This methodology aimed to explore the understanding of the effects of a project on managerial values by studying its evolution through a concertation architecture across the entire management chain (N = 320). To carry out this project, six stages were defined over a period of 12 months (see Table 1).

3. RESULTS

The results indicate an operationalization process of the concertation spaces that tended to become institutionalized in the municipality.

3.1. Successful problematization

The co-construction work that took place in January within the concertation spaces helped to clarify the concerns of the stakeholders within CODIR (board of directors) and also helped to resolve the controversies surrounding the meaning and role of managerial values. The stabilization of points of view was based on an agreement on the principles that each managerial value should respect:

- To be clearly formulated and appropriable for the agents of the Reziville municipality and externally.

January-March 2017	The local municipality, while taking note of the concerns expressed at the December 2016 meeting, asked the research team to redefine the scope of the values by refocusing on managerial values (hence the elimination of notions such as "management of the common good" or "healthy citizen city," which were deemed to be out of step with the strategy of the general manager). It was then envisaged to set up a strategic concertation space within the executive committee to co-construct managerial values involving the 23 directors, four deputy general directors, and the general manager of services. Six working sessions were planned over two months. The first two sessions were devoted to positioning the challenges of the approach against managerial values. The third and fourth sessions encompassed a brainstorming session designed to bring out and articulate the values. The fifth session was intended to validate the elements identified from the brainstorming, and the sixth session explored the deployment of the approach within the departments (through the setting up of tactical and operational concertation spaces).
March-April 2017	The research team built a methodological guide to managerial concertation and a systematic exploration grid inspired by the work of Cossette (2004). The aim was to define the related managerial practices and actions for each value identified (Appendix 2). This approach was reminiscent of that of Verstraete (1997), which is based on non-directiveness and the regulation of digressions, thus allowing the creation of a climate of trust. The methodological guide defines a framework enabling the stakeholders to take ownership of the concertation process, which is broken down into five stages: identifying the project's challenges, defining the object of concertation (translating values), clarifying points of view, contractualizing (making the representations of stakeholders converge around the object), and deciding. A half-day action training course was organized to equip 80 middle and senior managers, representative of each department and of the local authority. Among these 80 managers, 23 were designated as ambassadors, responsible for leading operational concertation spaces about the approach with the local managers in each department. A scoping meeting between the CEO of each division and the division's ambassadors preceded the launch of the concertation spaces. In order to prevent any difficulties, a group was set up to provide operational support for the teams if they so desired. This group, made up of three middle managers and two senior managers, was trained in the managerial concertation method as well as in a facilitation method based on the Bales grids (Gérard, D'Hont and Oboeuf, 2013).
July-October 2017	This period marked the opening of a tactical concertation space for the implementation of action plans, which were intended to bring together all the management executives as well as the management ambassador (whose role was to define the actions to be led by each department for each value by mobilizing the actors in a common dynamic). Each action plan had to then be communicated to the staff members by opening up an operational concertation area made up of non-managerial employees in each department.
August-November 2017 **Design of the managerial charter**	A working group composed of the five participants of the support group was set up to synthesize the content of the grids produced by the departments into a charter representative of managerial practices and actions. The team of researchers supported the co-construction of the approach in two phases: (1) during the processing and analysis of the data using textometric software (which allowed the group to appropriate the results) and (2) during the construction of the design of the charter of managerial values and the co-development of the prototype.

Table 1 – The stages of the process

September-October 2017 Design of the general action plan	All of the action plans produced by each department were analyzed within a strategic space that brought together members of the general management. The data were analyzed using textometric software similar to that used to draft the charter of managerial values. The content of the action plans was coded in order to identify general trends in the actions to be taken by the general management in terms of strategic steering.
Restitution	The programming of the reporting periods was planned for 6 months and 12 months from the launch of the project. The delivery of solutions was to be carried out during the management seminars.

- To be applicable to all local authority employees without discrimination.
- Be able to be broken down into observable manifestations: professional practices, behaviors, tools, symbols, and so on.
- Likely to be assessed.
- Could be supported by collaborative methods.
- Be sustainable and not linked to cyclical events.

Based on these principles, the two brainstorming sessions led by a researcher and a doctoral student resulted in the emergence of seven managerial values: innovation, benevolence, loyalty, responsibility, cohesion, trust, and equity.

The delineation of the action plans into the different directions, following the example of police management, underlined the importance of the initial problematization phase. In a context of doubling the number of police officers and the professionalization of the municipal police required since 2014, tensions emerged, and the heads of the brigades appeared to be particularly vulnerable. The lack of cohesion in the teams, the absence of uniformity of the intervention teams, and a lack of clear definition of the tasks, as well as a high turnover, were the main symptoms of this loss of meaning. The problematization phase seized the opportunity to reflect on managerial values and question the foundations of municipal action in terms of security, particularly regarding the values of cohesion and trust. This common questioning quickly led to the definition of structuring principles: (1) the primacy of the general interest and respect for the hierarchical pyramid, (2) the definition of the contours of the service, (3) the repositioning of the director and senior and middle management, (4) the introduction of new standards of behavior for staff and managers (the exemplarity of management and supervision, the ability of managers to manage their emotions, taking responsibility for their decisions, and ensuring that the methods of intervention on missions complied with instructions, etc.).

3.2. Action training to support the interessement phase

The construction and deployment by the team of researchers of an action training program for managers in the concertation method appeared to be a driving force in the interessement process for these same managers, helping them to understand "*the environment of change and the managerial practices to be adopted for the city, based on the list of established values*". Following this training, 23 ambassadors were appointed to set up and run a concertation space in each department. At this stage, the values validated in the CODIR were not perceived as diverging from the concerns of middle management and/or the representation of their role. From May to the end of June, the spaces were run by reproducing the methodology learned from all 320 managers.

The concertation spaces seemed to have played a decisive role here by facilitating the process of constructing meaning, as the DGA (deputy director general) observed: "*I was rather reserved at the beginning of the process, and the fact of working with this method of structuring and facilitating tools made it possible to give a lot of meaning to the executives and to put into perspective some of our actions that daily life had made us lose sight of*".

The organization of the spaces generally involved two phases: (1) a time to explain the project in terms of managerial values and the stakes for management and (2) a time for production. The whole process resulted in the production of canvases formalizing the values of each department and presented at the June session for managers (Appendix 2). On this occasion, each ambassador was able to present his or her efforts to the other departments and share them by going beyond the operating silos.

3.3. A bottom-up logic to support enrollment strategies

In the end, 23 action plans were produced. Through the prism of the experience of a department—the Communal Centre for Social Action (CCAS)—we proposed showing how the adoption of a bottom-up approach supported the recruitment strategies by giving the actors a legitimate place in the process. The formalization of values and their operational translation were consolidated by testing them in the field. The value of innovation had thus been extended through several operational actions: a discovery report on the functioning of the structure written by the newcomers, the setting up of a feedback committee, and the sharing of operational practices with other structures. The approach also benefited from the quality of the link between the strategic and operational levels. The CCAS thus wished to lead its project by establishing managerial values as the cardinal point of its collective action. Six commitees (innovation, sharing and exchanges, service projects, human resources, information systems, and meeting planning) were set up. Overall, the players took ownership of the approach, assimilating it as much into the deployment of a new organizational culture as to the production of content and support tools. The concertation spaces thus appeared to be a space where the prescribed rules could be reappropriated, and frameworks of thought could be tested. "*It is by freeing constructive speech in a space where one can express oneself and admit criticism*", stressed the spokesperson.

The concertation spaces were also the privileged place for the articulation between the strategic and the operational aspects. It appeared to be a mixed managerial innovation oriented toward knowledge and relations. Not only did it give content to the approach on managerial values but also it contributed to structuring relations between players: "*In these concertation spaces, it is a question of thinking about the organization before the procedure, thinking about the meaning of terminology, by questioning the function and meaning of the expert, his* [or her] *place, the nature of the network, the correspondent and* [the messages]. *The strategic project takes on its meaning in a project mode where it is a question of mapping the program by carrying out a public diagnosis to build our indicators*".

Finally, the enrollment strategies benefited from numerous managerial devices that contributed to reducing complexity and making them more easily accessible, but which also demonstrated the progress of change and its inclusion in organizational routines. Within the police directorate, the approach to managerial values had thus been based on the introduction of a daily management meeting with department manager, team manager, heads of brigades, and/or officers, in addition to the organization of bimonthly meetings involving the director, management, and officers (questions from officers, discussion of objectives and results, news, and service projects) and the introduction of a support mechanism for supervisory staff in difficulty.

3.4. Mobilization of allies and institutionalization of the project

Perhaps the most emblematic phase of this institutionalization process was the desire expressed by the project office to work toward incrementing values into the project life cycle. To this end, preparatory meetings were held from February to March 2018 between the spokesperson (doctoral student) and the head of the project office to define the working methodology. Three collective interviews were conducted with the project managers who led the three pilot community projects (management of working time, dematerialization of the mail chain, modification of the operation of the funeral home). The aim was to identify the associated deliverables and the values likely to support each phase of each project. Based on these data, the managerial charter group, in cooperation with the project office managers, was able to compile a deliverable: the management by project user guide.

Managerial practices associated with the accountability criterion

- The project leader clearly stated the objectives of the project to his superior.

- He made only realistic commitments and strove to respect them.

- He built a realistic budget.

- The project manager used all the managerial tools to explain the involvement of his staff in the value analysis.

- He reported on the work carried out in the pre-project sheet to his superior and initiated development perspectives.

- He encouraged exploratory exchanges with his colleagues to create, remind, or re-evaluate responsibilities during the analysis.

Table 2 – The elaboration phases of the request

By way of illustration, Table 2 explains the responsible managerial practices used during the project's initial phase.

3.5. Drawing up the managerial charter and progress report

The contents of the 23 collected canvases were processed in IRAMUTEQ (see Appendix 3). To describe it, at the first reading, we were able to establish a link with classes of managerial practices and typologies of subcultures (digital, quality, sports, administrative, legal) that discriminated against other forms in the community. Some types of directive and persuasive management, which were less participative and subsidiary (Merceron 2016), could also be identified, signifying in our opinion the presence of the imprint of a bureaucratic culture with its modes of rationalization.

However, the analyses of similarities enabled the group to go further by making it possible to measure the strength of the link between the lexical forms, particularly in terms of the intensity and meaning of the link. This approach enabled putting into perspective the data collected, particularly the acts or practices, by organizing them. This way of working made it possible to facilitate discussion by overcoming certain divisions between subcultures or different forms of management. The group's players were thus able to find solutions to identity blockages in the role of an executive or a manager. The spokesperson (doctoral

student) facilitated the discussion on postural elements relating to subsidiarity or control: "*I enjoyed working in this way with a method that helped us to better understand the specifics in order to trace a path towards a general trend*" (group member, director).

The eight working sessions culminated in the delivery of the charter in December after design work was carried out in collaboration with a private service provider for the graphic formalization. A booklet composed of the values and the charter was presented to CODIR and the staff during the mayor's greetings ceremony in January. It was planned for the next three sessions to work on the values groups and monitor their follow-up. It should be noted that following the ceremony, a phase of extension of the charter occurred by integrating it into the cycle of the project office.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As a field of research that is still emerging, consultation can be found at the heart of public authority concerns, which have made it a pillar in their policy for developing social relations. Using this perspective, this article contributes to a better understanding of the role of concertation in a configuration of change and enables us to observe the first effects of this experiment carried out in a city.

By proposing to understand consultation as a process of translation, our research proposed an innovative use of Actor Network Theory, which was deliberately mobilized in the framework of a research intervention, even though it is most often used in the framework of ex-post rationalizations. If concertation is likely to play a role in each phase of the translation process, it seems to us that it plays a particularly critical role during the interest and enrollment phases, thus enabling the actors to reflect on their own managerial posture and to project themselves more easily into the change in progress. Finally, our research, through the notion of concertation spaces, extends and completes the management work on discussion spaces (Detchessahar, 2011). When discussion spaces remain focused on the work and its contradictions, concertation spaces integrate a strategic dimension. This does not exclude a discussion on the day-to-day work, but offers an opportunity to constantly strive to link the strategic to the operational (translation of strategic objectives into operational processes) and also the operational to the strategic (construction and updating of the strategy through the daily practices of the actors, capitalizing on local initiatives).

The success of the approach can be underlined, in particular, because the organizational values were translated into action plans at Communal Centre for Social Action, on the one hand, and integrated into the project office, on the other hand.

The processing of the textual data from the action plans in IRAMUTEQ (see Appendix 3) shows that the translation process became effective as soon as the approach took root in daily practices and organizational routines (Class 3: Managerial Translation).

The problematization focused on the search for a consensus on the criteria for defining values. Class 4 (Collective Dynamics) clearly shows the challenge of this collective reflection, which aimed to go beyond the logic of functional silos to promote transversality and networked approaches. The training action was an incentive system and the adoption of a bottom-up logic supported the enrollment strategies. Class 5 (Participatory Management) emphasized the effectiveness of the strategies of participation and enrollment, with the concertation on managerial values encouraging the questioning by managers of their posture in the context of project management. The mobilization of allies was achieved through action plans that involved middle managers more widely. Finally, we can note the creation of a form of irreversibility (coupled with the strategy).

We can identify several conditions that contributed to the success of this approach:

First, the support of the mayor and the director general of services was a necessary condition for the success of the approach, but not sufficient by itself. Thus, the mayor was a stakeholder in the process by reminding everyone at each meeting that he encouraged participative management and concertation as the basis for all projects and achievements. Thus, there must be a concertation process upstream of each part to improve the protection of agents during the presentation of CHSCT and CT files. Class 1 from IRAMUTEQ (Empowerment) shows from this point of view the necessity of an enabling environment to support the concertation process.

Second, if the temporal scheduling of the process, carried out at a sustained and regular pace, presented the risk of exhausting the actors, it also enabled them to get involved in a process whose results were visible within a reasonable time frame. The consultation process made it possible to reconcile different time frames, that is, the rapidity of projects and the longer time frame of changes in values—organizational culture being by nature a stable element in an organization.

It should be added that the setting up of a steering committee and a methodological framework was an element of the success of the approach *via* the cognitive maps and the process of enlisting the actors (Akrich,

Callon and Latour, 2006). The cognitive maps played the role of a *"boundary object"* (Star and Griesemer, 1989), enabling actors to materialize the concertation process to test their respective knowledge and the nature of the relationships that bound them.

These success factors confirm the work of Favoreu *et al.* (2015) in their study of the application of the LOLF to local authorities, but also of other researchers who have looked at the organizational success factors of a local performance approach (Paquin and Tremblay, 1997; Guillaume *et al.*, 2002).

Finally, we can hypothesize that the organizational culture had already evolved thanks to the modernization processes carried out in this municipality in recent years. However, the concertation process carried out in the city may raise a paradox in that the bureaucratic model, which is prevalent within it, may generate dissonance with the values adopted by the organization. This paradox then could lead to questions about the institutionalization of the approach.

The experience described at the city hall highlights the need to translate the formalized values into the daily life of the departments *via* action plans. Although the health and solidarity unit quickly took up the project and translated the values into action plans, one may wonder to what extent the core values identified are likely to be disseminated throughout the organization.

The ability to maintain the culture of consultation regardless of the possible mobility of the actors who are at the origin of it is also a major issue. If this is not the case, should we then consider that the work carried out is a form of organizational hypocrisy (Brunsson, 1989)? Perhaps a first line of research would be to evaluate how a values-based approach could be a lever for the commitment of local authorities to projects to modernize the local civil service. A second avenue of research lies in the linkage of a values approach with the construction and evolution of collective identities.

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APPENDIX 1
Interview grid for workshop facilitation

Beliefs and values

★ What is central to the municipality discourse? Are there any stated values promoted by the municipality? Is concertation one of them? Are there gaps between the stated values and behaviors?

★ How would you define "concertation"? What would be the necessary conditions? What do you consider to be "false concertation"?

The myths of the municipality

★ What does the municipality communicate institutionally about? What does it promote and to whom?

★ Which projects do you think best embody the practice of concertation within the municipality? Conversely, which projects seem to you to embody the practice of concertation within the municipality the least?

The symbols

★ What are the main symbols of consultation within the Reziville community? Which ones should be developed?

Rituals and routines

★ What are the day-to-day social events that contribute to strengthening consultation (seminars, opportunities to mobilize on cross-cutting projects, annual meetings, etc.)?

★ How are the actors made aware of consultation?

Cultural taboos

★ What are the sensitive subjects for the community?

★ How do these affect the possibility of setting up a consultation process?

Concertation practices

★ What are the main management criteria to which the management team is attentive?

★ What leadership mechanisms are currently used to implement consultation (CODIR, department meetings, etc.)? How do you assess their effectiveness? What could be improved?

★ What means do you have to implement consultation within your teams: training, coaching, hierarchical support, tools, and so on? What areas of improvement could be considered in this context?

★ What role do/could HR practices play in the development of consultation (integration, training, mobility, etc.)?

★ What would be likely to cause a breakdown in the consultation process?

Organization

★ Does the current organization of the community encourage consultation?

★ Does the community seem open to the outside world? What importance is attached to relations with elected officials in the consultation process? The union organizations? Users and citizens?

Distribution of power

★ Which actors have the most influence in the consultation process today? Why or why not?

★ Which stakeholders should be more involved in the consultation process? How could they be involved?

APPENDIX 2
The systematic exploration grid

Canvases managérial values
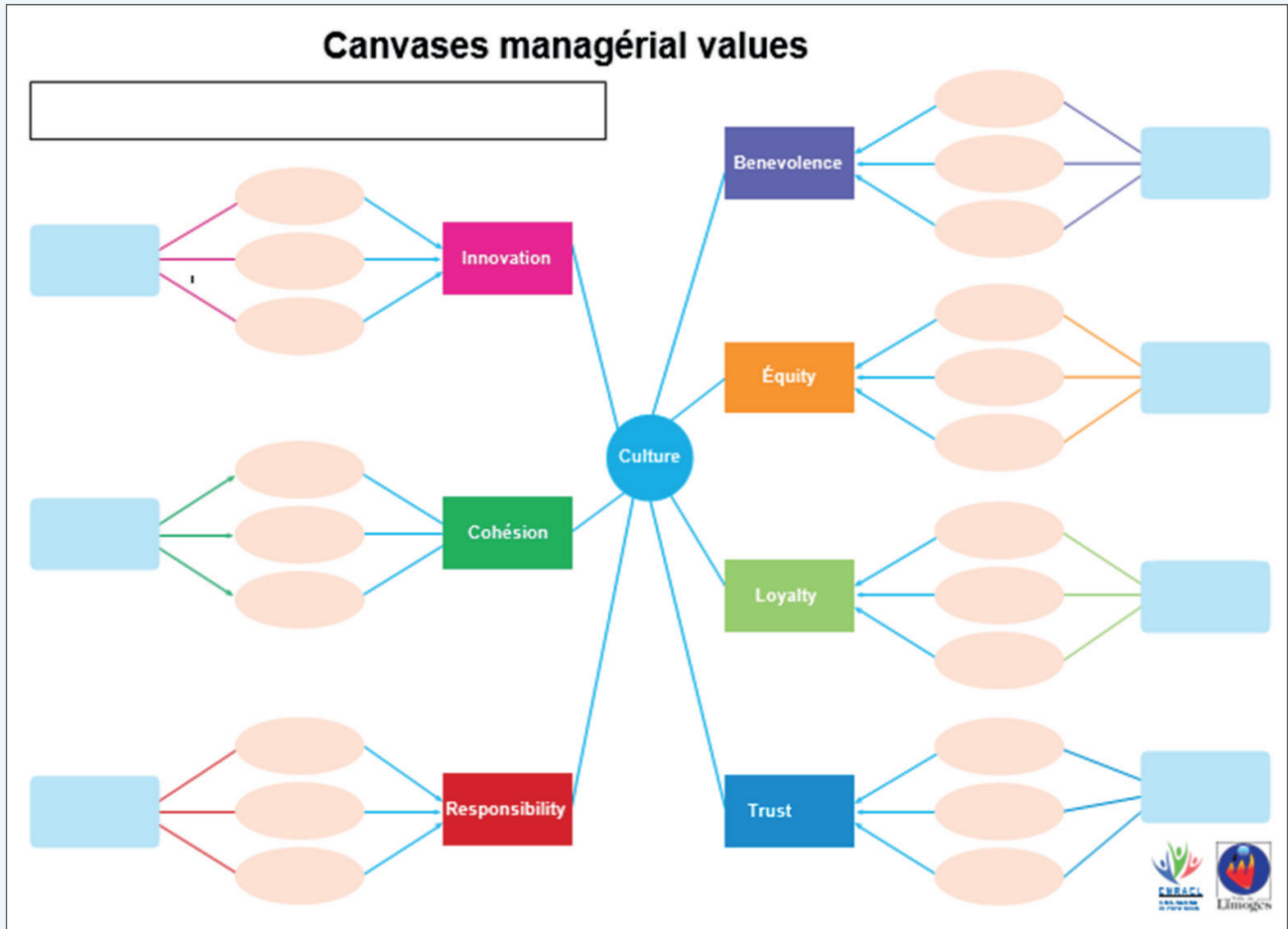
APPENDIX 3

Identification of classes in IRAMUTEQ

Extract of class characteristic lexicons (by decreasing chi2 linkage to classes)

The action plans developed by each department and processed in IRAMUTEQ clearly show that the translation process was successful. Correspondence analysis provides a graphic representation of the associations underlying a class of discourse. It enables "the simultaneous highlighting of different principles of data organization" (Bestgen, 2012, p.158). Five classes emerged during the analysis: **empowerment, communities of practice, managerial translation, collective dynamics, and participatory management**.

Class 1: Empowerment

The first class of discourse represents 13.8% of the classified segments. It includes the words **distribution** (χ^2= 32.37; $p < 0.0001$), **continuity** ($\chi^2 = 30.32$; $p < 0.0001$), **mistake** ($\chi^2 = 25.45$; $p < 0.0001$), **mission** ($\chi^2 = 24.87$; $p < 0.0001$), **position** ($\chi^2 = 19.09$; $p < 0.0001$), and **task** ($\chi^2 = 16.96$; $p < 0.0001$). We call it *empowerment* because the forms refer to the action of arranging the environment and the working conditions to use the capacities of the persons as well as possible.

Class 2: Communities of Practice

The second class of discourse represents 22.76% of the classified segments. It is composed of words that refer to the construction of work spaces to improve practices. Looking at the textual corpus, we can notice that the dominant lexemes are **direction** ($\chi^2 = 26.2$; $p < 0.0001$), **practice** ($\chi^2 = 24.34$; $p < 0.0001$), **participate** ($\chi^2 = 21.24$; $p < 0.0001$), **knowledge** ($\chi^2 = 20.88$; $p < 0.0001$), **network** ($\chi^2 = 16.58$; $p < 0.0001$), and **improve** ($\chi^2 = 16.52$; $p < 0.0001$). This class characterizes the new managerial expectations for organizational learning.

Class 3: Managerial Translation

The third class of discourse represents 22.1% of the classified segments. We call it *managerial translation*. The form **decision** ($\chi^2 = 45.15$; $p < 0.0001$) represents the highest occurrence in this class. The decision is equated with the operational implementation of the charter by the managerial chain putting, **enable** ($\chi^2 = 26.82$; $p < 0.0001$), **follow** ($\chi^2 = 22.1$; $p < 0.0001$), recalling the founding principles, **remind** ($\chi^2 = 18.29$; $p < 0.0001$), and explaining its operationalization (mediation/concertation tool) in management practices.

Class 4: Collective Dynamics

The fourth class of discourse represents 17.93% of the classified segments. We call it *collective dynamics*. It is composed of the words **spirit** ($\chi^2 = 32.83$; $p < 0.0001$), **sports** ($\chi^2 = 28.65$; $p < 0.0001$), **municipality** ($\chi^2 = 22. 1$; $p < 0.0001$), **share** ($\chi^2 = 20.12$; $p < 0.0001$), **political** ($\chi^2 = 19.79$; $p < 0.0001$), **cohesion** ($\chi^2 = 18.83$; $p < 0.0001$), **organization** ($\chi^2 = 18.74$; $p < 0.0001$), and **membership** ($\chi^2 = 18.19$; $p < 0.0001$). It is characterized by the capacity to project the actors in collaborative work methods in the network. In a way, it shows that the problematization phase made it possible to go beyond the logic of functional silos by trying to establish common values through mobilizing allies using a transversal approach.

Class 5: Participatory Management

The fifth class of discourse represents 23.45% of the classified segments. We call it *participative management*. We were able to identify the lexemes **proposal** ($\chi^2 = 27.64$; $p < 0.0001$), **manager** ($\chi^2 = 22.89$; $p < 0.0001$), **newcomers** ($\chi^2 = 20.43$; $p < 0.0001$), **being** ($\chi^2 = 19.35$; $p < 0.0001$), and **listening** ($\chi^2 = 16.91$; $p < 0.0001$). This class shows through the significant forms that the strategies of profit-sharing and enlistment have enabled the executives to better reflect on their managerial postures.

These classes were communicated to the CODIR before being translated within a tactical space that brought together the CEO of the resources division, the HRD, and four other directors of the human resources division as well as a translator (a doctoral student). We were thus able to observe a metamorphosis of the collective action into a strategic project by formalizing the goals to be achieved by linking them to strategic issues. From there, an HR training course was created for managers with a common base made up of key skills to be acquired in the areas of strategic management (prospective dimension in the development of the service project), consultation, change management, and finally the managerial values charter.