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Point of difference: The lost premise of creativity in 'creative work'

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abstract

Difference, divergence, feeling and less effortful thinking define creativity. Over the last 20-30 years we have witnessed accelerated growth and demand for creative products and labours producing experiences, atmospheres, and services, with increasing value placed on creative ideas, data, being moved or feeling, and 'being affected' in an attention economy. Creativity is often masqueraded as a core company ideal in the contemporary organisation, whilst its very premise is denied 'on the ground'. It is even openly accepted now that workers should bring with them some degree of emotional truth to contribute to innovation. Yet, management practices often remain pivoted around the pursuit of aligned workforces, organisational homogeneity, and deterministic recruitment processes for prospective candidates to fit into, all of which pose restrictions on the individualisms implicit in actually being creative and affective. Through the optics of affect, this note lays out the impossibility of creative work when those who are required to produce this creativity are not first free to themselves *be affected*.

Introduction: The emotional truth

To reveal the eco-system of feeling that produces the contemporary organisational paradox — where divergence and creativity are baked-into products while their premise often denied in organisational design — this note applies a Spinozian framework of affect. Here, affects are the, often unconscious, feelings that stick during encounters between bodies and other

bodies and objects, informing the direction one moves in thereafter, and in their broadest sense represent 'a sense of push in the world' (Thrift, 2004: 64; Spinoza, 1996). In what follows, the phenomenon of being affected is applied to organisations which vocally desire creativity and creative workers to reveal the incongruity: between what creativity means 'on the ground' and how it is pursued, or arrested, in dominant organisational discourse on aligned workforces.

This paradox in contemporary organisation, a need for creative workers and, yet negation of creativity's premise in difference and divergence, can be explored through the passage from being affected to becoming affective. Because divergent thinking, creativity, and innovation (qualities that are in demand and valuable) can be rendered and potentially optimised in the experience of being affected by range and difference (Spinoza, 1996). Through the worker's own susceptibility to feeling, and one's history of *different* ideas to draw from during any given affective encounter, lies an ecosystem of feeling very often denied in the pursuit of aligned (seemingly creative) workforces. As a way into the notoriously complex concept of affect, the note will refer to feelings that stick as a similar experience to that of affect and being affected, further explored in the following pages. A recent *Slack Technologies* (2019) report, titled 'State of work', is also used to illuminate this common organisational vernacular that both implicitly recognises the need for engaged, affected and creative workers, while, at the same time, promote the use of top-down management that contradicts what creativity means and looks like in practice. This report is not meant to be an isolated example as much as it represents and illuminates common mainstream management speak in contemporary times — and in younger companies, like in the tech sector, too.

Indeed, the argument that creativity is supressed in modern organisational design is not new. In their critique of the rationalist approach to management, Peters and Waterman (1982: 31) explore how rationality in management misses 'all of that messy human stuff' when it is oriented around the 'right' answer, more than the company's past experiences and learnt, incorporated values. Similarly, Hamel (2007) in his book, *The future of management*, illuminates the paradoxically slow paced recline of management innovation that's still 'stuck in a time warp' based on the sole pursuit of efficiency, in

light of such accelerated changes in societies and technologies over the last half century. Bell (1976) explains in *The cultural contradictions of capitalism* how cultural critique and culture, as a term, have grown into a game of 'in-and-out'; consumed and concerned with the notion of 'lifestyle', rather than a serious discussion of high art as it had been. More generally, 'society itself had lost its cultural moorings' over a gradual shift in mass society toward the paradigm of entertainment in an attention economy (Bell, 1976: 44).

But the subjective and fleeting qualities of affect, what I suggest throughout the note can be likened to the preconscious experience of feeling's that resonate with the individual, or stick, so to speak, within management and organisation is often cast aside as merely 'the province of the "art" factor in management' (Peters and Waterman, 1982: 31). Feeling and affect, moreover creativity, are seen as unquantifiable, hence unworthy of application and pursuit as a measure of reorganisation or design overhaul. As fleeting forces of encounter that shape the direction one moves in thereafter, informing their experiential archive and opening-up opportunities for divergence, affects illuminate the mechanics behind why this tension may not necessarily have a logical grounding for success in its objective. In the following sections, I intend to break-down the ecosystem of feeling that executes this organisational paradox: the vocal desire for creativity whilst denying its very premise. The logic behind creativity, defined here as non-effortful thinking, divergence and, following Spinoza (1996), seen as being dependent upon difference, feeling and a pluralised archive of experience, is both desired and denied in contemporary management and organisation. By breaking down and applying the ontology of affected labour, there is also room here, and in future work, to consider potential practical measures to account for the seminal place of feeling in being creative and producing affective, creative, immaterial products bound with feeling.

Affected creators

In many ways, the job of those who are doing creative work is to move, and be moved themselves, such that they authentically and meaningfully translate the ideological, atmospheric, and ephemeral qualities of the product and its use-value, or immaterial value: trust, optimism, humour, existential

questioning, ideology, seduction, impulse, escape, health etc. Being moved, or being affected, that is, the propensity to feel at work and to care, defines many creative labours, yet tends to be left out of more common metrics for measuring labour/performance and recruiting labourers. In developing Hardt and Negri's (2000: 293) useful conceptualisation of affective labour as 'labour in the bodily mode', the concept of *affected* labour helps to articulate the metric of care that precedes being affective; because being moved comes before moving others and helps inform the latter (at work) (Spinoza, 1996).

Affect, as a neighbourhood of social theory, can be traced through to two dominant strands: the post-structural approach taken up by figures such as Spinoza (2007), Freud (1997), Foucault (2003), Ahmed (2004), Massumi (2002), Deleuze and Guattari (2013), among many more. Spinoza's (1996) early work in particular had an impact in the forming post-structural affect theory. Spinoza explains affections as inseparable from the objects and sensations that trigger them — they are a collective faculty and embedded within natural and material environments. From a Spinozian and post-structural affect theory perspective, affect and emotion are theorised as separate concepts: affects are the feelings before emotions, and emotions are consciously applied to unconscious feelings. Where emotions become qualified states attached to feelings to give them meaning and order, affects are the forces and intensities embedded in the unconscious that spur senses and nostalgia long after they pass. Emotions consciously attribute meaning to the feelings (or affect) happening in the body during those fleeting passages of feeling, being moved, and being affected.

On the other hand, the neuroscientific perspective is notable in the work of Thrift (2004), Sedgwick (2003) and Tomkins (1962) (Clough, 2008; Stenner and Greco, 2008). The Neuroscientific theorisation of affect considers affect as synonymous with emotions, where the two concepts are often used without distinction. Here, affect is seen as existing separately from the world of objects, materiality's, cultures, and nostalgias that trigger them. Emotions and affects, seen as coming from the same logic and order, represent states that can be isolated and observed as automatic responses made by organisms that have evolved from their beginnings in the survival instinct (Leys, 2011). Whether viewed through the post-structural framework of affect as constant states of becoming, embedded in the interactional, material and natural world

and which are embodied, or through the neuroscientific lens that isolates affects (used interchangeably with emotions) from their environments, both perspectives consider affects as representative of 'a sense of push in the world' (Thrift, 2004: 64).

Being affected and becoming affective is a type of push, force of encounter and bodily response not unlike the notion of feeling, or being moved, which will liken affects to in this note as a potentially more accessible way-in to the concept and its application (Thrift, 2004). In Spinozian theory, previously mentioned as one of the earliest and most influential theories of affect, the journey from being affected to becoming affective opens new opportunities and possibilities in terms of how to move innovatively in the felt moment, and in what direction thereafter. Feeling, in this sense, is a potentially creative activity, because in the process of being moved (being affected), (potentially divergent) ideas, stick, are aroused and activated and stripped of their familiar normality if one is woke to the felt moment, happening within their body, as they transition between states. In being affected (being moved by feeling), the wider and more plural a person's experiential archive of ideas; the greater potential there is to form adequate ideas through exploring possibility and divergence. Because affects serve as reference points for past feelings to draw from in the moment, impacting the direction one moves down and the feelings engendered thereafter (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013; Spinoza, 1996). Past imprints of feeling become embedded in the individual and their archive of experience to draw from in subsequent encounters.

In Spinoza's (1996) book, *The ethics*, this mutual co-dependency between moving (affecting) and being moved (being affected) is explained: a person is empowered to move others, to act, having experienced positive feeling in the moment and ordered the ideas conjured in relation to the wide-ranging history of other ideas that make up their virtuous character. One may, for example, feel enchanted at a spectacular show, perhaps they are moved with tears or radical changes in physicality or perspective as they pass through the inexplicable/transcendent feeling (the affect) of the show and its sensory experience, such that they attribute an emotional state to the feeling/experience thereafter. That same person may leave the concert with a heightened capacity to act, empowered and transformed through the feeling-states to see a new perspective, a confidence, or form a thought about new

ideas, in what Spinoza (1996) describes as the conatus (one's desire to strive) being activated through the sensation of pleasurable affects. Everyone strives, but what we strive for is determined by the multitude of our own history of relations — a person's own experiential archive where the wider the breadth of material to draw from in digesting feeling in the moment, the more likely they are to pursue creative ideas and divergent thinking (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013; Massumi, 2015). In other words, the more plural experiences one carries, the more archival footage they accumulate to draw from in subsequent encounters, and the more options they can see in ordering the affects and using feeling as a vehicle for striving and, ultimately, creativity.

At work or elsewhere, one's openness to embrace divergence during the wide range of feelings encountered daily as the body collides with other bodies, ideas and objects, *is* a form of knowledge, based on how one recognises, orders and reasons with the affects thereafter (Spinoza, 1996). In being affected and forming adequate ideas, a diverse archive of experience is optimal, because past encounters with similar feelings become touchstones for potentially transcendent thinking and 'divergence from the flow' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013: 473). Feelings are given meaning through their referentiality to other ideas that make up the person's 'epistemological fabric of ideas' (Deleuze, 1988: 74-75). Difference, rather than sameness, in one's felt experiences leads to a wider set of aggregates that one can reference against each other to form potentially adequate ideas and divergent or creative thinking. This multitude of past affects helps to inform the present moment and the sort of direction to move in the moment. To have a range of experiences to draw from, then, equips one with further tools to understand feeling and the sorts of emotions and behaviours conjured (Spinoza, 1996, 2007). Exposure to diverse ideas, in labours that produce affective products, builds this knowledge, creative capacity to move in different directions, and resilience. Moreover, divergence and less forced/effortful thinking characterise creativity and being affective (Madrid and Patterson, 2018).

Affected labour, then, refers to an individual (workers, consumers, employers, investors, owners, followers, passers-by, likers etc), themself being personally moved by the product, brand and atmosphere such that they authentically communicate the atmosphere, ethics, aesthetic, culture and/or lifestyle of the product. Affected labourers are part of the multitude of engaged players who

actively participate in sculpting the direction of the product. To do their job successfully, or simply get through it, such labourers are implicitly required to adequately order the affects that are embedded in the job (Cameron, 2018). Artists, for example, illuminate the idea that the product must move the maker, so as to move the audience. They productively utilise feeling in creating work that needs to be moving. Similarly, affected labour exists within an economy of desire hinged upon engaged, moved players. It follows that this (lucrative) affected commitment becomes the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organisation (Afroz, 2013). Creative workers need to be affected; moved by the culture and lifestyle of the product, invest in it, find meaning in it, and manage emotion in a way that fosters the feeling, mood and atmosphere of the product/service (Cameron, 2018).

Breaking down the ontology of affect through a Spinozian (1996) perspective and applying this logic to work that produces affective products by moved labourers, exposes the impossibility of fostering creative and innovative workers if they are treated as static, homogenous and something to be fit into where everyone aligns. Affected labour is a step beyond the idea of affective labour; emphasising that workers not only need to move others, but before and in order to do this effectively they, themselves, need to be moved. But is one really free to feel at work? The relationship between affecting and being affected reveals the value of feeling fleeting (potentially transformational) openings. Being awake and open to feeling, embodying a differentiated and vast experiential archive to draw from in welcoming and dealing with momentary feelings, and seeing the potential within affective encounters to diverge, optimises the creative opportunities of feeling, especially if seeking to create moving products. Yet, this affective ontology appears contradicted in contemporary organisational design (even if creativity and innovation are prioritised and marketed). Innovation and creativity within many organisations are often celebrated as a concept more than an organising principle. Are we really allowed to be affected?

The language of post-industrial work emphasises flexible specialisation, teamwork, creativity, agility, passion, participatory work, collaborative work, and decision-making practices, all of which problematise notions of normality and homogeneity because they require the coming together of differences. This is supported by the language of productive diversity (or the celebration

of difference) where alternative knowledges and skills are recognised as valuable resources for the productive workplace in competitive marketplaces. But, even with this discourse on the significance of creativity, particular sets of outdated norms continue to be upheld. Creative work is operationalised such that the notion of diversity, while central to discourse and branding often comes secondary to the heavy seduction of sameness and cult values. There remain underlying assumptions of sameness; such that those who are not the same and have different knowledge and skills are seen to be in deficit (Solomon, 1999). Affected labours are premised on the notion that in order to form adequate ideas and use feeling creatively and productively, a wider and more plural experiential archive of ideas will give scope to the present moment in negotiating with the feeling and moving in a new (potentially innovative) direction. Following Carnera (2012: 78), in order for adequate ideas to formulate, 'we need to experiment with our own experience'.

'Aligned workforces' (really?)

Paradoxically, in light of this blatant requirement of individual feeling, contemporary organisations and recruitment practices still often seek to create their own monoculture, or cult. Creativity becomes purely a concept, too often couched in the posture of a free and equal, diverse workplace with bean bags, karaoke night and free espresso. Game-like playful designs are often adapted in physical workplace environments, nodding to the inevitable emotional investment required of workers, and their needing to be deeply affected to account for the longer, more connected, collaborative, round the clock schedules and connectivity that are required in so many jobs today (Greg, 2011). In fact, in a recent report from Slack Technologies (2019: 35), it was openly expressed 'when people are allowed to bring their emotional truth to work, that is when innovation, creativity, engagement and culture thrive in the organisation'. This report is not applied here as a unique or particularly specific case, as much as it reflects a common vernacular among young contemporary businesses seeking to produce more relevant and contemporarily equivalent products.

When aligned workforces refer to 'teams [that] are moving in the same direction' (Slack Technologies, 2019: 35), the premise of feeling and divergent

thinking as key to creativity is negated – and whether one really can bring their emotional truth to work is rendered questionable (ibid.). Workplace culture becomes a regime of power for managing people in contemporary workplaces (Foucault, 1989; Solomon, 1999). Contemporary training practices have developed into generalisable competency scales:

> While previously workplace training programmes were determined by local decisions made in response to local needs, training today in OECD countries is most frequently constructed within a competency-based training framework. This framework has been developed through government, industry and education partnerships resulting in policies and industry competency standards that represent institutionally recognised and legitimate knowledge. (Solomon, 1999: 122)

The bureaucratisation of skill, recruitment, testing and training tends toward a generalisable framework that scales categories of skill and competence according to static and incentivised industry indicators. Recruitment processes tend to recognise prior learning and the candidates aligned experience with the organisation. Whereas recruitment has the potential for *figuring divergence positively*, human resource practices and procedures still assume very particular kinds of experiences and prioritise the candidate's ability to fit in to the existing norms. Job seekers are encouraged, if not forced, to morph and potentially conflate their experiences into accepted categories and normative discourse in order to fit in with the organisation and be rewarded according to their experience of sameness (Solomon, 1999).

Such a dulling process may also lead to what Peter and Hull (1969: 25) coined the peter principle — wherein, people 'rise to a level of incompetence' or fall up in the organisational hierarchy in the process of their dumbing down to fit in. Recruitment and training of affected labourers are opportunities to enact creativity and embrace difference, which many workplaces today claim to foster. They are vulnerable to becoming assimilatory tools for ensuring an aligned workforce, without considering the centrality of the concept of difference in the affected labourer's mastery of feeling so as to invoke feeling in others (Solomon, 1999). Because in the process of affecting and being affected, for a person to formulate adequate ideas having been affected, the body relies on its history of corporeal experiences that, if plural and felt,

potentially present a wider range of ways to move thereafter (Spinoza, 1996). This room for divergence enabled by being affected *is* a form of creativity.

For creativity and innovation to be applied in organisational culture and design, there needs to be room for people to truly feel, or be affected, and an allowance of divergence if one is to pursue creative work (as an affected worker.) Organisational culture can be static and prescribed, something to fit into, rather than as malleable, created and recreated, plural, fluid, diverse, and formed through grassroots practice more than top-down prescription. In management speak, the concept itself of management, while being alternatively termed to re-engineer the top-down connotations, is enacted through:

> Managers want[ing] a clone of themselves, people who do things just like them. They are doers, taking charge; 'taking care of people [is] secondary'. Cloning prevents diversity; it also prevents any focus on managing people as a legitimate purpose within the organization. (Oseen, 1997: 46)

These 'cloning' practices run counter to the actual reality of the organic nature of work in organisations, and creativity, as a mode of 'divergence from the flow' that is based on the individuals embrace of different feelings in forming adequate ideas and moving in new directions (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013: 473; Solomon, 1999). While masquerading diversity, contemporary organisations can be seen as (inadvertently) creating monocultures in the process of cloning (Oseen, 1997). The construction of sameness rejects the very embrace of feeling and difference that is (seemingly) relied upon in the affected labourers' mastery over the job — closing-off potential pathways for 'divergence from the flow', creativity, and doing and being at work differently (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013: 473).

In affecting and being affected, or moving and being moved, it is the *different* backgrounds, experiences and perspectives which enhance an individual's skill in conjuring adequate ideas, digesting feeling, and striving to act or be affective (Spinoza, 1996). Again, using the example of *Slack Technology*'s (2019: 34-35) recent report on 'The state of work', all but one of 'The engagement eight' start from the bottom-up — i.e. precisely where engagement begins at the individual felt level — and, yet, at the same time, they all require *both* divergence and affected labour in pursuing an (ironically)

'aligned workforce'. These include: 1.) Invest in alignment now. 2.) Lead with strategy and vision. 3.) Communicate your strategy monthly. 4.) Allow people to be more human at work. 5.) Empower all leaders to share the strategic vision, but start at the top. 6.) Opt for meetings and collaborative channels when sharing strategy. 7.) Aggregate tools and information. 8.) Distraction is not just a productivity killer.

Despite conditions of labour today being built around creative products, affected and affective labour, flexibility, temporality and fluidity, unpredictability, 24-hour connectivity, casualisation and workers and consumers alike being affected, organisations are largely 'relatively homogeneous, integrated and unicultural' (Jeffcutt, 1994: 243; Gregg, 2011). Organisational culture is considered a static predetermined brand used as an instrument for unifying the workplace; a technology for governing workers and representing the brand (Oseen, 1997). Surely, given affected labourers are operating in conditions that require them to think creatively, flexibly, actively, innovatively, resiliently and emotively, then a fixed monoculture and blanket approach to culture, or aligned workforce, would not account for, or foster, the expressions of creativity and points of difference that drive creative products. Oseen (1997), for example, recommends an enabling model of management, rather than a cloning one, that recognises people as being different in how they work, and how they work together.

There is acknowledgment of difference and diversity, but often mere verbiage in the form of masqueraded company ideals, more than lived organisational values, and where culture tends to be understood as a static idea that can simply be commanded from the top. Valuing creativity is divorced from its actual premise in difference, disconnected from the base characteristics of culture that are plurality and communities of practice. Culture becomes a governing tool or disciplinary regime — and a means through which to navigate the product and its competitive advantage (Angouri and Glynos, 2009; Foucault, 1989). Moreover, cultural difference is often seen in corporations as a potential issue, risk, or a problem to be fixed, in a simultaneous embrace and denial of creativity (difference) within labours that produce creativity. Following Collinson (1994), it is the mystery of the uncanny unconsciousness and moral chaos within the contemporary organisation: irony, paradox, ambiguities, inconsistency, referentiality, that

should be illuminated within such networks and structures through sensitive research. Angouri and Glynos (2009: 13) suggest thinking about culture 'as a floating signifier builds this nuance and sensitivity to context into the analytical framework itself'. Here, culture would become conceptually separated from overly categorical and essentialist notions, toward exploration of formations and tensions — emerging differences — a dynamic movement hinged upon individual input (Angouri and Glynos, 2009).

Like the fleeting and ephemeral quality of affects, by definition, meaning, identity and culture are un-fixed and fluid where 'differences are symbolically conditioned and thus culturally malleable', such that Angouri and Glynos (2009: 9) 'characterize "culture" as a *floating* signifier here because its meaning and significance emerges only in and through the process of articulation'. And, for Jeffcutt (1994: 244) culture is 'theorized as a creative expression of the inhabitants of a particular setting, a symbolizing process which is amorphous, transient and sensual, a communal possession, a meaning system through which disintegrative forces are mediated and negotiated order pursued'.

Practiced, fluid, enacted, culture is manifested through engaged players who move — and are moved (Angouri and Glynos, 2009). Whether the value of cultural difference is embraced as an ideology, seen as a static value presenting a challenge to be overcome, or applied as a lucrative source of exploitation, there is broad persuasion that even at the lightest end of the spectrum divergent workers and workplace cultures in organisations are seen as a 'potential problem' or challenge in the context of capital's historic attachment to 'the ideals of efficiency and competitive advantage' (Angouri and Glynos, 2009: 6). Recognising affected labour goes beneath the surface of promoting an equal workplace, culture, diversity and employee satisfaction to reveal the ontological premise of feeling and its intimate relationship with divergence and creativity. Like affecting is hinged upon *being* affected, sameness and difference, too, help constitute one another. Notions of sameness cement what is conceived of as different, so as to project values onto sameness that are entangled in practices of power (Foucault, 1989; Oseen, 1997).

Conclusion: Embracing divergence and feeling through a care metric

Employee autonomy and creativity is vulnerable to being mere surface level branding within organisational systems that survey employee suitability with measures and metrics, psychometric tests and HR strategies geared toward universal competency standards. Individualisms may be promoted at work, but, in effect, risk actually perpetuating the opposite by failing to acknowledge how being an affective worker *is actually being* an affected one. In affected labours, the greater breadth of different ideas and experiences one carries, the more archival footage they may accumulate to draw from in subsequent encounters. In this process of forming ideas, cultivating self and utilising feeling, new vectors are opened-up in terms of the possibility and potential to move — and what direction in thereafter. This is a form of creativity akin to divergence and non-effortful thinking. How could enforced, static emotion management of contemporary workforces cater to the emotionally charged products and audiences they create and leverage off — if one accepts that moving others depends on oneself being moved (Hochschild, 1983)? The expression of feeling from consumers and producers of creative products/services, the mood-swings of diverse audiences and their collective engagement, inform the overall value (Lazzarato, 2006).

Immaterial products are by nature an activity, or experience, without a fixed end point or materiality; they require affected, communicative and emotional activity in finding use-value. Moreover, the potential for creative expression and transcendence in such labours is heightened given the feeling and care involved in production — albeit generally invisible and unpaid labour. And, following Virno (2004: 56), '…exactly for this reason, it is above all within the culture industry that the structure of wage labor has overlapped with that of political action'.

By actually feeling work and being affected, opportunities for creativity, non-collaboration and resistance are opened and, ultimately, the exploration of creative thinking is enabled. There is transcendent value in feeling individually and pursuing divergent thought in order to be creative, affective, and innovative (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013). Deleuze, for example, pursues the non-dialectical politics of multiplicity, or the multitude, in advocating for

creative pluralism in organisation, grounded in the concept of becoming (Linstead and Thanem, 2007). It is worth considering: what if the potential of human creativity that is characterised by divergent and non-effortful thinking was truly embraced in a multitude workplace, and organised according to feeling through a metric of care, rather than a normalising metric of sameness?

By breaking-down the passage: from being affected (moved) to becoming affective (moving), this note reveals how labours that depend upon creative workers and creativity (defined by non-effortful thinking and divergence) are born out of feeling and one's forming of adequate ideas in the process of their being an affected labourer (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013). As exploitative, precarious, coercive, and exhaustingly demanding work and consumption can be, there *are* characteristics of the present labour landscape that signal potential for divergence and creativity — where affected labour holds emancipatory potential. An individual's degree of *care,* and their ability to move others through moving themself, would seem much more indicative of their propensity for successful affected labour, rather than measuring their ability to fit in.

A metric of care would see affected labourers in organisations as users and engaged players whose ability to express feeling helps to drive the overall product. In a metric of care, individual difference is considered the crucial motor of creative growth or, following Deleuze (1988) and Spinoza (1996), as the premise out of which adequate ideas and innovation develop. A metric of care for measuring and recruiting creative affected labourers (when producing moving products that seek to affect the consumer) would seem to be an interesting paradigm shift in organisational redesign; figuring difference *as* becoming common. A metric of care would value the ontological premise of affected labour as being built on the individual's breadth of different ideas that are activated in the felt moment, and needed in the force of their own creativity and affectivity thereafter. Labour recruitment processes and skill-matching metrics too often both desire innovation and creativity, while paralysing its actual ontological premise — as has been revealed in this piece. In the pursuit of 'aligned workforces', organisation that produces creative products may consider replacing such an emphasis on alignment with an emphasis on different degrees of care.

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