

companies. The company supplied temporary staff to client companies, but they were having trouble cementing their relationship with the temporary staff—a relationship that is absolutely crucial for such a service. Initially, the problem was framed as the need to design a promotional gift to help develop a better association and greater loyalty. Two artists, working together in the collective Orgacom (see orgacom.nl) were commissioned to come up with proposals. They quickly got to the heart of the matter: the employment services company did have a huge problem, and it was not one that could be solved by simply designing a giftwrapped pen-in-a-box. The whole culture of the employment services company was based around the need to attract client companies, and it was going out of its way to be taken seriously by them. It had adopted a very professional-looking corporate style: an abstract modernist logo, standoffish gray office spaces, and staff that was trained to efficiently handle all the forms and complexities of temporary staffing contracts. But in the economic climate of the time, there were more than enough client companies that needed temporary staff—what the employment services company actually needed to attract was young people to *be* that temporary staff. All the elaborate corporate fanfare that they had adopted was completely counterproductive in this regard. Instead of selecting people who come in begging for work, the company had to become more attractive and inviting to these workers in the range of eighteen to twenty-five years old. The artists came up with radical proposals to change the company's practices in this direction. These inspirations included temporary offices at festivals and other places where young people gather, staff retraining modules that included some hilariously confrontational role play, as well as a complete overhaul of procedures to make the company much more people-friendly. Nine simple line drawings expressed how the company could place itself differently in the world, outlining nine completely different kinds of “offices”: a “home office,” a “theater office,” a “soap,” a “club,” a “bus stop,” etc. (see figure 2.1). Rather than using elaborate designs, the artists designed brain teasers to trigger the discussions that would build a context for real change. The same message was driven home on a direct human level by the role-playing games. The project was presented in a video, showing clips of the discussions it sparked at the firm. The Young Designers subsequently presented this to the board of the company. They had effectively developed the problem in a direction where it could be solved in many new and interesting ways (Pappers et al. 1999).