

Pro Action Cafe

Methodology Exploration

ART OF HOSTING Zagreb, 12.2.2010.

What is it?

- ***Integrate learning and action***
- Use best of world cafe and open space forms:
 - ***world cafe*** is simple and fast way 2 activate collective intelligence, create connections between people, dissolve judgments and opinions, you break and open, but convergence could be sloppy, lots of ideas but sometimes no ownership
 - in ***open space*** people are challenged 2 take action, individuals are taking responsibility to move forward

Methodology Basics

Could be done in 2-3 hours.

(comment: Pro Action Cafe session in AOH Zagreb had 28 participants with 2 hosts and took 3.5 hours, including opening circle, topic selection, 3 iterations and closing circle)

You need at least 2 hosts.

Methodology Basics

- start in circle (similar to open space) + cafe setup
- hosts call for individuals 2 step in and creates topics that are important for them

- logistics: divide number of people by 4
 - = number of tables (each table has 4 chairs)
 - = number of topics (each topic = *project*)
 - = number of topic owners (= *project owners*)

Basic principle is *First-come, first-served*

meaning that you have fixed number of topics and only such number of topics can be discussed (served)

Methodology Basics

After *projects* (topics, themes...) have been defined, each *project owner* goes to her/his table and starts to work on *project* in cafe setup through 3 or 4 stages (3 or 4 cafe sessions, depending on available time).

Project owners stays at table, other people move around in cafe setup after each stage.

Each stage has specific question which "guides" discussion.

Methodology Basics - Stage 1

Question to explore is:

WHAT IS THE QUEST BEHIND THIS PROJECT?

Project owner presents purpose and context to 3 other people sitting at the table. They try to answer this question.

Session takes cca 30 - 40 minutes and then cca 10 minutes break.

IMPORTANT: during break, project owner reflects and digest previous discussion. It is also time for project owner to release energy.

Methodology Basics - Stage 2

Question to explore is:

WHAT AM I MISSING?

After break 3 new people come to table. Project owner shares context and together they try to answer the question. Session takes cca 30 - 40 minutes and then 20 minutes break.

IMPORTANT: this break is very important for project owner to contemplate around the quest and begin to answer next questions.

Methodology Basics - Stage 3

Questions to explore are:

**WHAT AM I LEARNING?
WHAT STEPS DO I NEED 2 TAKE?
WHAT HELP DO I NEED?**

After break 3 new people come to table and they try to answer this questions. Goal is for CONVERSATION 2 BECOME ACTION.

After this session you can run 4th session for wrapping it all up, finalizing harvesting etc.

Comment: In AOH Zagreb we had 3 sessions.

Methodology Basics - Harvesting

Harvesting usually takes place in circle.

Project owners are trying to have rigorous answer 2 their questions.

It could take 5 minutes per project owner, it's important for them to speak back 2 the circle. It could be sometimes just expression of gratitude, share of thoughts, learnings etc.

What is this methodology good 4?

- Use it when rubber needs 2 hit the road!
- This is very converging form, so it is good for convergence phase, but can also stand on it's own.
- Could be fabulous way to organize business meetings, specifically if they need to create action plan with ownership.
- Methodology can scale from cca 15 people up to hundreds
- You can achieve workable results in just few hours

What 2 be careful about?

- You need 2 be sure that participants are ready to give their best in order 2 create solutions
- You should have enough diversity - 15 people at least
- Requires some logistics organization, more than other technologies
- Potential vulnerability of project owners must be cared about!
- Judging = mortal sin of learning

Comments, questions?

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