

Proaction Café

Propelling participant projects forward with collective intelligence



The Proaction Café provides a space for creative and action-oriented conversation where participants are invited to bring their call - project - ideas - questions or whatever they feel called by and need help to manifest in the world. The Proaction Café can evoke and make visible the collective intelligence of any group, thus increasing people's capacity for effective action in pursuit of good work.

Proaction Café can be used with a network of people and/or as a methodology for specific group / organization / community to engage in creative and inspirational conversation leading to wiser and more collectively informed actions.



Target/Purpose

Target: Action planning for a project or community
Purpose: to help people move forward with their projects through cross-pollination and getting deeper insights through conversation with others.



Requirements

- Set-up: tables of 4
- Flipchart and markers on each table
- Wall space



Output

New insights and next steps for projects in a community



Time

2.5 to 3 hours

Step 1

Prepare Materials and Set up:
 A large circle in one area and smaller tables with 4 chairs each in another area
 Flipchart paper, colour pens and markers for each table
 Prepare agenda matrix, taking into account the total number of participants divided by 4.

Step 2

Checking in:
 In the larger circle, share the purpose of the session with the participants.
 Break down the overall agenda into smaller calls to action to be assigned to each café table.
 Divide participants into 4 groups and allocate to different tables.

Step 3

Explain the rules:
 There will be 3 rounds of 20-30 minutes each, each guided by a set of questions.
 After each round there will be a break, and then participants will move to a different table.
 After the 3 rounds, the group will convene once again in the larger circle to close the session.

Step 4

Round 1:
 What is the quest behind the project?
 (to delve and clarify the purpose of the activity).

Step 5

Round 2:

What is missing?

(get participants to identify what is required to make the end goal more complete and possible).

Step 6

Round 3:

Lessons learned and way forward

Participants are asked to reflect on what this process has helped them to understand about themselves and the project, as well as the help that is still needed to achieve the desired outcome.

Step 7

Closure:

After convening back in the large circle, identify the following:

- What are we grateful for?
- What are the next steps?

Resources:

- How to designing host a Proaction Café, mini-guide: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5384b177e4b0bc0d91a835c0/t/53a47edde4b0c840895da357/1403289309661/the_pro_action_caf12-1.pdf
- Video, an example of a Proaction Café: <https://artofhosting.ning.com/video/example-at-work-pro-action-cafe>

Successful cases:

- Serving Community enterprise: <https://www.transitionus.org/stories/serving-community-enterprise-proaction-caf%C3%A9>
- Local community building: <https://www.greencommunityconnections.org/recent/creative-solutions-bloom-at-proaction-cafe-2>