

# Patterns for a Company to Collaborate with Local Community on Social Issues

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***Abstract.** We propose a set of patterns for a Contact-Activity communication process that a company can use to collaborate with a local community on social issues. The Contact-Activity process starts from building relationships among members who have gathered together based on common interests, rather than picking team members based on required functions. People then gather and come up with an “issue in common” for starting a project. For the past 4 years, this Contact-Activity communication process has been tried and tested in Tohoku, Japan and there were some core ideas shared and repeated among 10 members of Fuji Xerox. This paper outlines these core ideas (patterns) that we learned. Starting the communication process through personal interactions has shown to be a powerful means that involves both company members from outside the community and local members inside the community. Our experience has shown that it can lead to better collaboration in thinking and acting on social issues in a positive inner motivational driven way.*

## Categories and Subject Descriptors

D.3.3 Language Constructs and Features

## General Terms

Pattern, Pattern Language

## Keywords

Contact, Community, Co-creation, Wholeness

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## Introduction

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Companies have learned that it is essential to participate and collaborate on important issues in the community, specifically to approach and act on social issues in collaboration with the local community. This is referred to as Creating Shared Value [Porter 2011]. To realize such action, we have proposed and outlined a Contact-Activity communication process that companies can use to collaborate with a local community on social issues [Takahashi 2015]. Contact-Activity is a communication process that starts by building relationships and personal interaction among members by promoting contact through gathering together based on common interests, rather than picking team members based upon required functions. Members then come up with an “issue in common” for starting a project to work on as a shared activity. We have learned that it is very important to start from personal interaction as we have found that performance of activity toward the issue works best when it is something that has risen from the inner motives of each member.

Fuji Xerox has recently done research to build a better communication process they could use as part of the local community. For the past 4 years, this Contact-Activity communication process has been successfully used in Tohoku, Japan. This research started with a 10 person team that went to Tohoku, Japan to find ways to build better communication within their community. From this research, this team learned and documented 13 core ideas (patterns), which are presented in paper as the result of Fuji Xerox reaching out to the community in Tohoku.

We have designed 60 minutes workshop to share these 13 patterns inside our company. This workshop process has groups of 4 to 6 persons. We have put our 13 patterns into small cards for use at our workshop as shown in Figure 1. We start the workshop with our 13 patterns along with the Fearless Change Patterns [Manns 2015]. During the workshop, some new patterns are expected to be added.

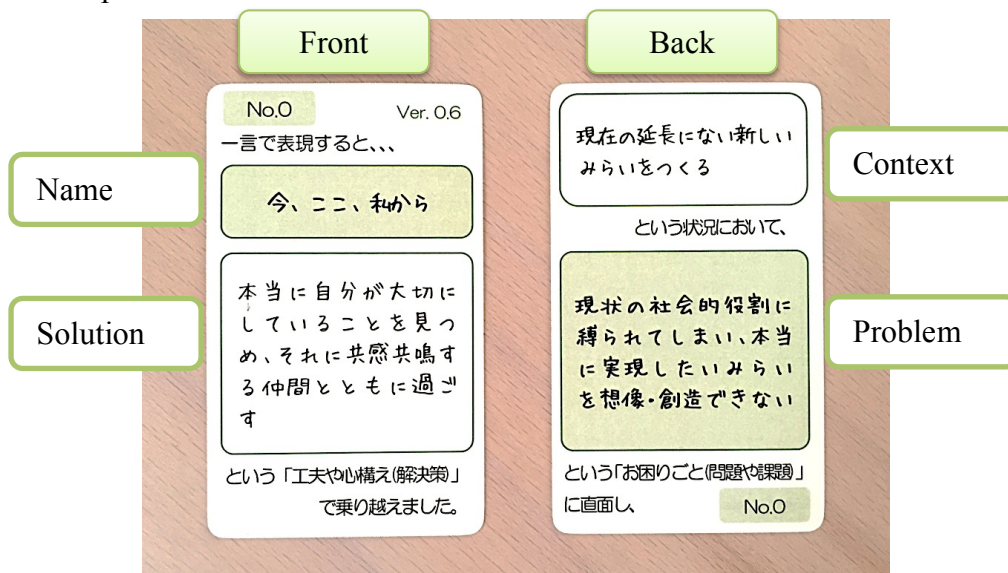


Figure 1: Pattern Cards

We have seen this Contact-Activity communication process as a powerful way to involve both company members from outside the community and local members inside the community. We have also seen that it can lead to collaboration in thinking and acting on social issues in a positive, inner motivational driven way. This paper will present an overview and the details of all 13 patterns of a Contact-Activity communication process. In this paper we follow the pattern-writing format of the Fearless Change Patterns as this is a pattern language applied to describe creative human action.

## A Contact-Activity Communication Process Patterns Overview

We designed the Contact-Activity patterns based upon ideas from Triple Focus [Goleman 2014]. Triple Focus is a model for effective education, motivated from each individual’s self-awareness. The main idea in Triple Focus fosters people to start thinking and acting on issues in a positive and inner motivational driven way. Triple Focus model consists of 3 stages: “inner”, “other”, and “outer”. The “inner” stage is about becoming aware of oneself. The “other” stage is communicating with the outside world through sharing what you have got from practicing the “inner” stage. And the “outer” stage comes after unlearning of the borders between self and others and connecting with others in a deep sense which Christopher Alexander quotes as “wholeness” [Alexander 2003].

Figure 2 is a pattern map outlining our 13 patterns. Central to the Contact-Activity communication process is to “Start From Yourself” by learning what you value. After you learn from yourself, you can explore your inner self and “Just Imagine” how you really want to be and what you really want to do. After you have outlined your ideas, you “Propose Your Ideas” to others which will help you better refine them. You then share these ideas with others by finding a “Common Connection”. The foundational patterns “Just Imagine”, “Propose Your Idea” and “Common Connection” are placed around “Start From Yourself” circled by solid lines. Supporting patterns for each stage are circled in dashed lines placed near each main idea pattern.

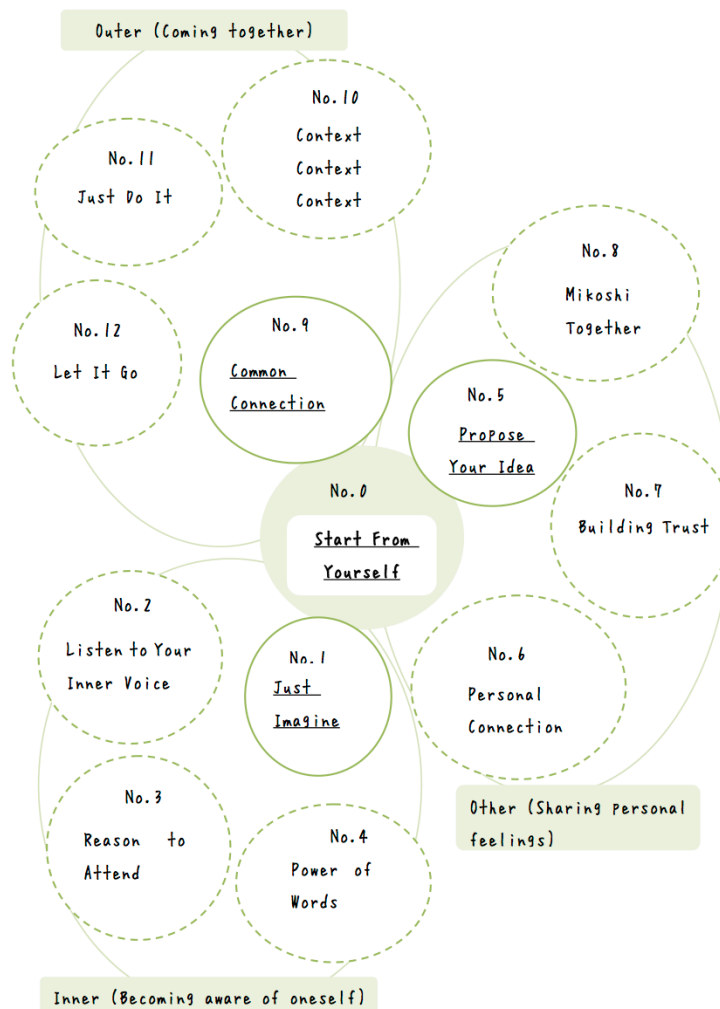


Figure 2: Pattern Map

Table 1 is a list of patlets for the 13 patterns. A patlet is a brief description of a pattern, usually 1-2 sentences outlining the context, problem and/or solution.

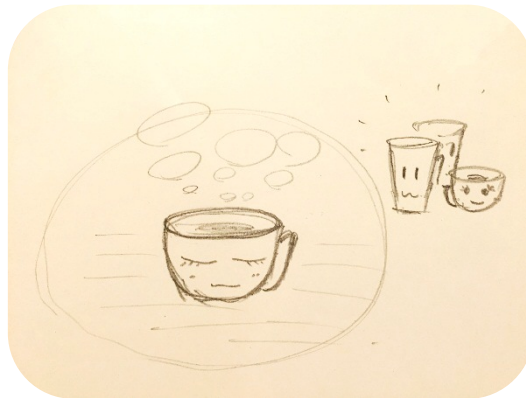
<b>Patlet Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>No.0 Start From Yourself</b>	It is important to be aware of what you really value when dealing with an emerging future, imaging things you have never considered before. Prioritize and focus your time with those values that are most important to you.
<b>No.1 Just Imagine</b>	Something has arisen in oneself and you want to present it to others. Think about whom you want to present the idea to and imagine they are in front of you, and just try.
<b>No.2 Listen to Your Inner Voice</b>	When you are too focused on your hypothesis and plans, there is less room to accept other peoples' opinions or feelings. This can lead to you being isolated. Set aside your plans to become aware of the small voices that come from inside of you.
<b>No.3 Reason to Attend</b>	If you have an uncomfortable feeling about being in a meeting or a workshop, reflect on the reason why you have chosen to attend. Consider an emotional tension that might have taken you there.
<b>No.4 Power of Words</b>	When it is difficult to put words to your inner passion, express your idea the best you can and present to others without being afraid of what others will think about your idea.
<b>No.5 Propose Your Idea</b>	You are worried about what other people might think of an idea you have. Just present your idea to people you trust and ask for feedback and impressions.
<b>No.6 Personal Connection</b>	During conversations be sure to include your personal impressions as well as the official ones. Build closer personal relationships by sharing feelings.
<b>No.7 Building Trust</b>	When you are new to a community, it is often hard for your ideas to be accepted. Communicate with skeptics to build trust which can be a good start to connect more deeply with the community.
<b>No.8 Mikoshi Together</b>	There are borders which are difficult to cross when you are dressed and seen as a company person with job titles. Attend local events and travel privately to build trust and relationships.
<b>No.9 Common Connection</b>	When working on issues with two or more stakeholders, it can be difficult to see the big picture affecting all stakeholders. Find common issues among multiple stakeholders to connect them.
<b>No.10 Context Context Context</b>	You want to get connected with the community and be involved as an individual independent from the company. Make small connections with community members by sharing local context.
<b>No.11 Just Do It</b>	When you have new ideas and are not sure how to get started, prototype your ideas and improve them through feedback.
<b>No.12 Let it Go</b>	Your project requires more than you can handle? Don't think of managing the project all by yourself. Collaborate with others and let others help you.

**Table 1: Pattern Patlets**

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## No.0 Start From Yourself

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*“Stop and be yourself”*

It is important to be aware of what you really value when dealing with an emerging future, imagining things you have never considered before. Prioritize and focus your time with those values that are most important to you.

You are trying to accept and cultivate a new emerging future, which you have not imaged before.

**Social requirements and other outside responsibilities can lead to “should” roles. These roles can overwhelm a person, keeping them from even imagining what is really desired from their heart. How can a person find what they really value and realize their dreams?**



Your life is filled with “should” roles and actions based upon responsibilities and social expectations. There is usually very little time to be aware of your feelings to think about what you really value and what is natural and comfortable to you.

There are constant distractions in life from family, business, and friends. It is often hard to balance and focus on one’s own values with life’s many distractions.



**Therefore, take quite time for yourself. Become aware of what you really value. Spend time on those values that are most important to you.**

It is good to become more skeptical about “have to do” things. Consider what would happen if you did not do those “have to do” things. For example, consider what would happen if you did not prepare perfect slides before your meetings. Although that might be accepted inside your company, it often is not acceptable and usually considered that you are not doing your job. However, this might be the opposite when meeting someone from the local community. They might feel you are too formal if you present very formal slides and materials.

One way you can prepare is to spend time at a local historical sight and **Just Imagine** (a Communication Pattern no.1) what you could do within the community. Use what you imagined to **Propose Your Idea(s)** (no.5) to whom you trust, and try to take *Baby Steps* to realize your idea(s). Those steps could help you to make a **Common Connection** (no.9)

among multiple stakeholders. Then, you may see an *Evolving Vision* co-created and shared lively instead of some individual's prepared plans [Manns 2015].

Actions that can help are...

1. Take 3 minutes in the morning to sit quietly with yourself, reflecting on what you value. Do this as a daily habit if possible. This can even be a form of meditation.
2. When you make decisions, take your emotions into consideration in addition to rational reasoning.
3. Try meditation techniques such as Zen meditation in your meetings. Just taking 1 minute in the beginning of the meeting sitting quietly thinking for yourself can help.

As you take these actions, you may become more aware of your emotional feelings. Be aware of these feelings noting if they are comfortable or not. You may become more sensitive about being uncomfortable, and that may lead to some conflict or separation. You may even experience some painfulness, but they can lead to positive change.

\* \* \*

There are related patterns from Fearless Change [Manns 2015] and Change Making [Shimomukai 2015] that can help to **Start From Yourself**. The *Know Yourself* pattern from Fearless Change and Change Making patterns both mention about knowing your passion and capabilities. This can help you explore inside of yourself to know more about what you really value and help you to become an *Evangelist* who takes actions based on those values.

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## No.1 Just Imagine

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*“Explore your inner self”*

Something has arisen in oneself and you want to present it to others. Think about whom you want to present the idea to and imagine they are in front of you, and just try.

You have “something” that you are excited about that you would like to share.

**That "something" is still very abstract, making it very hard to be transferred to others. How can we evolve this into “something” we are confident in presenting?**



You are afraid of some questions that might be asked when you propose your idea. How can you respond to those questions that you may not be able to answer?

When presenting new ideas, it is important to prepare. But if you prepare too much, it can be hard to get other people involved to get new opinions as they think you have all the answers.

New ideas often have skeptics or some people who may be suspicious of the idea, or may consider the idea as a weird one and give negative comments.



**Therefore, imagine the person you want to present the idea to is in front of you, and just try. Start presenting the idea out loud as if they are there. Practice with questions you are not prepared to answer asking for the person you imagine is in front of you to give feedback.**

Realize that the ideas coming from inside of you have nothing that should be judged. Instead, these ideas are something that could help everyone to sense the emerging future. There is no right or wrong. They are just ideas that can be tried and might help. **Listen to Your Inner Voice** (no.2), or think about the **Reason to Attend** (no.3) in case you feel you are not quite in the right place. Believing the **Power of Words** (no.4) can always help you step forward.

Actions that can help are...

1. Start from just telling stories without pretty slides or materials that take time to prepare and keep you from presenting.
2. Choose someone who you work closely with since he/she may know about your context and more likely will be able to understand what you are trying to say.

As you take these actions, you will start to be understood to some degree. It may not be perfect but you will still make good progress towards your end goal.

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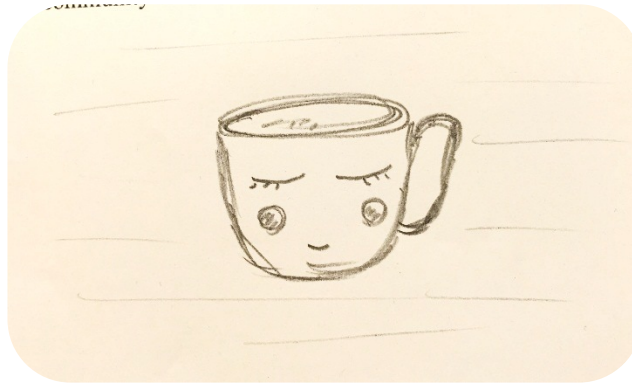
There are various Fearless Change patterns that can help you to **Just Imagine**. For example, *Imagine That* using *Tailor Made* messages can help you to tell stories about your idea and get feedback. A *Shoulder to Cry On* can be a good person to first tell your story to [Manns 2015].



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## No.2 Listen to Your Inner Voice

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*“How do I really want to be?”*

When you are too focused on your hypothesis and plans, there is less room to accept other peoples’ opinions or feelings. This can lead to you being isolated. Set aside your plans to become aware of the small voices that come from inside of you.

You have strong hypothesis, goals, or plans.

**By just focusing on your original plans or goals along and your own communication style, you are losing access to your feelings and other possibilities. Thus you can lose sense of being a whole self, and not ready to build trust with others.**



As you believe and focus too much on your hypothesis, plans and ways of communication, there is less room to accept other people’s opinions and feelings.

There is often peer pressure and fear of being judged in order to meet your expected obligations. For instance, as a company member you may feel you have to dress in a particular way and stay objective, thus suppressing your feelings.

It can scary to be brave enough to admit that some obligations are uncomfortable and can be obstacles that can prevent us from an emerging future?



**Therefore, put aside those perceived ideas and listen to your inner voice.**

In order to put aside what you believe in, you could...

1. Look at how local people communicate, how they dress, and what kind of topic they start with for casual communication. Listen closely to what the local community says.
2. Try to dress similar to the local community (maybe you would need to take off your dark suits and put on a T-shirt). Start talking to the community using familiar local topics.
3. After taking the above actions, reflect by yourself and become aware of how you feel.

As you start to listen to others, rather than talk about yourself, you start to hear the local community’s real feelings, including emotional reactions about your plan.

As you listen closely, you start to feel like you are part of the community, and lose the sense of looking at the community from outside of it.

\* \* \*

There are various Fearless Change patterns that can help you to **Listen to Your Inner Voice**. For example, *Location, Location, Location* can help you to have quiet time away from daily distractions [Manns 2015]. And *Time for Reflection* can help you to pull back sense of being a whole self.

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## No.3 Reason to Attend

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*“What do I really want to do?”*

If you have an uncomfortable feeling about being in a meeting or a workshop reflect on the reason for why you have chosen to attend. Especially consider an emotional tension that might have taken you there.

There is an upcoming meeting you have been requested to attend. You have some uncomfortable feelings about being there.

**There are often requirements to be at meetings that you are not that interested in attending. Specifically the meeting might not be something that you have an emotional connection or desire to be there. Since it is required, you have to attend this meeting anyway. How can you motivate yourself to not waste time while going to required meetings?**



Often there are required meetings that you must attend such as for some routine work or demanded task. You do not have strong ownership or enthusiasm for attending some of these required meetings.

When you are attending required meetings, most of your time is filled up with routine or demanded work. Since these tasks keep you so busy, it can prevent you from thinking about your personal desires.

Sometimes you try to connect to meetings you are not that interested in. However, this might take in too much of your time on a topic which can be disturbing or wasteful.

At a lot of routine meetings, people attending seem to be the same; not thinking much about their desire, but just following demanded tasks. However, there can be fears about sharing what one really thinks about the meeting. Won't I look different if I presented my uncomfortable feelings about being there just because it is required? Won't I sound odd if I honestly confessed that the topic is not that interesting to me?



**Therefore, reflect on the feelings or reasons that made you take some action for being at the meeting, even if the primary reason was because it was demanded. Look at how you can add value or get something meaningful from the meeting.**

Actions that can help are...

1. Connect your personal interest(s) with the topics discussed at the meeting.
2. Listen to other attendee's motivations and interests. Related these motivations and interests to your own personal interests.
3. One way to do this is to look more positive at the situation. For example, I have to be at the meeting anyway, how I can make this a good experience for me and others.
4. Reflect on these questions: What Can I get out of this meeting? How can I add value to this meeting?

As you take these actions, you may start to feel some sense of ownership emerge.

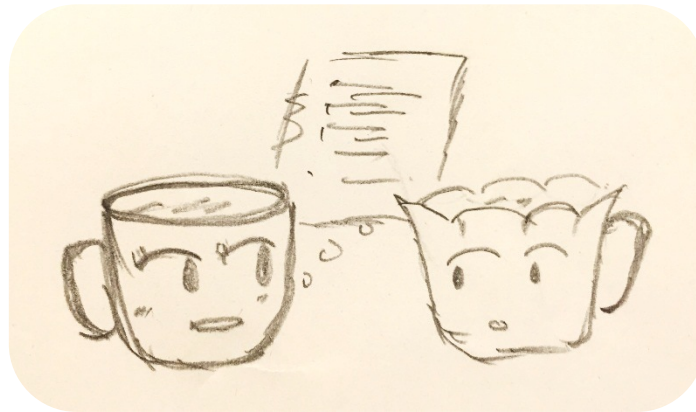
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There are some Fearless Change patterns that can help to find your **Reason to Attend**. For example you can take *Time for Reflection* to think for yourself the emotional reason that took you there [Manns 2015]. A *Shoulder to Cry On* can be someone to first say that you cannot be interested in the topic and why it is frustrating to attend.

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## No.4 Power of Words

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*“What words shall I put to my feelings?”*

When it is difficult to put words to your inner passion, express your idea the best you can and present to others without being afraid of what others will think about your idea.

There is a great passion inside you that you really want to try. However you are not sure how to present the ideas from the passion and there is some fear of what people might think.

**Others may not notice or understand your passion unless you express them. How can you share you passion with others.**



You have a strong passion or vision for something, for example a good idea to help your project move forward. You know who to ask for help, but you are afraid that asking for help may cause some extra work to that person. Will I be bothering that person? On the other hand, your passion may not be understood or realized unless it is expressed to others.

You have some action that you want to take, and you are pretty sure that it will help your project evolve. But, when that action requires help from outside your organization, you get worried whether it is okay to involve people from outside the organization.

You don't have the whole idea. You are still working on the details about how your idea will help with the project. So, you may be worried about asking for help with something that you don't have the complete details for yet. Will my idea be accepted or will they judge me or the idea since it is has not been completely thought out.



**Put your idea into words, try not to be too afraid of what others will think about it. Share your ideas with those who you trust and who can help you.**

In order to introduce your passion to others you must...

1. Think of a small first step and propose of it to others. (Such as to ask your friend to have a lunch, i.e. a *Brown Bag* meeting together).
2. Even if the first answer is not a friendly one, don't worry, try again on another day and possibly with someone else.
3. Once you have succeeded in taking a first step, use that experience to take the next step. Keep taking small steps and ultimately your vision or passion will be realized.

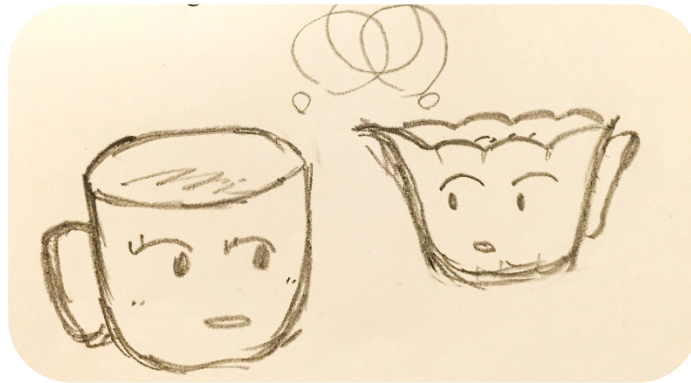
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There are some Fearless Change patterns that can help **Power of Words**. For example you can hold a *Brown Bag* meeting with people who you can trust and already share a lot of context with to get the first feedback [Manns 2015]. Or you can prepare a *Elevator Pitch*. The preparation process can help you to pull ideas together and the prepared short description will help you to collect many quick responses to your idea.

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## No.5 Propose Your Idea

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*“Share your feelings and impressions”*

You are worried about what other people might think of an idea you have. Just present your idea to people you trust and ask for feedback and impressions.

You have a rough idea or plan of something that you would like to try. But, you are worried about what other people might think of your idea.

**How can we overcome our fears and get unstuck to share a rough idea we have?**



When you are just thinking by yourself, you can be your worst critic, thus hesitating to take your first step. Ultimately a lot of time passes by and you can start to feel as if you are just wasting your time.

You have a rough idea that you think will help and you'd like to share. On the other hand, you may be discouraged by negative comments, or some may claim that the concept is still too rough to even give comments.

You are afraid to be judged by other individuals or organization's strategy. Some people may not always be objective and may react more emotionally, thinking that your idea is stupid or not useful.

In a company, you often don't worry about making plans that require people from other working groups, since required people will get assigned to participate. But when collaborating with a community or other stakeholders, other people may be busy with daily routines, and it may be hard to find time to just present new ideas to them and even harder to get them involved.

When collaborating with various people, some good ideas might be stolen or taken by those who want to get ahead or get a competitive advantage.



**Therefore, start from presenting what you want to try in casual conversations to those your trust and ask for simple personal impressions. From this early feedback, you can evolve your ideas and expand your trust relationships by communicating your ideas to others.**

Before getting able to present your idea, you may need to get connected with the local community. Try to make **Personal Connections** (no.6) by expressing your personal impressions. Even if there is resistance to our idea at first, try **Building Trust** (no.7). Then you may get a chance to be more connected with the community. **Mikoshi Together** (no.8) and attending local events can help you build trusting relationships that makes it easier to present your ideas.

Actions that can help are...

1. Start from presenting your ideas to someone close to you; possible outside of your work group. This could be to friends, family member, or colleagues.
2. Choose someone who you work closely with and trust, since he/she may know about your context and will more likely be able to understand what your idea is all about.
3. Try experimental workshops to get feedback to improve your ideas.

As you take these actions, you get to know the first impression from others; you have something to start with. From here you can continue on realizing your idea.

\* \* \*

The following Fearless Change patterns can help you to **Propose Your Idea**. Holding a *Brown Bag Meeting* and using *Personal Touch* can always help when you want to start with small unofficial discussions about your idea [Manns 2015]. A good way to **Propose Your Idea** is to *Just Do It* and *Test the Waters*. This can help you to take *Baby Steps*. Look for *Innovators* and *Early Adopters* that you can trust. These people are the ones who you want feedback from.



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## No.6 Personal Connection

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*“Sharing feelings and impressions always helps knowing each other”*

During conversations be sure to include your personal impressions as well as the official ones. Build closer personal relationships by sharing feelings.

There is a strong official relationship in the team along with personal relationships within the company.

**When focused too much on official requirements or roles, there is less of a chance to connect at a personal emotional level. Sometimes those who are subordinate will be fearful or unwilling to express opinions or to share emotional impressions on official requirements. How can we get honest feedback and opinions about issues when dealing with this mix of personal and official requirements?**



Being too assertive about your official roles, may keep others away from openly discussing ideas with you or even trust you for small conversation about local topics.

A subordinate might feel they will be rude if they challenge their superiors. It can be scary and possibly dangerous to challenge those in official roles.

You want to open up to help subordinates to feel comfortable sharing with you. On the other hand, that way of using your time may not be accepted by your company. The corporate culture might focus on being more efficient and to only take time for topics that are directly related to your duty.



**Therefore, value personal relationships as well as the official ones. Be there as a whole self, not just an agent from some company. Work to build trust and let people know it is ok to openly share ideas.**

Actions that may help are...

1. Occasionally put your official role aside; encourage people to share openly.
2. Try some small conversations, for example discuss some local food or scenery that you like, or ask those around you what their interests are.
3. Take plenty of time to listen to local stories. Really listen and relate to the stories.

As you take these actions, you may gain a chance to build trust with the local community and that could evolve to some common project in the future. Sometimes you may need to find ways to incorporate this into your organization. For example, create *Study Groups*, *Do Food* such as go out to lunch with your subordinates. *Corridor Politics* can also help if the organization is strict.

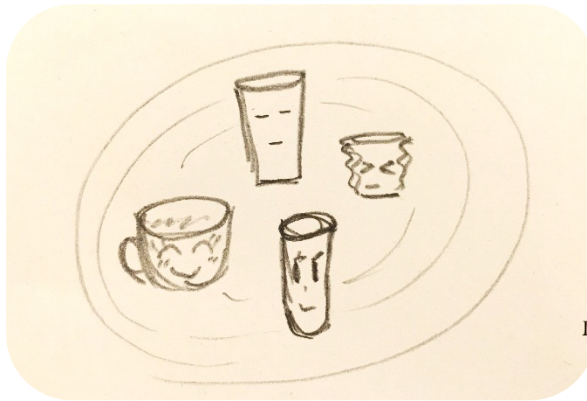
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There are various Fearless Change patterns that can help to build **Personal Connection**. For example you can hold *Study Groups* and *Do Food* there to share *Hometown Stories* [Manns 2015]. And that could help to build *Emotional Connection* that is an essential part for **Personal Connection**. If some events such as *Do Food* is a new work style for your company *Corridor Politics* in advance may help a lot.

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## No.7 Building Trust

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*“The opposite side of love is to ignore”*

When you are new to a community, it is often hard for your ideas to be accepted. Communicate with skeptics to build trust with them, which can be a good start to connect more deeply with the community.

You are new (alien) to a community and you are bringing a new project for the community to work on. It is important to learn about the community and how the community can work together on fulfilling the needs of the project.

**At first, many from the community may not like the project introduced by newcomer. There can be many opposing comments from members of the community as they feel they are being challenged. Also, the community works well together but has not yet figured out how to work with the new person (alien).**



People within a community have built relationships and their own interests and may not have interests in new ideas from outside their community.

The community member may not have much experience in collaborating with people from outside the community. They may be scared or feel suspicious about doing something together with someone who they don't know much.

Communities have varying personalities and it takes time to build trust and accept new ideas from “outsiders”.



**Therefore, communicate with skeptics to help them REALLY get interested in your project. Once you convince the skeptics you are in a good position to convince the rest of the community.**

In order to convince the skeptics you must...

1. Ask them why they are skeptical.
2. Talk to them about the problems with the new project.
3. Ask them how they might solve those problems.
4. Go out for lunch and dinner with them *Do Food*.

As you communicate with the skeptics, you start to build a trust relationship and you address some of their fears and concerns. They also start to feel like they are part of the project and can begin to take ownership. They will open them up to bring this to other team members.

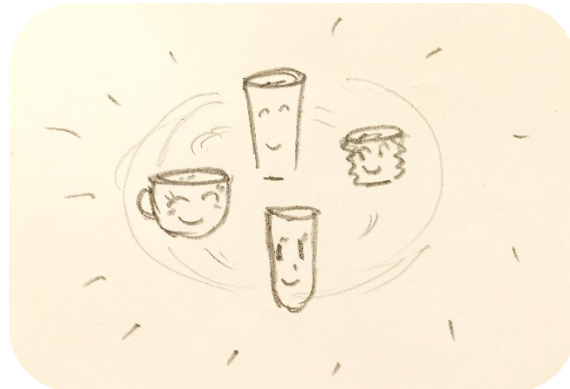
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There are various Fearless Change patterns that can help with **Building Trust**. For example when you find someone with negative comments you can ask he/she to be a *Champion Skeptic* so you can evolve your idea [Manns 2015]. If you feel that there are half-truth rumors out there, clarify your idea using *Myth Buster* pattern. Even though there are some resistances to your idea, *Fear Less* and ask for help from them. *Do Food* will always help you when you want to ask for help in casual atmosphere.

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## No.8 Mikoshi<sup>1</sup> Together

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*“Share the food from the same pan”*

There are borders which you are difficult to cross when you are dressed and seen as a company person with job titles. Attend local events and travel privately to build trust and relationships.

You are working for a company which has a strong bias towards commercial context which emphasizes company roles.

**Local community members see you as “a company person”. This can get in the way from you getting to know local people’s life and thus, keeps you from reaching social issues within the community.**



There are borders which you cannot cross while you are dressed as a company person with various job titles. The higher your job title is, the harder it gets for people to feel comfortable talking with you to have *Personal Connections* [Manns 2015].

There are boundaries between work and private time. If you have your own family, you may already have a lot of local events that you should attend. Some local events are held during vacation periods which means that if you want to attend, you would have to work during a holiday or your vacation. Family members might not approve or want you to work during your vacation or on a holiday.

Most companies expect you to separate work responsibilities and personal life. Spending work time with your family can be frowned upon and considered not good for the company. Also, your family can feel they are interfering with the work and risking opportunities if they interfere with you during work.



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<sup>1</sup> Mikoshi (神輿/ 御輿) is a divine palanquin (also translated as portable Shinto shrine). Shinto followers believe that it serves as the vehicle to transport a deity in Japan while moving between main shrine and temporary shrine during a festival or when moving to a new shrine. Often, the mikoshi resembles a miniature building, with pillars, walls, a roof, a veranda and a railing. [ref Wikipedia]

**Therefore, attend local events, travel privately at your own expense, and if you can, take your family members with you.**

Some actions that can help with this are...

1. Go to a local festival and hold Mikoshi with local people.
2. Take your family with you when attending local events.
3. Take the attitude as if this is your home town, and try to love what is there.

Taking the above action can help you and local members to become more connected.

There can be challenges when your family attends local events. For example, how can there be a good blend of personal family activities and company activities? The challenge for a company is how to try a new work style. As a first step, the company could organize an open workshop that family members can attend in addition to local community members. In that way, the company is making the event more open to everyone rather than just employees.

\* \* \*

There are various patterns from Fearless Change that can help you to do **Mikoshi Together**. For example, you will be able to meet *Connectors* at local festivals which can help you to get *Gurus on your side*; getting connected with a Guru of the community is often difficult in everyday context [Manns 2015]. As you share “Mikoshi” at local regular festivals, you will build new relationships and it will become easier to get to know and talk with the local Gurus starting from casual conversations.

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## No.9 Common Connection

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*“Coming together makes the world go round”*

When working on issues with two or more stakeholders, how can you make it so that you can see the big picture that is affecting all stakeholders? Find common issues among multiple stakeholders to connect them.

You are working on issues that involve two or more stakeholders. Each relationship with the stakeholders are independent although there can be related issues amongst the stakeholders.

**When working with stakeholders with independent issues, your team can evolve to become a hub and spoke. Although this has some advantages, it is often the case that a project doesn't scale out as the stakeholders do not see the big picture. How can we involve multiple stakeholders to see if there are advantages and to see if there are ideas that overlap?**



When working with individual stakeholders, you focus narrowly on the specific issue common to just you and the stakeholder.

If the scope is small, outcomes can also be small. You might be micro-optimizing, thus missing the big picture.

Not understanding the overall vision and how pieces fit into this larger view can lead to a sub-optimal vision for everyone.



**Therefore, try to broaden the scope and look for common issues among all stakeholders that you are connected to. Communicate the big picture to everyone and share common ideas and how individual pieces fit into the overall scope.**

Actions that can help are...

1. Start from listening deeply to each stakeholder that you are connected to.
2. Abstract the stories that you have heard from stakeholders and look for points that may be common among them.
3. Once you have come up with some common issue candidates, tell that story to future stakeholders. They can use this to build upon shared interests.
4. Start by focusing on the “what” rather than talking about the details such as the “how”.

As you take these actions, you may get to approach common issue among various stakeholders and connect them. You may not be able to meet specific needs that involve only you and a specific stakeholder when you are focusing more on the bigger picture. To resolve this you can still have individual communications with individual stakeholders to address their specific concerns.

\* \* \*

To get connected with various stakeholders, try **Context Context Context**(no.10). While making small connections, you can make prototypes together by **Just Doing It** (no.11). Once you start to sense the big picture, then **Let it Go** (no.12) and then you can start to share the *Evolving Vision*.

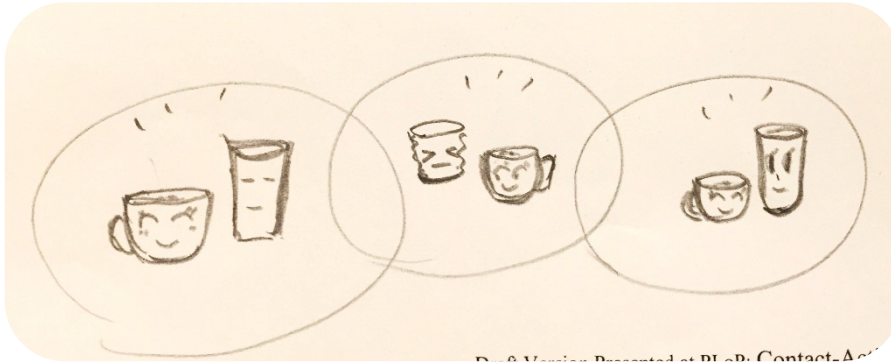
There are various Fearless Changes patterns that can be used to help build this **Common Connection**. For example you can hold a *Town Hall Meeting* or *Study Group* to share the vision [Manns 2015]. The use of *Hometown Stories* is always a good way to make *Personal Connections* during the get-together. Sometime you need a *Bridge Builder* to facilitate the connections. This can lead to *Future Commitments*.



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## No.10 Context Context Context

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*“Context is where the true meaning lies”*

You want to get connected with the community and be involved as an individual rather than someone representing a company. Make small connections and share context.

You are entering a new community as a member of a company. There is a strong boundary around a community and it seems hard to get connected with. You want to know about the community and get involved as an individual rather than someone representing a company.

**Quite often when you enter a new community, too little is shared since you don't share context, thus you don't have a lot to say to each other. Since the local community will have very little information about the new member, how can they get better connected and build trust?**



When there is someone new to a group, the original members of the local community tend to see and judge that new person with biases; this usually happens because they don't know or have relationships with this person yet.

A new person to a group will know very little about the group and their background. Similarly, the group will know little if anything about the new person's background and experiences. This can make for early communication difficult until everyone learns more about each other.

Sometimes it can be threatening when a new person joins a group. At first, a person new to a community may look different and be seen as an outsider. This can lead to resistance from the community as they might not trust the outsider's motives. It can be difficult at first to find something in common, so that communication can start and the fears get smaller.



**Therefore, make small connections and share context. Look into yourself, explore for something that you can discuss in common.**

Actions that can help are...

1. Just say hello if you meet the local person in town. Greet them with a smile and warm greeting if you see them on the street.
2. Attend social gatherings with them and entertain conversations about personal interests.
3. Say good bye when spending time together; for example participating in a workshop.

4. *Just Say Thanks* and *Keep in Touch* with whom you shared time with.

As you take the actions above, you will grow closer with community members. However, it is important to note that as you become closely connected; it will become harder for someone from your company to replace you in case you are assigned to a different task. To resolve this, you can be the *Connector* between the new person from your company and the local community assisting the new person to make good connections with the local community.

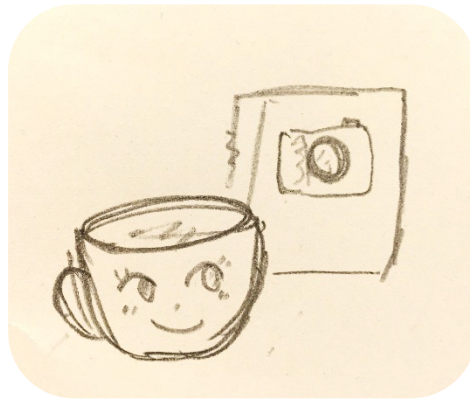
\* \* \*

The *Stay in Touch* and *Sincere Appreciation* patterns from the Fearless Change patterns can help you to make small connections for **Context Context Context**. You can include some stories about your new idea when you share context and that can lead you to *Plant the Seeds* for future collaborations [Manns 2015].

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## No.11 Just Do It

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*“Good ideas and good intentions are useless without action”*

When you have new ideas and are not sure how to get started, take action and prototype your ideas and improve them through feedback.

You are starting something new with rough ideas that have some actions you want to do.

**Just thinking inside your mind or getting obsessed with how to completely implement new ideas can be overwhelming and doesn't always give a lively image. In fact, obsessing about the ideas can make the task seem overwhelming making it harder to see how to realize the ideas and to introduce them to others.**



It can be hard to communicate new ideas by only using words. What you imagine and share through words might be interpreted differently from others. They may have a different image than what you tried to share with words.

It is often tempting to want to know exactly how something should look, including knowing all the details, before you show it to someone else. There is a fear that they might not like something that is incomplete or there will be judgments of problems with your idea.

Putting some ideas out there in a rough format can help with some brainstorming. On the other hand, incomplete ideas may bias you away from a more exciting image or shape of your idea and prevent your idea from evolving more.



**Therefore, prototype your ideas and improve the ideas through feedback. Continue to evolve your ideas with feedback being open for new ideas.**

Actions that can help are...

1. Try to draw pictures, make simple prototypes.
2. Show them to others (people you trust), ask for feedback.
3. Evolve these ideas and update your prototype as you receive feedback.

As you take these actions, you will become more confident with idea as it evolves and that will help you to see your vision more clearly.

\* \* \*

There are various Fearless Change patterns that can help to **Just Do It**. For example you can find *Low Hanging Fruit* by running *Trial Runs* [Manns 2015]. As you *Test the Waters* you start to take *Baby Steps* forward. As your ideas get better, you create an *Elevator Pitch* to share the ideas, thus you start to *Involve Everyone*.

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## No.12 Let it Go

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*“Let the project be ours not mine!”*

Your project requires more than you can handle? Don't think of managing the project all by yourself. Collaborate with others and let others help you.

There is a complex social issue project you are in charge of. You have to come up with a solution for implementing the details of this project.

**Many people are involved from different sectors of the community. You are reaching the limits of what you can do and the project requires something beyond your ability. How can you get this project completed with the time and knowledge you have?**



Everyone has limited time, energy, and knowledge. You are afraid to accept your limitations and think that you will be judged if you ask for help.

You do not have access to other resources such as experts or connectors. You may not know who the experts are. Also, you may not know who might know of someone who is familiar with a task that you need.

You may not know how to ask people how to make connections. You may be shy to get connected with someone you are not familiar with.

There is a risk of losing control of the project. You have created a concrete vision and have made plans about implementing the project. There can be fear of those plans being changed by other people.



**Therefore, don't think of managing your project all by yourself. Let others come in and help you. Accept and trust that the plan will change positively as an *Evolving Vision*.**

The actions that can help are...

1. Do not hesitate to ask for small helps.
2. Take the courage to ask for help. Don't worry if someone cannot help, they can just say "Sorry, not at this time". It costs almost nothing to just ask. It only requires courage.
3. Accept the help that is offered. Keep in touch with those who have helped you and says thanks. This might help you get connected to a *Connector* and then you will have better access to various people.

Taking the above actions can lead you to a greater success on your project than you would have achieved if you had not asked for help. As you do this, the project might take a life of its own on, and you may lose charge of the project and the vision may evolve.

\* \* \*

There are various Fearless Changes patterns that can help **Let it Go**. First of all you can *Ask for Help* [Manns 2015]. This will be the first *Baby Step* you take. Once you achieved to do something together, take this as a *Small Success*. *Ask for Help* from people who you want to have as a *Mentor* or a *Local Sponsor*. Little by little you come closer to *Involving Everyone*. Remember those who have helped you as a *Go-To Person* and *Just Say Thanks* to them. They will be the people you can rely on in future. Don't hesitate to share the *Evolving Vision*. Since that will be the very gift you receive after you **Let it Go**.

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## Summary

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In this paper we have introduced the basic idea of a Contact-Activity communication process that can be used by a company to collaborate with the local community on social issues in a positive, inner motivation driven way. This included the 13 patterns that we found and that were shared and repeated among 10 members of Fuji Xerox during the past 4 years during the Contact-Activity communication process in Tohoku, Japan.

For our future work, we would like to share more and evolve our learning and ideas from the Contact-Activity communication process. We strongly believe that by expressing our experience in patterns, and by sharing and rewriting these through workshops, is a good way to communicate and openly share these important concepts.

### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our shepherd Joseph Yoder for his valuable comments and continuous support during the PLoP 2015 shepherding process. This is our first challenge to write patterns in English. Sharing all 13 in English following beautiful pattern format could not have happened without his dedicated help. We would also like to acknowledge Takashi Iba for giving us valuable feedbacks on Japanese version of a Contact-Activity process patterns. Our appreciation also goes to Hiroshi Nakano for helping us to learn how to make use of the connection between the patterns and the Fearless Change patterns.

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