

## The Pro Action Café version (2 page version)

The Pro Action Café is 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 for to manifest in the world.

The concept of Pro Action Café is a blend of 'World Café' and 'Open Space' technologies. It was first conceived by Rainer von Leoprechting and Ria Baeck in Brussels / Belgium.

### **What is Pro Action Café Good For?**

As a conversational process, the Pro Action Café is a collective, innovative methodology for hosting conversations about calls, questions and projects that matter to the people that attend. These conversations link and build on each other as people move between café tables, cross-pollinate ideas, and offer each other new insights into the questions or issues that are most important in their life, work, organization or community.

As a process, the Pro Action 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. Pro Action 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.

### **General Flow of a Pro Action Café:**

First: quick check-in circle to connect to the purpose of the session and with each other. If check-in has already taken place as part of a longer process go straight to building the agenda.

You need 2 ½ to 3 hours for a good Pro Action café. Invite participants to step forward with their questions or ideas. In that way they ask the community for the help they need to move more into action. People with a call / project stand up, speak it and write it on the agenda that corresponds to a numbered café table.

Count the amount of participants divided by 4 that gives the amount of callers with projects / sessions that can be worked - with 40 people you can have maximum 10 callers with each their own project. **The principle is first come, first serve.** If you have less callers add chairs to café tables but no more than 5 at each table. During this process each contributing participant (those who did not step forward) get to contribute / support to 3 of the different calls / projects.

When the agenda has been created invite the callers to go to their numbered café tables. There will be 3 rounds of conversation in café style of 20 to 30 minutes - each guided by a few generic questions to help deepen and focus the conversations:

**Round 1: *What is the quest behind the call /question/ project?*** - to deepen the need and purpose of the call. Guests on the table or not to give advice, but to deepen the insight of the table host.

**Round 2: *What is missing?*** – when the quest has been deepened, explore what could make the project more complete and possible.

**Round 3: *What am I learning about myself? – What am I learning about my project? - What next steps will I take? - What help do I still need? – to help bring it all together for caller and his/ her project.***

This 3rd round is in 2 steps:

Some minutes for the callers to reflect by themselves on the 4 questions above and harvest their key insights.

Then a last round where 3 new guest visit the tables to listen to the harvest of the caller, their learning, their steps, help needed – and then offer any insight and any further support they can offer...

Between each round (or once) create breaks for the contributors to have a drink, relax together and get ready to support another caller in their quest/ project.

Last step is to meet in the big circle and invite the callers from each table to share answers to these 2 questions:

- **What am I grateful for?**
- **What are my next steps?**

If there is time the whole group call reflect shortly on: **What applications do we see for practicing Pro Action café in our contexts?** End the Pro Action Café with a collective gesture to appreciate the work done and the gifts offered and received.

#### **Materials and Set-Up:**

Ideally create a large circle in one part of the room and enough café tables with 4 chairs in another part (if the size of the room does not allow this, then participants will move the tables and chairs themselves as soon as the agenda is created).

Dress the tables with flipchart paper, colour pens and markers as basic café set up.

Prepare the matrix for the agenda setting of the session with the right amount of sessions according to the number of participants divided by 4. Have fun and do good work together.

*The real voyage of discovery lies not in seeking new landscapes, but in seeing with new eyes.*

*Marcel Proust*

<http://artofhosting.ning.com/forum/topics/passion-for-pro-action-cafe>