



Collaborating to build the resilience of coconut farmers in the Philippines

Scenario

You're a project manager running a collaborative project to build the resilience of coconut farmers in the Philippines. It's a project that connects smallholder farmers with better information and services – by equipping a case worker with a smart device. There are six other organisations involved

- A government agency
- A national agricultural university
- Coconut buyer
- Cacao buyer
- Micro-finance institution
- Tech provider

You're at the very start of the project, you've engaged with everyone and they all seem really enthusiastic, including senior leaders in the organisations. However you have a niggling doubt about whether there might be competing agendas between suppliers. You're wondering how you can make sure the project is a success.

Over to you

1. Which dynamic will you pay attention to?
2. What move will you make?



The real story...

This was a project with Grameen Foundation Philippines to create their Farmerlink programme.

The dynamic

The key dynamic was **Belief**: a sense of purpose and finding the optimism that we will need to succeed.

The move

The project leader gathered everyone in Manilla for a 1.5 day workshop to work through all the details and build a strong shared vision. This gave everyone the space to describe what they wanted to give and get from the project.

The result

They learned that actually everyone had a very similar shared vision - to build a stronger, more resilient coconut farming industry that was good for everyone involved. As a side effect, the project team built strong alliances across the senior levels of the organisations involved.





Getting 41 fine artists in 6 cities to co-ordinate their collaboration

Scenario

You're at the start of a collaborative art project involving 41 artists in 6 cities: Beirut, Cape Town, Medellín, Los Angeles, London and Istanbul.

The project is ambitious and everyone's excited: each city's artists will co-create a body of work together, mingling and clashing their personal styles. The project requires each artist to be working separately and then meet together to exchange work and see what is emerging. The aim is to deliver all the 41 finished pieces from 6 cities in time to exhibit at an arts festival in London. As the project owner, you don't have direct contact with all the individual artists, instead each city is hosted by an artist you know, trust and have worked with before. They selected local artists, who they know and trust. There are a lot of moving parts to this project and each of the artists involved has many questions.

Over to you

1. Which dynamic will you pay attention to?
2. What move will you make?



The real story...

The Mixup is a collaborative project by Richard Watkins

See the work at www.themixup.org

The dynamic

The key dynamic was **Structure**: a clear and grounded plan for what we are doing, held with the right flexibility.

The move

- Set a transparent timeline that everyone involved in the project could see, understand and agree to. Instead of trying to rush the project through quickly, they allowed a generous time to deliver the work.
- Accountability - each city host was fully in control of the local hosting and empowered to edit the plan/process (but not the timeline) as appropriate to fit local artists.

The result

Timelines of course slipped, but not by much. And The Mixup has shown not just in London (as part of Camberwell Arts Festival) but also Istanbul, Cape Town and LA.



A more engaging experience for high-value charity donors



Scenario

You are new in a role working for a cancer charity, and are in charge of updating the way we engage with people who have given over £100K. You're figuring out how to appropriately recognise their generosity and keep them feeling connected and appreciated – What is the best way to stay in touch? What updates do they want? What are the right messages to share? What kind of events do you invite them to?

The project is well under way and you've spoken to lots of supporters and learned a lot about what needs to change – but some questions are hard to get to grips with and really understand what needs to shift. Your research with donors says that the whole experience (good and bad) is mediated through local relationship managers who are not based in the London head office where this project is being run. You've not spoken to any of them formally about the project.

Over to you

1. Which dynamic will you pay attention to?
2. What move will you make?



The real story...

Let's Go partnering on a real project with a major research charity – but some details have changed.

The dynamic

The key dynamic was **Involvement**: the right mix of people involved and getting the best out of each other.

The move

The project owner re-ordered the project, putting the regional relationship managers at the heart of developing the strategy. They ran a survey to get perspectives from all relationship managers in the organisation, set up calls with the regional heads of the department to walk them through the approach and then went to the local office in Derby for a workshop to take the whole team through the ideas, engage them with the content and ask their help with the unresolved questions.

The result

The relationship management team gave some great insight into what would/wouldn't work and made significant shifts in the strategy. They also felt that their voice was heard and really bought into the overall approach – and didn't need as much training to deliver it.



Collaborating with young people to create content for young people

Scenario

You've got a great idea to revolutionise a social media strategy for a broadcaster. You want to reach out to young people and encourage them to be content creators not just content consumers. You've seen young people creating content around the world and you believe it's possible for the broadcaster to be a part of this.

Can young people create content that's good enough to broadcast and find an audience that wants to share it? Can you get the senior leadership to believe this, and can you navigate the bureaucracy involved in securing the investment you need to make this happen? Can you persuade an organisation steeped in tradition to reach out to young people in a completely new way?

Over to you

1. Which dynamic will you pay attention to?
2. What move will you make?



The real story...

This is an anecdotal interpretation of a real story: The Social at BBC Scotland.

The dynamic

The key dynamic was **Progress**: momentum towards our goals and focusing on successful delivery.

The move

The project team decided not to get mired in debating the idea with senior leadership, but to just get on and test their hypothesis that young people could create good content.

They secured a small amount of budget and, ignoring the normal protocol, found a group of engaged young people and made a load of content really fast using phones and low-tech/cheap equipment.

The result

When the team went to the senior leaders, instead of pitching them the idea and talking about the content, they were able to show them what they'd made. It turned out to be better than they'd hoped and the project moved forwards at pace.

THE SOCIAL
from **BBC** Scotland

Driving collaboration through your organisation



Scenario

You are the CEO of an airline in turnaround. You and your exec team know that you need the organisation to be more collaborative, especially between head office and operations, where there is some historical distance. You are setting up a leadership development course to address gaps in skills.

The company runs a regular survey. Recent results show that the employees don't consider the execs to be united as a team, they're viewed as a collection of separate leaders. Some team members have been in their positions for a long time, and some are new. It's frustrating because everyone on the team has their heart in exactly the right place and is working so hard and are really stretched.

You discuss it as a team and people seem to agree that it might be part of the reason why the organisation is not collaborating further down the chain.

Over to you

1. Which dynamic will you pay attention to?
2. What move will you make?



The real story...

Let's Go working with the Executive Team of a major European airline.

The dynamic

The key dynamic was **Care**: the strong relationships that generate resilience and lasting commitment.

The move

Reflecting on the results of the survey, the exec team realised that they hadn't really invested in their relationships as a team, and had been too busy focusing on task management and delivering on strategy. They realised that this investment wasn't just a 'nice to have' but held real strategic importance and was pivotal to the success of the company. The conversation felt like a release – everyone was very enthusiastic about connecting more and offering support to each other.

One practical step was to start their weekly team meeting 30mins later in the day, using the extra time to sit down and have lunch together before each meeting.

The result

Lunch together allowed for more informal off-agenda conversations to develop 'would you mind if...'. It's early days but the signs are good for a little step towards a more cohesive team with more resilient relationships.