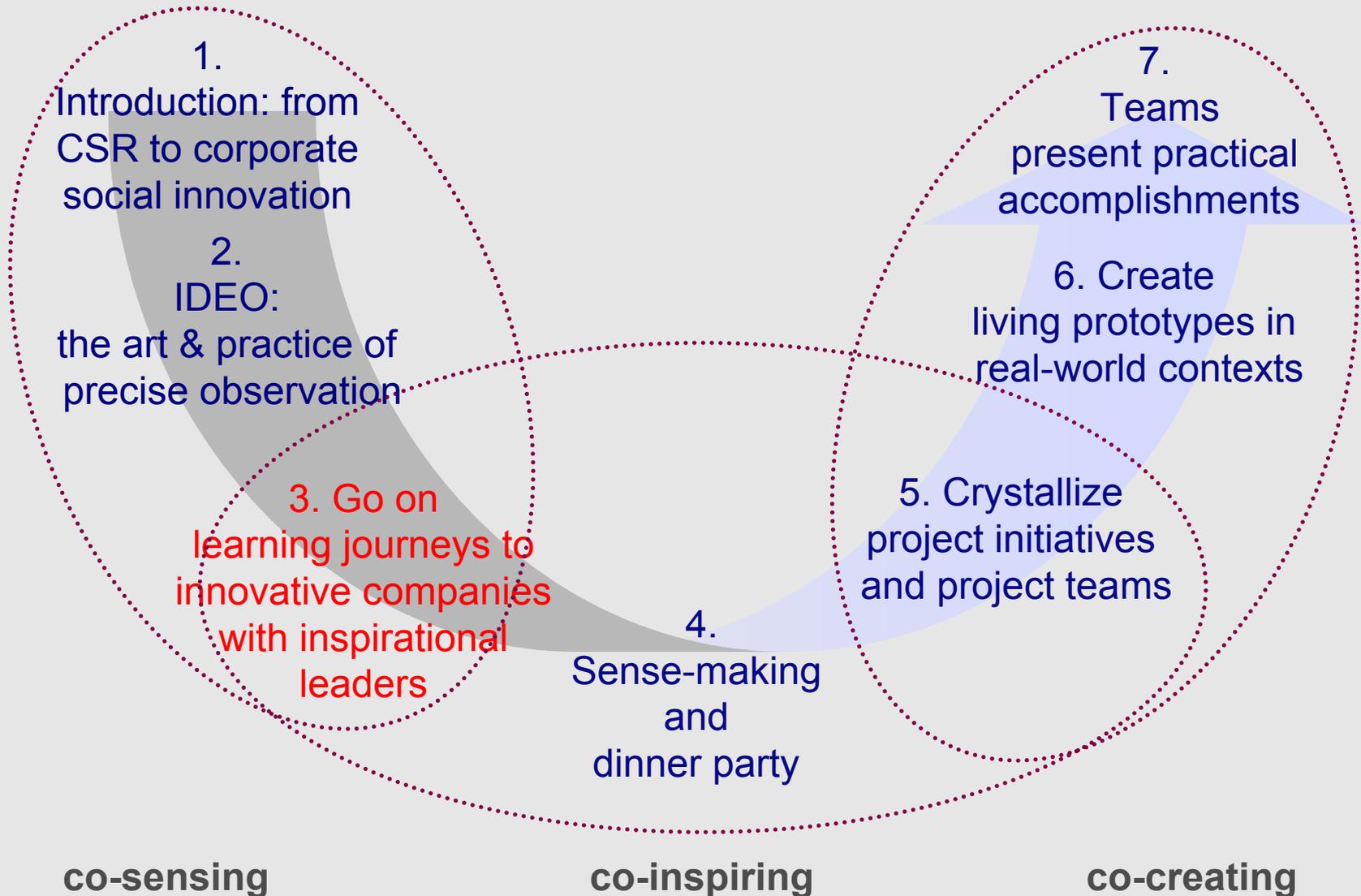


# **Dialogue Interviews**

**Teaching Materials:  
Leadership Lab for  
Corporate Social Innovation**

# Leadership Lab for Corporate Social Innovation: One Process, Three Stages, Seven Elements



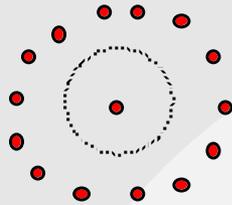
**Capacity-Building  
for Conducting  
Dialogue Interviews**

# Twelve Principles of Dialogue Interviews

1. **Preparation:** use www; do background reading; develop a questionnaire; schedule the interview
2. **Intention:** “the most important hour is the hour before the interview” (Jaworski); develop a sense of profound openness and an intention of serving
3. **Initial contact:** create transparency and trust about the purpose and the process of the interview; establish a direct eye-to-eye (heart-to-heart) connection early on (Jaworski)
4. **Access your ignorance:** pay attention to and trust the questions that occur to you; don’t be afraid to ask simple or “stupid” questions (Schein)
5. **VOJ:** suspend your Voj (voice of judgment) and develop a sense of wonder (Ray)
6. **Access your empathic listening:** put yourself in your interviewee’s shoes--and thoroughly appreciate/enjoy/love the story you hear unfolding
7. **Access your generative listening:** listen for your interviewee’s highest self--his or her highest future possibility--and at the same time try to listen from that place--not just from who she is today, but from her evolving future Self
8. **Go with the flow:** let go of old ideas and concepts (Schein)
9. **Questions:** focus first on What, not on Why or on confrontational questions; you want to get into a flow, not into a debate (Schein)
10. **Generative silence:** this may be the most important (and least visible) intervention you can perform: while you remain silent you slow down the interviewee and help her to access the deeper aspects of her story, her work, and her life; generative silence requires the interviewer’s utmost level of attention, presence, and intention
11. **Journey question:** if appropriate, reconnect the interviewee’s biography (for example, why he or she pursued a certain profession or embarked on a particular journey) with what that person now senses wants to unfold in her life or in a social context around her.
12. **Post-interview:** ”debrief” and crystallize right away; capture observations and insights in your journal; don’t even make phone calls or have short conversations between the interview and recording your thoughts and impressions; use a structured debriefing process.

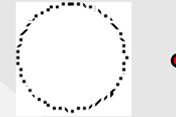
# **Four Field Structures of Listening**

# Listening from What Emerges



## Generative Listening

- ⇒ Listening from the future wanting to emerge (Source)
- ⇒ The world as Self-Birthing Sculpture
- ⇒ The Self as operating from outside and within the boundaries of its organization (Self as Source)



## Empathic Listening

- ⇒ Empathetic listening (from within)
- ⇒ The world as arising from a formative field
- ⇒ The self (of the listener) moving beyond the boundary of its own organization (beyond its prison)

Primacy of the Whole

## Judgmental Listening

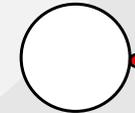
- ⇒ Downloading habits of thought
- ⇒ The world as mental projection
- ⇒ The self as captured in the prison of its own organization



Primacy of the Parts

## Listening from Outside

- ⇒ Observation from outside
- ⇒ The world as a set of objects
- ⇒ The self as looking through the windows of its own organization



Listening from What Is  
(Patterns of the Past)

# **Four Field Structures of Conversation**

# Enacting Emerging Futures

## Generative Dialogue

- ⇒ presencing, flow
- ⇒ time: slowing down
- ⇒ space: boundaries collapse
- ⇒ listening from future Self
- ⇒ rule-generating

## Reflective Dialogue

- ⇒ Inquiry
- ⇒ I can change my view
- ⇒ empathic listening  
(from within the other self)
- ⇒ other = you
- ⇒ rule-reflecting

Primacy of  
the Whole

Primacy of  
the Parts

## Talking Nice

- ⇒ Downloading
- ⇒ polite, cautious
- ⇒ listening=projecting
- ⇒ rule-reenacting

## Talking Tough

- ⇒ debate, clash
- ⇒ I am my point of view
- ⇒ Listening = reloading
- ⇒ other = target
- ⇒ rule-revealing

Reenacting Patterns of the Past

## For more information on this session:

Scharmer, C. O. (Forthcoming).

*The Blind Spot of Leadership: Presencing as a Social Technology of Freedom* (working title).

Scharmer, C.O. 2001. Self-transcending knowledge: Sensing and Organizing Around Emerging Opportunities. In: *Journal of Knowledge Management*, Vol. 5, no. 2: 137–150.

Senge, P., C. O. Scharmer, J. Jaworski, and B. S. Flowers. (Forthcoming).

*Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future* (working title).

[www.dialogonleadership.org](http://www.dialogonleadership.org), [www.ottoscharmer.com](http://www.ottoscharmer.com)