

## The 4 Voices of Collaborative Innovation



**THE VOICE OF EXPERTISE** is about understanding with our heads. This is the voice of rational research and analysis, of selecting and tracking metrics, of measuring effectiveness.

### PRINCIPLES

Create a goal that's specific enough to measure progress.  
Treat everything as a hypothesis—and test these.  
See the whole system.

### METHODS

Map barriers and emerging opportunities.  
Invite experts to help the group learn more about the issues.  
Eliminate limiting factors.

### TRAPS

Believing that rigorous analysis is more true than real-world experience.  
Getting stuck in trying to understand the issue (Analysis Paralysis).  
Going around and around (Death by debate).

### GIFTS

Rigor.  
Discipline.  
Methodical analysis.  
Systemic understanding.



**THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE** is about understanding with our hearts. This is the voice that reminds us to listen for pain and hope, to deepen our insight into the lives of others, to feel empathy.

### PRINCIPLES

Start understanding the system from the experiences of real people.  
Understand the context to create full solutions.

### METHODS

Context experts.  
Experience models.  
Experience prototypes.  
Journey maps.  
Personas.

### TRAPS

Weighing lived experience over systemic understanding.  
Wanting to help without understanding impact.  
Settling for sympathy.  
Developing a “we’re helping the helpless” mindset.

### GIFTS

Focus.  
Empathy.  
Perspective.  
Grounded solutions.



**THE VOICE OF DESIGN** is about working with our hands. This is a creative, dynamic voice reminding us to work openly and collaboratively and iterate early and often to create solutions faster.

### PRINCIPLES

Test ideas early.  
Fail early and often.  
Quick rounds of brief feedback help more than one big round.  
Go with what's working.

### METHODS

Physical modeling.  
Storyboarding.  
Offering questions not suggestions in feedback rounds.  
Storyboards and scenarios to focus on HOW, not IF.

### TRAPS

Losing steam when we hit hard realities and political resistance.  
Incremental mindset.  
Experimentation over implementation.  
Losing track of the purpose and desired outcomes.

### GIFTS

Progress.  
Fast results.  
Momentum.  
Fast learning.



**THE VOICE OF INTENT** is about working from our spirit and our highest purpose. This voice invites us to dream big, bring our passion, and to aspire for better, more meaningful futures for all.

### PRINCIPLES

Craft a unifying purpose.  
Revisit the purpose in times of doubt or confusion.  
Deepen purpose over time.  
Differentiate, then integrate.

### METHODS

Purpose for the group and purposes for each meeting.  
Share individuals hopes and intentions.  
Define both focus and frame.  
Discuss frustrations and fears.

### TRAPS

Dreaming over doing.  
Assuming unity without testing it.  
Groupthink.  
Failing to adapt purpose and strategies to changing context.

### GIFTS

Clear purpose.  
Personal growth.  
Deep engagement.  
Diversity within unity.