

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP JOURNEY

I have two daughters who are like the mystery in my life. I have tried my best to keep them from being the mysterious presence in my life, and they have been rebellious. This spring, the oldest decided to take care of herself and in the midst of that, got the old man taking care of her. She is crazy about animals, and says she will stay in the Order as long as she is assigned someplace where she can take care of animals. She wants to be a vet.

She was coming home from school and heard this little meow in the bush. She found a little bundle of fur called a kitten, slipped it into the house and up to the third floor where it stayed for three days before I knew it was there. At that point, she brought it down and introduced it to the house.

I did not want one more unmanageable thing in the House then, and I said, "How are you going to get rid of it?" She said, "I'm not." I said, "How are you going to take care of it?" and she replied, "I'll bring you a model this afternoon." That night she came down and announced its name. We said, "Fantastic, what is the name?" She said, "Victory." At that time, I knew I had been had. All during last spring, that little bundle kept running around the House, and I experienced it as an unwanted intrusive presence. They'd keep running in saying, "You know what Victory just did?" I'd reply, "What room is it in?" All spring it was like that.

As some of you may know, I thought TM'76 was certainly not a priority of this body of people. But something shifted in August. That kitten got its muscles together. And they began to come back with reports of the feats of Victory. "You know what Victory did today? He climbed the tallest tree in the street! He just became intrigue. People would stop. He had five ladies trained to stop after they went to the store. "Oh, Victory"--they would say--and reach into their bags with goodies for him. He conned the whole neighborhood. Victory became intrigue, and fascination.

To me, that was the Foray's first weeks--intrigue and fascination. It was possible; indeed it was possible! Something was happening to local man. It was not because of what I was doing when I was there. It was because of what they had me doing when I was in their community. In the last few months, Victory has been a friendly presence. He senses when it is about 5:00 Friday because he'll be sitting next to the radiator in the ICA office when I return from a foray. You come in and dump the big box of whatever is left from the week on the road, and Victory does not say a word. He just sits back there and LOOKS at you, and you sit down, worn out, and you are just trying to get your head clear on what happened. This week, I found myself saying, "Hello, Victory. How are you? Hello, Victory, how are you?" That is how it is that Victory is our friend. Something's happened.

Many "Messiahs" have bitten the dust in our path. This time it's another mini-messiah, we'd say after two or three weeks when things weren't going well. We'd sit down and say, "What's going on," and rant and rave and brainstorm and brood and begin to move on. We'd create another little thing we'd call a model and say "Let's try this another 2-3 weeks and see if something begins to crack open." This is simply the latest in the long run of models of forays of how you get local man to decide to be his possibility in the midst of his community.

JOURNEY	AFFIRMING THEIR CHOSENNESS		DECIDING TO DARE		EXPENDING THEIR CARE
WEEK	ONE	THREE	FIVE	SEVEN	EIGHT THRU THIRTEEN
EVENT	FORAY	TROIKA/LUNCH	STEERING COMMITTEE	INITIAL SPONSORS COMMITTEE	SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE
ACTIVITIES	AUTHORIZATION	ADVOCACY CONFIRMATION	SEVEN WEEK TASK CLARITY	METHODS INTRODUCTION	SPIRIT CONVERSATIONS
	FRAMING	TARGET DATE	THE 100 ORGANIZATIONS	SEVEN DAY TIMELINE	MIRACLE REPORTS
	SPONSOR LOCATION	SPONSOR STRATEGY	CALENDAR DATE CONSENSED	T/F ASSIGNMENTS	TASK ASSIGNMENTS
CHALLENGE	"We're plugging ahead here in ___ and it's going good but so slowly."	"I don't believe I can care effectively."	"No one ever comes to an eight hour event for anything."	"Every group has one issue. Working together is rare."	"Can we last long enough to get it all wrapped up?"
PROPOSAL	"You are there as embodiment of profound local care."	"You are the evangelist for a new human community."	"You are the miracle workers of the twentieth century."	"You are the corporate body effectively engaging the community."	"You are the sustained one on the Long March of Care."

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Now, this category: Community Sponsorship Journey it should be called. (Page 2) It has three journey categories across the top that seem to hold at this point. Here's how you stand ten days in a community doing something. That's another key. It's just your presence in a community. Look at the event category; see where and how you go into a community in such a way that you know what is happening in that community by the end of the day. You talk through a screen that demands seeing a lot of people early in the morning, 8 to 10 people. You decide who the two or three are that will pull off that Town Meeting.

Some people want to know what a day looks like, so let me give you a run down of that day. This seems to work: in the town at 8:00 that morning, sitting in a restaurant listening to conversations and checking out their coffee. Dragging around going through all the research you have in your file on what's going on in this town, going through some of the stuff you got through the mail, on reports from that town and other places, and at 8:30 walk to the Chamber of Commerce. Do that simply because they have data readily available to give to you. You just pick it up. (On top of that, in middle-sized and small communities in Ohio everything works the same way except it is a bit more complicated and more network oriented rather than locally oriented.) Then it's off to do the first four calls, breaking at noon, again doing your corporate brooding. (What's the story this community's living out of? How's that story now enabling us?) Janesville's story is "We cannot keep a company in this time." They tried to rebuild the economic base fourteen times. They say, "We have no way to survive economically. That's part of their story. That began to tell us, meanwhile, where we would go to find people who had possibility. The Chamber of Commerce's nose was so flat that they couldn't move. For us it was probably the Jaycees, who have a bit of wildness that were ready to go whomp it up; they were the key there. Maybe some Rotarians, some young Kiwanians. They told us how to move in the afternoon with the next four or five people we talk with. Then a 15-20 minute visit simply introducing them to Town Meeting, saying we want to get together later on, and we'll be in touch with you, and we've talked with so-and-so and they seem to be interested, and they want to hear some more. At that point there is nothing committed by them in terms of a place or time, or anything, except that we'll be back. Then at the end of the day, we sit down and brood through the choosing of the three that you'll call back by phone to set up a luncheon appointment. This is the new dynamic that got in about 6-8 weeks ago. It's setting up that troika lunch and getting a letter off to everyone you visited, a particular kind of letter to the three that you invited to sit at that lunch.

I sit with two new guys that were particularly interested and try to prolong that conversation, "You said you wanted to think it over, and pick up some of the responsibility?" When they confirm that, it is like they have already begun to say yes. Then you say, "Okay, let's get together and see how we can begin to move on this." Now that's the troika dynamic. That's the second key. (I don't want to move on that yet. I'll come back to it.) Then at the troika lunch you get a corporate yes from a body of people who know how to move in the community, dealing with the economic, political, spirit dimensions of that community. That's finally all you are out to do at that lunch. They begin to say yes, and to act on that yes in terms of the next act which is the steering committee.

The steering committee is a larger body of people whom they had selected and recruited, that they had advocated to do a Town Meeting. When you have a steering committee you don't have a bunch of new people who've never heard about

Town Meeting, and who are out to bomb it because they see right through to what it is, and they do not want it to happen, but in the steering committee, you've got those who've been recruited by that troika, who've already said a yes to the troika about taking seriously the possibility of doing this and by coming to the steering committee already begin to pick up more details of what it is, and how they begin to do it.

I am going to go back for a minute to the major break, to the first 5-6 weeks and the sponsorship meeting. That's always a special one because sometimes we do have some new people at that one, because the steering committee has gone out and gathered some more folks. But you have so many yesses, so many decisions there, that someone may be having a tantrum at that point, trying to act out their death wish. Some simply will not, but their result will not be sustained, because the yesses will surround them and just slay them. And you see them walk out of the meeting. The last thing is the sponsorship committee, we've tried to detail the activity that we experience in all of those meetings.

Now, let me go back and say why we decided to put the troika lunch and the steering committee in there. We were finding that when we went on the Foray and asked a guy to write letters, to make telephone calls, to call a large body of people, that they folded. After we gotten beaten 5 times in those meetings, I sensed as I struggled home the second week, that we found the contradiction. I mean you've got to pay attention to that when they hit you for the 5th time. Even though you found that you dealt with an honest man, my experience is that I don't find them in a one-day Foray. Sometimes there is a good clay model of an iron man, but I just don't find them. Now, you're not asking one man to take the whole burden of this mysterious thing that he is fascinated with, because he just happened to get excited. You are looking for a few people that will claim the burden of the responsibility of pulling off that great day in their town. Probably out of that will come a coordinator but that is way on down the line. I wouldn't worry about that at this point. What I want is a group of three people who will lead in a community to advocate Town Meeting '76 out or their own particular stance, their own particular practical vision, their own particular passion. Therefore, you have engaged their passion at that point. They had already sold it when we met with them the second time. Now I think that was the release that we came upon about 6-7 weeks ago, and since then things have happened.

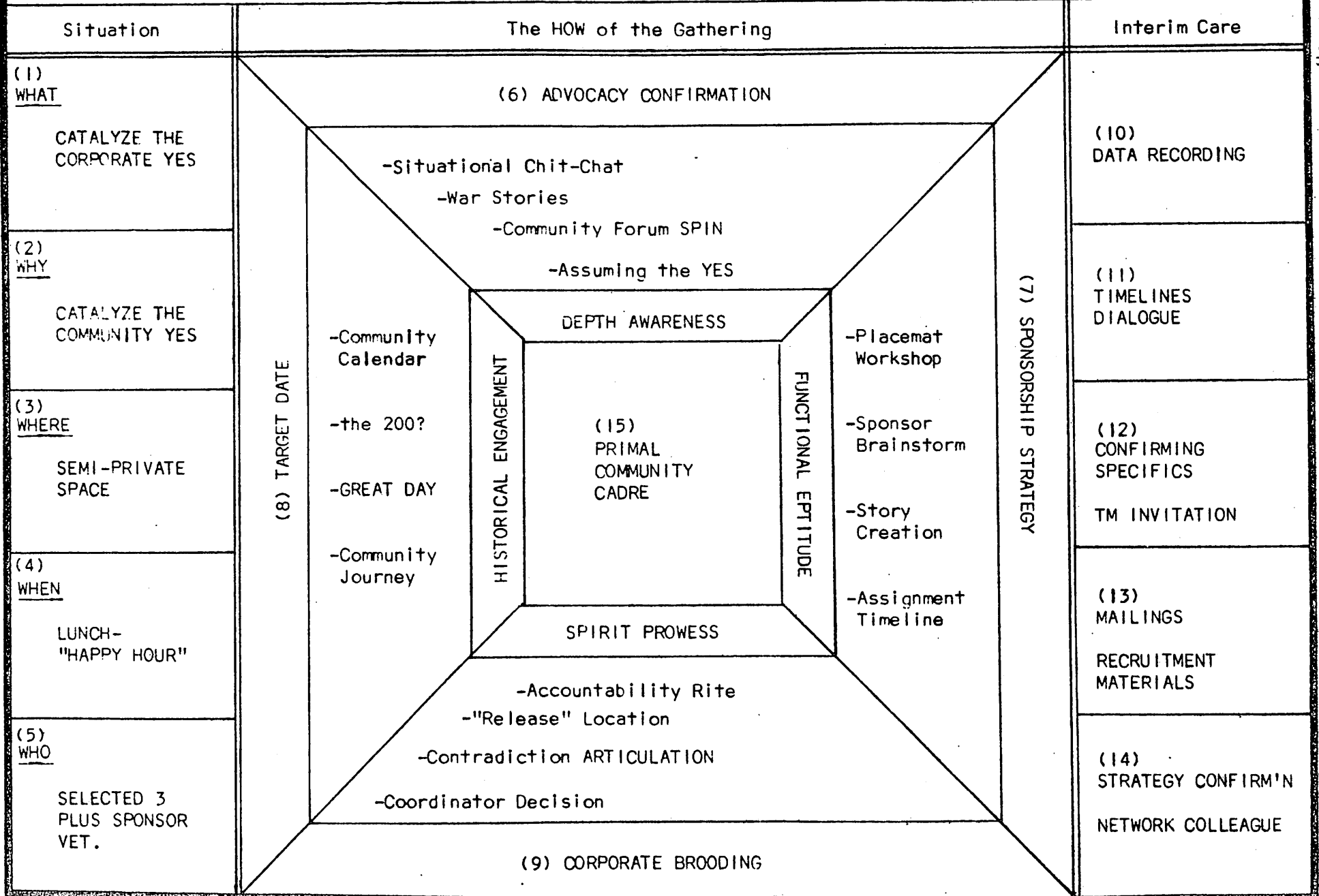
They tell me now that the Foray dynamic is where the shift is going to take place. That is, a network will begin to do the Forays for us. Anderson is a community on the outside edge of our grid. We gridded 120 self-conscious neighborhoods in Greater Cincinnati this summer, out of those 6 protoparishes, the 6 micros, the 36 communities we are going to spin in. One of those is Anderson. Anderson came into being because three networks intersected. One of those was Kiwanis, who had 40 men at a mini Town Meeting (We've got to get that together and get that out.) After we did our presentation of Town Meeting '76 for the greater Cincinnati Kiwanis Club, we sat with them and they became a sponsor of the Greater Cincinnati Downtown Leadership Town Meeting. They invited us to talk and we put together a Town Meeting that lasts about 30 minutes. It was a great event. The international President of Kiwanis is coming into town into town in February and they want us to do a mini Town Meeting then. That Kiwanis network that ended up in Anderson intersected with the Underwriters Insurance Men. We did a 45 minute mini Town Meeting with them. The third network is the movement that was out there

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beating the bushes, and that ended up in Anderson. The Foray was all done Anderson and I hadn't even known how to get to Anderson. That tells you how to do the 5,000. The networks begin to do the Forays for us and the corporate yes is already done.

In Shelby, Ohio up in the hinterland two polis' up, we had not been able to do a thing and we decided to try it one more time. We visited a Chamber of Commerce man who is also the Heritage Chairman of the Bicentennial Committee. We saw him at 9:00 and by lunch time we had our troika meeting and they asked what we were doing that night. So I stayed in Shelby and they set up the steering committee for 7:30 that night. By the end of that meeting, an initial sponsorship meeting was set in a period of 8 hours, we had done phase 3 which usually took 5 weeks. That also begins to give clues of how you flip to the 5,000.

We had a Town Meeting in Ada, Ohio. We visited Ada on the Foray in August. We found a troika the first day.

This other sheet has the troika lunch dynamic. Here is what we believe is happening and the activity is listed underneath. The left hand side states the givenness of what you move in with, the givenness of our stance toward this meeting. It is the what that catalyzed the corporate works of three people who then catalyze the community for the Town Meeting. Although this is not polished it is the only reasoning we do that I know of. In meeting with these people, it is helpful to find a semi-private space. Also a lunchtime meeting is more helpful than a happy hour between 5:00 and 6:30 at night, although sometimes they do want to meet in the late afternoon during the Happy Hour period, and that's fine too. You can also do breakfast meetings. The disadvantage is that people are anxious about getting off to work. We always pay our own way, for we are just mature men having lunch together.

Let me say this 18 times--if you want to win every time, take a veteran of a Town Meeting who has been through a sponsorship committee with you. Therefore, go back to the wisdom of getting the first 6 done. We decided in June that was crucial and we moved all through the summer to get those under way by September and that unleashed all kinds of power. Once you had those six, as you go on forays, you can just gather people and point them back to the six.

Here is the other shift I meant to tell you about. Halfway through the quarter we said the six are under way. They are here, now-- boom, boom, boom, boom. In the forays we're scooping people into those six, pointing to those six as authorization. Everything happens around those six. Now, we said, how do you get the first handful together to get the beginnings of a snowball? So, halfway through the quarter, though we had been doing very rational circuiting, we stood back, and looked and said, "Where does the data say that we have yesses?" Therefore, we shifted our circuiting so that we could begin to see, according to the grid we have for Ohio and how many we have to get for our portion of the 5,000, where do we get the 20? So, 6 or 8 weeks ago the vision of the 20 shifted our whole circuitry. Our circuits were then built around getting the 20 whirled in, specifically, tightly and strongly around the six demonstrations occurring so that we could have the handful of snow to start the snowball by this quarter. Now, so far it's working. It seems to me that the second quarter has to be the beginning of the snowball. The momentum must begin to happen.

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Back to the troika lunch. To me that is a swirl because you lock in on any of those places. You lock in on their opening conversation, insisting on pushing the target date. You are talking about sponsorship strategy. Any one of those things can be the beginning point of your corporate time together; wherever they have focussed their passion at that particular time. So six, seven, and eight on the chart are just a swirl for me and corporate brooding is always going on. It is really a post activity and happens with the team afterwards. Let's just take them in order.

First, you have to confirm that you have an advocacy core. What I do there at beginning of the time is situational chit-chat (that's what I call it.) That consists of having them talk about the community and about major events in the nation and reflections on these events. Then, they usually ask the veteran Town Meeting sponsor almost immediately, "You've had a Town Meeting? Tell us what it is like. What have been the results? What's been happening?" So, the veteran has lots of stories on what has happened to that community. Somewhere in there you rehearse again what this thing is, and then, I just assume their yes and readiness to go with Town Meeting. That's how you get the "Yes". I just assume that the "Yes" is there, and that is the major asset you have to deal with. Next, how do you get the community to say "Yes" to this great event? You don't do this directly, you do it indirectly.

Then, there's the question, "Well that's going to take a good number of troops. We don't work well together. Boy, that's going to be hard." They become paralyzed again. There, the sponsorship strategy workshop has been critical for me. I used to use these three sheets until we found this great mini-messiah that had the workshop all on it. I'd get to that point and pull out these fantastic sheets for the workshop. Every time I would do that I'd see them fall back in their chairs. They told me I was scaring them. Here was a guy that was going to take over and the sponsors would be puppets. So, I switched to the placemat workshop. Another grid you have to have is what restaurant chains have the best kinds of placemats for workshops. Howard Johnson's doesn't. Everybody gets caught on those silly little games. Halfway through the workshop, one guy is trying to put the puzzle together. What you are out to do is help them brainstorm through who should be on the sponsorship committee. You do just a little brainstorm and have them use their own screen for selecting the key sponsors. Everybody goes home with their workshop on their placemats.

Next comes the target date--getting them to work through to saying "April 15th". I'm always uneasy because they have not imaginably grounded the great event in history or grounded their passion in that event that is in history until getting near the target date--the critical time. There's a little swirl you do about community calendars. There was one Town Meeting where we didn't do that very well, and there were fourteen other events, including an OSU ballgame in the Columbus area. Everyone goes to the football game. It's a wonder we had 130 people there at all. But, you have to deal with the reality of the community calendar as they know it. At that point they always raise the question in some form, "How are we going to get 200 people?" That's the time to let your veteran sponsor do spins on how to get the 200 but only enough so that they can say, "We can do that."

Then you discuss a great day for Town Meeting. There's a little spin I do about what would be the time that Town Meeting would be a Great Day for the community. Let's do it to kick off the Bicentennial Year because we don't have enough going, and there's a little swirl about it. Wherever they sense there's a journey going on the community over the year, when will that placement be? Now obviously, to get the snowball, we have done a little manipulation to get 20 in this quarter, so that's a great day in the journey selection time.

Then you move on to release the location and articulate the contradiction you're going to be dealing with the next ten weeks in that community. You just write it down. I have a famous little black book that's now become an ungift. I think half the data I'm supposed to have in the master file at home is in my little black book, and these women keep screaming in my ear, "When are you going to get that stuff in the folder?" The coordinator decision is always made in that corporate brooding. Who have I decided should be the coordinator and I begin to move with a battleplan on that. One of my great stories is that you pick a "no thing" to talk to, just some otherness to have your accountability rite and take out your form. Down in Chillicothe, I had quite a corporate brooding session with a hot fudge sundae. I just sat there and talked to a hot fudge sundae and went through the accountability form. You can have great conversations with trees and fire hydrants.

Now, interim care is on that right hand side. It is caring for those decisions between the times you're going to see them, by telephone, by letter, whatever makes sense. I hit point 14 and I thought that was an unwieldy number.

A community is awakened to the greatness that it is in history and to the possibility of being the great community that it is. In addition, you leave behind in that town a primal community cadre, so when Town Meeting Day is over, you know that there is one stake of steel left in that community called that troika that you created way back then. It is those people who will be the continental core.

Robert Booher