

8), one could (over) focus on creating a good late-night experience for just one particular group of youngsters (say, young males going out together—see chapter 8). Such very concrete and limited frames will more easily suggest what particular actions to take. The ideas that flow from such a focused frame can invariably be applied much more generally later on in the project.

8 BE PREPARED

What actually makes a “good” problem situation that would benefit from utilizing frame creation rather than using other problem-solving approaches? From the case studies, we can glean some general patterns: (1) there are opposing views or conflicting aims, (2) no obvious solution is apparent, (3) the problem can be placed in an expanded context, (4) there is an open-minded champion within the “problem owner” organization that is seeking a solution, and (5) earlier solution attempts have not resulted in a satisfactory resolution, to the point where there is a willingness to take a different approach. When most or all of these conditions have been fulfilled, the frame creation approach still requires a lengthy process of getting to know the problem, approaching actual and possible stakeholders, motivating them to participate, making contact with external expertise that may be useful, etc. Initial discussions with the problem owner usually involve “widening” the brief, often by involving not only the key decision makers but also the people “on the ground” in the organization who actually have a more direct and complete overview of the complex problem situation. This process cannot be rushed: together with the historic research that is an essential part of the archaeology of the problem situation, this pre-workshop phase takes on average two to three months from first contact. These activities can be seen as a “map-making” of the problem situation, in its current and in its expanded form. Experience has shown that these maps (see figure 5.3) are often a key deliverable of the frame creation approach, as they can act as mirrors helping organizations to understand why and how they are stuck in their problem-solving processes.

9 CREATE THE MOMENT

After all this preparatory work, the team can embark upon the frame creation workshop, which normally lasts two to four hours. In this workshop, all the information is brought together, and the team is taken through the frame creation steps by a facilitator. The team members of these frame creation sessions tend to be very diverse. To achieve breadth and depth in the frame creation