FRAMES

Throughout the in-depth analysis of the broader field, common themes will emerge that can be different from those underlying the original paradox. Themes that are shared among many of the players in the field are particularly interesting, as they could be the basis for frames that are attractive to a network of partners. While these inklings can be a strong springboard, the ideation of a new frame is largely a creative leap. Again, experience with a varied repertoire of frames is clearly an advantage—having a team from diverse backgrounds can be inspiring for this step. As we have seen in chapter 3, the frame that results can be formulated as the implication that adopting a certain pattern of relationships (e.g., a metaphor) will lead to valuable outcomes. This implication can be written down as:

> *If* the problem situation is approached *as if* it is … , *then* …

This may sound a bit convoluted, but it works—see the case studies in the second half of this chapter.

FUTURES

After a proposed frame is applied to the opened, broadened problem situation, it is then reshaped in a process of coevolution. Through these investigations, we are seeking assurance that the frame can potentially lead to realistic and viable solutions. This is a "thinking forward" exercise which is part of "design abduction" as it was described earlier (chapter 3). Only by proposing both a pattern of relationships and a design will we generate the feedback about whether we are on the right track in adopting a frame. It is important to remember that these design solution ideas are generated only for the purpose of exploration: they should be noted down but not pursued. Investing too much effort into any one idea at this stage might lead to attachment and a premature closing of the problem space while the quality of the frame that lies at the root of the idea is still being evaluated. In these playful explorations, we creatively envision how things might work. Experts tend to talk about this process of proposing and trying out frame ideas in terms of "fruitfulness": will a frame steer us in a promising direction, allowing us to generate multiple sensible solutions or not? Experts with years of experience will have built up an acute intuition about which frames will be fruitful and lead to results and which will not. Without this kind of experience and gut feeling, the exploration of future scenarios can be very time-consuming. In parallel with the development of these ideas,