

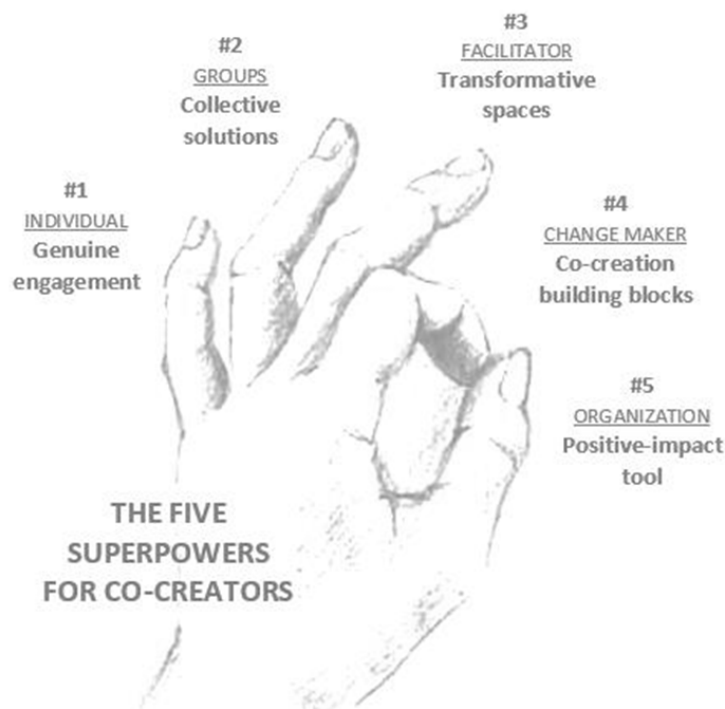
TOOL - THE FIVE SUPERPOWERS OF CO-CREATION

Co-creation is the process of “**collaborative creation**” where various interested parties, including customers, clients, and organizations work together to develop solutions, products, and/or ideas. During this collaborative process, “people can think, work, learn together, and invent their respective futures” (Muff, 2019). Co-creation relies on agency partners to be “open and equal collaborators” with community to employ the best problem-solving tools and processes. Agency partners act as “facilitators” to cultivate spaces of trust that allow individuals, communities, and organizations to express themselves with courage and vulnerability. As facilitators, it is your responsibility “to be in charge of the process, not the outcome or the intent.”

Muff (2019) created the framework of the *Five Superpowers for Co-Creators* to embrace change within individuals, as groups, and as facilitators of co-creation for change makers and organizations. The Five Superpowers are:

1. **Genuine engagement of individuals**
2. **Collective solutions generated by groups**
3. **Transformative spaces by facilitators**
4. **Building blocks of co-creation for change makers**
5. **Positive impact tool for organizations.**

6.



SUPERPOWER #1: GENUINE ENGAGEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS (BUILDING RAPPORT)

- Allowing the community to be the “expert” of their own experience.
- Active listening by allowing the space for people to share their experience without interruption and/or judgment.
- Ask follow-up questions and repeat back key events.
- Showing genuine interest with body language (eye contact, positioning your body towards the person and/or group, and not multi-tasking).
- Asking insightful questions and engaging in open-ended conversations.
- Interpreting non-verbal cues (What is their body language telling you?)
- Leveraging shared experiences to be relatable not divulge your life story.
- Utilizing tone of voice (Mirroring their tone and allowing them to lead the conversation).
- Developing your emotional intelligence.
- Practicing small talk with no intentions.
- Demonstrating appreciation to community for their time, alliance, and support.

SUPERPOWER #2: COLLECTIVE SOLUTIONS OF GROUPS

A part of facilitating co-creation is understanding that people’s experiences shape their perspective. “It is part of the skillful facilitation process to bring along the development of individuals and the group so that the common issue be addressed successfully,” (Muff). As a facilitator, consider the following questions at an individual, group, and regarding the overall process.

<p>On an individual level</p>	<p>What is at stake and what are my various roles in this process?</p> <p>Am I closing discussions or am I opening discussions?</p> <p>Am I focusing on differences between others and my group's perspective, or am I able to listen openly to what other groups have to say?</p> <p>Have I made up my mind about the projected outcome, or am I open to hearing new ideas and perspectives?</p>
<p>At a group level</p>	<p>What is at stake for me as a member of a group if we succeed or we fail with this process?</p> <p>How does this reflect on our group and how does this reflect on me as a member of this group?</p>

	<p>Whom do I report to and what are external pressures on me or on the group that may be obvious to me but not to others in my group?</p> <p>To what degree can I make such external expectations transparent, and how can this be helpful in clarifying open or hidden tensions in the process?</p>
<p>Regarding the process</p>	<p>How does this process and the emerging solutions challenge the perspective, the motives and motivations of the group I belong to?</p> <p>How do these possibly challenge my continuous participation in the process?</p> <p>How can I share my concerns without endangering the continuation of this process?</p> <p>Have all voices been heard? Have the quiet and more reserved participants been able to provide meaningful input?</p>

SUPERPOWER #3: TRANSFORMATIVE SPACES FOR FACILITATORS

“The challenge in holding the space for a shared issue is being too strict or lost in facilitation” (Muff). As the facilitator, you want to be able to provide **four key** elements to co-creation:

- Bringing “**structure**” and anticipating that partners will have various ideas and suggestions and are able to contribute those ideas. Even if they differ from yours as the facilitator.
- Allowing for “**adapting**” and not being set to a proposed agenda. Emerging thoughts may arise and leave space to discuss these new strategies and suggestions.
- Facilitating “**stillness**” and understanding that people may need time to process, allowing space to table complex issues that arise, and not having a solution to every problem.
- Empowering “**connectors**” and challenging the group to share and be vulnerable to presenting new ideas.

SUPERPOWER #4: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CO-CREATION

You want to be intentional with community, so consider the following questions before engaging with community:

- What is the issue and how is it defined?

- Who are the interested parties that need to participate and how are they mapped? What perspectives are covered, and how are these individuals that represent these perspectives?
- How do we invite these interested parties? What is the so-called call? What do we invite them for?
- What is the authority of the person who invites?
- What are the expectations of this collaborative adventure that we're undertaking, and how do we know when will be done?
- Who funds this adventure and who energizes it?
- Over what period of time? How much time are we giving this project to succeed?
- Who will hold the space? Who will be the facilitator who will ensure that appropriate processes are introduced and embraced in order to advance towards a co-creative solution?

SUPERPOWER #5: THE POSITIVE IMPACT TOOL OF ORGANIZATIONS

As a facilitator, you will work towards the following knowledge, skills, and abilities and work towards engaging in true and meaningful community engagement through co-creation.

	Knowledge (Knowing)	Skills (Doing)	Attitude (Being)
Interested party relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Methods to identify and integrate legitimate interested parties •Seeing conflict as a foundation for creativity •Dealing with conflicting interests of stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Initiating and moderating a dialogue •Respecting different interests to find a consensus •Developing long-term relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Being empathetic with a desire to help others •Being open and trustworthy •Appreciating the positive in diversity
Ethics and values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Knowing what is right and wrong •Knowing your own values •Understanding dilemmas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Critically questioning and adapting values •Acting according to ethics and own values •Being a role model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Being honest and having integrity •Seeking fairness •Being responsible towards society and sustainability
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Understanding the importance of reflection in the learning process •Knowing oneself •Understanding one's own strengths and weaknesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Learning from mistakes •Reflecting on one's behavior, mental models and emotions •Adapting the communication style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reflecting about oneself •Reflecting about one's own behavior •Sharing one's developmental challenges

<p>Systems thinking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Understanding how the systems work •Understanding inter-dependencies and inter-connections of systems •Understanding sustainability challenges and opportunities 	<p>Dealing with complexity and ambiguity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Estimating consequences of decisions on the system •Seeing the big picture and the connections rather than the parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Working across disciplines and boundaries •Defending a long-term perspective •Providing a transgenerational perspective
<p>Change and Innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Understanding the significance of a motivating vision in change processes •Understanding the drivers and enablers of innovation and creativity •Understanding conditions, functioning and dynamics of change processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Developing creative ideas •Acting to bring about change and translating ideas into action •Questioning the status-quo and identifying steps of change for a sustainable future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Being open, curious and courageous •Being flexible and adaptable for change •Being visionary in finding solutions for society's problems

Primary Source:

- Muff, K. (2019). Five Superpowers for Co-Creators: How change makers and business can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Greenleaf Publishing.

Additional Resources:

- [Beyond Sticky Notes: What is Co-Design?](#)
- [Relational Partnership Model](#) (Office of Equity)