3, 2, 1 Engage!
Tools and Tips
for Launching Authentic Power Partnerships

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QUICK COMMUNITY MAPPING (DESIRED COMMUNITY)

Community:

Name of one person we know in this community:

Is this community primarily connected by:

- Geography
- Identity
- Affinity

How connected are people in this community? Do they have strong ties to each other, or are they very loosely connected?

- Barely Aware
- Weak Ties
- Strong Ties
- Very Strong

How would you describe your organization’s relationship with this community?

- Non-existent
- Bad/troubled
- Spotty
- Strong

Why do you see this community as a good possibility this year? Do you have a credible starting point for involvement right now?
OF/BY/FOR MAP 1.0

We want to involve ____________________________ by:

(community of interest)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Becoming more representative OF this community</th>
<th>Supporting projects co-created BY this community</th>
<th>Offering welcome, value, and meaning FOR this community</th>
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Where do you see the greatest opportunity today? Where might you get started?
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FROM A PARTNER?

Different partners bring different assets. Use this checklist to select 2-5 top priorities for your work at this time.

The partners who will be most valuable to us right now are:

- Connected to many individuals in our community of interest
- Involved in this community at the grassroots level
- Involved in this community at an institutional/structural level
- Respected as leaders in this community
- Very knowledgeable about this community
- Already providing services/resources to this community
- Seen as authentic members of this community (not service providers)
- Highly collaborative, with lots of partnership experience
- Professional in how they communicate and present themselves
- Creative thinkers who bring new ideas to the table
- Interested in opportunities for long-term, structured involvement
- Interested in opportunities for informal, flexible involvement
- Able to bring specific resources to the table (money, translation, etc.)
IS THERE A LEAD PARTNER IN MY LIFE?

Take a moment and make a list of notable individuals from your community of interest you've met recently. If you don't know their full name, that's fine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>STANDS OUT BECAUSE...</th>
<th>ALIGNED WITH MY...</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>GOALS</td>
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If there's someone on this list who you think could be a potential lead partner, ask yourself:

- What do I want to know more about this person?
- Is there anything I could do soon to be helpful to them?
- Is there an opportunity coming up that might be a good fit for them?

Reach out and keep building your relationship. You never know where it might take you.
**PARTNER POWER 101**

Set yourself up for success by learning what matters most to your partners. Your goal is to be able to fill out this empathy map after your meeting is over.

**Partner name:**
**From (organization, community, etc.):**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CHALLENGES THEY FACE</th>
<th>VALUES THEY HOLD</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>GOALS THEY’RE PURSING</th>
<th>COMMITMENTS THEY CAN MAKE</th>
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<td>(Can they take anything else on? If yes, note: days, times, # of hours, activities...etc)</td>
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<tr>
<th>TO THIS PARTNER, SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE:</th>
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Partner Power Question Bank

Use any of these questions (or write your own) to dive into the topics on the empathy map.

**Questions that help you understand the values they hold:**
- What kinds of things/people inspire you?
- How do you stay grounded when you feel overwhelmed?

**Questions that help you understand the challenges they face:**
- Tell me about the last biggest hurdle you faced?
- What did you learn?

**Questions that help you understand their goals:**
- What are some big changes you'd like to see in your community?
- Tell me about what you envision for your future.

**Questions that help you understand commitments they can make:**
- Tell me more about yourself and your work.
- How did you arrive to where you are now?
- What do you see as your greatest strengths and limitations?

**Questions that help you understand what success looks like:**
- What does success look like to your community?
- What is your ideal outcome?
Tips for Empathetic Listening

- **Ask open-ended questions.** Yes/no questions or questions that can be answered in one word prevents you from understanding what's in their minds, thoughts, and emotions.

- **Ask neutral questions.** Encourage their fresh perspectives. Avoid asking questions in a way that implies that there is a correct answer. Allow them to self-express on their own terms. For example:
  - **DON'T ask:** What frustrates you about...?
  - **DO ask:** What do you think about...?

- **Encourage storytelling.** Prevent generic responses by framing questions in ways that give you more context to their experiences and why they value them. For example:
  - **DON'T ask:** Do you like to go to the park?
  - **DO ask:** Tell me about the last time you had a great time outdoors.

- **Embrace silence.** Long pauses happen, and that's okay. Give them time to reflect. They could be thinking about something you brought up, what they previously said, or a past experience, which can help you understand them better. Let them break the silence.

- **Pursue tangents.** Sometimes your initial Partner Power meetings will go off-script and that's okay. Free yourself from the urge to steer the conversation back on topic. A conversation fueled by passion will give insight into how they might feel on a certain cause or issue.

- **Observe body language.** Non-verbal cues can express how someone feels before they can verbally say it. If someone expresses a strong reaction to a question you asked, use it to drive your conversation forward. Use your judgment on whether that means you take a step back or lean in.

- **Be ready to participate fully.** If you ask personal questions of your partner, expect that they might ask the same of you. You don't need prepared answers, but you should be whole-heartedly open to where the conversation goes.