



Moments of Impact: How to Design Strategic Conversations That Accelerate Change

By Chris Ertel, Lisa Kay Solomon



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Two leading experts on designing strategic conversations unveil a simple, creative process that allows teams to tackle their most challenging issues.

In our fast-changing world, leaders are increasingly confronted by messy, multifaceted challenges that require collaboration to resolve. But the standard methods for tackling these challenges—meetings packed with data-drenched presentations or brainstorming sessions that circle back to nowhere—just don’t deliver.

Great strategic conversations generate breakthrough insights by combining the best ideas of people with different backgrounds and perspectives. In this book, two experts “crack the code” on what it takes to design creative, collaborative problem-solving sessions that soar rather than sink.

Drawing on decades of experience as innovation strategists—and supported by cutting-edge social science research, dozens of real-life examples, and interviews with well over 100 thought leaders, executives, and fellow practitioners—they unveil a simple, creative process that leaders and their teams can use to unlock solutions to their most vexing issues. The book also includes a “Starter Kit” full of tools and tips for putting the book’s core principles into practice.

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Editorial Review

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In this book about meetings—and designing them for productivity and impact—Ertel and Solomon have crafted a compelling methodology to making critical decisions in any company. Specifically, their dialogues are focused on who we are, where we're going, and how we will get there. In so doing, they transform the “OMG, not another two-day session” thinking into a time to truly ponder and shape the future. The construct, on the surface, is simple: five principles (all of which have to be present) must be incorporated, from defining the purpose and engaging multiple perspectives to frame issues, setting the scene, and making it an experience. More telling are the all-too-vibrant case histories of companies that have experienced the doom loop, such as Flip Video (after its acquisition by Cisco Systems) and Encyclopaedia Britannica, damaged by Wikipedia and other competitors. The authors do a darn good job of stepping readers through the process (especially since there is a starter kit included), but they also make the text a bit more complicated and meandering than needed. --Barbara Jacobs

Review

Strategy is one of the most over-used, poorly understood words in the business lexicon. Ertel and Solomon set out to make it meaningful again, drawing on decades of experience running real strategic conversations. (Clay Shirky, author of *Here Comes Everybody* and *Cognitive Surplus*)

If you are even remotely interested in 1) having a team that knows what each other is doing, 2) delivering a complex message in a clear way, 3) making sense of the mania that passes for so much of "business thinking" these days, you must read this book. (Dan Roam, author of *The Back of the Napkin* and *Blah Blah Blah*)

Solomon and Ertel get it. We need to move beyond the blah blah blah dominating our meeting rooms today. We need strategic conversations - this book shows you how to design them. (Alexander Osterwalder, author of *Business Model Generation* and *Business Model You*)

They say insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. I say that's also a pretty good definition of the typical business meeting. If you'd like to short-circuit the meeting loop and energize your team's ability to solve real problems and create new visions, then *Moments of Impact* is the book you need. (Daniel H. Pink, author of *To Sell is Human* and *Drive*)

So many times organizations go to the outside to develop and refine their strategic plans when the answers lie internally. *Moments of Impact* gives you a roadmap to unlock solutions that are literally in the room. It provides powerful examples and a step by step guide to creating intense engagement and encourages diverse and unique points of view. This leads to a powerful shared vision and strategic plan coupled with a pragmatic execution plan. And, as a bonus, it is a great bonding experience for all involved. (George Borst, CEO of Toyota Financial Services)

What if conversations at work actually mattered? *Moments of Impact* shows how they can, offering an actionable model for sparking creativity and driving change. (Adam Grant, Wharton professor and bestselling author of *Give and Take*)

Conversations are how groups of people learn, collaborate and act together, but having powerful, coherent and

strategic conversations takes active design and support. Chris Ertel and Lisa Solomon collaborators of mine for many years have provided a practical and insightful guide to shaping consequential strategic conversations. A must read for anyone shaping the decision environment of an organization. (Peter Schwartz, author of *The Art of the Long View* and co-founder of GBN)

Stories ignite understanding and engagement on our most important strategic challenges. *Moments of Impact* reveals how to go beyond data-driven meetings to generate new insights that help change our world for the better. (Nancy Duarte, CEO of Duarte Design, author of *Resonate* and *Slide:ology*)

We've seen how the power of design can radically change experiences for the better. *Moments of Impact* shows how design can transform our strategic conversations, too. (Scott Cook, co-founder of Intuit)

“...this is a guide every frustrated meeting-goer should read, with advice they should all implement.”
(Publishers Weekly)

“Ertel and Solomon articulate the purpose, principles and practices of well-designed strategic conversations and support their ideas with a lively, convincing mix of social science theories and research, interviews with organizational leaders, anecdotes and case studies, and an invaluable 60-page Starter Kit...to enable you to put the ideas to work immediately.” (*Success Magazine*)

“Chris Ertel and Lisa Kay Solomon provide several useful tools for making sure all voices are heard--and empathized with--at strategy meetings. You can apply many of their tips to general meetings as well. Refreshingly, Ertel and Solomon remind readers that diversity comes in many forms--all of which are important in business settings.” (*Inc.com*)

About the Author

Chris Ertel has been designing strategic conversations for fifteen years as an advisor to senior executives of Fortune 500 companies, government agencies, and large nonprofits. He lives in Berkeley, California, with his wife and daughter.

Lisa Kay Solomon teaches innovation at the groundbreaking MBA in Design Strategy program at San Francisco's California College of the Arts. A frequent public speaker and guest lecturer, she lives with her husband and two daughters in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mary Davis:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray an individual, why because this *Moments of Impact: How to Design Strategic Conversations That Accelerate Change* book written by well-known writer who knows well how to make book which might be understand by anyone who read the book. Written inside good manner for you, dripping every ideas and creating skill only for eliminate your current hunger then you still uncertainty *Moments of Impact: How to Design Strategic Conversations That Accelerate Change* as good book but not only by the cover but also by content. This is one e-book that can break don't determine book by its protect, so do you still needing an additional sixth sense to pick this!? Oh come on your reading sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to an additional sixth sense.

Glenn Wallin:

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Angel Jones:

With this era which is the greater man or woman or who has ability to do something more are more valuable than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time little but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. Among the books in the top listing in your reading list is actually Moments of Impact: How to Design Strategic Conversations That Accelerate Change. This book that is qualified as The Hungry Inclines can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking upward and review this guide you can get many advantages.

Phyllis Wilder:

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