

# THE POWER OF MUSIC THINKING



FOR LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS

CHRISTOF ZÜRN

Have you ever noticed that when people work together, they often use expressions like "Let's rock this!" "Are we in sync?" "I've noticed a pattern." "Let's jam about this." "We need to improvise a solution." "What is the tone of voice?" "We should orchestrate this." "We have to find the right rhythm." "Let's pull all the plugs." "Let's make a remix of all this." "I hope this will resonate with our customers."

The pattern behind these expressions is that they all have a music context, whether the person using it is aware of it or not.

What if we were to dig a little deeper into what is behind these concepts and the rich repository of meanings, ideas, and inspirations? Music – like business – can be international and local and it can affect you on an individual as well as on a group level. What possible analogies are there between what happens in music and what happens in business?

This book is about recognising a pattern in one system and realising it in another system to create meaningful collaborations. To do this, I have developed a flexible framework that incorporates all the ingredients that come into play when connecting the analogies between music and business.

from chaos to calm

**JAMMIN' before SCORE**

Use this cue to start a new endeavour, when you are in doubt, or in case of a crisis where you need to look broader than your experience.

**The mind is like a parachute, it only works when it is open.**  
Frank Zappa

**You can't rehearse what you ain't have invented yet.**  
Wayne Shorter

to open

to sense

It is about creating from a place we do not know yet – something unheard, unseen, unthought. The ability to open up to uncertainty is essential for letting serendipity happen and sensing things to come. It is also about unlearning and seeing what we (in principle) already know but have not seen yet.

JAMMIN' is the realisation of creation and it helps the other cues to diverge first, to see what is possible, and then converge to focus.

In this respect, JAMMIN' is also the most intuitive cue. It is connected to the ability to improvise.

**Instruction for JAMMIN' without knowing**  
Open up to the new and sense what appears, share it with others, and see how it resonates. What do you hear? What does the co-creation involve? No judgement! Just play and listen without an intended result.

**How to improvise**  
Improvisation together with others is a capability that can be learned. There are some guiding principles to keep in mind when improvising and co-creating together. These musical principles can easily be used in many business situations like conversations, meetings, and ideation sessions.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR (BUSINESS) IMPROVISATION**

- Be open.
- Co-create.
- Make others shine.
- Be there, be mindful, listen for intent.
- Use possibilities and momentum.
- Listen to the environment, to others, to you.
- Recognise patterns, generate patterns, break patterns.
- Don't just react: initiate, support, respond.
- Don't plan: experiment, change roles, try.
- Stay in shape.

**A KIND OF GLOSSARY**

Like in music, there is a nearly endless number of instruments in business. Music Thinking connects concepts, tools, and approaches from various fields and combines them for successful collaboration. The aim is to pick and choose what they see contribute. And everybody needs to know how to play the instrument. Please keep in mind that mastering an instrument needs time, rest, training, and experience.

If you want to dive deeper into instruments, I recommend the following sources:

- Service: [www.designsource.com/about-us](http://www.designsource.com/about-us)
- Strategy: [www.jammin.com/about-us](http://www.jammin.com/about-us)
- Organization: [www.perspectives.org/resources](http://www.perspectives.org/resources)

In addition, I'd like to share some personal thoughts and kind practices on the selected instruments I am using.

**DEEP LISTENING**  
The late Deep Listening was created by composer and improviser Pauline Oliveros as a result of a concert recorded in an abandoned church in 1988. The Deep Listening enables cognitive, somatic, and listening. It helps to practice the art of listening and responding to environmental creations. [www.deeplisting.org](http://www.deeplisting.org)

One similarity was the same term to explain the four levels of listening: downloading, factal, empathic, and generative. In a video, he explains:

the 'core skill for all domains of professional practice' with the concept of the conductor Zubin Mehta. On the website, you'll also find a list to realize your daily listening levels. [www.perspectives.org/resources/about-us](http://www.perspectives.org/resources/about-us)

**CORTEX MAPPING**  
Many meetings and projects fail because we only focus on what we would do instead of visualizing everything related. It is essential to map all the different perspectives, including the-go areas, to see a field where all the possibilities are listed.

Then, it is crucial to decide together what to focus on.

**QUESTION STORMING**  
Like brainstorming with ideas, you can do a question storming to come up with the right questions to generate the right ideas.

I introduced a **TEAM CROWDSOURCING** There is no leadership without followers, and the other way around. You can experience and learn this when you go to a concert. If it is classical music, try to go to a rehearsal. It will help you to understand the music: multi-metric, highly synchronized cues with best improvisation because they allow you to experience the instant composing and structuring of the performance.

**PURPOSE**  
Many organizations don't understand the difference between a purpose and a goal. A purpose is connected to your values: why and how you do things. A goal is to achieve successful services and products based on your purpose. Just making money is a goal without a purpose.

**OCISM**  
Clarity, grace, intelligence, and

**MEASURES (OCISM)** is a goal setting and action plan framework, often on one page, used in strategic planning. Like any framework, it depends on how it connects with the company's purpose and values and if the alignment with the right questions to generate correct purpose and values.

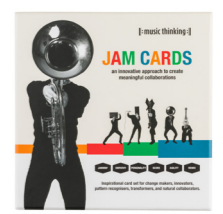
**BACKLOG**  
A backlog is a list of items with the most important one at the top of the list. It year work items, agile, management should too. It gives you the year go to a concert. If it is classical music, try to go to a rehearsal. It will help you to understand the music: multi-metric, highly synchronized cues with best improvisation because they allow you to experience the instant composing and structuring of the performance.

**SYSTEMIC MAPPING**  
In order to understand a system, you need to map cause and effect flow – and on – the players in the system. Thus, you can visualize how the relations and interactions influence the dynamics and strategic intention. That allows you to identify the leverage points for possible interventions. [www.systemic-design.org](http://www.systemic-design.org)

**STAKEHOLDER MAPPING**  
A stakeholder mapping always shows the perspective of a human being with attitudes and behaviors related to the challenge. On instead of using taskforce as a shorthand or, also understood as the 'regular

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# EMPATHY

Use this cue for any human-centered activity and service design project. Make this the cue to start and to end with.

**Knowledge speaks, wisdom listens.**

Jimi Hendrix

**The eye should learn to listen before it looks.**

Robert Frank

