The Clarity Not Certainty Effect (CNCE®): Strategy for NOW

Reimagining strategy for complexity and the future.

The Clarity Not Certainty Effect (CNCE®) integrates evaluative inquiry into strategy formation and implementation from onset. Rooted in more than two decades of practice in the philanthropic and nonprofit ecosystem, CNCE is designed for leaders and efforts who recognize that conventional models of strategy—focused on prediction, control, and competition—are insufficient in today's complex and rapidly changing environment.

CNCE positions strategy as a living, adaptive practice. Drawing on Henry Mintzberg's view of strategy as more than a plan, CNCE weaves together Perspective, Position, Pattern, and Plan with the Evaluative Inquiry Cycle™ of framing, focusing, conducting, and applying. Together, these create a disciplined yet flexible way of aligning values, choices, and actions.

Why CNCE Matters

- **Clarity over certainty.** Plans are not reality. In uncertain times, this becomes abundantly evident. Clarity provides the grounding needed for adaptive and responsive action.
- **Learning as a strategic asset.** The Evaluative Inquiry model embeds curiosity, reflection, and sense-making into daily practice—strengthening organizational rigor and adaptability.
- **Perspective and Position.** Organizations articulate how they see the world (Perspective) and their unique contribution within it (Position).
- **Pattern and Plan.** Shared behaviors (Pattern) are aligned with adaptive, values-driven actions (Plan) recognizing conditions and capacity that remain relevant in shifting contexts.
- **The human element.** Strategy is dependent on the people whose beliefs, intentions and efforts are aligned, and they are equipped to act collectively.

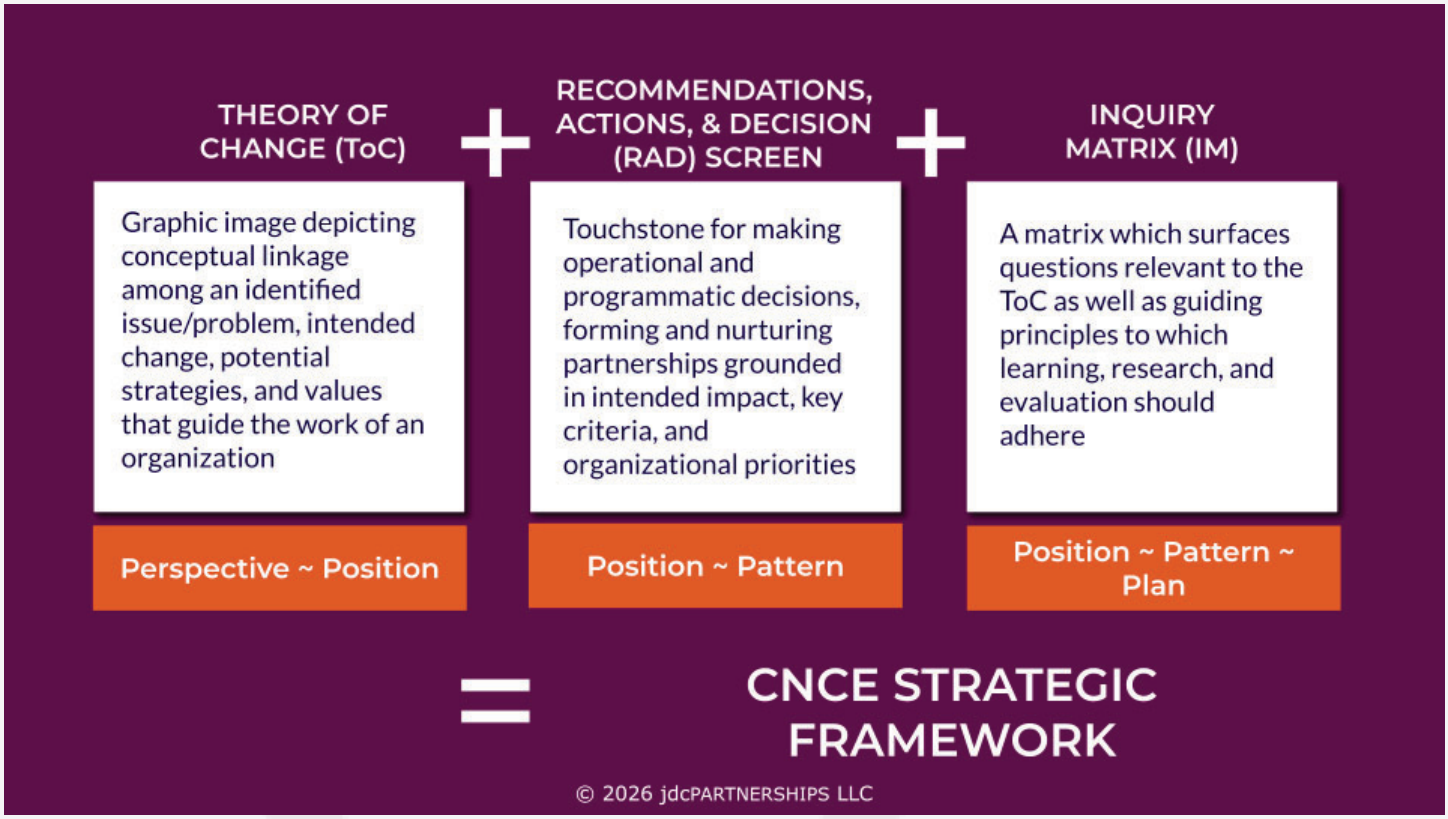
CNCE Consulting Services Include

- **Theory of Change Development** – clarifying identity, values, and purpose to strengthen Perspective and Position.
- **Inquiry Design & Facilitation** – applying the Evaluative Inquiry model to cultivate organizational learning, surface Patterns, and support adaptive Plans while one constantly attends to Position.
- **Decision Support** – creating transparent processes and tools that ground choices in values, commitments, and capacity. This is how one holds oneself accountable to and responsible for that which it aims to be and make real.

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The Clarity Not Certainty Effect (CNCE®):

Strategy for NOW



CNCE Consulting Delivers

- A shared organizational identity that strengthens coherence across leadership, staff, and partners.
- Increased capacity to adapt and respond to complexity with integrity and confidence.
- Decision-making practices that are rigorous, transparent, and rooted in purpose.
- Strategy that fosters sustainability and meaningful contribution within larger systems.

In Practice

CNCE consulting services are not about producing a static plan. They equip leaders and institutions with the clarity and capacities needed to act effectively—today and in the future.

CNCE helps funders and nonprofits alike move with coherence and confidence in complexity—anchored in Perspective, guided by Position, expressed through Pattern, enacted through Plan, and sustained through Evaluative Inquiry.

If you are interested, reach out to info@jdcpartnerships.com.

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