

The Key to Innovation in Experience Design



From the experts at Haute Dokimazo,
creators of the Spontaneous Think Tank™,
Secret Family Reunion and Age of Conversation Summit



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“Magical.” “Therapeutic.” “Comfortable.”

These are just a few of the words that participants have used to describe how it feels to be part of Haute Dokimazo. While we didn’t set out to make it magical (we just wanted to talk to each other), it’s very true that every experience feels that way.



What started as a desire to share meaningful moments with relevant people in the midst of an industry conference, became a movement that catalyzed people into action. Haute Dokimazo is a simple concept: Genuine human connection, facilitated problem solving, and authentic feedback. This magic equation has helped thousands of people move the needle in their businesses and life.

Our Spontaneous Think Tanks™ were our foundation, but our ethos drives all of the experiences and engagements we create. And what is our ethos? It’s rooted in what we call The Five C’s: Care, Collaborate, Co-create, Converse, and Connect, and they should be the framework for any engagement where you want to drive connection.

Care

We believe that everyone has a story to tell, and caring about other people and their stories, perspectives, experiences and wisdom is at the core of all we do. We are a community that is inclusive, not exclusive, and we make everyone feel like they belong there through our words, our actions and the diversity of our participants and their points of view.

Foundationally, we follow a simple framework for caring.

- Offer your time and attention. Free from distractions, you are able to focus on the conversation and the people around you.
- The gift of availability. Being available is beyond just offering time and attention. It means you are available to receive the conversation. Hear the perspectives. Understand the context of the stories you're being told.
- Communicate acceptance and positive regard (smile!). Even when the information is hard to receive, accepting it and accepting the person who is delivering it is important to learning more from them.
- Thank them for sharing and validate their willingness to be open and transparent.
- Earn trust by being a good listener; an active listener, providing acknowledgement cues like leaning forward, nodding your head making eye contact and being relaxed.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Uphold appropriate boundaries. Don't hijack the conversation with your own issues or needs or stories. Listen until the time comes to share.





Collaborate

We bring a collaboration mindset, where participants are free to bring their challenges and solutions to seek help, advice, and guidance and share their experiences for the benefit of others. During collaboration, we uncover shared goals, leading to the co-creation of new initiatives and bringing in new perspectives and ideas. This is where business relationships begin. Collaboration is a team sport and participants need to bring a mindset that supports progress.

- *Openness.* Welcoming others into your work, being accepting of differing perspectives and sharing freely.
- *Bravery.* Being vulnerable and open to criticism requires being brave. Being brave allows us to try new things and encourages collaboration with others.
- *Trust.* Collaboration is not possible without trust. It is imperative to create an environment that fosters trust and the values that the outcomes are prioritized over ego, acclaim and attribution.
- *Experimentation.* Through openness, bravery and trust, we foster the willingness to experiment and try new things without fear of failure.

- *Transparency.* Being open, feeling trusted and that participants can trust each other, and having the courage to be brave, allows us to be truly transparent in our work to collaborate more effectively.
- *Determination.* Collaboration does not happen in isolation. All participants must opt in to the process, so as the creator of the experience, you need to be brave and determined. Communicate objectives clearly, share, trust, experiment and make magic!

Co-Create

Co-creation brings a “Yes, and...” mentality to our events, anchoring on the tenets of involvement, engagement and participation. We carry the value of co-creation beyond just crowdsourcing and collaborating. Through conversation and shared goals, we co-create projects, business agreements, solutions, and deep and trusting relationships. Co-creation is inherently inclusive because all ideas have value and all experience is relevant, however action from co-creation requires structure.

- *Get everyone on the same page.* Through the collaboration efforts, you have identified shared areas of interest, so now you can set up the topic, state your relevance to it and align participants to begin co-creation.
- *Set expectations.* The “co-” in co-creation announces that this is a team sport. When you begin to ideate, assign a scribe. Ensure ideation is providing equity to all participants. Sales is not part of co-creation.
- *Give permission.* During this process great ideas will come up. Ensure all participants understand what ideas belong to the group, and whether discarded ideas are free to be leveraged outside of this experience.
- *Be open.* Always use inclusive language (we, our, team/group) so that even when there is clear leadership, the creation belongs to the group.
- *Next steps.* Does this idea live on? Did the problem get solved? Share the top-level notes and formulate a plan for additional thoughts and a deadline to implement a timeline for action.

Converse

We believe in equality of conversation, not letting one person monopolize the time, and conversation must be value-based, not sales-based. Only by listening, thinking, building and refining our way to an answer do we get something that will work for the people and businesses we serve. Conversation gives us permission to explore. These are the four cornerstones of great conversation:

- *Equity in conversation.* If you have spoken three times, make your fourth time be a question.
- *Conversation is value-based.* Offerings should be relevant to your experience, not your product. These conversations are about how to solve the problem or who to connect with, but the “sale” does not happen in these conversation that connect.
- *Share great stories.* Stories drive connection, explain concepts and bring example. Sharing stories helps people remember key points and understand different points of view.
- *Be inclusive in your demeanor.* Understand that extroverts may speak first and loudest, but introverts have much value to add, if given the time to prepare. In a conversation, there are no speakers and listeners—everyone shares equal footing. There are no leaders and followers, just great facilitators who can keep a conversation moving.

We believe strongly that organic and serendipitous connections abound when things are taken away. When the distractions are gone. When the environment is bare. When people feel comfortable enough to be vulnerable with another person, then a connection is made. We create a comfortable, walls-down environment. The rest is up to you.

Connection is a byproduct of a shared experience. It happens naturally and organically (never by force), but that doesn't mean the path to it can't be choreographed.





Through thoughtful planning, careful design, intentional curation of content and participants, and purposeful moments of impact, we can evoke an emotional response that drives connection. When you create experiences around a shared moment you produce a sense of love, bonding, and well-being, releasing Oxytocin.

When your experiences create excitement, anticipation, and pay off with the reward of a mind-blowing experience, you are releasing Dopamine.

When your experiences elicits a sense of adventure, trying new things, building confidence and self-worth, you are releasing Serotonin.

By releasing Oxytocin, Dopamine, and Serotonin, you are literally creating happiness.

When you craft a comfortable, walls-down environment, ensure that participants care, collaborate, co-create and converse, then you have created happiness and paved the path for connection.

**“The business of business is relationships.
The business of life is human connection.”**



Haute Dokimazo Secret Family Reunion

Taking risks is not something your average event professional is comfortable doing. Execution must be flawless for clients. Unknowns must not happen... ever. Throwing caution to the wind and letting the environment be in control is a rare occurrence indeed.

Enter Secret Family Reunion. With the premise that you don't need large crowds, major production, hundreds of breakout sessions, and concerts to drive profitable relationships, we chartered a plane for 80 experiential marketers, told them to pack for 6 days, meet us at JFK and bring a passport.

We took these intrepid adventurers to Tuscany for a 5-day experiential Spontaneous Think Tank to test our formula for creating connection.

Participants cared deeply about joining an experience with like-minded industry risk-takers to push the boundaries of thought. They collaborated on the challenges and solutions they were facing, and co-created sessions aimed at helping each other find solutions. The entire experience was conversation-based with no keynotes or prepared presentations. The connections created through experience have driven more than \$5m in co-created projects among the participants and created lifelong friendships that transcend business.

The Age of Conversation Summit

When the pandemic took away the livelihood of many event professionals and opened the door to virtual events that most had never created previously, we saw an opportunity to create an event that would be both impactful from the content and from the process of creation. We hired 10 event professionals who had no experience in virtual events and publicly documented our 6-week journey to creating a one-of-a-kind conversation-based summit. Our checklists, scripts, and handy tips can be found on the Amazon Kindle store at <http://bit.ly/HauteAoC>

Our process followed the 5Cs closely. We care deeply about our industry and wanted to do something that would upskill event professionals who needed support and create an event that was worth joining. We collaborated with our leadership team, their professional networks, and our collective communities to find an event tool and content ideas. Together, we co-created the agenda with more than 100 hours of content and conversations. Each session ended with live conversation with participants in the room so they could share thoughts, insights, and perspectives on the topics. The connections that our leadership team made with each other are strong, and we added hundreds of new community members to our Slack channel, which you can still join at <http://bit.ly/HauteSlack>

The Age of Conversation Summit lives on and we are eager to see what our community will co-create in the future!



Haute Dokimazo sparks deep and trusting relationships anchored in genuine connection through rousing shared experiences and conversations. Explore the #HugLife community for event professionals and Convo, a program for marketing and sales executives.

Haute Dokimazo is part of Haute Companies, a family of companies that believe in human connection, from events to media (podcasts, videos, and more) to direct mail to branded merchandise to entertainment talent management to strategy session facilitation.

Contact Nicole Osibodu nicole@hautecompanies.com to explore how we can design conversation that connect and convert for your organization.



Here on Florida's Paradise Coast, event planners will find everything they want most in a meetings destination: hotels and resorts with superior on-site services, an unparalleled commitment to attendee safety, and a location that's easy to get to. Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades offer all this and more—along with plentiful other opportunities to make your next meeting not just successful, but exceptional.

You'll love the beautiful hotels and resorts with flexible, well-equipped meeting spaces of all sizes and hybrid-virtual meeting capabilities to meet your unique needs. But special meeting venues are just the beginning of what makes this a meetings Paradise. Outside the conference rooms, attendees will find a destination that offers the ultimate rewards for a productive day's work: Award-winning restaurants. One-of-a-kind boutiques and galleries. Incredible golfing, fishing, and eco-adventures. World-class spas. And of course, endless white sand beaches along the shimmering Gulf of Mexico—perfect for relaxing and recharging until the next day's agenda.

Planning a meeting in Paradise is sure to ease any of your clients' lingering concerns about holding an in-person event. That's because our hotels, resorts, and businesses have made visitor health their Number 1 priority.

There's no better time to start planning your event in this one-of-a-kind destination. Because when a meeting has to be nothing less than extraordinary, only Paradise will do.

About Naples, Marco Island, Everglades

A natural and cultural gem, Florida's Paradise Coast is where the Gulf of Mexico's sparkling waters meet white sand, wild islands and downtowns filled with artful treasures, culinary delights and countless other discoveries. Explore Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades, and find your most idyllic Florida meeting destination.

www.paradisecoast.com/meetings



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SOUTH CAROLINA

Kiawah Island Golf Resort in coastal South Carolina has always embraced the Haute pillars centered around caring, conversation, co-creation and collaboration to design innovative events. Each of these tenets is realized through the Resort's natural barrier island setting, inspirational group venues, powerful team-building, corporate social responsibility opportunities and supportive event services.

Natural Barrier Island Setting

Meeting planners gain the opportunity to uplift attendees by providing time for connection with Kiawah Island's lush maritime forests, unspoiled saltwater marshes and abundant blue spaces, unhindered.

Inspirational Group Venues

From manicured green lawns that stretch toward the sea and a riverside setting shaded by a canopy of ancient oaks to indoor spaces with oversized windows opening onto island vistas, the Resort provides inspirational group venues to create the ideal environment for education and enlightenment.

Powerful Team-Building and Corporate Social Responsibility

Kiawah Island boasts a subtropical climate that lends itself to outdoor team-building and corporate social responsibility initiatives year-round. Attendees come together to co-create and work toward collective achievements in a variety of immersive experiences—including one-of-a-kind service opportunities available through the KLH Group in Charleston.

Supportive Event Services

From leading-edge technology to the fine art of custom-crafted catering menus, the professional event services team at Kiawah Island Golf Resort collaborates with you to provide the comprehensive expertise and support you require to ensure your gathering yields the most impactful results possible.

The distinctive and innovative offerings of Kiawah Island Golf Resort will deliver a group experience you have yet to imagine.

About Kiahwah Island

Kiawah Island Golf Resort is the ideal destination for innovative events in South Carolina. Situated on an unspoiled barrier island, the Resort offers inspirational group venues, powerful team-building and supportive event services as well as five championship golf courses—including The Ocean Course, home to the 2021 PGA Championship.

kiawahresort.com/meetings/



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TOP 5 BEST SMALL CITY IN THE U.S.
Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards, 2020

Learn the Secret to Innovative Events.

Visit Alexandria is equipped to support meeting organizers and attendees responsibly by effectively incorporating seamless hybrid meeting solutions and physically distanced in-person events as travel intent continues to rise. Visit Alexandria works closely with its hospitality and tourism partners to provide one-of-a-kind experiences like The Leadership Collection at Alexandria™ and innovative solutions like a timely educational webinar series, a Virtual Tours and Experiences Library and more, all which point to the CVB's strengths in increasing productivity and profitability, while driving innovation and strengthening relationships. Alexandria, VA has pioneered creative solutions during COVID, including:

- Visit Alexandria's Meeting Planner's Destination Checklist to cover all your bases when looking at a destination and communicating with a DMO or CVB during the new normal.
- Timely EIC CMP-approved educational webinars for planners on topics such as Rethinking event design in changing environments and more.
- A virtual tours and experiences library for remote site visits of top meeting hotels and the city and hybrid meetings attendee activities. Alexandria is one of the first CVBs to offer this caliber of virtual experiences to meeting planners.
- Partnerships with local streaming and audiovisual services, as well as virtual experience-focused businesses, including CSI Destination Management, PSAV, Cheers in a Box and Federal Conferences, to offer hybrid and virtual meeting resources.
- New COVID recovery initiatives and curriculum from three nationally recognized institutes of The Leadership Collection at Alexandria™
- Expansion of outdoor meeting and event spaces, as well as outdoor group activities content for safe events and activities

About Alexandria, VA

Just five miles from Washington D.C., Alexandria, Virginia is the perfect spot for small to midsize meetings. Named a Top 5 Best Small City in the U.S. 2020 by Condé Nast Traveler, Alexandria offers a relaxed, walkable setting with a small town feel and the amenities of a cosmopolitan city.

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#LeadershipALX | #MeetALX



SOUTH WALTON FLORIDA

With 26 miles of sugar-white sand beaches and turquoise water, South Walton is one of Florida's top meeting destinations. More than 15,000 accommodations and 155,000 sq. ft. of meeting space offer a variety of options for meeting planners, including boutique hotels, full-service resorts and charming beach houses. Combined with ample outdoor venues and wide-open spaces, South Walton is an ideal destination for safe and enjoyable meetings of any size.

About 40% of the land in South Walton is preserved for nature. And it's put to good use – with four state parks, a 15,000-acre state forest and 15 rare coastal dune lakes providing plenty of opportunities for incredible eco-exploration. Bring your family and stay a few extra days to discover why TIME Magazine named South Walton one of “The World's Greatest Places.” Find your perfect beach in South Walton, Florida.

About South Walton Florida

Located on Northwest Florida's Gulf Coast, South Walton's pristine sugar-white sand beaches and turquoise water complement 16 unique beach neighborhoods, each with its own personality and style. South Walton is the ideal place to rejuvenate, create lasting memories and find your perfect beach.

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