VISUAL FACILITATION
cookbook

CREATIVE *learning* COOKBOOK

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Chapter I.

WHAT IS THE BIG THING?

Creative Learning Cookbook project

This book has a story. It begins in spring 2014 when Estonian UNESCO Youth Association, Room of Fulfilled Dreams (Latvia) and Cooperativa Braccianti (Austria) decided to apply for a KA2 Strategic partnership project within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme, which they named "Creative Learning Cookbook" (CLC). The idea of the project was built around three main topics: Creative writing, Storytelling and Visual Facilitation. This was because the partners felt interested in these topics, finding them very creative and powerful for the facilitation of learning. As such, they wanted to share their skills with colleagues, as well as to explore the potential of new creative learning techniques. But, above that interest there was also the intention to structure this knowledge and make it accessible for other educators.

The main objective of the project was to help raise the quality of educational and training activities within the contemporary system of formal and non-formal education. This aim was to be achieved by introducing and developing innovative teaching, as well as approaches and methods in both training and learning. Additionally, the project endeavoured to support the exchange and dissemination of best practices in the field of education and learning. In order to reach these goals, the partners organised three training courses and introduced the tools and methods of Creative Writing, Storytelling and Visual Facilitation to youth workers, teachers, trainers, youth leaders and educators from Austria, Estonia and Latvia. In the second stage, participants of the trainings organised local follow-up activities in their countries, shared their newly gained skills, tested new methods in practice and gave their feedback, which, along with the tools and techniques, set the basis for the third stage of the project: creating publications on each of topics which could become a handbook — or rather a cookbook of recipes — for educators working with youth in a classroom or on a project.

What you will shortly see is the inventory of the training course "Visual Facilitation+" which took place in Estonia during September 2015. It was compiled by Torben Grocholl and Deniss Jershov (trainers of VF+) and Kati Orav (visual practitioner) with inputs, real cases and examples from colleagues and participants.

This book was presented during the final event of the "Creative Learning Cookbook" project, which took place in Riga on the 26th–28th of February 2016 and brought together 50 educators from all over Europe. Apart from the presentation of the publications, the programme of the event also included workshops on Creative Writing, Visual Facilitation, Storytelling and other tools of creative learning.

What is the Big Thing?

Training Course: Visual Facilitation+

The training course took place in Taevaskoja, Estonia on the 5th–13th September 2015 and brought together 19 youth workers, leaders, trainers, teachers and educators from Austria, Estonia and Latvia. The training team consisted of two main trainers, Torben Grocholl (Austria) and Deniss Jershov (Estonia), two co-trainers, Inese Predite (Latvia) and Marcus Vrecer (Austria), and support staff Anna Mossolova (Estonia). A half-day of the programme was lead by visiting expert Kati Orav (Estonia), a practicing visual facilitator, who joined us to share her experience of working with graphic templates with participants. Kati is also one of the three co-authors of this cookbook.

The training was aimed at developing participants' skills in Visual Facilitation, exploring a variety of visual tools and exchanging best practices in the field. It was meant for absolute beginners and "non-drawers", or for participants familiar with the basics of drawing. The only condition set by organisers was that participants had to be connected to working with young people.

The training programme, pretty much like this cookbook, consisted of an introduction into the essence of the training topic and finding an answer to "What is Visual Facilitation?"; exploring the basics of drawing and lettering (shapes, containers, characters, composition, colour, letterforms, etc.); getting acquainted with the concept of graphic templates as a powerful tool of Visual Facilitation; exploring and using different newly-gained skills, from personal notes to graphic harvesting; and, most importantly, developing visual tools for personal and professional use.

After the training, participants carried out follow-up events in their home countries, where they shared their new skills with friends, colleagues and target groups, whilst they continued developing visual tools, which you will be able to find in this cookbook and also on CLC online media. In total, the follow-up events have brought together over 160 participants from all three countries.

Visual Facilitation Cookbook

The Idea Behind this Book

With this publication, we want to invite you to join us on a little journey through what we see and understand as Visual Facilitation. It will hopefully include some fun and inspiring moments for you and might even change a bit the way you work and think. Possibly even the way you look at the world and yourself as a drawer. We want to encourage you to step out of your adult and professional routines, connect with your inner child and (re)discover your natural ability to communicate and express yourself in a more visual way. Together, we will explore the potential of visual language and show you some first steps, tips and tricks to put ideas on paper and to start using visual tools in your life and educational work — at school,

in seminars, during coaching sessions or while running projects at the local youth club.

Our main idea was to make this book something easy to access and very practical. It is not meant to be a comprehensive A to Z compendium of "perfect" visual tools. We have put together a number of tools, templates, exercises and games which we use in our training activities and which were proven to be interesting, engaging and useful for facilitators and learners in different settings. We have also reached out to colleagues, friends and former participants of our training courses and workshops, asking for their "favourite tools" and visual approaches in their professional context. You will find them as practical cases, examples and tools throughout this book.

If you happen to find any content in this book, which originates from your work, please, let us know! We will be more than happy to credit you!

Generally, we see this book as our modest contribution to support what we and others call the "Doodle Revolution" and to enrich educators as well as learners in the European youth field and beyond.

How This Book is Structured &
What We Put into It

This cookbook consists of five chapters. The first chapter will try to answer the question of what is Visual Facilitation and how does it work? There we will also try to explain the difference between various ways of using visuals in the facilitation process, in addition to taking a look at the usage of visuals in different fields and the most common practices. Since we are talking about a cookbook, you can think of this part as an aperitif.

The second chapter introduces some basic elements of what we call "visual language", to prove that drawing is easier than you imagined. To take your first steps on the visualisation path you need to know very few things, but you have to have enough motivation to practice. If you think that you already know the ABC of visual language (basic shapes, containers, arrows, lettering, colours and composition, etc.) you can skip the second chapter. If you don't have time for learning the basics and want something practical right now, then it is also fine to skip it and move to the toolbox chapter. If you think you don't want to learn the ABC, it is also alright (but we strongly recommend that you have a look at it). You can call this part the starter.

In the third chapter we collected different tools that you can start to use for your educational purposes as a learner or as an educator. There you will find pre-prepared graphic templates, layouts, other tools and real-life cases that we collected with colleagues and the participants of our training course. You can call this part of the toolkit the main course.

Chapter four is a bit different from rest of the cookbook. On the one hand it is a part of the educator toolbox, on the other

hand it has an entertaining accent. There we have collected different games and exercises which include a visual component (e.g. they are about drawing, or something similar), but at the same time, they are not necessarily for the development of drawing skills. However, as with many games and exercises, they can teach you different skills, or just help you with interaction and dynamics within the group. You can call this part the dessert.

Part five is all about references, resources and everything else you might need to continue with using Visual Facilitation. This is the coffee.

How to Use It

As we promised, we will walk together on the path of Visual Facilitation for educational activities, from theories to practices. Feel free to join us wherever you like:

1. If you want to become a visual facilitator — get a pen and a paper and doodle along while reading this book — copy templates, analyse examples, participate in games and exercises.
2. If you simply want to use tools — feel absolutely free to use them, but don't forget to mention the source, after all, this book is the outcome of the work of quite a few people.
3. If you are looking for inspiration — there is some, mainly between the lines and chapters ;)

What is Visual Facilitation?

During our research, training courses, workshops and through many discussions with participants and colleagues, we agreed on a rather broad definition which proved to be useful in our working context and a solid foundation for our practical and theoretical explorations of the topic.

For us, Visual Facilitation is the intentional integration and application of visual elements and exercises into our educational activities for:

1. Presenting content and information.
2. Supporting (in the sense of actively guiding) an individual and/or group process.
3. Documenting outcomes.

Especially when it comes to situations where the density of information, or the level of complexity, is rather high, the use of visual elements is of a great value for perception and overall understanding. Therefore, we also see Visual Facilitation as a more holistic and dynamic approach in education, that can be used to deal with the challenges of "information overflow" and the complexity of a globalised and rapidly changing world. Visualisations can grab attention and increase a learner's level of motivation and engagement. Combining spoken and/or written words with visual elements and thus addressing different senses, has an impact on how people perceive information and retain facts in their memories.

In fact, almost every communication — especially in the field of education — consists of the intention of a communicator to "draw" or to develop a clear and detailed picture in the mind's eye of the audience. The common phrase "I see what you mean!" makes that aspect literally quite clear. So, the challenge for a visual facilitator is to stimulate and to evoke these inner pictures in their audience by applying "visual language" onto educational activities.

More or less, it all started during the 1970s along the west coast of the United States, where a group of consultants and facilitators got inspired by the problem-solving approaches of architects and designers. They started to apply these techniques in their work to support the group process in meetings, seminars and workshops by creating and using a shared visual picture, or map, of the working process that could serve as, what they called, "group memory". If you want to go back in time and take a closer look at the early beginnings and history of Visual Facilitation, it is worth starting your research with one of these pioneers: David Sibbet, Geoff Ball, Fred Lakin, Jim Channon or Nancy Margulies.

Through the past decades, what started as "group memory" has by today evolved into a diverse and lively professional field with different disciplines, approaches and a wide-ranging (sometimes even confusing) terminology. To keep it short and simple, the most common and relevant classification can probably be made between the following approaches or disciplines:

On the one hand, there is Graphic or Visual Facilitation as the act of leading and guiding an individual or group process, dialogue or working session by using a variety of visual tools, such as process illustrations, templates, drawings or even drawing exercises, etc. And, on the other hand, there is Graphic or Visual Recording (sometimes also called Scribing) as the activity of creating a (live) visual documentation and summary of a workshop, conference, lecture, etc. This usually appears on large scale paper formats and is visible for everybody in the room. The results can be digitalised and distributed among participants later on. In contrast to the graphic facilitator, the graphic recorder has a more passive role and does not normally interfere directly in the group process, however there might be overlaps from time to time.

A little remark: While going through different resources and publications during our research, we realised that the terms Graphic Facilitation and Graphic Recording are, unfortunately, often used synonymously, which can sometimes lead to confusion and misunderstandings. However, if you are aware of the basic difference between those two you are quite safe ;-)

Within the field of European youth work and the Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme, we recently saw a significant effort to introduce Visual Facilitation as a tool to the wider public of educational practitioners and youth workers. Particularly during the latest editions of the "SALTO EuroMED Tool Fair" events, where the topic was made visible through specific

workshops and activities, gaining a lot of attention. This large interest from practitioners from the field of youth work also lead to the publication of the booklet "Graphic Express: First steps to Graphic Facilitation in Youth Work" which was created by our colleagues Mark Taylor and Buzz Burry, together with Siiri Taimla and Tanel Rannala. At the same time, more and more brave and passionate educational doodlers started to incorporate visual approaches into their educational activities, offered trainings and workshops around the topic and thus spread the visual virus into the European youth field!

VF is a way to support any kind of group or individual working or learning process by using any kind of visual tools. For me the main benefit is that it's making communication and working together more joyful and it's helping everybody to get a common understanding of what is going on. It's playful and meaningful at the same time. It helps us in working and communicating together, in being more productive and it is increasing understanding among us.

Torben Grocholl, trainer at VF+ training

Why Do Visuals Work for Us?

When we planned this project, we already had some experience with organising educational events on the topic of Visual Facilitation. We got the idea that it could be useful for the learning process and knew a few actors in this field and a few resources. However, one year later, when we carried out the Creative Learning Cookbook trainings and started to compile this cookbook, we noticed that in just one year, the number of people practicing and training Visual Facilitation as well as the number of resources on this topic skyrocketed. Why is it so popular now, one may ask, and why do visuals work for us? It seems to be a difficult question to answer, however, let us try.

We are visual information processing robots. That is our job.

Sunni Brown

You must have noticed that the world around us has become more visual. Text is no longer welcome in, let's say, the everyday world, which talks to us mainly in the language of pictures: advertisements, icons, infographics, Instagram pictures, selfies, etc. Indeed, the blast of social media and constant "status update mode" forces us to communicate faster and in shorter sentences in order to be heard, to use catchy ways of getting into other people's minds, when you either want to sell something, or just to be noticed. Recent studies say that nowadays, content is browsed 94% more often if it contains images and is shared 40 times more often in social media if it contains images. The same can also be said for the rise of infographics, which has now become more popular than ever, because we want to consume information, but we don't have time for reading. So, today, image is king.

What is the Big Thing?

However, it would be wrong for a visual practitioner to conclude that our field is growing thanks to this trend. It definitely helps visual practitioners to develop and spread their message. Pictures, talking media and the popularity of Visual Facilitation go hand in hand, but in reality, the reason why pictures work better is much deeper than the costs of mobile internet and the "Facebookisation" of our generation.

> *We all speak 'Visuals' and are capable of immediately understanding and even reproducing 'visual messages' we find in the world around us. The sad part of this story, from my point of view, is that even though we would have the potential to do so, only a few people make use of it. So my mission, as a 'Visual Facilitator' is to help people rediscover their skills, change their mind set about their skills and enable them to learn what they already know. This I see as my contribution to a simpler and happier tomorrow.*
>
> Markus Engelberger, participant at VF+ training

Some people like to say that Visual Facilitation works because there are different types of learners (audial—prefer to listen, visual—prefer to see, verbal—prefer to speak and kinaesthetic—prefer to move or do some physical activity), so some of us are just visual learners. In reality, none of us is just a one-type learner, we use more or less all four types, depending on the situation. Nevertheless, we do indeed have preferences. Some even say that 65% of us are visual learners. It would

be interesting to know where this number comes from. Some, explaining the effect of visuals, state that only 7% of communication is verbal, or reversed, that 93% of communication is non-verbal, as if the rest is only visual. However, this 93% also includes pace of voice, gesticulation, mimics, intonations, etc.

Many visual practitioners and authors often bring another kind of math: 75% of the neurons in our brain are responsible for processing images and the other 25% are responsible for the rest of our senses. This is already helping us to get to the point: indeed, most of the information we receive comes through our eyes, not just the texts and images we aim to read or watch, but also the colour of furniture, lighting, organisation of our spaces, which we know by heart and once learned visually, notice without even focusing. We can't touch colours, smell textures or hear the size of an object, therefore our eyes are important to us. And, 75% sounds like a fair number, and it can be measured nowadays through neuron activity levels.

Still not convinced? Okay, here comes the cavalry. We read images through our eyes, but they are processed through our brain which, according to collected information, recognises objects and gives signals to other parts of the body. On average, our brain is only 2% of the weight of the body, but do you know how much energy it consumes? 20%! Which is ten times more that its weight. This is a lot and means that constant cerebral activity can empty our energy resources and put the existence

of our organisms, including the brain, into danger of running out of charge. So, the brain understands that and, to save energy, sends us back signals so we can maintain the resources. And, one of the signals is: "Show me pictures, not texts!".

Reading is losing to watching because viewing requires little mental processing.

Paul Martin Lester

If we look at a written word, let's say "watermelon", we read it quite quickly, as we may conclude, but in reality our eyes read symbol by symbol, in our brain these are translated into sounds, which are then put together to form a word. The brain then finds the image matching the word, before sending it to the information processing centre with the remark: "I got it, it is a watermelon!" Then we move to another word. We learn how to read during childhood, we do it automatically and cannot calculate how much time it takes for reading a text. In reality, however, this process is quite time and power consuming for our brain. At a certain point, it starts to lose resources and sends us signals, like: "I don't understand it!", "Start over!" or even "Now you go to sleep!". But when we see a picture, all the work that the brain has to do is to compare this picture with the one in the brain and to recognise it if they look alike. We process visual information in about 0.01 second, which is almost immediately and without using much energy. In reality, we even think in images. When we read "mother" we imagine our mother. When we read "favourite toy" we imagine

what used to be our favourite toy. When we read "honey" we think of several things at once, depending on how wide the range of meanings the word has for us. By default, images have wider meaning than text and are more flexible: the word "car" makes us think of a car, however a drawing of a car gives us some space to decide the size and model of it, the direction it drives, it's function, etc.

Images also bring emotions, because one picture of a beautiful sunset explains the level of its beauty instantly, however, text would need a few sentences for the same task. We also like to watch pictures, because they remind us of the life we are used to and like to see every day. Text doesn't remind us of life at first glance, because our life doesn't look like a page of small black symbols, so we have to read it first.

Are you still kicking our attacks back? Well, here is the heavy artillery then. Obviously, the greatest invention of mankind is language. We can take any idea and transport it to someone else's head almost directly. When we can't see or hear the person we talk to, we use another invention — writing. So, to describe the beautiful sunset we have to translate the image into words, which again takes resources. Or we can pass along this scene without translation, but just by reconstructing this image and drawing the picture. The effect is double when the person you are talking to speaks another language. An image is same in any language, isn't it?

What is the Big Thing?

All of these evidences appear when you put these theories into practice. Visual Facilitation works, because it reminds us of life. We recognise images because we have the same ones in our head. Visuals deliver information faster. And, most importantly, images bring inclusion of people who speak different languages, which is crucial in international or intercultural groups or situations when someone can be excluded from the process because of the level of their spoken language, even in their mother tongue. Watching images is natural to us, it is fun, it often reminds us of solving riddles or adventure, when you have to guess what one symbol means, the games we loved so much in childhood. By the way, didn't we start to draw before we started to write and read?

> *Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.*
>
> Pablo Picasso

Now you may strike back with the most wide-spread weapon on earth: you can't draw, right? That's okay. We have seen it many times and have also seen that it is absolutely not true. Everyone can draw. Period.

However, we agree that there is a strong and widespread limiting belief within most of us, telling us things like: You are not creative, you cannot draw! The same actually goes for singing, dancing and many other activities, mostly because we were told so by parents, teachers or peers at some moment in our educational career. So, at some point in the lives of many of us, we seem to lose interest and/or confidence in expressing ourselves visually. In the "adult world", drawing, doodling and playing with colours and shapes has become inappropriate for us, even though it can be considered as something very inherent to our human nature. Just try to remember how fun and easy it was when you were drawing as a kid. Think about what you enjoyed to draw most… Maybe this can be a starting point for you to connect and start again?! The next chapter will offer you some simple steps on how to start drawing practically.

> *Drawing should not be viewed as activity that requires artistic talent, it should be considered more of a process with the aim of turning ideas, thoughts, plans into visible form.*
>
> Heikki Toivanen

What is the Big Thing?

Chapter II.
ABC

In this part, we will go through the basic visual elements together. We kindly welcome you to dive into the following pages and try whatever you read in this chapter. However, we can't promise that you will become a professional right away—because practice makes you a master—but, what you will shortly discover is the very minimum of graphic tools and elements, enough for starting your journey in the world of Visual Facilitation.

Before we finally get started and explore things further, there is one thing we want you to keep in mind while reading this book and for whenever you start putting your pen to paper: You don't have to be an artist! Working more visually and applying visual tools into the facilitation process is not about drawing beautiful pictures. It is all about simple little drawings that activate people's attention and support understanding, retention and engagement. In fact, people's brains are more active when looking at drawings that are not perfect, but slightly ambiguous. Or, in other words:

> *Simple visualization is powerful and it is memorable even if — heaven forbid: — it looks like chickens drew it.*
>
> Sunni Brown

Basic Shapes

All you need is this (we can call it the visual alphabet): Circle, Rectangle, Triangle, Line and Dot.
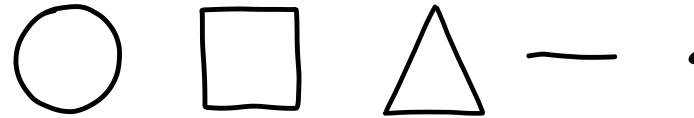
These shapes are quite basic, as you may have noticed. They are the simplest and recognisable to human eye, which also makes them very popular in visual communication: road signs, buttons, arrows, banners, screens, etc. Simple navigation also uses simple shapes, because they communicate to our brain even faster than other of images. And, what is most beautiful, is that all other images can be constructed with only these basic shapes.
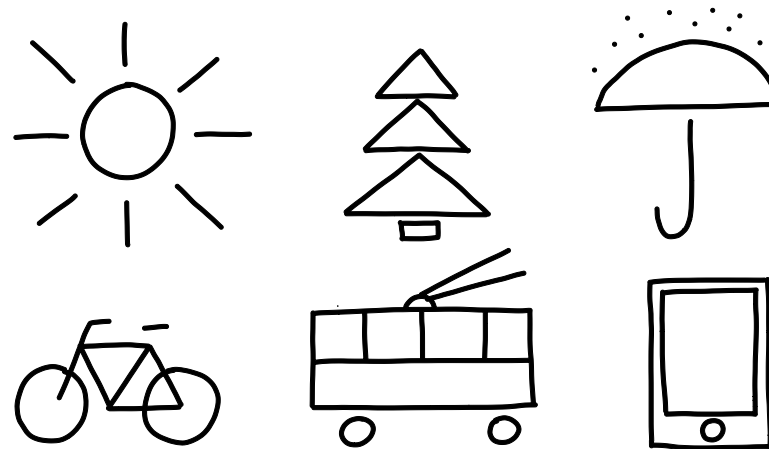
Dave Gray extends this set: Dot, Line, Angle, Arc, Spiral, Loop, Oval, Eye, Triangle, Rectangle, House, Cloud.
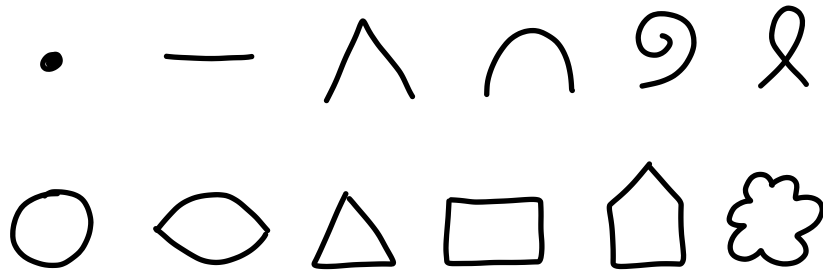
And other teachers and experts of Visual Facilitation bring even more basic shapes, but what we all agree on is that basic shapes are your entry point to advanced shapes and with these basic shapes you can already do a lot. To prove it here, we would like to offer you some exercises you can either try out alone or with a group of people, which is of course more fun.

Playing Derrida

Objective:

To learn using basic shapes for drawing bigger concepts.

Materials:

Tables and chairs, pen for everyone, prepared sheets of paper with an opening picture, pre-folded.

Settings:

1. Since this exercise is built on a certain sequence of constructing and deconstructing pictures, it is better if you have an even number of people in each group, so that the last person will construct the objects and then compare them with the opening picture.
2. The number of people can be odd, but the number of free panels on papers should be same as the number of people in the group. Otherwise, if there are more panels, people will get the paper they started with and it is boring for them to construct the object they have seen before.
3. It is strongly recommended to use a thicker paper, such as watercolour paper. It is essential that the paper is not transparent enough to see what is drawn under the sheet.

Flow:

1. Prepare the sheets for participants in advance. The recommended width is about 10 cm. The length depends on the number of pre-folded panels; each should be about 6 cm. It is important that the number of panels is equal to the number of people per group, plus one more for the opening picture.
2. The opening picture should consist of simple shapes: a house with triangle roof, air balloon, TV, etc. You need to draw them in advance in the first panel.
3. The opening pictures should be different on papers at the same table. Which means, if you have two groups of six

ABC
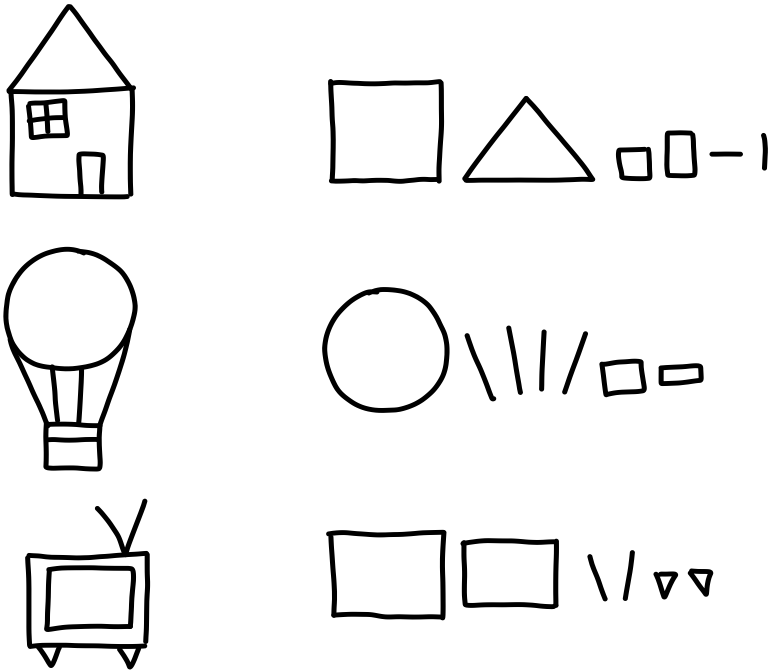
people at the table, you need just one set of six pictures and 12 pieces of paper with seven pre-folded panels each. If you have three groups of eight people, you need three sets of eight pictures and 24 pieces of paper with nine pre-folded panels.

4. Each player receives one paper with a pre-drawn image. Now, the task is to deconstruct this image into basic shapes: triangle, rectangle, circle, line and dot (see the example picture). They should draw these shapes in the second panel, right under first. Then fold the opening picture back and pass the paper to the right, when everyone is ready, so the receiver can only see the second panel.

5. The next person cannot see the initial picture but should guess and reconstruct, what it was or could be, by using the simple shapes first person provided. This reconstruction is drawn in the third panel. When the second panel is folded back, pass it to the right again.

6. If the number of people in the group is even, then the last round is to reconstruct the object and then everyone can unfold the paper and see the transformation of the initial picture to the final one, through a series of deconstructions and reconstructions.

Tip:

If you want to go deeper into deconstructing pictures and art, you should check out this guy: Ursus Wehrli, a Swiss comedian and artist. He created a book called "Tidying Up Art" and also gave a very entertaining TED talk which you can find online.

I remember this part of the training where we were constructing and deconstructing things, so I understood that basically every drawing consists of a few basic elements and that was a huge discovery for me. So, now I think that I can draw everything using all those basic elements and that is easy, actually

Solvita Jirgensone, participant at VF+ training

Playing Picasso

Objective:

To learn how to use basic shapes for drawing even more natural pictures.

Materials:

A4 size tracing paper, pencil and eraser, old magazine with different pictures for everyone.

Flow:

1. Ask everyone to find a picture they like in a magazine.
2. Place the tracing paper on top of the picture
3. Try to reconstruct the picture by drawing simple forms: rectangles, triangles, ellipses, dots and lines. In other words, you are going to simplify the original picture into basic shapes as far as it remains understandable, whether it is a person at a table or beautiful valley with a rising sun, or whatever else there is in the picture.
4. When you think you are done with one, move onto the second and so on.
5. It is called Playing Picasso, because he started with quite realistic paintings at the beginning of his career and then went on to the simplification of detailed pictures, down to just several lines, still keeping it recognisable.

Tip:

1. Don't draw the silhouette of the picture. It would be the easiest way, but the essence of the exercise is to understand that any photographed picture can be reconstructed with basic shapes, at least to the extent that you can still understand what is going on in the drawing.
2. Sometimes participants jump into details, trying to "over-shape" the picture by being very precise. Too many details also steal time for reading them. So, the simpler, the better.

What helped me here very much was to see that it's actually a low threshold to start. We used this semi-transparent paper on magazines and discovered that complex things indeed consist of simple things. So I would strongly suggest to popularise these small and easy exercises so people can really see that it is a low threshold to start.

Uku Visnapuu, participant at VF+ training

Banners, Frames, Containers

Frames are easy-to-draw elements which help you to structure your content, to set focus and to increase the reader's ability to capture an overall idea and retain information. With frames you can cluster information and put it literally "into boxes". By doing so, you separate certain sections of information and text from each other and make it explicit that "this here is something and that there is something else".

ABC

ABC
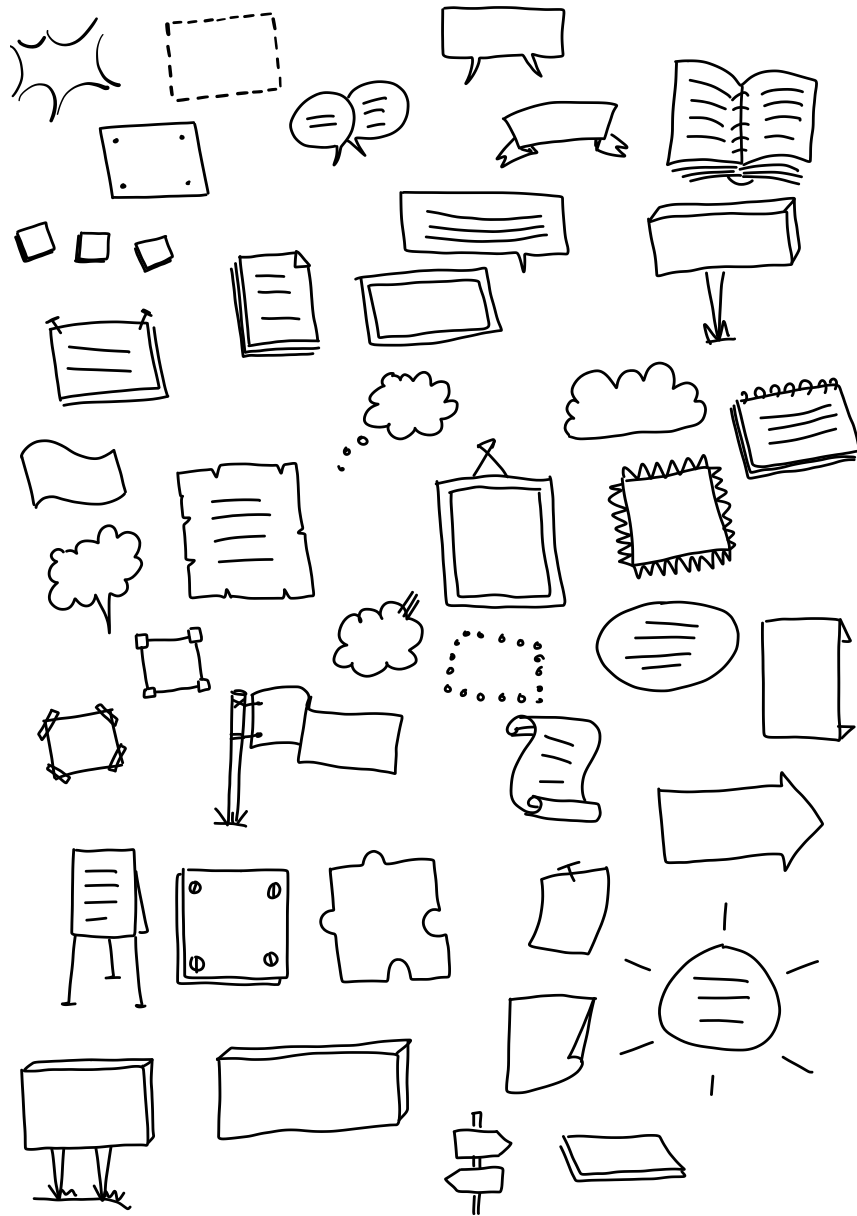
How easy it is to make things look more interesting; new ideas on frames, connectors; got to be creative, easy things that can be useful in so many areas.

Yulia Jefanova, participant at VF+ training

You can call them frames, containers or boxes. Basically it is about drawing a line around some words. They can be modified, shaped and reshaped in many different ways. It is just up to your imagination and creativity. They can give hints to what kind information you are actually dealing with. For example, speech bubbles can be used for statements, thinking clouds for thoughts and ideas, banners for headlines and titles, etc. The way you place the frame can even hint towards the "quality" of the content, e.g. on an axis between more formed and less formed.

Two tips from Brandy Agerbeck's The Graphic Facilitator's Guide: Write or draw your content first and then put your container or box around it to make sure you have enoughspace. And yes, boxes are nice and useful but,"Don't become a boxaholic!"

Brandy describes the character of different shapes:

UNCERTAIN   UNFORMED   FLEXIBLE   STATIC   DYNAMIC
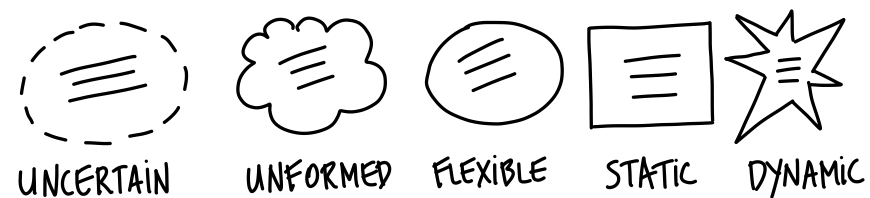
Arrows, "Connectors"

Simple arrows are useful visual elements to build connections between the different elements of your content. By using eye-catching and visible arrows you can make visible relations, process directions, dynamics, hierarchies, etc. Thus, you can guide the reader's eyes and attention through a picture, story or process flow and make it easier for your audience to follow, to keep the overview and to see the "big picture".
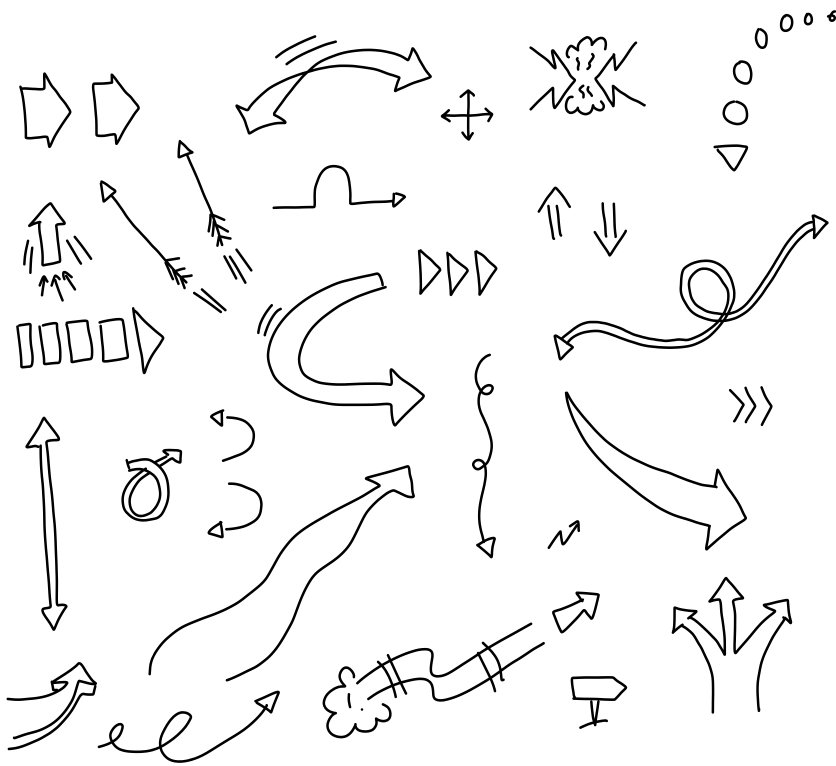
Characters and Figures, Emotions

ABC

Draw little stick figures and characters to liven up your content and make your posters, presentations and educational materials more human. Simple figures and characters are essential to illustrate and show any kind of process, because human beings are usually involved in it as well!

Different people have created and used different characters. Here you can find a compilation with examples of the most common ones, plus the ones we like. They are all easy and quick to draw. Try them all, choose the one you like the most and make it your own. However, in practice basically everything which has two arms and two feet can be a character. So once again: It is all a matter of your own imagination.

You can add a nose and eyes to make clear where your character is looking to. If you want to add emotions to your little creatures and bring them more to life, it is worth taking a look in the mirror and watching yourself for a while, making some emotional face expressions. Try to look very sad, super happy or wild and angry. Which part of your face is actually changing and how? Which part stays more or less the same? Usually the eyebrows and mouth are changing the most, while the rest of the face remains the same. So, these are the relevant parts of the face to put emotions into your character.

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The following scheme which is called the face- or expression-matrix by Austin Kleon will make this quite clear and offers you already nine different face expressions and emotion by basically combining only 2 lines: eyebrows and mouth.
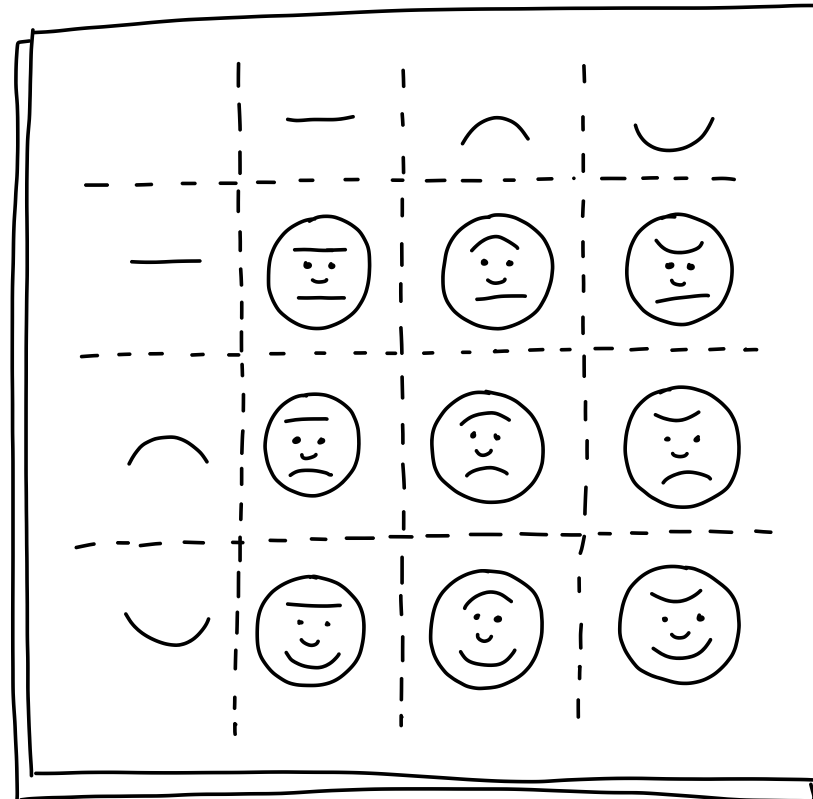
Lettering

We have already discussed that images communicate to the brain faster and are more flexible for understanding, can be read in any language and engage an audience. However, image together with text sometimes works even better, especially, if you have to pass down some certain information and you don't want to leave it just to the image, which people can understand differently. So, text is sometimes just a backup to an image, sometimes vice-versa, the image just illustrates the text and makes it less formal. Anyway, a good visual facilitator knows how to operate images, but he is also familiar with the basics of lettering.

Yes, lettering! This is where we think we must explain the difference, because in some resources written letters are called typography, however this term applies to ready-made type forms, the type you find on a computer word processing programme or the physical letters you use with old printing presses. When you write the text with hand, writing down letterforms, or cutting them from paper, shape them from clay, etc., we are dealing with lettering. In lettering, each letter is unique. In typography letters are similar.

Also, we like to speak about lettering, because we find this term fresh and cool. Typography has been a trend for several years already, however lettering is a more recent and more attractive. Don't get us wrong, the term "lettering" is older than "typography", for instance the famous Trajan pillar is an example of lettering, which later inspired typographers to use the same form in printing. But nowadays, handwritten and handmade art is back in fashion, therefore "lettering" is the new "typography".

CAPS vs Regular Handwriting

Facilitators of different educational events give some information to the audience or formulate the task and, obviously, for better communication do it not just verbally, but also visually, e.g. write it on a flipchart. This is very professional, if we keep in mind that people learn differently and that there are people who experience difficulties understanding foreign languages acoustically, so for them, written text is an invitation into the next exercise. However, participants can also miss acoustic information and written text can distract them, for example, if it isn't readable. In most cases, it happens because the text is written in the most comfortable way for the facilitator—with regular handwriting, just at flipchart scale—which doesn't mean that it's comfortable for the audience. This complex or pattern is hard to break: we live with our handwriting our whole life, we get it from school and learn to take notes quickly and read them later. So, we think, through the prism of own experience, that our handwriting must be perfectly understandable to others.

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The easiest way to break this pattern and try something different is to switch to capital letters. From school we remember that caps (usually) stand separate and do not flow from one into another. They have a clearer form and are more readable. That is why we start our journey in writing with caps. Moreover, if we look back into the history of mankind, alphabet systems also started with caps; small letters came later, when the need to write texts down faster came along, and here we are.

However professional letterers can write words and texts in different ways and make any style completely recognisable and readable. So, if you are sure that your regular handwriting is completely okay for your audience, keep going. If you have doubts, start using caps and then after some time try again with small letters and see if there is a difference.

If you happen to be an advanced letterer already, or think that you know the basics of flipchart lettering, you can skip the next three chapters and we will meet you back in Colours.

Level 0

Okay, you didn't skip! Great! Here we will take a look at those simple steps which you can try already in your next class or meeting. These are quite simple steps, however they have different moods and are suitable for different purposes.

Single Line

This one you must remember from first grade. If it already looks boring and regular, then check out one cool thing about caps — they also consist of basic shapes. A is a triangle, B is a line with two semicircles, C is one semicircle, and so on.
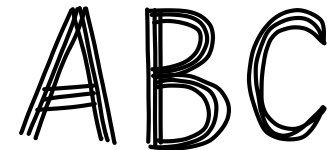
Double Line

This is already a level up. Instead of pulling one stroke, pull two and see how different it is already, compared to single stroke letters. It is saying: "Hey, I am important, I am a title."

Triple Line

When double-stroke is not enough and you still want to make a bigger accent on your text, use three lines. Who is important now?

Level 1

Cartoon Letters

Mike Rohde in his "The Sketchnote Handbook" writes that after you practice three strokes letters, you may want to try to outline the letterforms and,

through this exercise, practice creating letters with volume, where the main stroke is constructed from empty space, which you outline.

This letterform has a special feature: firstly, it is more playful and reminds us of titles from cartoons, which we liked so much in childhood. Secondly, tadaaa!, you can colour these shapes in whatever colour you like, expanding your letterer toolbox from just marker to also crayon or felt-tip pen, which we will discuss in the Materials chapter.

New Style

This one is very popular now on the Internet and in custom lettering because it is almost as simple as single stroke. But, watch what happens: all vertical lines now turn to into boxes, and horizontal lines remain single stroke. It gives a nice contrast between lines and makes the composition more dynamic. If we are working with letters like A, X, V, then the ascending stroke (the one going from down left to upper right) remains thin and descending (the one going from upper left to down right) is thick. You can also decorate or colour the boxes.

And yes, we called it New Style, because it reminds us of the approach to typography at the beginning of the 19th century, where contrast between thick and thin strokes was a special feature. You may find this kind of letters in fashion magazines nowadays.

Serifs

Even boring single stroke letters have a chance to get face lifting and create some mood if you just decorate the edges of letters with short horizontal strokes — serifs. It makes the letterforms more playful and live. If bored with strokes, add small circles, so letters can look now like an alien alphabet. Squared serifs remind us of "Wanted" posters from western movies, wouldn't you agree?
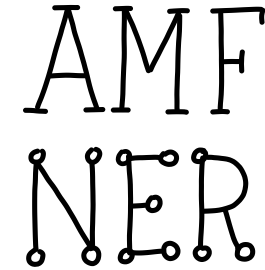
Condensed and Extended

You can continue playing with single stroke letters and try to stretch them vertically or horizontally. The first option usually helps a lot, when there is not so much space on the flipchart and you have to fit a word, such as "entrepreneurship", into a certain sized container. The second option gives you the flexibility to fill the space, if a word is very short. Also, depending on meaning, you can use these two styles, for example, if you have to visualise "high value" or "wide perspective".

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Level 2

This subchapter we called Level 2, because for practicing letterforms from this part you need to refresh your knowledge of Basic Shapes and Perspective.

3D

Now let's imagine our cartoon letters are not two-, but three-dimensional, as if they were made of stone and appeared to us with some kind of perspective. The principle is the same. Draw 2D letters, imagine the horizon line and the perspective point behind the letters, pull imaginary lines from the letters and decide how deep letters should look.

With 3D you can also colour each letter in two colours, for example, the front is bright because it is facing the light and the side is darker because it is in the shade.

Actually, you can turn 2D into 3D not just by pulling lines to a perspective point, but, following the same principle of light and shade, draw the shadow behind the letters, as if they were made out of cardboard and stand on your desk.

Geometric

Here you can finally really go conceptual and try to create your own alphabet out of basic shapes. What if all 26 letters were boxes, or what if there was a circle in each of those 26?

Volume and Shading

Neuroscientists—the same guys who proved that three out of four neurons in our brain are responsible for visual information—did a little more of our job and figured out that, even if an image communicates to our brain almost instantly, unlike text, there are images and there are images.

In everyday life we very rarely see two-dimensional pictures, because we inherit a three-dimensional world. Of course, flat images talk to us from street navigation, service pictograms, even the screens of our smart phones, but still, we recognise three dimensional images even faster. Which is a signal for facilitators too.

To draw a 3D object, you can recall technical drawing classes from high school, where next to the X and Y axes there is also the Z axis through which drawings become three dimensional, however, a bit artificial. Doodlers usually use a very simple

tool which is called one-point perspective. When you draw an object, you have to imagine for a second the horizon behind it and also imagine that if the object would quickly move away from you, then at which point of the horizon would it disappear. Then you pull invisible lines from this point to the angles of the object and define how deep is this object towards the horizon. So, in addition to height and width we now have depth. The rest is just pulling lines. The horizon can be right behind your object, but also above and below, it just has to be there if you want to use perspective. Even a flat piece of paper can have a perspective.
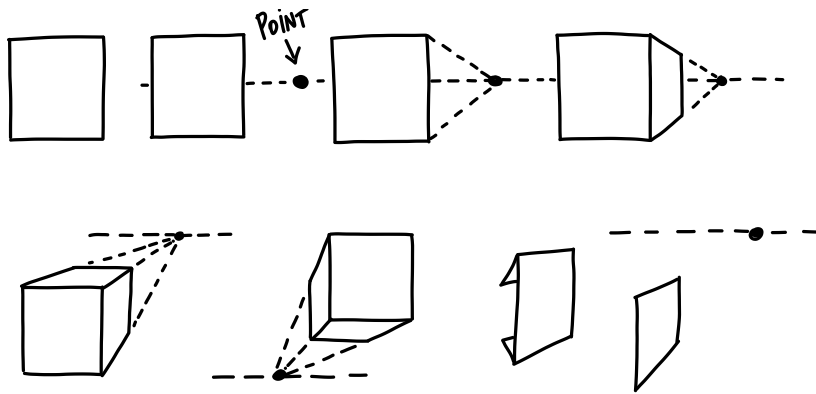
The same works for more complex objects, like a house or even a letter. It is usually easier to learn perspective with objects that have corners. But, what about round objects? Here, instead of horizontal lines, you use ellipses, like an eye, and the higher you fly above the object the more open the eye is. A full circle would mean that you are right above the cup, but a top projection is

even less recognisable than a side projection. The one with a slight angle is usually the most recognisable, because this is how we usually see the cup — from the vantage point of our eyes.

What if we are dealing with a ball? How exactly does a circle turn into a ball if it is round from all sides? Well, here we can't use perspective, but now we meet two new friends: shadow and shade. Shadow is the silhouette of the object on the surface and shade is the darker back side of object itself. Advanced visualisers usually use more shading than shadow, however you very often find either one or the another, or both together. It is up to you to decide how you want to use it. Just keep in mind the advice from our neurologist friends.

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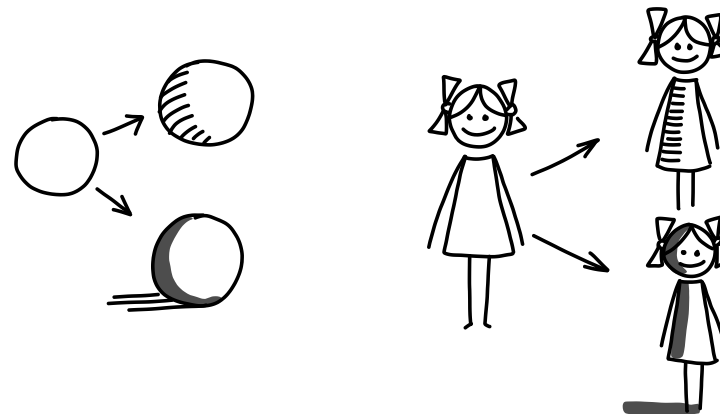
Colours

This is the shortest part of ABC. Firstly, because Visual Facilitation is possible with only two colours: a white surface and a black marker. But, secondly, the topic of colour is so huge that we won't go very deep into the physics of light, difference between RGB and CMYK systems and arguments about the psychology of colour. Instead we would like to tell you, that using colours in your visual simply makes it more natural: if it is to remind us something we've seen before, it's better to use colours since we remember by heart that sun is yellow and clouds are white. The images we think with are also colourful, unless these are piano keys, a chessboard or a glass of milk, etc.

Nevertheless, here's a bit of science. Johannes Itten—a famous teacher of the Bauhaus school—developed the model of the so-called colour wheel, which teaches us two things. First, that all colours are connected through different tints and shades and that you can walk from yellow to blue if you take a shortcut through green. The second thing it teaches us is that the colour wheel is a great way to see which colours are allies and which are opponents and how we can use them.

First things first. According to this model, yellow, cyan-blue and magenta-red are all primary colours which exist in nature in pure pigments. You cannot get these three by mixing other colours. Instead, by mixing primary colours you get all the others: yellow and magenta-red will give you orange; yellow and

cyan-blue will give you green; cyan-blue and magenta-red will give you violet. So violet, orange and green are now secondary colours. All the colours that are between secondary and primary are so-called tertiary. What this means practically for you is that if you need to draw an orange for another visual, but only have a red and a yellow crayon, pencil or paint, mix these two and you will get orange (as well as the other colours of this part of the wheel), just use the right proportions. So, three crayons in your pocket will give you all the other colours, more or less.

Secondly, the colour wheel is good when you want to enhance your visuals with colours and manipulate an audience's attention. Colours which are neighbours in the wheel work together and create some kind of harmony. So, if you prepare a visual with violet-purple and dark-blue they will work pretty well together, creating a sort of visual unity and dialogue. However, if you want to make a special accent in your visual, or immediately catch the attention of the viewer—colour one object light-orange or yellow and it will be noticed very quickly.

Also, there are so-called warm colours (yellow, red and orange) and cold colours (blue, light green and violet). In our brains warm colours invoke images like sun, sweet orange, warm Christmas socks and cold colours conjure up images like cold ocean water, ice and cool peppermint gum, so you may also want to use this in your visuals. However, this warm-cold division is usually very personal, or subjective, for every facilitator and participant, so instead we prefer to manipulate the connotations of colours: shade is black, clouds are blue, grass is green, sun is yellow and fruit are red. The visual should remind us of life, remember?

To summarise all this a bit: be aware that colours — as almost everything mentioned in the ABC above — can support learning and foster understanding, but can also create confusion! Therefore, we would rather recommend to use a limited range of colours (maybe 2-4) in a "strategical" way as opposed to (always) making full use of the rainbow-spectrum. What do we mean by "strategical" use you may ask? It's quite simple: create your own colour palette with the colours you like, but make sure that you use your colours in a meaningful way. Relate colour to certain ideas to ground and organise your information. Draw outlines with dark colours and fill in the spaces afterwards, give some contrast with darker colours and highlight important aspects with brighter colours. It's as easy as that ;-)

Composition

Once again a topic that can never be fully studied as it cannot be fully studied in life. Composition actually resembles life a lot, therefore we all have this inner feeling of comfort or discomfort when looking at some piece of art, or just random objects. When we analyse their size, we are either bigger or smaller than the object, we see balance and imbalance because we grow with this and can walk straight or lay down, we like the music, because it has rhythm, which we get from the beating of our heart. So, it is really everywhere. Also in your visual memory. So, how do you position your images and texts in a way that makes people like them, even without going deeper into the content?

Some advice is natural. For instance, our scientist friends proved that every time we see a new object in our view we first measure it by checking corners, to figure out its size and then find

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the mid-point. We don't even use our direct view, peripheral is enough, but if there is something important in the corner then it catches our attention. Remember concert posters with names, dates and time of the event, in most of the cases these are in the corners. So, use corners for titles, topics, names of speakers or references, also signatures. If you are using a template for a visualisation of some process, then place where you are now with your group in one corner and where you want to get in the opposite. You can also use the middle point as the centre of your visual if you are going to develop your thoughts around it.

The middle point is a centre of symmetry and it is a quality we also take with us anywhere we go. The human body is symmetrical, it divides the space into left and right, so you can also pull the middle line and structure your visual with two columns.

Dividing space into thirds is also very often used by painters, photographers and designers, because we are surrounded by threes: past-present-future, front-middle-back, right-straight-left, father-mother-child, etc., so we find three very natural and also structure and read the world through this. By the same principle, not only does dividing space into thirds work, but also positioning the objects at the crossing points of the thirds gives a very nice visual impression.

Some rules of constructing composition come from culture. They are connected to certain patterns we follow in other spheres

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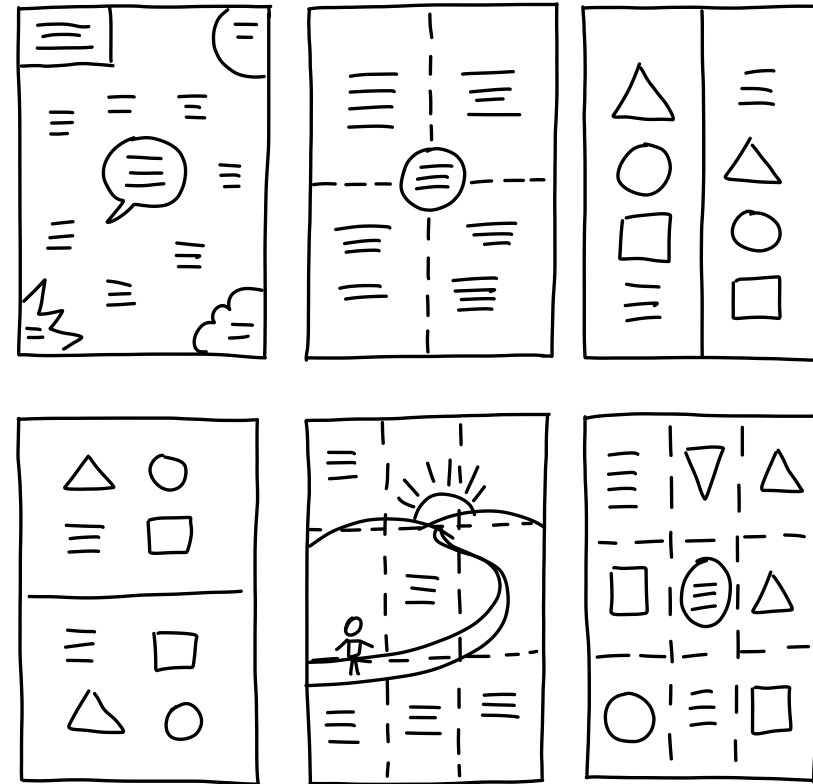
of life. For instance, in western culture we read from left to right, so pictures also evolve in the same direction, like the famous Bayeux Tapestry. The same applies to visuals: very often we set the starting point at the left and our goal is on the right side. Apart from that there is something called a diagonal, which breaks the horizontal and vertical statics and makes composition more dynamic. But, diagonals are different. Reading from left to right we combine it with the traditions of western

architecture which tends to grow to the sky, so we consider the diagonal growing from bottom left to upper right, a positive or ascending. It would be interesting to see how Visual Facilitation works in countries where writing and reading works right to left, or even top to bottom.

Also, analogue wristwatches teach us that a circle starts at the top and then evolves clockwise, through the bottom to the top again. Many diagrams pick 12 o'clock as the starting point.
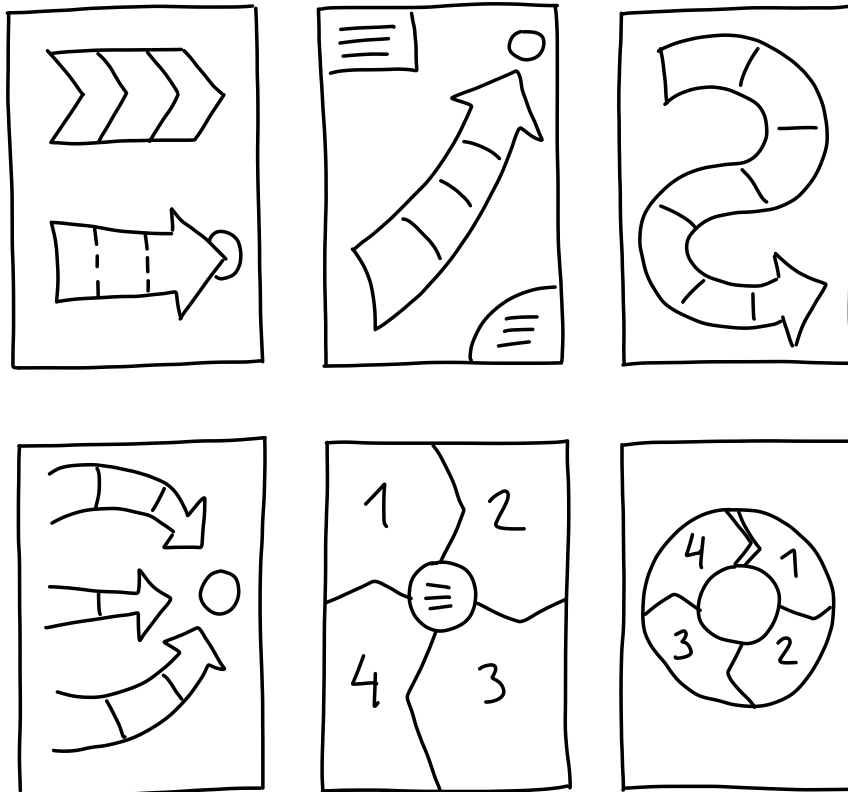
Visual Vocabulary, Icons, Symbols

Pictures can provoke emotional reactions that support learning processes. Visualisations and images contribute to the understanding of a process or topic by helping people to grasp an idea more easily. Sometimes, a simple image can even explain more than a lot of words — just think about traffic signs for instance.

Here we usually mention two types of images: icons and symbols. As with many things of our century, these have a story too. It originates from ancient cultures which one day decided to start documenting their everyday routine and send messages to each other. It is a hard task to invent a writing system, even nowadays. Back then it was even harder, so they used a simple method: foot is foot, bird is bird, ship is ship. This is an icon. We understand what it depicts. But documenting developed, trade relations upgraded, etc., there came a need to explain more complex things: a foot became "to walk", "to run", a mark for shoe maker; a ship became a "a delivery", "a port", "to sail", etc. Pictures became a means of identifying something more than their direct meaning, people made an agreement on what they mean, so symbols came along. A picture of lightbulb is an icon of a lightbulb, but is the symbol of an idea now. A cup is an icon of a cup, but it is also the symbol of a coffee-break. Our alphabet is, however, only symbols. None of the letters look like the sound they describe, maybe just O which reminds us of an open mouth.

The same happens in visual language. We widely use icons which are read by the brain first in their direct meaning, but then, depending on the agreement within the group, community or culture, we give extra meanings to the pictures we use.

But, how can we create a good visual vocabulary? In order to develop and provide meaningful and strong imagery, it is really helpful to be clear about the core point of what you want to say or communicate. What is your message and what image can underline or even replace it? Where do you want the group to be or move to? How can it be visualised quickly? What details can be left out and what is essential?

Take a look at the examples created by participants of Visual Facilitation+ and Facilitarium training courses on the following pages.

In fact, the process of simplification and reduction to a subject's essence is very important in this regard. According to a concept by Scott McCloud — a leading theorist on comics — "amplification through simplification" it can even be said that sizing down an image to its very essentials, by taking away (unnecessary) features and making it more and more abstract, actually allows the viewer to put more meaning into it. In other words, a simple stick figure can be more effective than an elaborate and well-drawn character!

ABC

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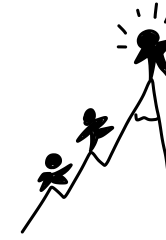
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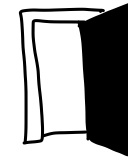
OPEN

COSTS

INTERNATIONAL

EVALUATION

LEADERSHIP

CREATIVITY

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION

EUROPEAN FEDERALISATION

EXPECTATION

TEAM

ABC

NON-CONFORMITY

LEARNING

CHAORD
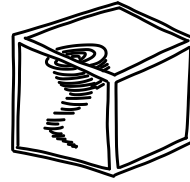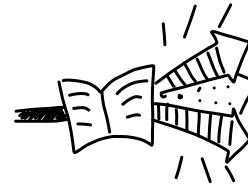
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GROUP DYNAMICS

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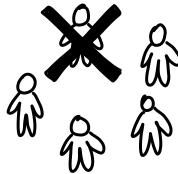
DISCUSSION

TEAM WORK

$1+1=2$

METHODOLOGY
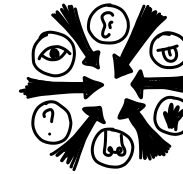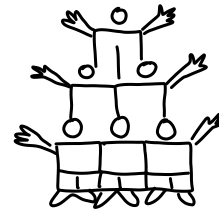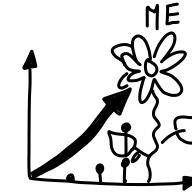
HOLISTIC APPROACH

DISCUSSION
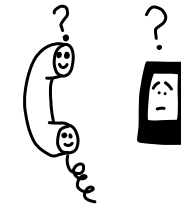
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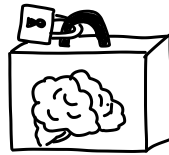
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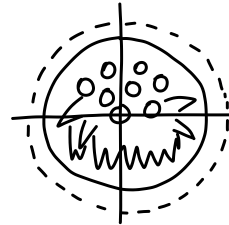
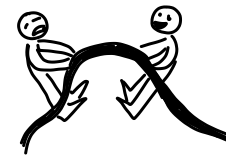TARGET GROUP

TEAM BUILDING

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

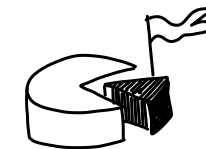GENERATION GAP

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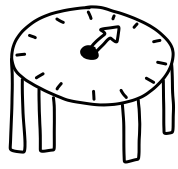
GROUP AGREEMENT

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

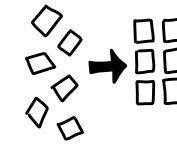COMPETITION

MINORITIES

INSPIRATION

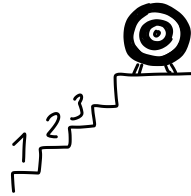ABC

TIMETABLE

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BRAIN STORM

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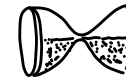
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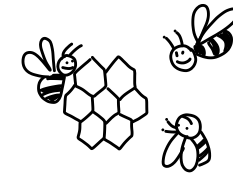
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COMMUNICATION

STRATEGY

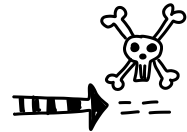TEAM-BUILDING

NOW

ORGANISATION

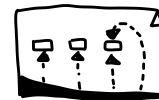SAFETY
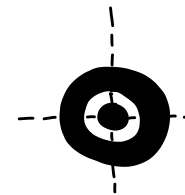
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INCLUSION

INTERPRETATION

PRIORITY

FEEDBACK

DEADLINE

DEVELOPING

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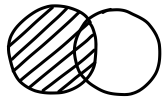
STRATEGIC PLAN

AIM

CHOICE

ABC

INTEGRATION

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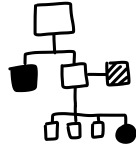
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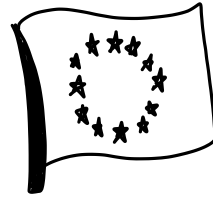
EUROPEAN UNION

DEVELOPMENT

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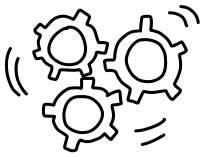
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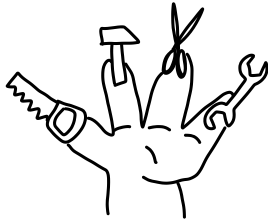
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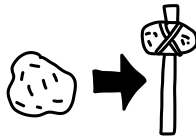
DESIGN

SEARCH

DEADLINE

FUNDING
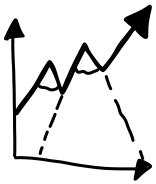
DEVELOPMENT

OFFICE WORK

PROJECT

PROGRAMME
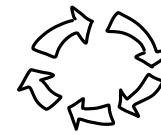
SUSTAINABILITY
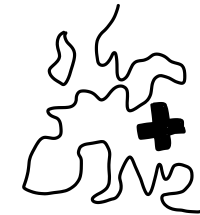
ERASMUS+

PROBLEM

SUCCESS

STAKEHOLDERS
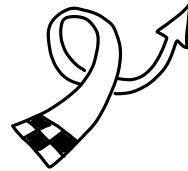
DEVELOPMENT

TIME

RESULTS

ABC
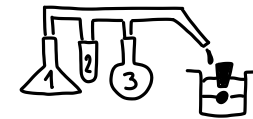
ATTRACTIVENESS

WAR AND PEACE

IN LOVE

WORLD MAP
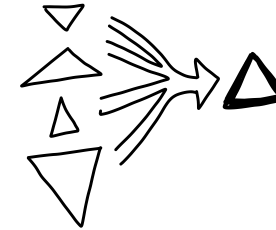
GENERALISATION

RESPONSIBILITY

POLITICS

EDUCATION
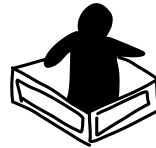
STEREOTYPE
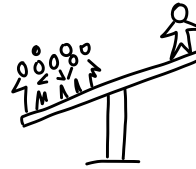
BALANCING NEEDS

AGENDA
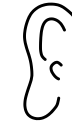
LISTENING

CONFLICT DYNAMIC
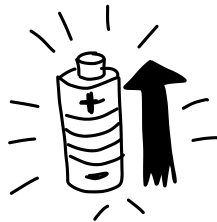
MORE ENERGY
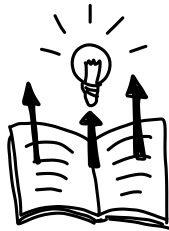
LEARNING OUTCOMES

JOB
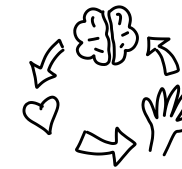
COMPETENCES

COFFEE BREAK

TABOO

GENETICS

CURIOSITY
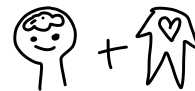
VALUES

CARE
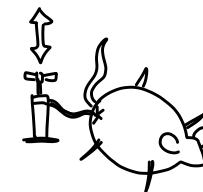
EXAGGERATE

Here are some more useful tips for creating your dictionary:

1. Think of the situation, where the word or concept belongs —
   What kind of activities do you relate with it? For instance:
   cooperation and agreement may involve many handshakes.
2. Think about the first image which is popping up in your
   mind when you hear the word. Trust your intuition. The
   chances are quite high that other people will also relate to it.
3. When you cannot come up with an idea for an image right
   away, deconstruct the word and draw the meaning of its
   single parts such as "Brain+storm", or "time+table", etc.
4. And, one more time: "Simplify and don't be super detailed!"

Creating and constantly developing your personal visual vocabulary is of course not an easy task. But, you can see it as a very enriching experience to reflect and rethink the concepts, words and topics you are working with on a daily basis. Think them through from time to time in order to see them from a different perspective and gain more clarity about them.

> *Drawings, especially if they are in the forms of metaphors convey powerful messages very quickly. It can help people connect to the things that have resonated in the group, but have not been explicit so far. It can also help people to discover processes or connections that, if you put into words, would take much more time and wouldn't be as profound. Visual facilitation can bring both this profoundness and instancy into the process.*
>
> Uku Visnapuu, participant at VF+ training

ABC
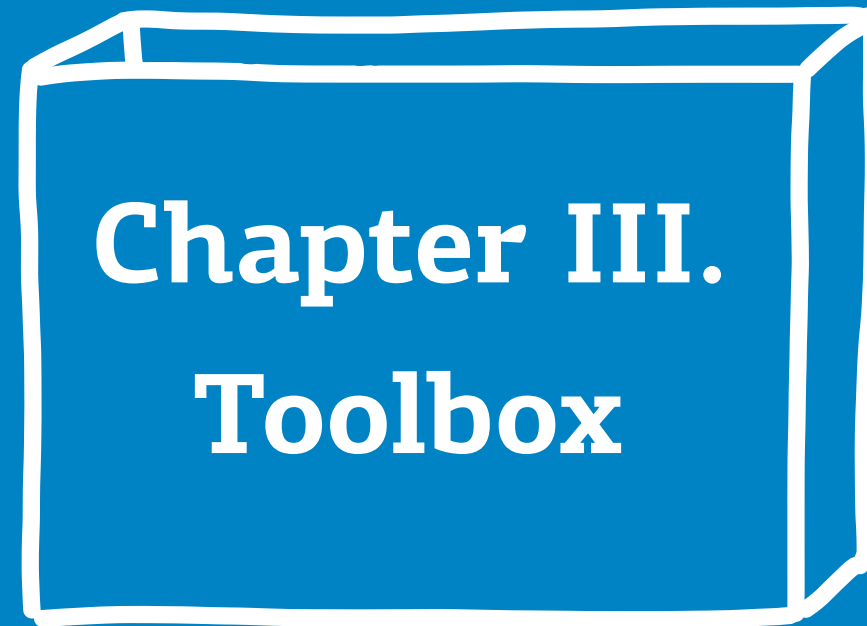
Chapter III.
Toolbox

When you find the benefits of drawing and using visuals for facilitation of your own or a group's learning, it is always interesting to see how you use it. Some of us draw flipcharts instead of using PowerPoint. Some prefer to visualise text exercises and tasks and turn text into more engaging images and graphic riddles. Some just like to doodle for taking personal notes, or even practice Graphic Recording on large scale canvases. There are many ways. Here we collected some examples of visuals from our friends and participants which serve different purposes and can be a ready solution, inspiration or idea for your next learning activity. Several examples are inspired by the work of Anne Madsen and Nanna Frank "Den Visuelle Lærer" and David Sibbets book "Visual Meetings".

Templates

Templates are the most interactive way of using Visual Facilitation. Templates are something that invites people to collaborate and participate. What makes a template different from other visuals? A template is something that has been prepared by someone in advance, so that participants can use it as a graphic tool to perform group work and fill it in. The same visual can be used with another group, and another group, whilst the frame remains the same. The objective may differ slightly, but participants' content is always new.

Templates are very flexible tools. They can be filled-in in advance and used for the presentation of your idea(s) to others; they can be given as a task and filled during group processes, or they can be used for summing up; and finally, you can use templates for personal use. What is important is that the same template with the same layout and set of visual symbols can be helpful in very different situations. It is up to you to decide where and for which purpose you would like to use it.

Can you imagine situations where you want to do a project or a plan with your youth? For getting funded you need to fill in a long application and your youth may barely understand it. So instead, then you take a big, big sheet of paper and fill it with all of the elements of the project, with a lot of white space for everyone's contribution. Firstly, the youth start to see the overview. Secondly, they can understand the structure, patterns and how things are connected. And, thirdly, they can start to fill the white space with their own ideas. What could be more fun!?

Toolbox

Template: Just an Example
What It Could Look Like!

This is a template — a map, a sketch or some visual, pre-drawn by someone in advance, that can later be filled-in by everyone in the group or class. It can be used in every kind of group work, with very different methods. It is not just a powerful tool for facilitating the meeting, event, project and process, but also for preparing or harvesting.

Toolbox

- HEADLINE
- OUTCOMES
- PURPOSE
- PRACTICE
- NEED
- STRUCTURE
- PRINCIPLES
- LIMITING BELIEFS
- PEOPLE
- CONCEPT
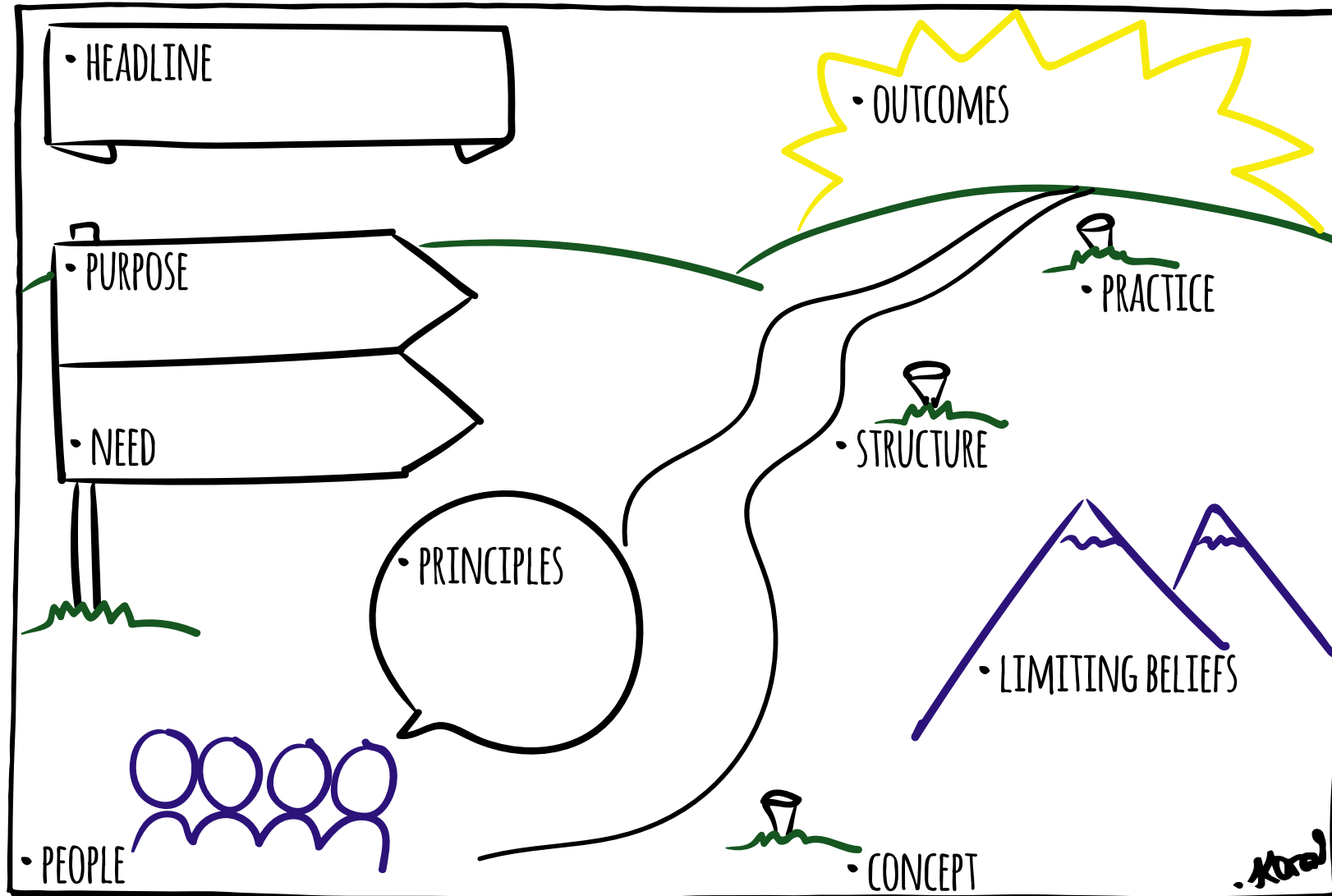
Think about certain tasks before an important meeting or event. Make a meaning and you can make a difference!

Toolbox

- HEADLINE

- OUTCOME

- PURPOSE

- NEED

- TEAM AND PLAN

- PRINCIPLES

- DESIGN

- TARGET GROUP
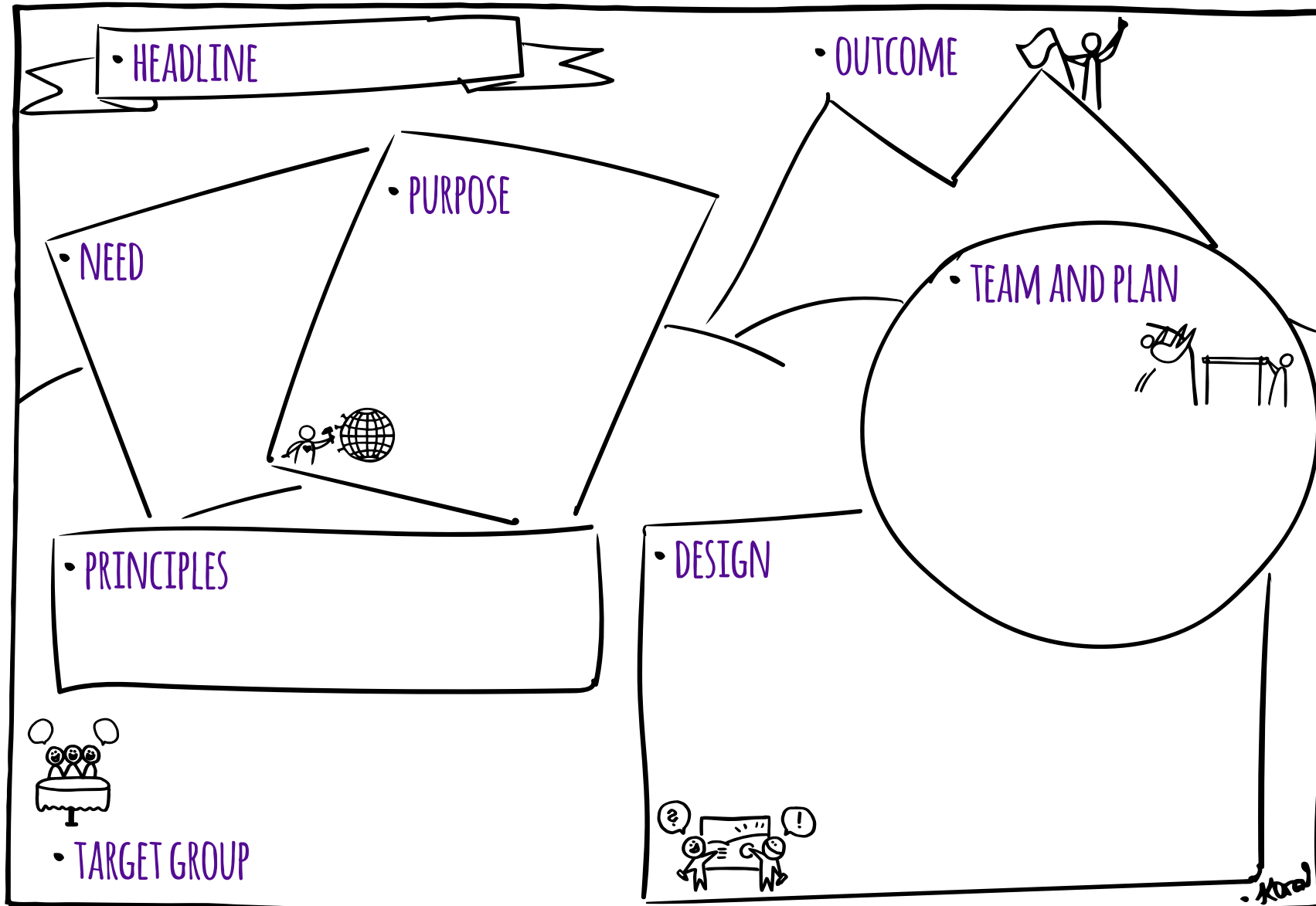
Harvesting is kind of looking back at the process and collecting all the learning points, good ideas, etc. It is a powerful tool to make a meaning and learn from what has been done.

Toolbox

- PROCESS HARVESTING

- LEARNING MOMENTS

- GOOD IDEAS

- WENT WELL

- COULD BE BETTER
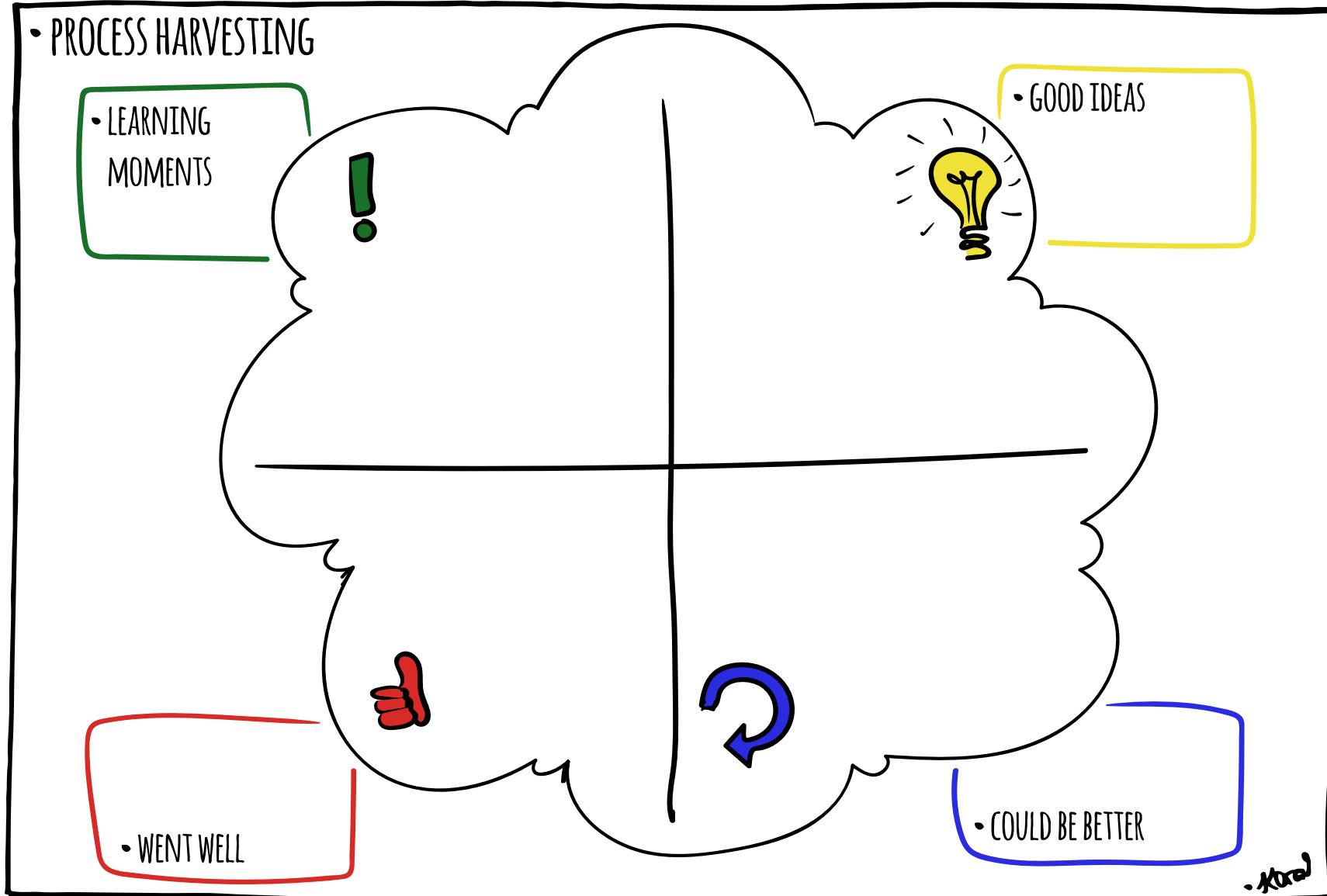
Templates can also be a good method of making learning easier and more fun. They also help you to teach students meaningful notetaking. For example, you want your students to listen to a piece of text and write down most important things. You actually have an idea of what you want from them and you use it later. But you can't be sure. So, make a template for listening and students can fill it in. It is fun for them and easier for you to harvest later.

Toolbox

- OUR PROJECT
- OUTCOME
- ORGANISATIONAL SUCCESS
- TEAM SUCCESS
- PERSONAL SUCCESS
- AUTUMN
- WINTER
- SPRING
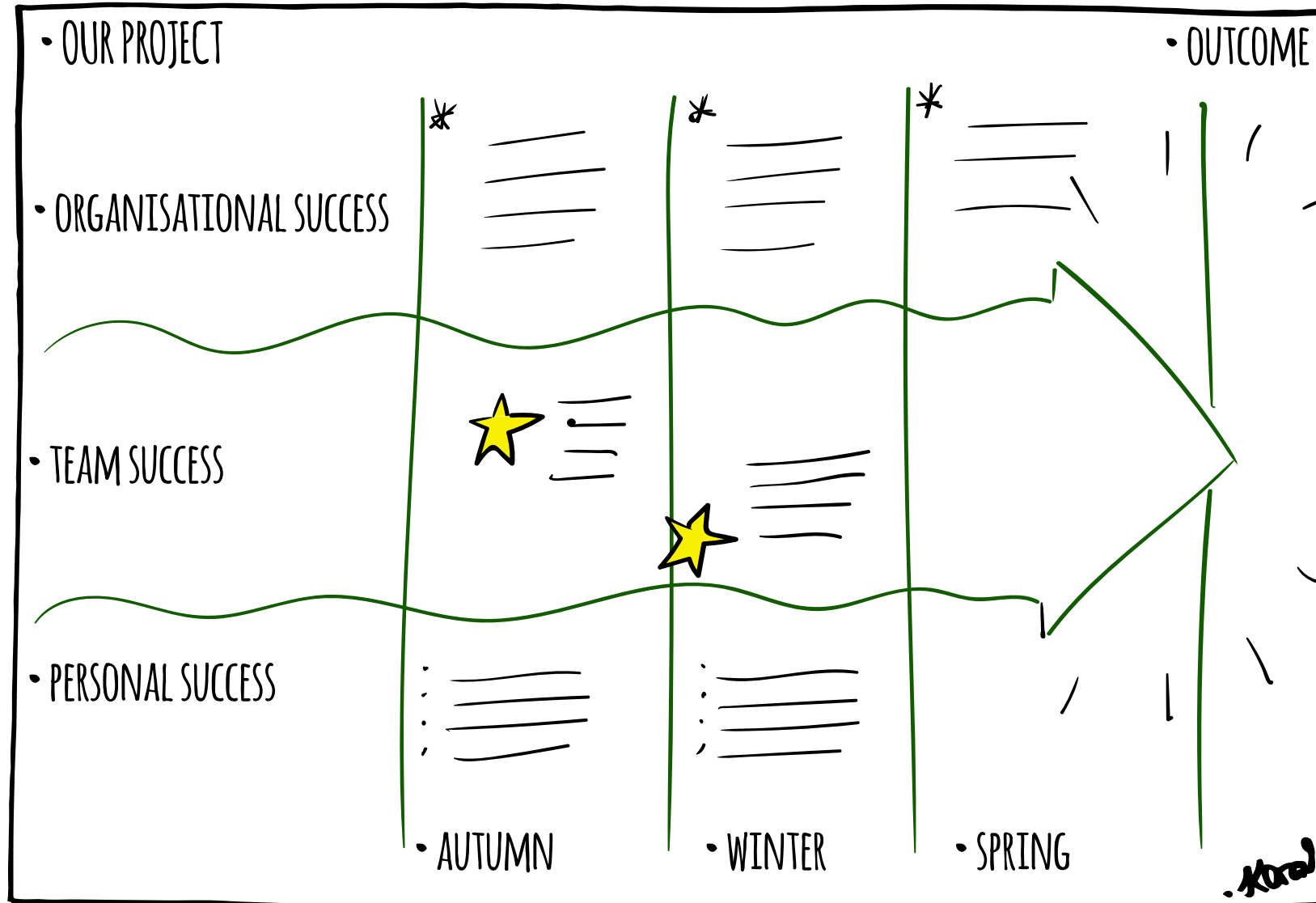
This template was inspired by David Sibbet and his book "Visual Meetings"

Your students and participants of training can think about themselves. Here are few examples.

· WHO?

· WHAT?

· TEACHER & TEACHING

· WOW!!!

· EXERCISE WORKSHEET LISTEN TO THE TEXT AND WRITE DOWN THINGS YOU HEARD ABOUT THE TEACHER AND TEACHING

MY COMPETENCES

VISION
WHERE DO I WANT TO GO?

MY KNOWLEDGES

WHO I AM TODAY?

MY SKILLS

SUCCESSES
WHAT STEPS HAVE I ALREADY TAKEN?

MY PRINCIPLES

SUPPORTERS

CHALLENGES

Toolbox
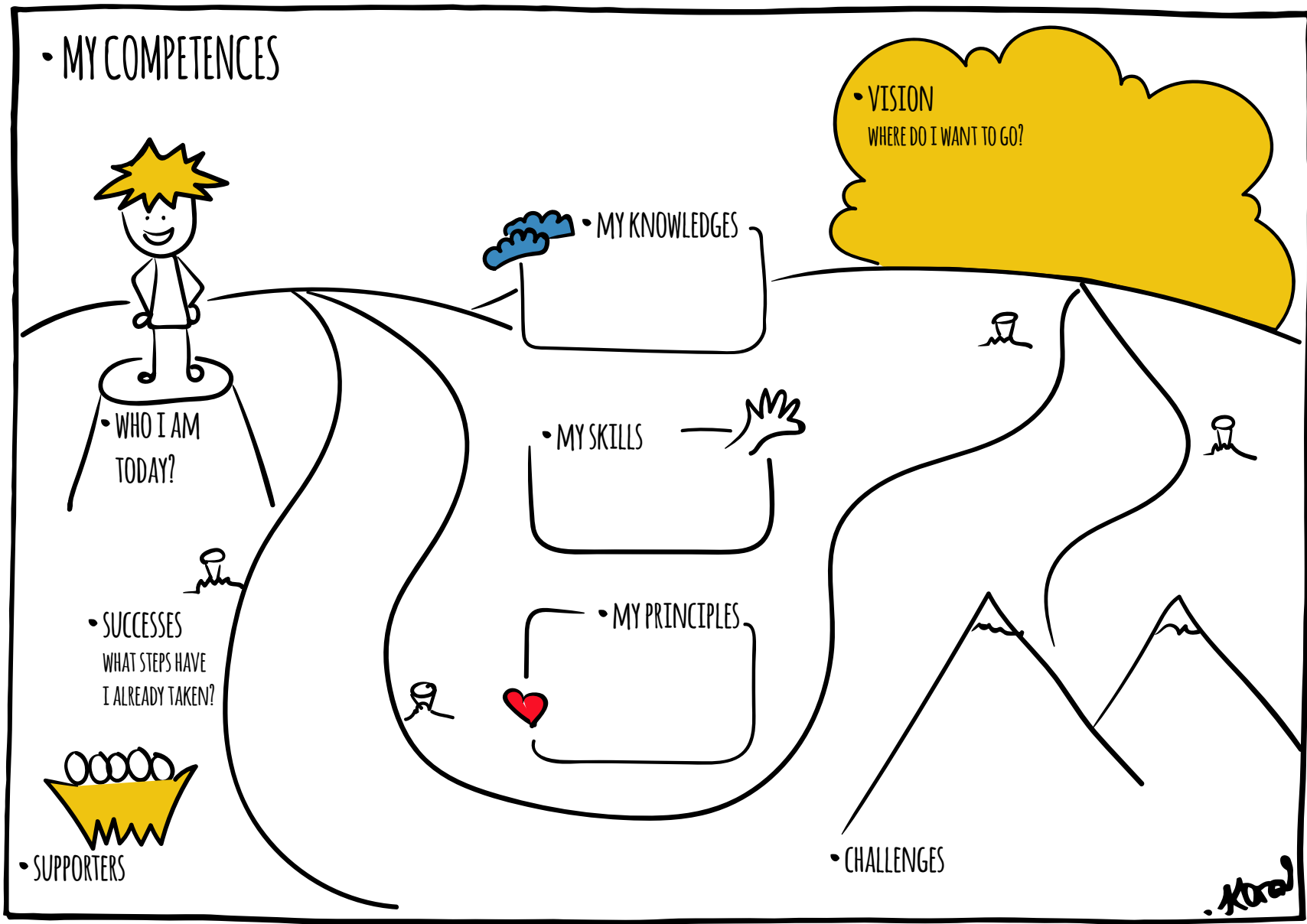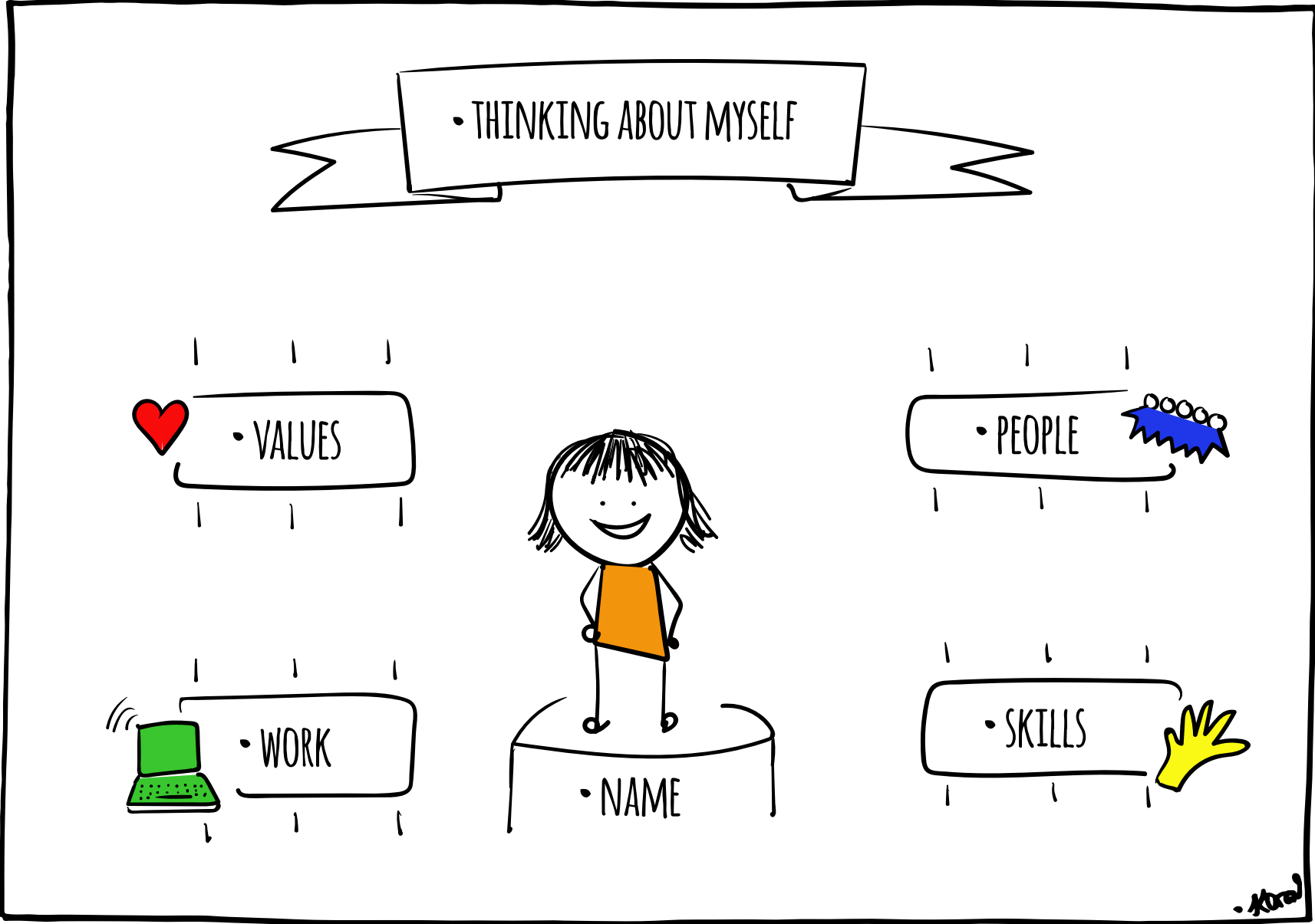
And this is an example of how you can help them to think about last year. This way you can also make your own templates to harvest from lessons, the school year, project(s), etc.

2015 SUMMARY OF THE YEAR – THINK ABOUT SOME THINGS BEFORE SETTING NEW GOALS!
FEEL FREE TO USE AND SHARE :)

WELCOME 2016
DREAM TO TAKE ALONG

WAS CHALLENGING…
WAS SURPRISING…
WAS EYE OPENING…

SURPRISING — PLEASANT
MOMENTS I FOUND…
SORRY — TEACHING

MYSELF
THE WORLD
SOMEBODY ELSE
DISCOVERED ABOUT…

SURPRISING — PLEASANT
PEOPLE WHO WERE…
SORRY — TEACHING

SAW — HEARD
IMPORTANT THINGS THAT I…
SAID — DID

I AM GRATEFUL FOR…
I APPRECIATE A LOT…

CHANGED ME
WAS PAINFUL BUT FAIR
WHAT I HEARD ABOUT MYSELF THAT…
SURPRISED ME
WASN´T FAIR

I AM PROUD OF
IDEA THAT STILL NEEDS TO WORK ON
GLAD THAT I TRIED BUT LET IT BE…

What is behind a template?

As you have already guessed, behind a template is a powerful question and lot of meaning. Before making a template you need to ask from yourself:

1. Why I am doing this? Why do I want to do it?
2. How and where will I use it?
3. For/with whom will I be using it?
4. What is the outcome of using the template?

Toolbox
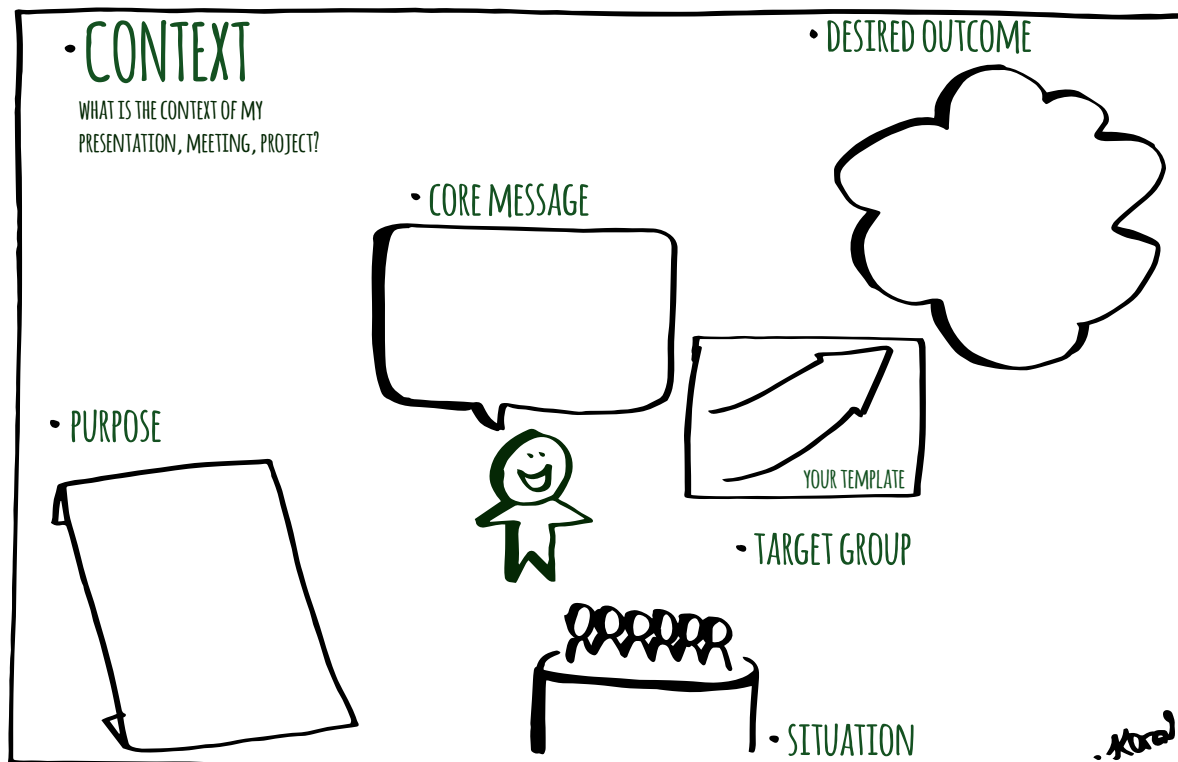
Where and Why Will You Use the Visual?

If the answers to these questions are clear to you, then you can start thinking about your template. This means that you start questioning again, although this time it is not about the context of the visual, but about its content. What do you need to talk about or harvest from the process, meeting, listening exercise, project, etc.?

There can be a lot of things on your visual. For example, if we think about working on a project idea:

1. What is the meaning/purpose of this project?
2. Why are we doing it?
3. What is the desired goal(s) and outcome?
4. Who is engaged in the project — the core team, partners, target group(s), funders, etc.?
5. What are the values and terms of our cooperation?
6. How do we reach our result, the outcome?
7. And, you can always think about other parts like: opportunities, challenges, implementation, evaluation, media plan etc.

What are the Main Things You Want to Tell/Show?

Toolbox

• CONTENT

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TELL, TO WORK WITH?
THINK ABOUT THE CONTENT BEFORE DESIGNING!

• WHAT?

• WHERE TO?

• WHY?

• PEOPLE?

• HOW?

• WHERE FROM?

Template: Manual for Designing the Visual/ Template.

And then you start to design your template. How to design a template? Look at the manual!

Toolbox

MANUAL – HOW TO DESIGN A VISUAL

So– you know why you want to do and use the visual. You know the content and context, and all you need, is the visual itself. Now you need to design it. ollow these the 8 steps and you will succeed!

STEP 1
Take a white paper. As big as you wish your visual to be. Don't forget to check how big is the wall where you want to present your work. Be sure your visual fits there.

STEP 2
Draw a frame to your paper. Now take a pencil and divide your paper into nine parts. You will erase it later but then it is easier to see how many parts you can use.

STEP 3
Now take post-it's and write down all the headlines. Each one on a separate sheet.

PURPOSE WHY NEED PEOPLE TO-DO WHERE

STEP 4
Lay the post-it's on your paper and play with them a bit. Maybe something can be put togehter, something to be taken away– or added. Which things are connected? What leads to another ? And so on.

NEED WHERE PEOPLE

STEP 5
Think about the bigger picture, the theme. Do you want it to be like a landscape or a sea? You can draw a bit with the pencil already. What kind of symbols you bring in? Don't forget to leave some room for the white space!

STEP 6
Now take the post-it's off and start to write the headlines and content, if you have it. Then draw the symbols and frames. Always write first and then make he frames! Also erase all the things you drew with the pencil before.

NEED TO-DO PEOPLE

STEP 7
Now draw the background and start colour– ing. Be wise with using colours and pictures– the content is always the most important. Your visual is just supporting it!

NEED TO-DO PEOPLE

STEP 8
And now your visual is ready. Write your name down on the right side so everybody knows that it is your great work. Congratulations! Good luck with using it!

And some other templates to use in different situations.

Who is in the room?

• WELCOME CIRCLE

• NAME
• PROFESSION

?

Toolbox

- MEETING
  - TIME
  - PLACE

- OUTCOME

- AGENDA
  1. _____
  2. _____
  3. _____

- PURPOSE

?

- PRINCIPLES

- PARTICIPANTS

Template to help with strategy.

Lay out all the content and people will understand this complicated document.

Toolbox

- OUR STRATEGY
- VISION
- OPPORTUNITIES
- WHAT AND WHY?
- ACTION PLAN
- KEY AREAS
- TEAM
- CHALLENGES
- MISSION
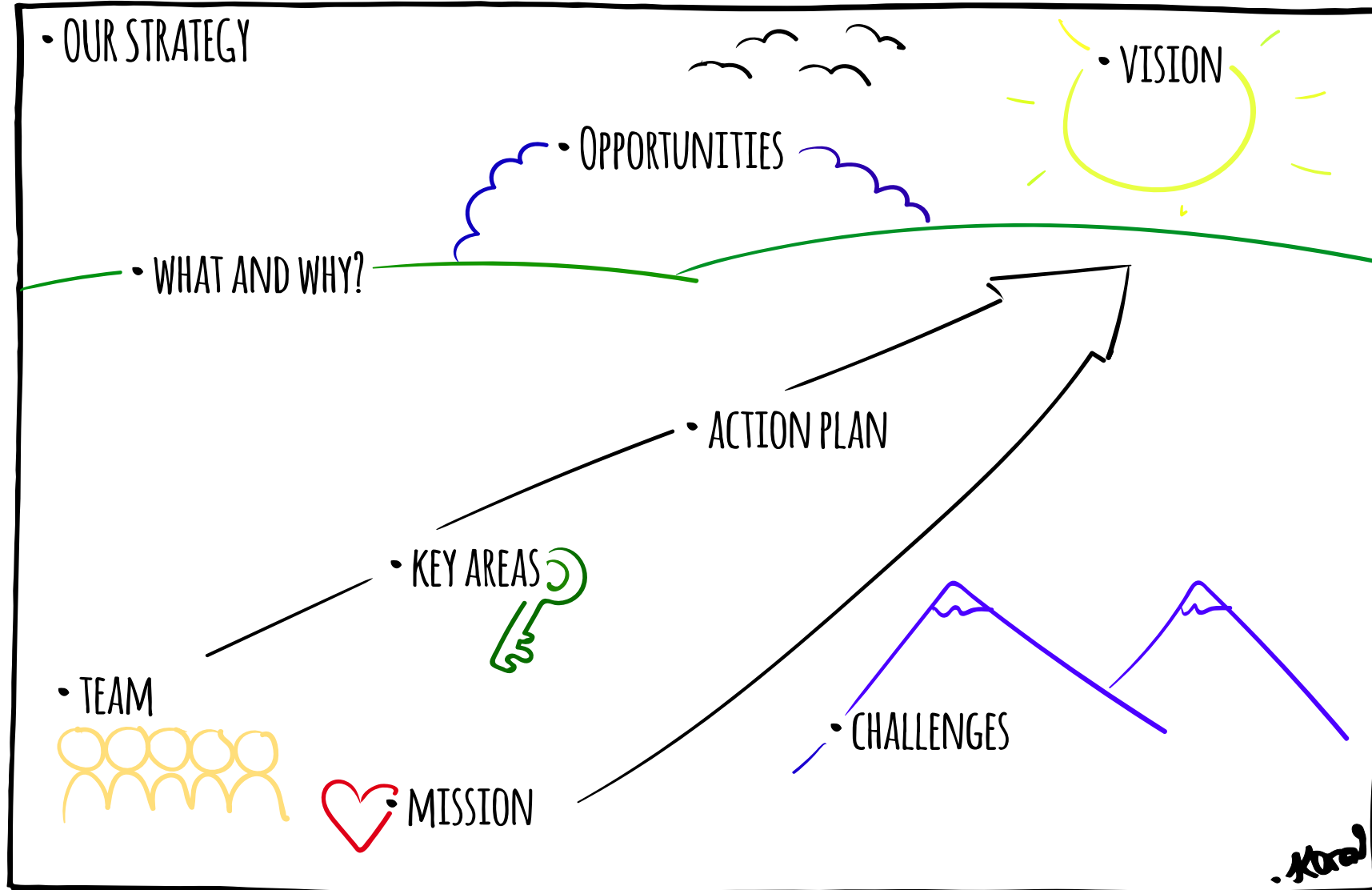
More Templates from Practitioners

From Markus Engelberger

"The shown template is an overview and a visual summary of a change process in a Viennese NGO, collecting/saving and distributing food that is still edible to "poor" people in different social organisations, that would otherwise just be thrown away, for instance in supermarket chains.

I used it in the kick-off an event on the process. I chose the bicycle metaphor, because we worked on different questions together but it was themselves who would make the bicycles move forward, towards the finish line. The board next to the starting line shows the process goals (that should be reached at the finish-line). The signs with the process-loop-arrow represent reflective elements along the way (meetings in which we evaluated the process). The little hut on the left side represented a strategic team meeting (Klausur in German) they had in October. Q3, Q4, (2015) and Q1 (2016)
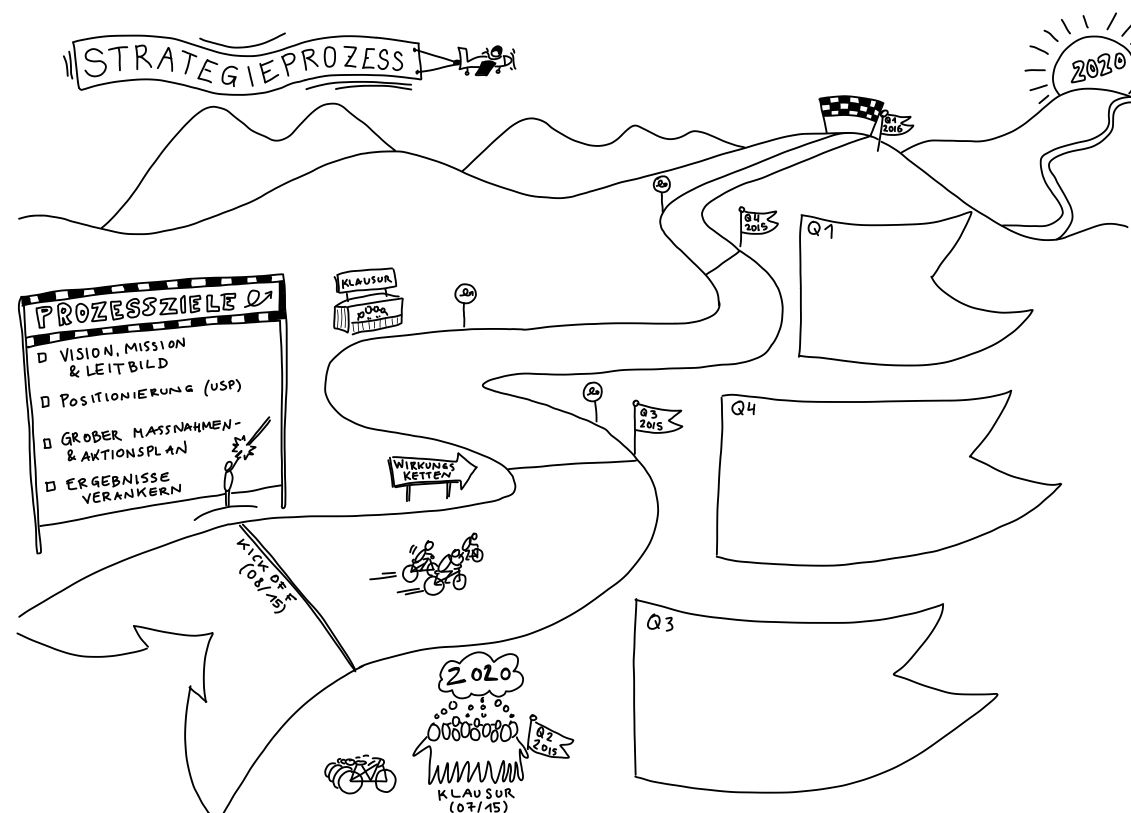
relate to the quarters of the year(s) in which the process should take place, so they relate to the time-aspect and give orientation. The "zoomed in" flags on the left side provide room to fill in the small operational goals already reached or still to reach within each quarter (so they are kind of like milestones). The

road after the finish line, going towards "2020", reminds them that our process is part of something bigger — a bigger change process — for which we developed visions in a workshop in July 2015 (represented by the group of people on the left edge of the visual)."

Toolbox

From Melanie Pichler

"It is basically a feedback template/booklet. It is used in a school project for pupils between 13-15 years in the form of a little A6-folded-booklet. It is part of their Lapbook.

They participate in four workshops during the summer semester. In the feedback booklet they can rate each workshop and give a comment about it. We will collect it at the end of the project, as an evaluation of the project and the workshops."
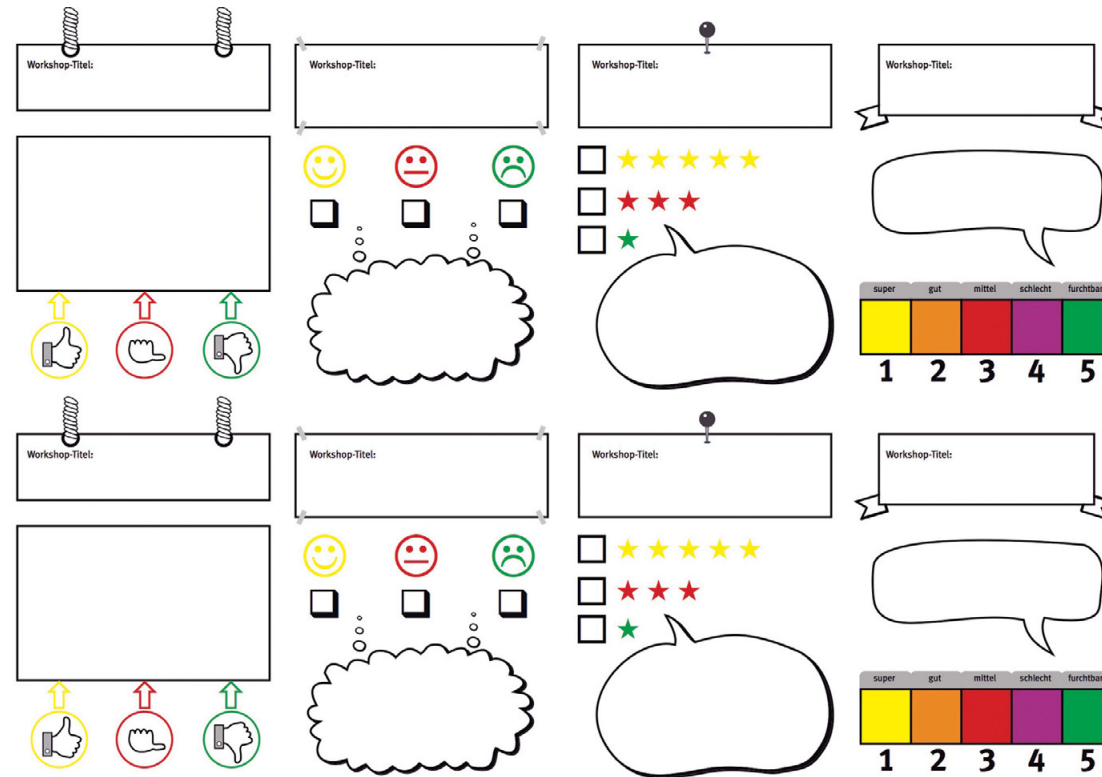
What is an A6-folded-booklet? A4 paper, folded one time, would give us two times smaller format — A5. Two times folded A4 gives us A6 or four panels. In Melanie case we could fold it once more, and get 8 panels. Then we would call it A7-folded-booklet
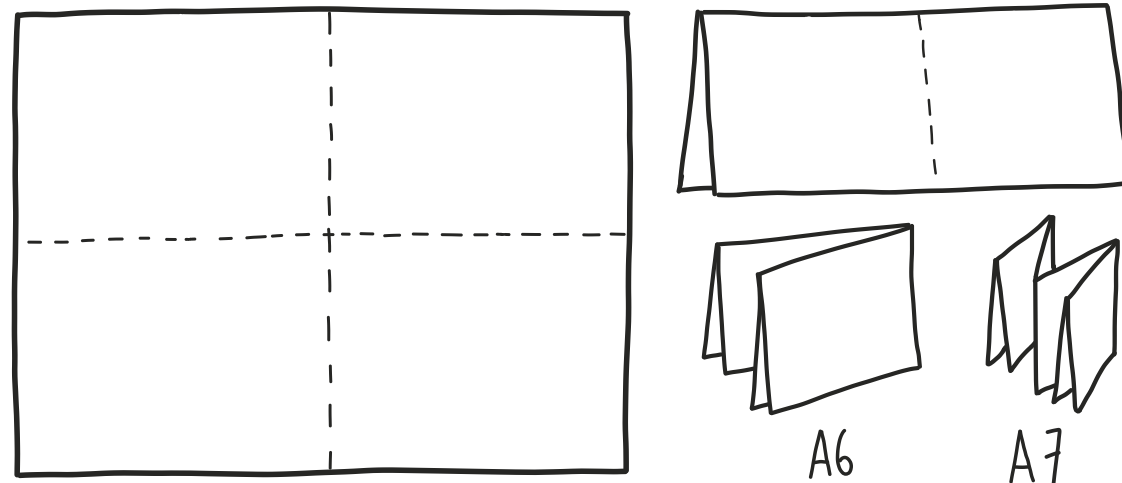
From Deniss Jershov

This template is about planning and managing a youth project. It was used in an international youth work seminar and inspired by a National Geographic article about one tribe in Africa, where honey is the most wanted delicacy in their whole existence. Men from this tribe go out to climb trees and hunt for honey, which sounded like the metaphor of a project. Based on a canvas of the tree, where top is "where" you need to get, the template was upgraded with the main questions and key points that teams need to consider, when they work on a project.

Toolbox

WHAT WILL YOU DO TO REACH YOUR GOAL?

WHAT WILL YOU NEED? WHO CAN HELP?

PLAN

WHO WILL BENEFIT?

RESOURCES

TARGET GROUP

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE? WHAT FOR?

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO OR LEARN? WHY?

AIMS / OBJECTIVES

MOTIVATION

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

WHAT NEEDS TO BE CHANGED?
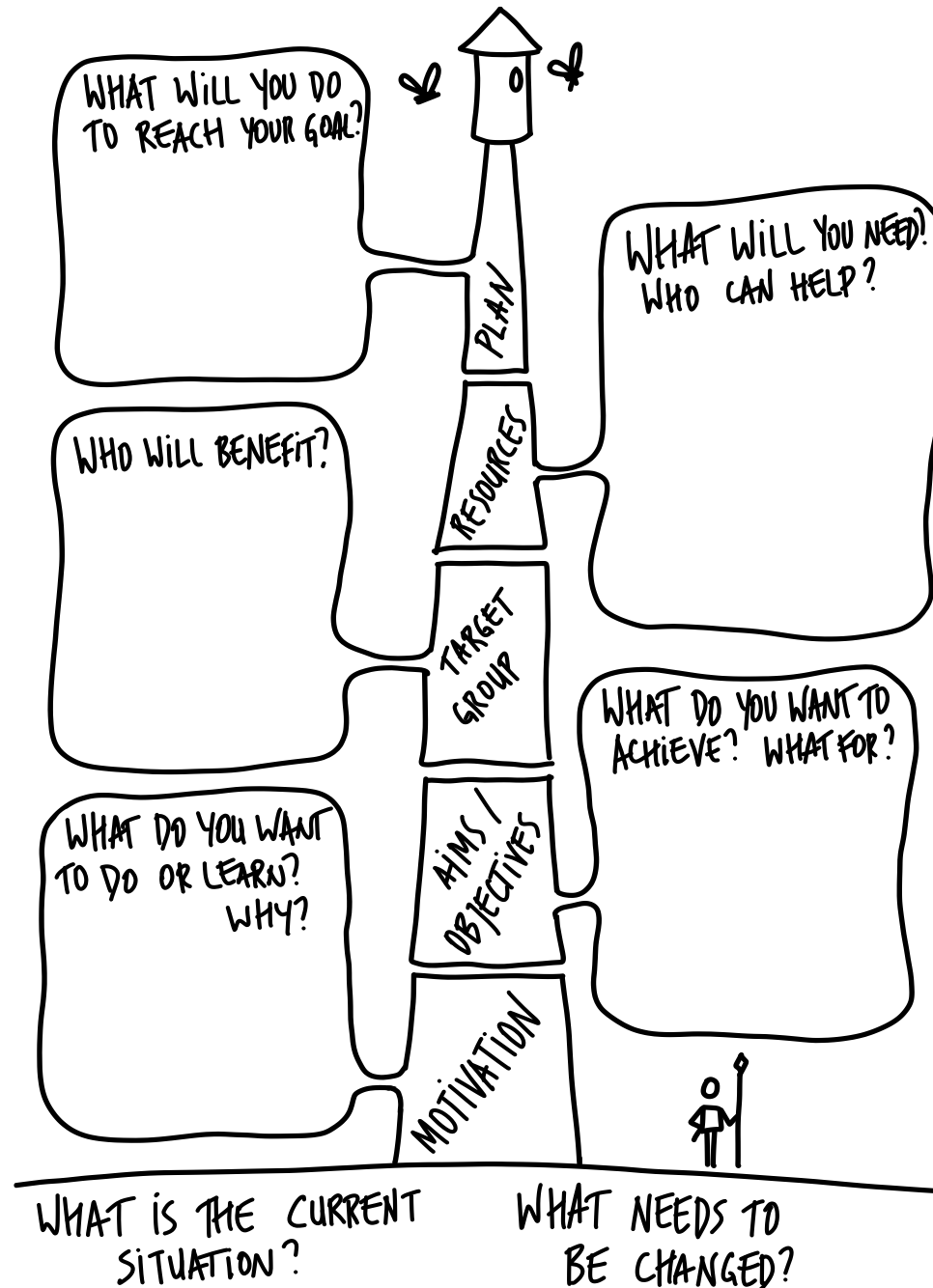
From Torben Grocholl

"We created this simple template as a tool to support the final individual reflection and the planning of the next steps at the Seminar "Youthpass Learning Agora" 2015, La Rochelle, FR. The little something in the lower left corner symbolises the "agora", which was created as a kind of logo, or visual element, to be used throughout all drawings and illustrations of the seminar. Apart from that, the template is quite easy to understand and very much universal, I think."

Toolbox
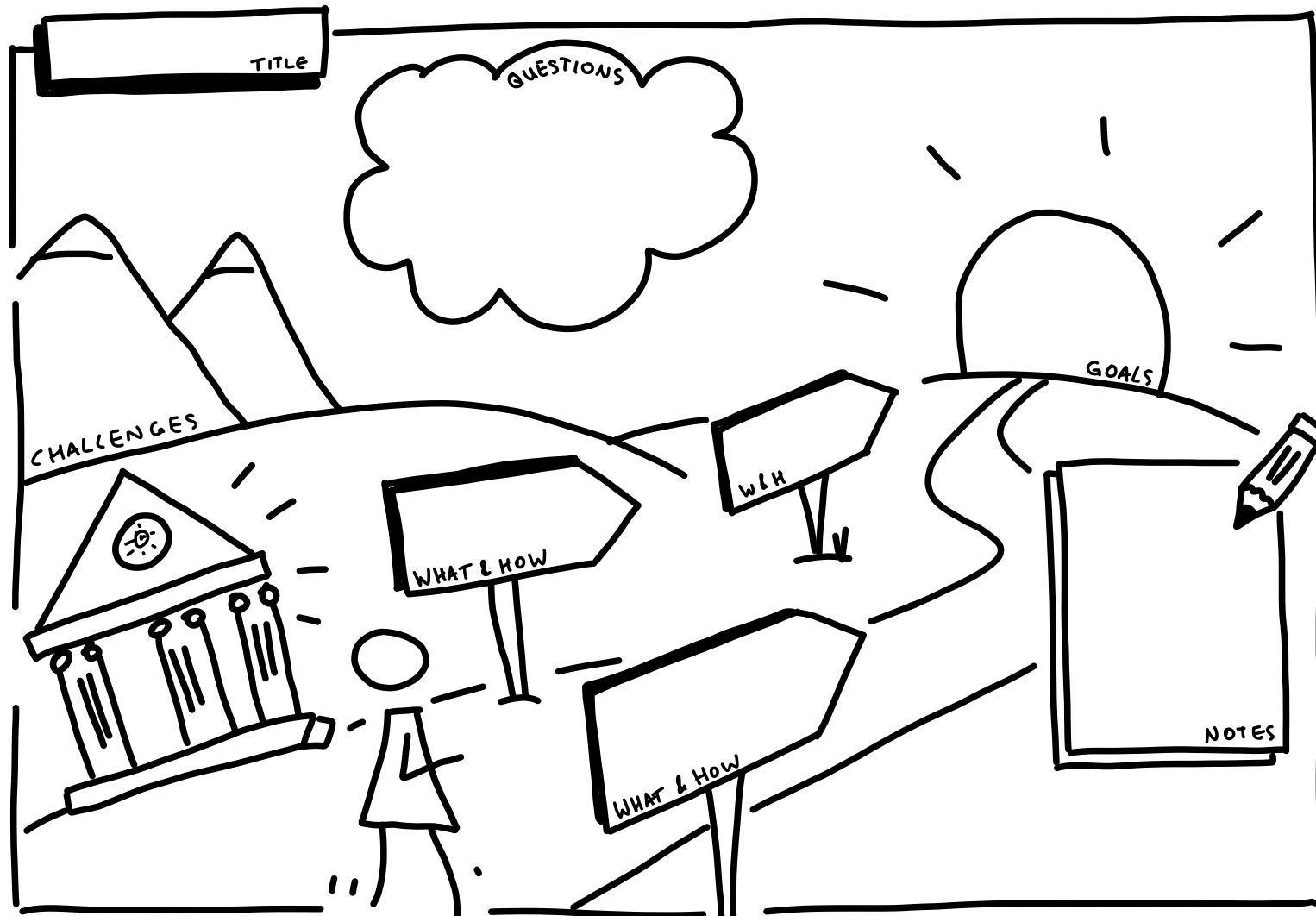
From Facilitarium training course

"During our previous training course "Facilitarium" — which was also dedicated to the topic of Visual Facilitation — we used few visuals for daily reflection. These are also good templates because they are quite universal and can be used in different situations. For example, when you need to reflect on a day or sum up a class.

The first template is the well-known five fingers, which is often used without any visual component, just a hand. But, it can also be drawn on a paper and become a graphic template. The thumb is something you liked, which was good, or that you appreciated and could give a thumb up to. The index finger is used to point out something, for drawing attention to something important, just for ourselves, or the group. The middle finger is a well-known opponent to the thumb and usually means something you didn't like; something that you weren't satisfied with. Inside the ring finger there is a blood vessel that goes directly to your heart (well, all vessels do,

WHAT I TAKE WITH ME?

WHAT DID NOT SATISFY ME FULLY?

IMPORTANT MOMENTS FOR ME

A LITTLE DETAIL I REALISED

WHAT WAS REALLY GOOD?

(NAME)'S SELF-REFLECTION ON (DATE)
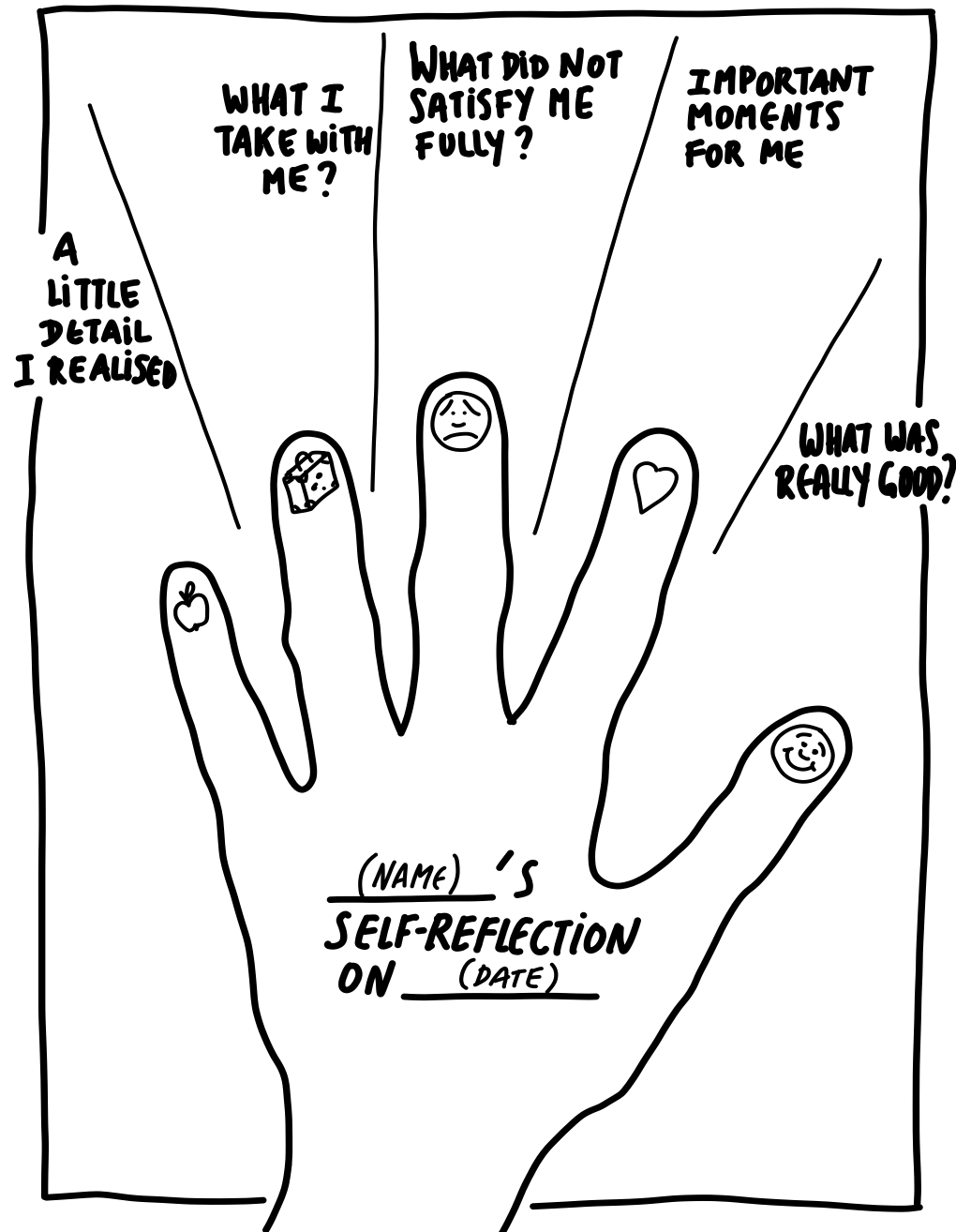
but that one must know a shortcut), so this is why we wear a wedding ring on it. But, in our template it is something that struck you emotionally and something you take into your heart. The little finger is something that there was very little of during the event or class, something that there wasn't enough of. The middle of the palm is a place for noting down what you would like to take with you, something that you can carry away in the palm of your hand. Simple, huh? A template in your pocket.

The second template uses the metaphor of an animal that everybody likes. In our case it was a bunny which lived at the venue. The questions for reflection are connected to body parts: Ears — what was the most useful thing you heard today? Mouth — what was the most interesting thing you said? Heart — how did you feel? Head — what you definitely wouldn't like to forget? Hands — which skills did you develop? Feet — what moved you the most? Fluffy tail — what was the most beautiful?"
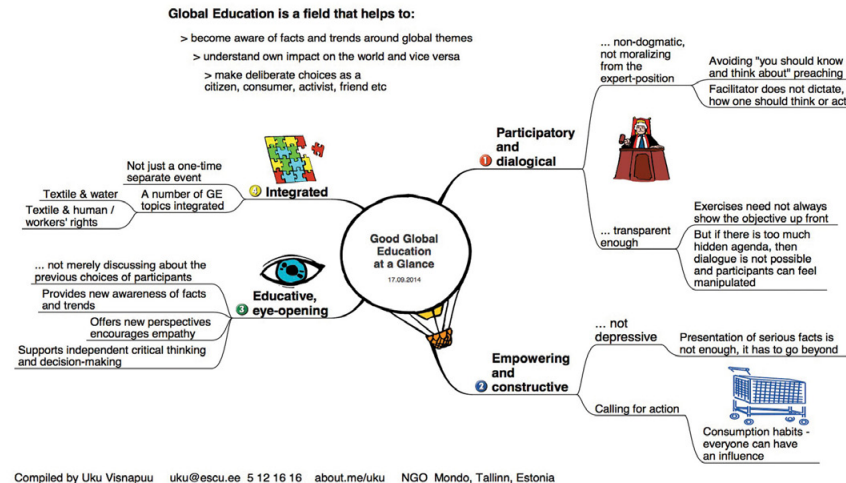
Toolbox
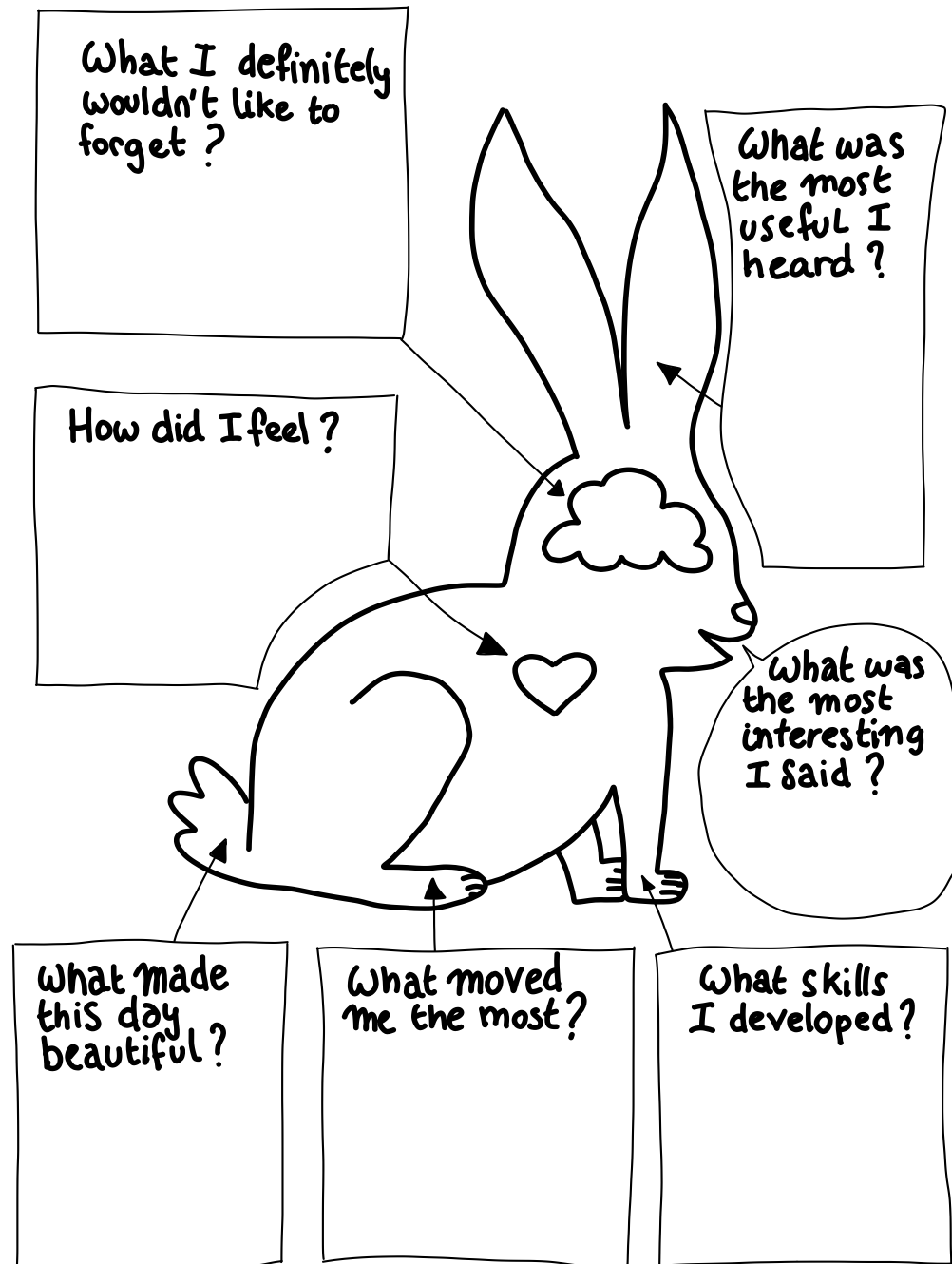
Layouts

This part is something between visual vocabulary and composition. Here we collected examples of how you can organise your visual depending on its profile. Apart from positioning content on the format it is also important to pick a suitable visual match for the structure and aim of your next visual. Every visual practitioner uses their own invented (or adapted) canvases and maps, and it is indeed up to the facilitator to pick one. So check out the ones we brought up here and think of the ones we forgot to mention.

Mind-map

Originally the term "mind-map" was popularised by Tony Buzan, however the principles it includes trace back to earlier centuries. Mind-map works because, unlike linear text, it gives us the opportunity to see more information with one glance. If we need to add something we just add one more branch or cloud. In a text however, we would need to delete and rephrase the sentence. This great concept deserves its place in the team of the most popular visualisation tools.

The mind map is a good starting point to enter the world of "visual thinking", to go beyond the plane textual form. To structure and re-structure content and information, to see the bigger picture and grasp the idea, to see and make visible connections, relations, find gaps and patterns, etc. The mind-map is already a visual form in itself, but it is also very easy and inviting to add some symbols, icons, pictograms, etc.

Global Education is a field that helps to:
> become aware of facts and trends around global themes
> understand own impact on the world and vice versa
> make deliberate choices as a citizen, consumer, activist, friend etc

Compiled by Uku Visnapuu   uku@escu.ee 5 12 16 16   about.me/uku   NGO Mondo, Tallinn, Estonia

This mind-map was prepared by Uku Visnapuu for a seminar on topic of Global Education, organised by NGO Mondo.

Thermometer

If mind-map is a, so called, cloud structure, where information is spread all around the middle point in many directions, thermometer is from the other, so called, linear world.

Information here works along just one line, vertical, horisontal or diagonal, doesn't matter. The key feature of the thermometer is the scale, or progress, from minus to plus, from cold to hot, or as in one more case from Uku, depicting stages

of professional development, "used as interactive mini-lecture notes for participants of a training of trainers where participants were invited to estimate their expected development over a 6 months trainings period by drawing a line, and then we made a visual summary of it all."


ILLUSTRATSIOON : UKU VISNAPUU   UKU@ESCU.EE
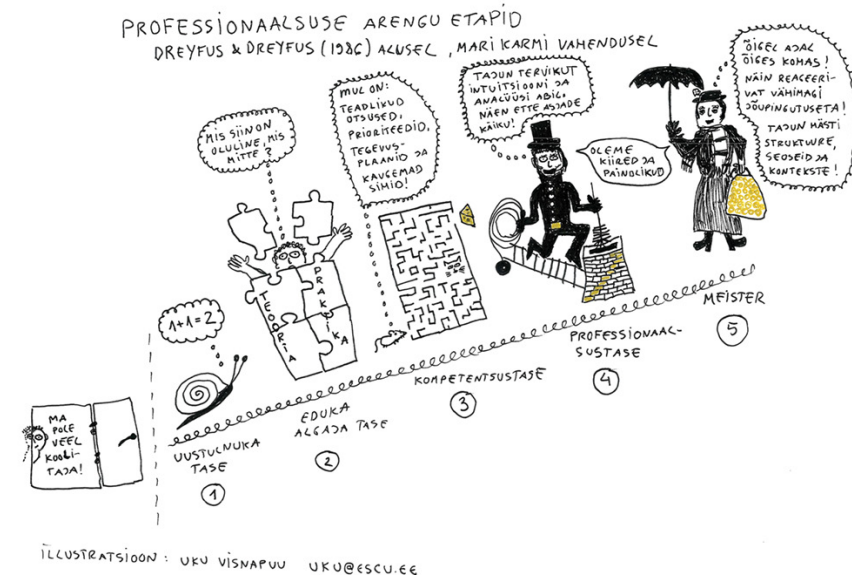
Timeline

A timeline is another simple and yet powerful way of visualising information, which obviously could explain its popularity in contemporary infographics. Of course, in reality it is popular because very often we have to visualise some events, projects, plans, which have a beginning and ending point. So, a timeline first of all gives us an idea of the duration of something, so just by looking at its size we can already imagine how long the story is. You can also add more time marks onto

timeline and, if you are accurate with the proportions, the audience can measure how far this certain event or mark is from the beginning or end of the story. If there are many marks, it is also easier for the audience to compare the gap between the two events in comparison to the whole duration of the story.
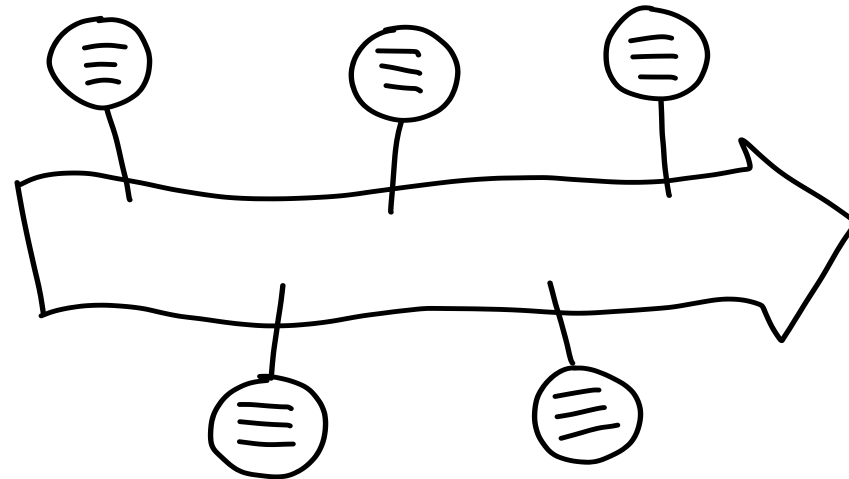
A timeline will work when you have to plan a project which is limited in time and, normally, all projects are. It can also be very helpful when you plan your organisation development strategy, a certain set of actions, anything that contains stages, etc. In the classroom, a timeline will help you to give a perfect overview of historical or political events, or even whole periods and eras. You don't even have to draw: spread your arms and show events using elbows, shoulders and body parts. An example: if spread arms represents the timeline of existence of our planet, then the history of mankind would be just a tiny bit of a nail on the third finger of your right hand.

Road

This is very much like a timeline. It is also often used to visualise some kind of a process with a start and end point. Apart from the duration aspect, it often includes different stages and steps that need to be done during a certain period of time. Very often, roads lead to a rising sun—a profit or a goal—or just to a place behind the horizon—a certain point in the future.
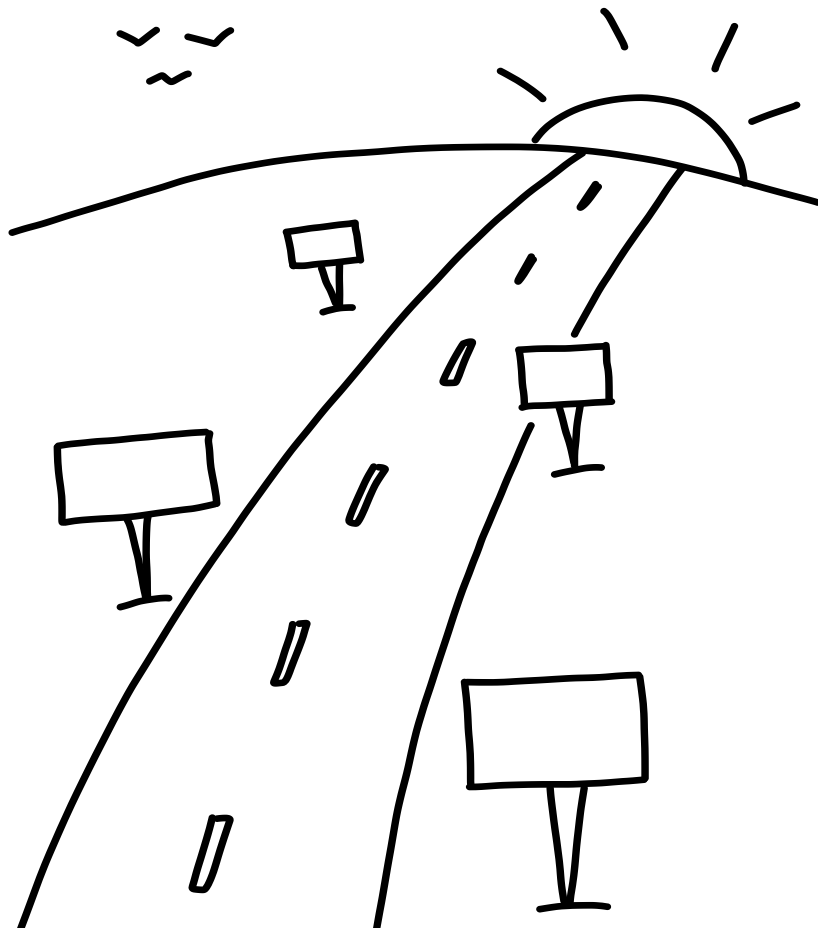
Circle

A circle is a basic shape and is a very popular form in visualisation. Apart from its perfect geometrical value, it can also be used to symbolise the wholeness of something. It's often used as example of a complete process, for example, when you go from A to Z making a full circle. Sometimes it is also combined with a timeline, like in this example, which is a recording of a documentary, telling us a story of young girl and old lady, drawing parallels between their existences. So, the circle here is a metaphor of a complete story, but it also consists of two parts, reminding the viewer of the flow of the film with the most crucial quotes. The questions in the middle fill the space in the story, but also invite participants to think about the message of the film.

Toolbox
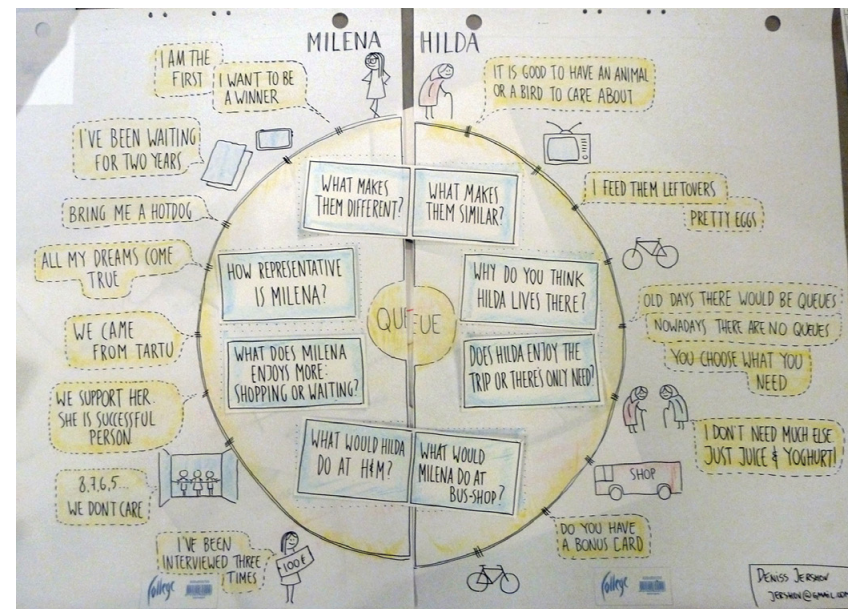
Pie-chart

One more circle based visual is the well-known pie-chart. It is widely used in infographics when the task is to show a piece of the whole and outline how big or small the piece is in comparison to the rest of the circle.
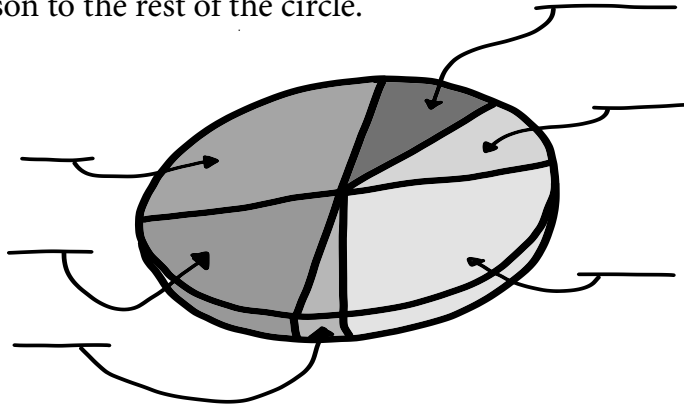

Bulls Eye / Target

When many circles meet together they form a bulls-eye, which divides the space of the visual into a number of fields: the one in the middle is the target and the ones around it serve as markers approaching the target. We used the one on the left for observing the progress of participants' self-development during the training Visual Facilitation+ training course: all participants started at the periphery and aimed to get closer to the middle each day. Tanya Starodubova—participant of VF+ training—went further and played this layout the other way around: during one of her events she had participants put their fears into the middle and observed how far participants could get away from them.

Toolbox

Venn Diagram

Introduced by John Venn in the late 19th century, it is also a widely-known visualisation of possible logical relations between fields or concepts. It can consist of two object on the intersections of which the core component is born, but very often it is three circles. One popular example is the concept of competence, born in the intersection of knowledge, attitude and skills. Or IT, born on intersection of math and technologies.
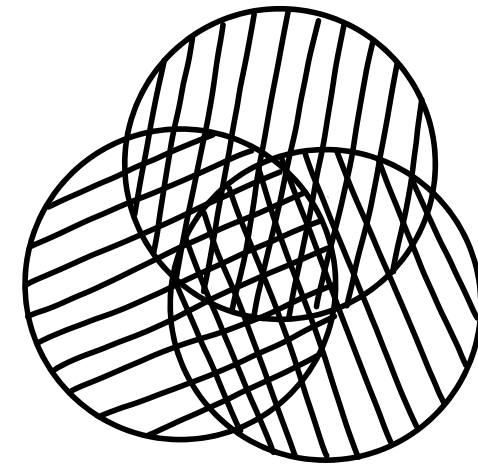
Matrix

You must remember matrix from the face emotions part of this book. It resembles a classical diagram with two axes dividing a working space into four sectors, where the top right is usually the most efficient and the bottom left is the most inefficient. Our example would be a matrix of the widely-know DEOR (dissemination and exploitation of project results) which applicants of Erasmus+ are familiar with. The vertical axis could be the scale of visibility of a project and horizontal scale would be the involvement of youth into the process. Your task is now to find a place for different types of promotions for your project and see which are more efficient in terms of visibility and which give more power to youth. Where would a closed Facebook group go? And where would you place a presentation of your project in local schools and youth centres?
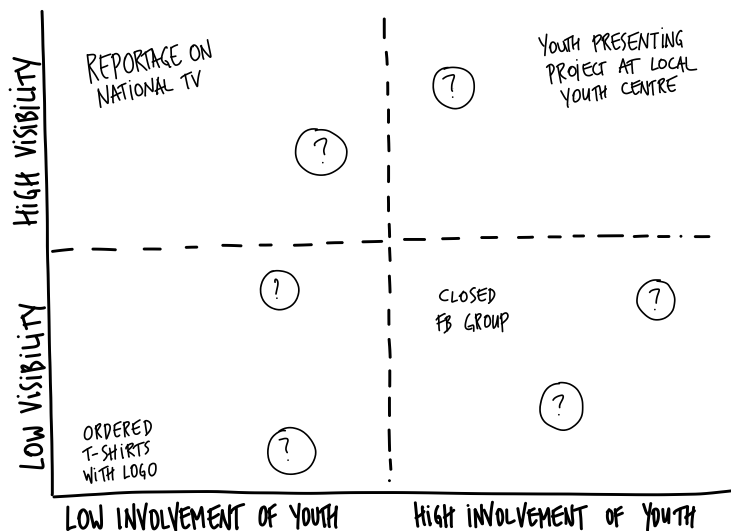
Stairs

Like trees, stairs have many connotations and metaphoric meanings: it is a process of moving along a certain path, usually divided into stages — one stage per step. The steps may also symbolise challenges, if it is the way up. Stairs generally lead to a positive or negative result, depending in which direction you are moving, up or down.

Tree

Trees are nice. They have many meanings and hidden metaphors. Apart from its vertical vector, leading up to the sun, trees also have a trunk as the main static axis, or component. Then come the branches as sub-categories, or sub-directions, which

Landscape

A landscape is not quite a layout, its rather more of a canvas; a very popular background for visuals. Firstly, we like looking at different landscapes, it is very natural and pleasing for us. It explains why it is so widely used on many visuals in this book. But often, a landscape also symbolises different key elements and connotations: horizon — goal, destination; river, abyss — obstacle to overcome; mountains — challenge, etc. If you take another look at the templates in the previous chapter you will see.

Abyss

The abyss mainly has three connotations on visuals: firstly, it is a visualisation of a pit, where the main protagonist of the visualisation definitely doesn't want to end up — a problem, a dead end, a difficult situation, etc. The second connotation is more promising: it symbolises the obstacle which has to be

end with leaves and fruit which symbolise the outcome(s) or goal(s). Furthermore, trees have roots which help trees stand still and also mark the starting point. A tree is often a metaphor of a process, which has roots (basis) and branches (actions) and fruit (outcomes). It can also be used as a form of mind-map, when you don't want to use abstract circles and lines. You can stick to the trunk as the main topic and then thick and thin branches as the ideas growing out of it.
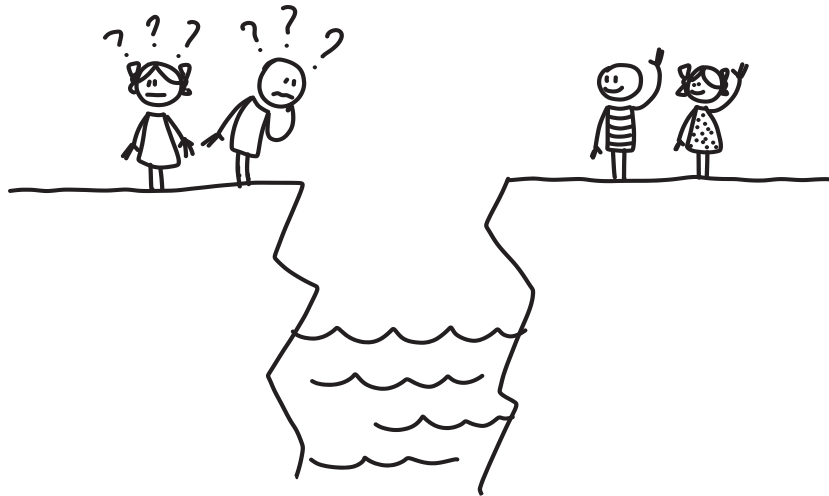
overcome in order to get to the other side. The third aspect helps to elaborate the idea of who is on the other side and how we can reach them: partners, students, target group, sponsors, stakeholders, etc.

Iceberg

The iceberg is a well-known concept and metaphor of something that is huge, the biggest part of which is not visible to us. So, this canvas is used when you have to introduce to a group or class a topic of which very little is visible, but usually perceived as the whole, however there is a lot more going on "under the water", which becomes the basis of the visible part. For instance, it could be a political campaign, which visibly consists of speeches, meetings and debates of the primary candidate, but what is not visible is the labour of dozens and hundreds of people, speech writers, technicians, PR, journalists, fund-raisers, etc.

In international youth work we love to use a canvas of an iceberg when we introduce the concept of culture, where dances, dresses, architecture, food are in the visible part, but they are all based on beliefs, the concept of space and time, philosophy, family relations, etc. Another example where you could use this canvas could be to increase visibility and dissemination of the results of your project, where behind every presentation and action there is a lot of planning and preparations.
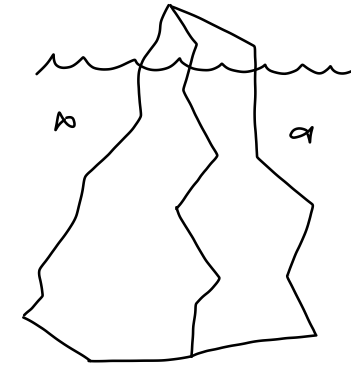
There are definitely many more ways to layout and metaphorise your message or content. We mentioned here only a few and hope you become inspired and invent your own. Good luck!

Cases

Here we collected more examples of visuals which our colleagues use during their activities. These are not quite templates, because they are prepared in advance and used for a single case. They use several icons, metaphors and layouts at once. They give good examples (and inspiration) of other ways we could liven up communication with visuals.

The Value Machine

The Machine was created in order to define the five core values of the organisation, which was needed for future decisions as well as defining an organisational model and mission-statement.

Q1: Is the value important for everyone here?
Q2: Does the value affect the success of our actual core business?
Q3: Will the value be important for making our organisation´s vision come true?

Markus Engelberger

The first step was to collect in the strategy group all values that seemed to be important. Then, each value was "put in" at the top of the "machine" and then passed on through the different bubbles and pipes. Depending on how the strategy group answered the questions, the values finally reached the "TOP 5", "the exotic ones", or the "laboratory".
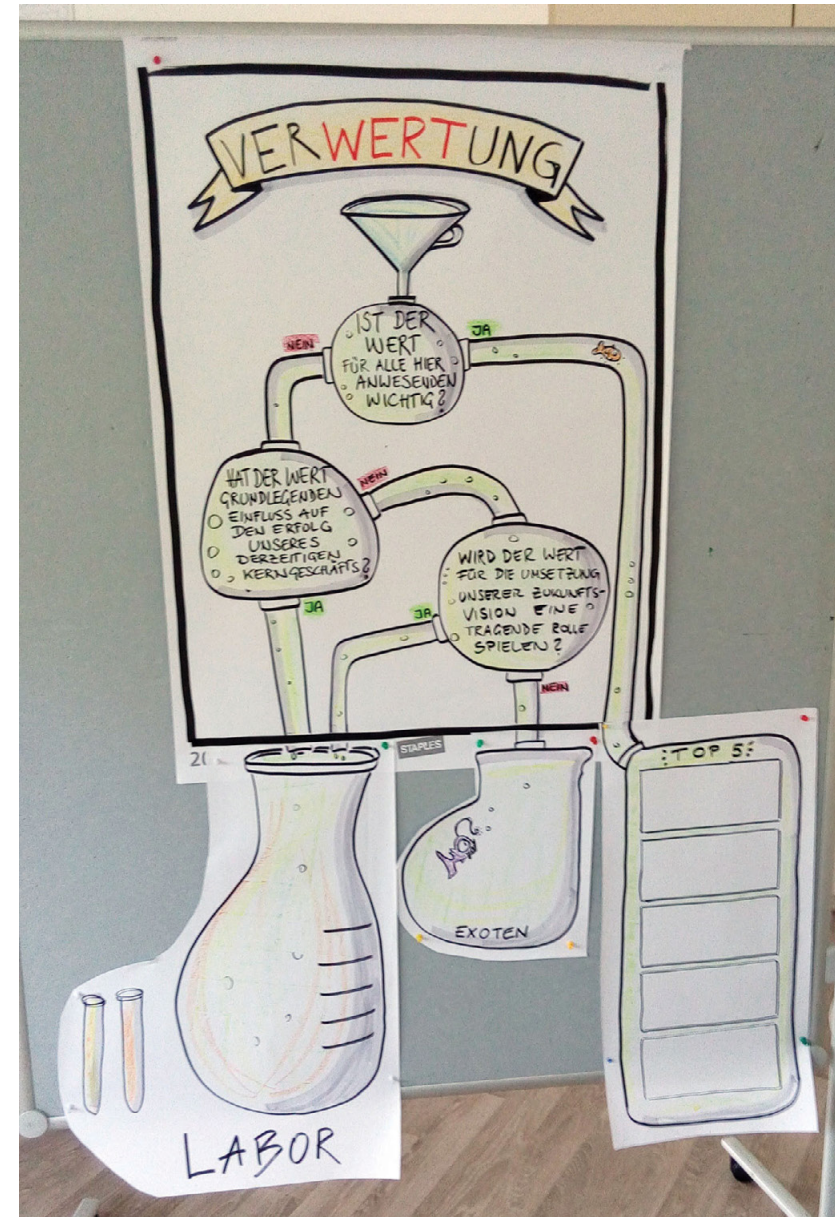
The rules: Only five values fit in the "TOP5". If a sixth value is added, another one has to be removed, in order to make it five again. The removed ones (and other ones that made their way directly there), go to the "laboratory". Their values could be kept for the future (not being in the "TOP5" doesn't mean that the value is not important at all) and also be combined to create new values that might be thrown into the machine again to pass the questions. "The exotic ones" are the place for the values that drive only a single person of the strategy group. They might be considered, but are not of importance concerning the mission statement, etc."

The 5 Pillars of Identity

"The 5 pillars of identity" is a model from the German psychologist H. G. Petzold (*1944). According to it, the identity of a human being is based on five pillars: the body and the perception of the body, the social network which surrounds it, work and accomplishment, material security and moral and values.

We adapted this model for our work with young people and created this template. They can colour it in and have an active part through this. After filling out the pillars we can see which pillars should get more filled and start a conversation about how that could happen. Our youngsters understand it very easily and enjoy working with the template.

Magdalena Burtscher
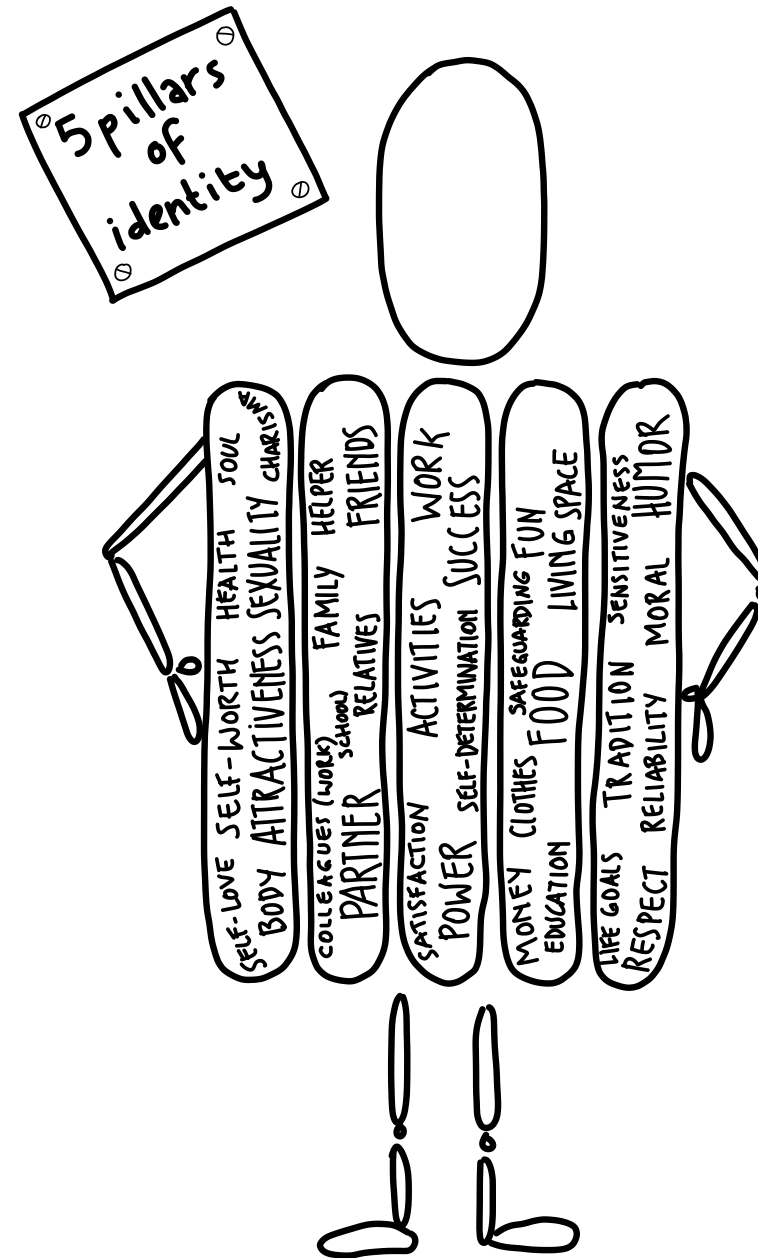
Youthpass

I am usually drawing a picture like this when I am explaining the overall concept of Youthpass in EVS trainings. The simple structure makes it easy for me to draw live in front of the group, while presenting and talking, and it helps the participants to grasp the overall concept without getting lost in details.

Torben Grocholl

www.youthpass.eu
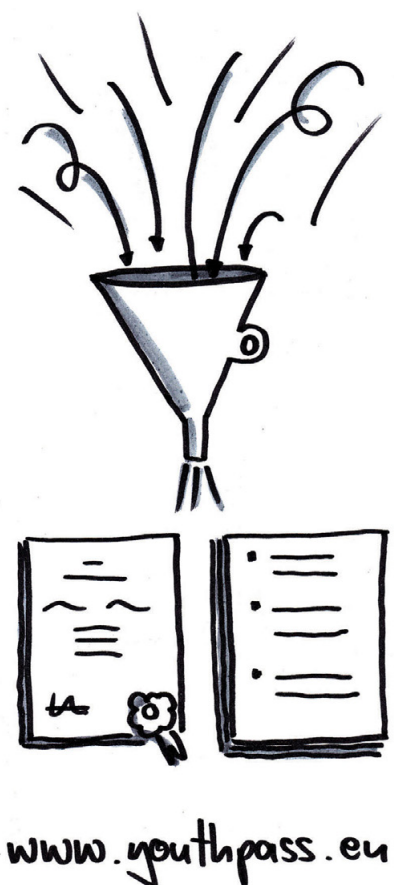
8 key competences

I often present key competences and every time try to do it in a different way. What bothered me is how would it be possible not only to visualise the key, which is simple, but also the competence. And what is more paranoiac in my case: how to explain the 8. So, from the key and simple composition of thirds I went further to something else, which already exploits the 8, but in different context, and first thought of gods with many hands, where hands symbolise something practical, which is almost correct, if we speak about competences. But, it excludes knowledge and attitudes, so I went to another 8 and thought that chess pawns, just like our competences, protect us in everyday situations. And to develop it further, when you push your competence really hard and it makes it to the end of the board, it becomes a queen, which is even more powerful and universal, and can help you to win the game.

Deniss Jershov

Toolbox
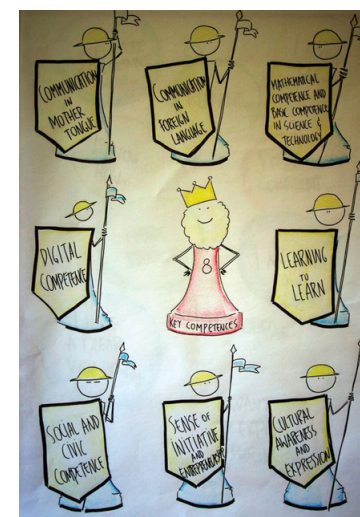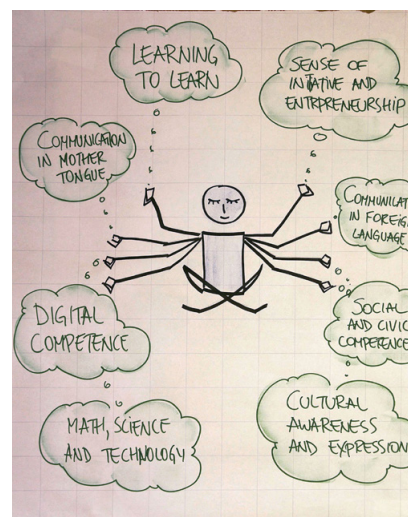
Patenting Process

This is one more example of how you can turn an already rather visual, but rather complex scheme into a nice visual, without losing the point or the information. It was produced by Aija Auzina, a Visual Facilitation+ training participant, and serves the purposes of explaining the patenting process. Aija uses it during educational activities she organises back home.

Erasmus+

Toolbox
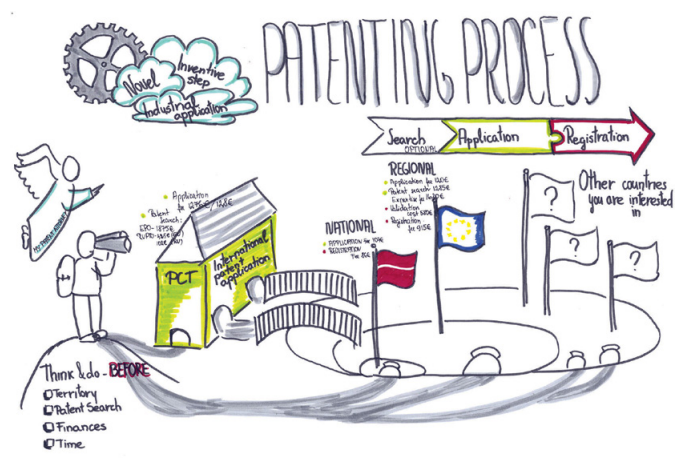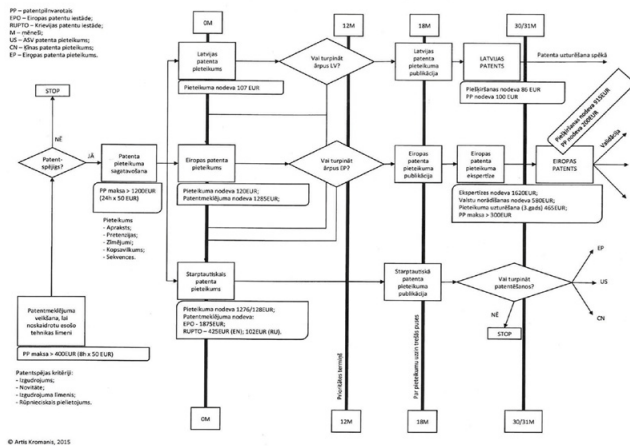
This is a presentation of Erasmus+ submitted by Melanie Pichler, a participant of Visual Facilitation+ and now a practicing visualiser. In this presentation Melanie has shown "the steps, which are necessary, if you are planning to apply for an Erasmus+ grant (from the project idea to the application)". The visual language she used helps to identify the aims, the target group, and also shows the most important stages in the process in the form of stairs. Also, notice the composition: a rising diagonal, angles with title, target group, information on Melanie's organisation and also the final destination for those taking the steps.
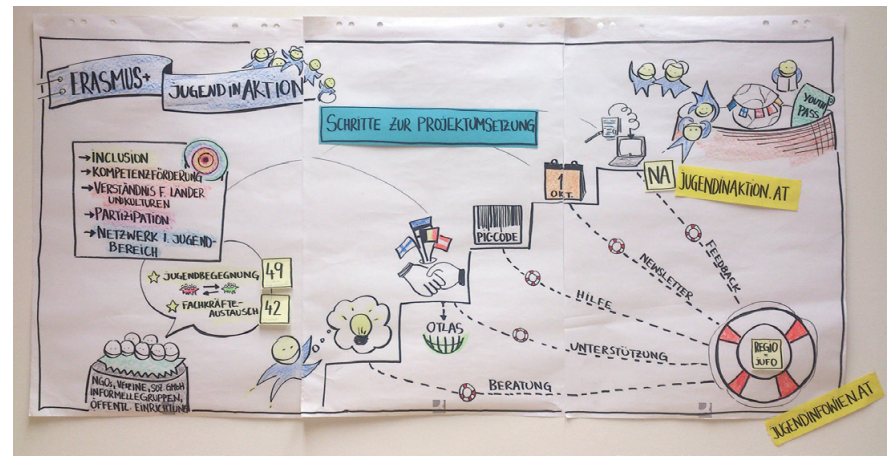
"The template helped me to focus on a clear and structured presentation. And it also reminded me on certain points which I wanted to say. I could also refer to it, when participants were asking a question.
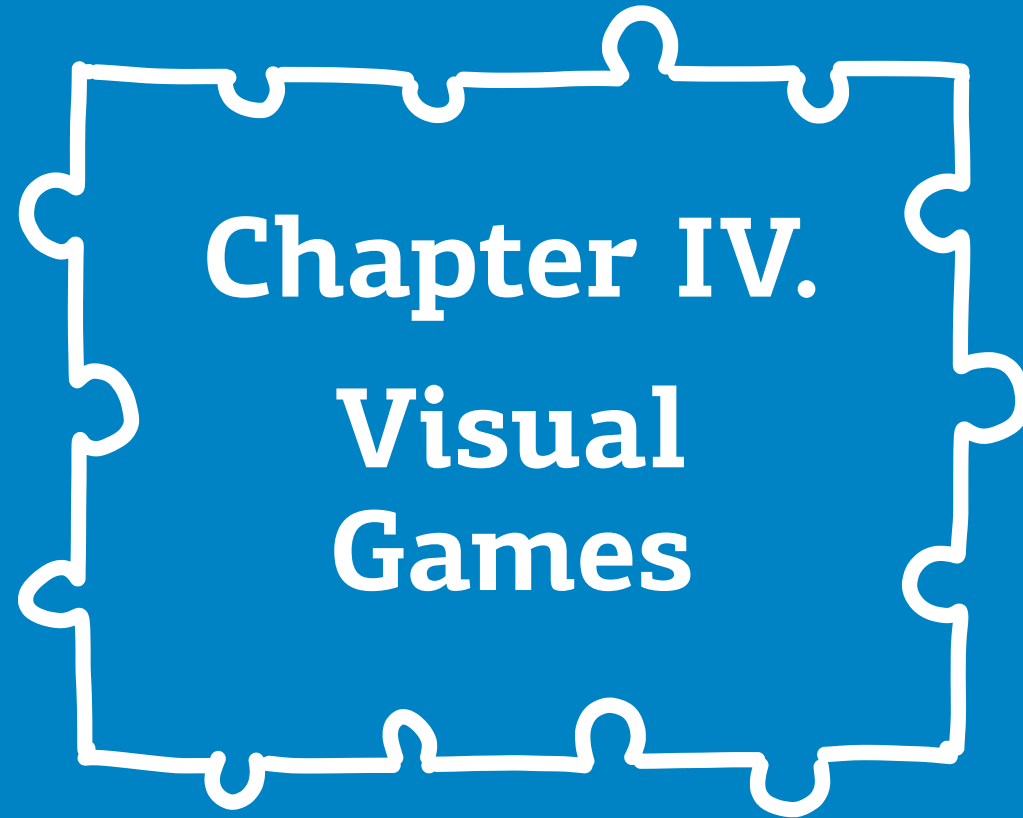
I achieved my concept and skills of presenting Erasmus+ and also got new ideas for the presentation. While drawing, I got the idea of a water landscape. So next time I would use the landscape of water and waves instead of steps and on the right top maybe a beautiful island. And the star-person would sit in a boat.

Erasmus+: Youth in Action is a complex funding programme and it is challenging to give a good overview of it. The Visual presentation — in the shape of a big picture template — gives your audience a good overview, shows connections and the whole process. It also helps the presenter to have a clear structure and anchor points. It can also help to be clear about the core message of the presentation.

So, it is useful, if you want to show a complex process, which includes (why, what, who, how = steps, output)."

Melanie Pichler

Chapter IV.
Visual Games

We use games a lot on our trainings. They bring a playful mood into the process, which can sometimes be quite exhausting (if you stay focused for long time). Games are also good teachers and what you find in the selection below is not necessarily an attribute of Visual Facilitation training, but can be used during other learning events and activities. This is because they also develop other soft skills, such as focusing, non-verbal communication, attention, etc., and can also be great energisers and communication exercises. Because art unites!

Free-hand

We found this game in a local art school. It is a regular warm-up exercise in the illustration class. The main objective is to provoke the imagination, train the eye and learn to see and recognise objects and shapes where they hardly exist. The initial objective in the class is to come up with some character, style or environment for future illustration. But, in the Visual Facilitation world it is a perfect exercise to prove that everyone can draw, as long as they can imagine, and also a good warm-up exercise.

Objective:

Creative warm-up, visual thinking, focus and attention.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: not important.

Materials:

One marker/felt-tip pen/pencil/pen per person; a sheet of A4 or A5 paper; some surface for drawing.

Flow:

1. Ask participants to warm-up a little. Just raise the hand with the marker in it and try to rotate the wrist for 10–15 seconds, as if you were a conductor.
2. Now take the paper and draw an unbroken line, as if you were, again, conducting. Try to wake your hand up by just doodling. The line can have sharp corners or smooth arcs — it doesn't matter.
3. Now, ask everyone to try to see and recognise some shapes or objects in this mess they just doodled, and outline it.
4. If the shape is still not very convincing, doodlers can add more lines to make it clearer.
5. Instead of outlining you can also colour the shapes.
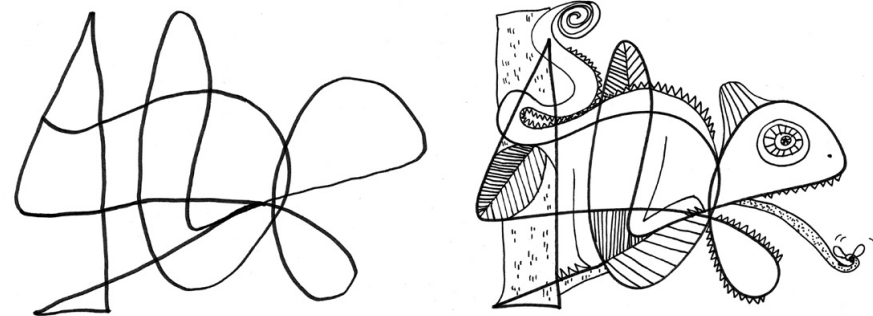
Tips:

1. Objects which are easy to recognise in this exercise, when you do it for the first time, are different flowers, birds, butterflies, sails of ships, etc. With the second or third attempt, people usually start to see more complex things.

2. When you see that participants feel comfortable with working with their own doodles, you can invite them to work in pairs. They can draw random lines and then offer it to another person to outline the shapes.

Drawing in a Circle

Objective:

Creative warm-up, group building, focus and attention. Also patience, it seems to us. To go into more depth, you may find that it also trains drawers to use clear lines and simple shapes; not to go too sophisticated with their pictures. Overall, this game is great fun.

Target group:

Everyone who knows the basics of drawing (at least one person in the group). It is good to have minimum of 12 participants up to 60, or even more.

Materials:

Sheets of A4 and one marker per person. This exercise works best if everyone can sit on the floor in a circle. But, tables are also ok, if they are in a circle.

Flow:

1. Invite participants to sit in a circle with an A4 sheet of paper.

2. You are all going to draw the same picture, but you need a starter. Ask for volunteers, who would like to draw a picture. The picture should fill all the paper. It can be free plot: an island in the sea, with ships around, clouds and sun above, fish underwater; or, a building in the city with windows, car parked in front, rainclouds, birds in the sky; or, someone's bedroom with furniture, paintings on the wall, flowers on the table, etc. Just feel free to draw anything you are comfortable with.

3. Ask the first person to start drawing. They can decide which direction the circle will go and if it is going to be a landscape or a portrait drawing. Let's imagine that it is going to the left and it is a landscape.

4. Important! The second person from the left can see the starter picture and tries to draw exactly the same picture on his/her sheet. The third person can only look at the picture of second person, the fourth can see the picture of third and so on. People in the circle can only see the picture of the previous person. It will be a temptation to look at the pictures of others, but try to stick to the rule.

5. In order to save time, the second person can copy first person's picture line by line. Waiting for first person to finish the picture will take about 2-3 minutes and if you

multiply it by the number of people, it can take up to 40 minutes. Let people copy their neighbour's picture line by line, and you will complete the exercise within approximately 10 minutes.

6. When the first person has finished drawing, they give everyone a signal: "Done!", "Ready!", "Finished!", etc. If the second person thinks he/she copied everything and is also done, they also give a signal and so on.

7. When last person is done, you can now raise your heads and your pictures and show them to everyone in the circle. You will be able to compare things, like for instance how different are the first and last pictures and how careful and accurate were the drawers.

Tips:

1. The more detailed the first picture is, the bigger the chance that drawings will be inaccurate. At the same time, people tend to make the size of certain objects bigger or smaller, which is perfectly normal.

2. Depending on time, you can make another round right away. You can also run this game regularly to see how people progress and perform with better precision during the exercise.

Visual Games
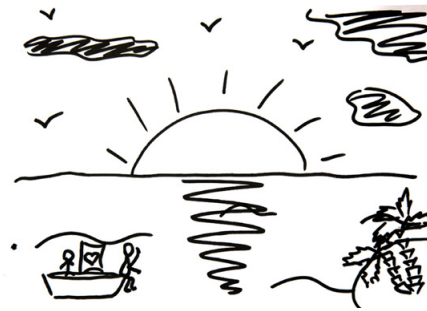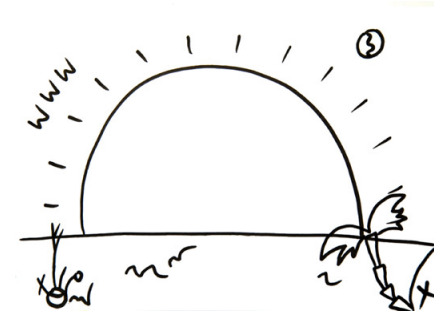
First person
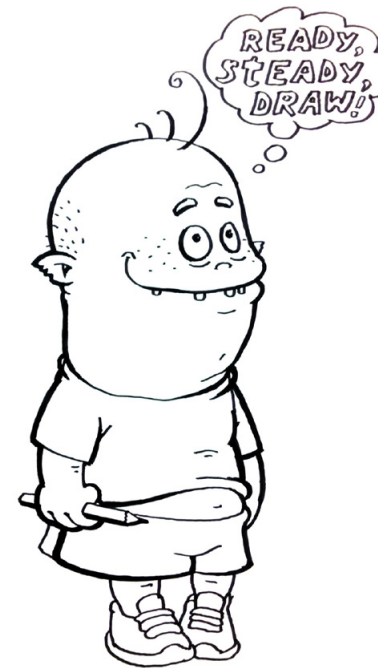
Last person

First person
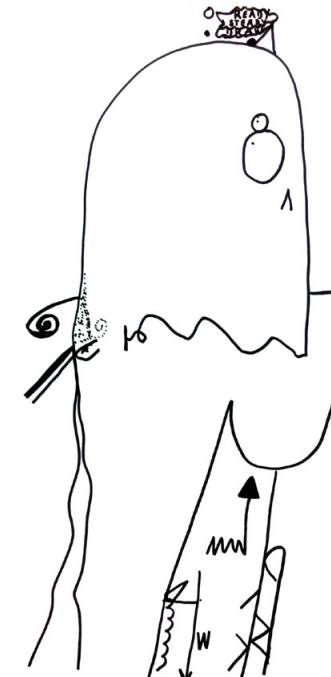
Last person

Drawing in the Air

Objective:

Visual and spatial thinking, focus and attention, non-verbal communication.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: not important.

Materials:

Chair, paper, pen for everyone.

Flow:

1. Ask for a volunteer, whose task will be to draw something in the air in front of the rest of the group. The volunteer is free to choose an object to draw, it can be something, which is already in the room: a chair, a table, a smartphone, a lamp, etc., or it can be a free association: a bus, a castle, a Christmas tree, etc. The simpler the better.
2. As the volunteer starts drawing the chosen object in the air with their index finger, the rest of the group starts to copy the volunteer's lines on paper, to see what the object is. The first who recognises what it is, names it aloud and, if the guess is right, the winner of the round sits in front of group and draws in the air. The first volunteer can join the group and continue working with a real pen and paper and trying to guess the next drawing in the air.

Tip:

Try not to draw some specific objects or buildings, like the view from your window, or Notre-Dame de Paris. People in the audience might not be aware of these objects. At the same time, don't use very obvious shapes that will be guessed within a few seconds.

Drawing on the Back

This game is very similar to the previous, however it is also similar to the one about drawing in the circle. The objective is to train concentration and enhance abstract thinking.

Objective:

Creative warm-up, ice-breaker, group building, focus and attention, non-verbal communication.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people is not important. It is crucial to have two teams.

Materials:

Chairs for everyone, pen and paper for one person in each group.

Flow:

1. People should sit in two rows, one behind another. The person at the front of each row holds the pen and paper

2. The game starts with the persons at the back of each row. They are shown a simple picture and now have to "send" the picture to the person at the front of the row.

3. This "sending" is done in the way that last person draws with a closed marker, or just a finger, the same picture they were shown, but on the back of the person in front. This process is continued down each row…

4. …until it reaches the person at the front of each row, who now must draw the picture on their sheet of paper.

5. When both front drawers are done, the pictures are shown to the rest of the group along with original picture.

Tip:

It is up to the participants to decide if they want to get the full picture on their back and then to pass it down all at once, or to draw line by line. The second option involves more concentration and may be very hard, because at that moment, participants need to "read" and "write" at the same time, which involves many senses and brain resources.

Telling the Picture

Objective:

Creative warm-up, visual and verbal thinking, group building, focus and attention.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: not important.

Materials:

A4 paper, markers or felt-tip pens in different colours.

Flow:

This game is almost the same as one about drawing in the air, but this time the person in front of the group should describe an object with words, while others should draw what they hear described. For instance: "It is a circle on top of an oval, there are two more circles on top of the first circle and two circles inside first circle, a little bit up from the middle, under these circles is an arc. Below the oval there are two more ovals, and two more, one to the left and one to the right of the main oval." That was supposed to be a teddy-bear.

Tip:

Try to be precise, but not too precise. When explaining the position of the details of the object, specify if it is top, bottom, left, right, more to the middle, more to the top, etc. Also, consider that people are using pen and paper, so what they need to "see" in order to recognise your object.

Drawing Collaborative Characters

Objective:

Creative warm-up, energiser, ice-breaker, getting to know each other

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: not important.

Materials:

A4 paper, markers or felt-tip pens in different colours.

Setting:

Divide participants into groups of four people, so each group can sit together around the same table or on the floor.

Flow:

1. Each person gets one sheet of A4 paper and a writing instrument (pen, marker, felt-tip pen, etc.).
2. Ask everyone to fold their A4 sheet so that everyone will have four panels, one after another.
3. Now you are going to draw a character together. Ask everyone to draw a head on the top panel. Any head. Just draw the lines of the neck a little into the second panel, because now you will need to fold the head back, so next person can only see from where they should continue the portrait. Pass the paper to the next person.
4. Now from the neck lines participants should draw the main part of the body, from the neck to the belly. Any chest, male, female, clown, businessman, robot, etc. Again, draw the belly lines a little into the third panel, and fold the second body part back. Pass the paper along.
5. The third part is to draw from the belly to the knees. Don't forget to take the lines a little into the fourth panel and fold the third part back before passing the portrait along to the next person.
6. The fourth panel is to draw from the knees to the feet.
7. When you are done with the feet, unfold the paper and look at the portrait you just created.

Tip:

Again, depending on the group, you can give some hints to draw a man or a woman, or a book character, but it is more fun and creative to limit it to just a portrait and have four sections. The group will do the rest.

Line by Line

Objective:

Creative warm-up, energiser, ice-breaker, group building, non-verbal communication, visual thinking.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: from two to infinity.

Materials:

A4 paper, markers or felt-tip pens in different colours.

Settings:

Divide participants in twos, threes or fours, depending on the dynamics of the group. Working in pairs is simplest.

Flow:

Each group of two, three, four or more people should receive one sheet of A4 paper and one writing instrument (pen, marker, felt-tip pen, etc.) per person. The task is to draw a picture together, which is pretty simple. But, the drill is that they have to draw it line by line, one after another. Another thing is that they can't speak during the game, the only way to communicate and figure out what they are drawing is to actually draw.

Tips:

1. If the group is "cold" you can give them a topic. Like, "Let's draw a flower!" Then they at least know what they are drawing. But it is more fun if they don't know what is going to appear on the paper and just start to improvise.
2. It also doesn't have to be "line by line". It can also be dot by dot, if they are drawing a rainy day or a simple face. However, if it is line by line, ask them not to make these lines very long and complicated. The more turns they each have, the more unexpected the outcome will be.

Save the Bunny

Visual Games

Objective:

Creative warm-up, associative thinking, visual thinking, non-verbal communication.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: from two to infinity.

Materials:

A sheet of A4 paper and a writing instrument (pen, marker, felt-tip pen, etc.) per person.

Settings:

1. Big table or many tables, where a group can sit together. You can also sit on the floor.
2. If necessary, you can divide participants into smaller groups, but then each group will need a surface to work on.

Flow:

1. Every person draws a very simple bunny in the bottom right or left corner of their sheet of paper. Then, at your signal passes the sheet to their left.
2. Now every person should add to the picture something that is about to kill the bunny, like a falling meteor, a hunter with a rifle, a wolf, etc. Again, when everyone is ready, instruct them to pass their sheets of paper to their left.

3. Now, every person should draw something that eliminates the threat, like a webbing that catches the meteor, or Greenpeace who stops the hunter, etc., so the bunny stays alive. Pass again.

4. Now everyone should draw something that eliminates what eliminated the initial threat, so the bunny is in danger again. Pass again and repeat several times, adding one after another objects that either raise the likelihood of the bunny's survival, or don't give it a chance.

Tips:

1. The drawings don't have to be perfect. What is important is that they are recognisable to the next person, so they can understand the qualities of the object and figure out a way to eliminate it.

2. Play 7–8 (or more rounds) to see how far peoples' imaginations can take them.
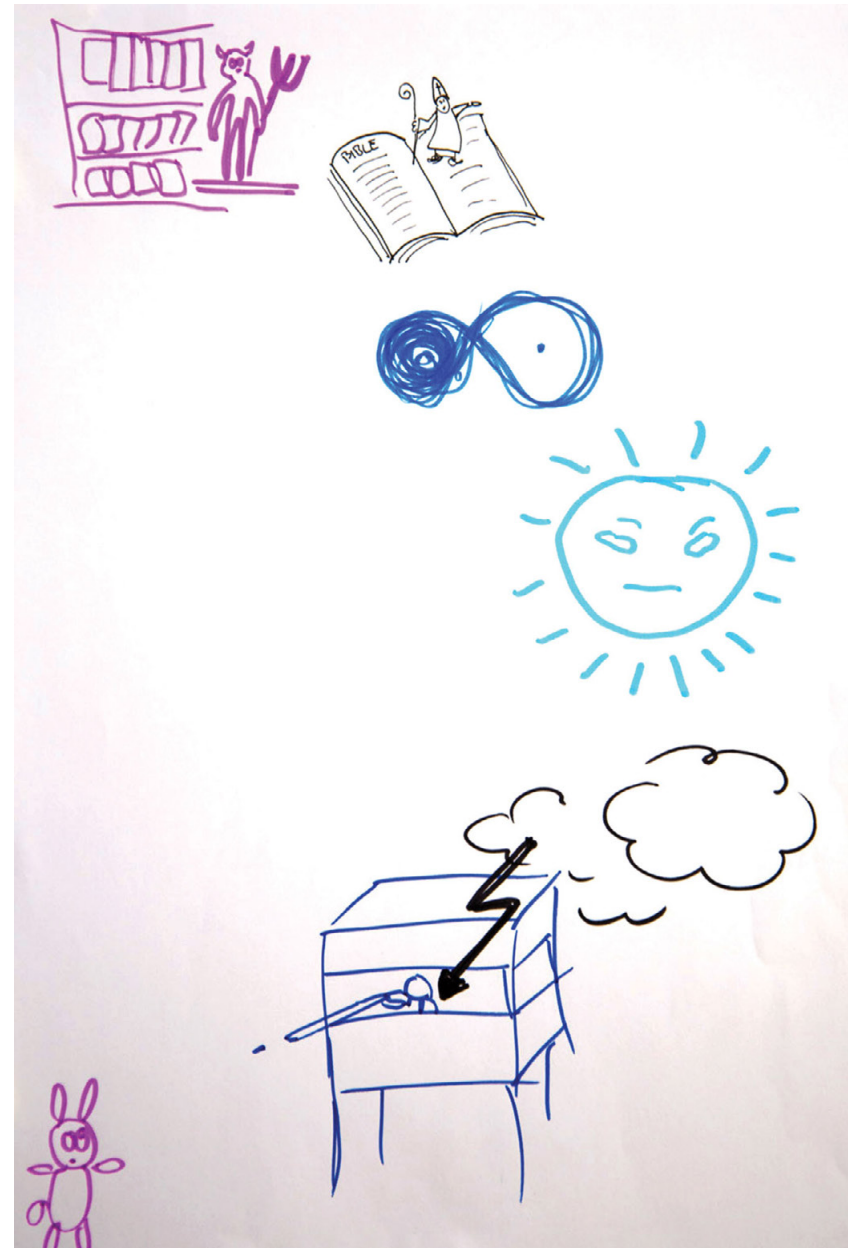
Analogue Social Network

Objective:

Getting to know each other, networking, making visible resources, backgrounds, relations and common interests.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: from two to infinity.

Materials:

Paper, pens, markers, wall space (big blank poster, flipcharts, pin board, etc.).

Flow:

1. Creating profiles: You can prepare templates for this or leave it to the participants. You can also give some instructions about what kind of information should be on their profiles (depending on the purpose of the game and the topic of the meeting or target group). The participants create their own profiles or work together in pairs and interview each other. A profile picture can be used or not (usually it is fun!).
2. You can ask participants to present their own profile (or someone else's) in front of the group and/or stick them on the wall/poster.
3. Create the Network! Ask everybody to draw lines and make connections with people you already know or with who they have something in common. Ask them to label those connections. Invite people to also name professional connections or things they have in common with others to show who knows who, from where and why. This will ideally reinforce communication between participants, support group-building and networking. We all know: It is always great fun to find common friends and figure out surprising things you might have in common with a person you do not know (well) yet. This can be done with a time limit, or throughout the whole event.
4. The result will be a visible network full of links, connections, discovered common friends and interests.

Tips:

There are many possible variations for this exercise. Just think a little bit about your context and the setting where you want to use it: What kind of activities do you want to stimulate within the group? What kind of information should be collected and made visible on this picture? For instance:

1. During international events stick the profiles on a pre-made map to show the geographical diversity of the participants.
2. Modify the questions for the profiles according to either your or the group's needs.
3. To keep this activity going through the full length of an event we have had good experiences by making it a little competition. The participant finding the most connections got rewarded with a little prize at the end.

Picturising Words, Verbalising Pictures

Objective:

Creative warm-up, associative thinking, visual thinking, opening topics. This game is similar to the Derrida exercise, but instead of drawing and drawing, we will combine drawing with writing.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: fun starts with six to seven people.

Materials:

Pens and A4 paper for everyone.

Flow:

1. Every person gets one sheet of paper and a pen.
2. The first step is to write down a random short sentence, which makes sense. It could be a line from a song, a famous quote, slogan, etc.
3. Now everyone passes it to the left or right. It doesn't matter for the first round, but matters for the second and those that come after.
4. The next person's task is to draw the sentence, how they understand it. To translate it into an image. When the second person is done, they have to fold the opening sentence to the back and then pass it along in the chosen direction.
5. The third person has to verbalise the picture, how they interpret it. This continues until the paper travels around the whole circle and arrives back at the first person, or until there is no empty space anymore.

Tips:

1. The aim is not to guess the sentence or draw the same picture, the aim is to release your creative spirit and think fast and free.
2. It is even more fun when you guessed the initial picture or saying to ignore it and add something completely new and crazy.

Guess My Picture

Objective:

Creative warm-up, associative thinking, visual thinking, opening topics, energiser.

Target group:

Everyone; number of people: fun starts with three groups of three, or more.

Materials:

Pens and paper

Flow:

1. Prepare a selection of concepts, words, etc., which are either fun to visualise, or relevant for the group and the topics they are dealing with, on little paper cards.
2. Split the group into smaller teams.
3. Pick a card and show it to one delegate from each group.
4. The delegates have to draw the word from the card without using words, letters or numbers, etc., in silence.
5. The teams have to guess the correct word or concept.
6. The winning team gets a point.
7. The game continues...

Tips:

1. You can visualise almost everything in this game: topics, concepts, movies, whatever the group is interested in or working on!
2. In our trainings, we love playing this game (as a starter) to create a joint visual vocabulary which is based on the needs and interests of the participants and their professional contexts. Therefore, we collect all kind of terms from the group and put them in a big box before we start playing.
3. There are many variations of this game: small groups competing with each other, or one person drawing in front and groups competing with each other, or one person in front and everybody against everybody, with or without the "hangman" rule, points, scores, ranking, etc.,

depending on how much competition is fun and joyful for everybody in the group.

4. Sometimes, when a concept is really hard to draw, participants start to cheat, by pointing at something that can give a hint to what the word is. Remind them it is a drawing exercise.

Collaborative Group Memory

Objective:

Reflection, visual thinking, associative thinking, group building.

Target group:

Participants in training courses, seminars, workshops, classroom lessons, long-term educational activities, everyone; number of people: from two to infinity, just try to form teams.

Materials:

Flipchart paper or large sized paper roll (e.g. packing paper), markers, colours.

Flow:

1. Divide participants into smaller groups (You can also ask for volunteers, day by day).
2. Assign each group to a certain day or session of the event.

3. At the end of the day or session each team has to fulfil the task of creating a visual documentation of the day or session on a poster in a pre-given format (e.g. landscape).

4. The summary can be presented the next morning to start the day by looking back and recalling what has happened previously.

Tip:

This exercise might require a little introduction and preparation for your participants to get familiar with some basics of using visual language (see ABC chapter).
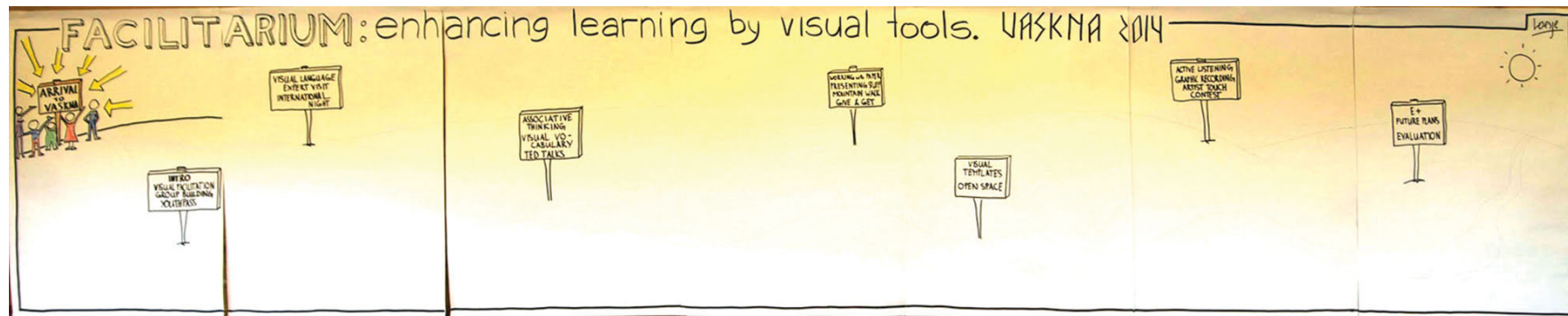
Chapter V.

How to Move On?

It's great that you have made it until here! We hope you enjoyed it and that you got some useful ideas and inspiration from reading the book, or some parts of it. If you want to continue your journey on the visual learning path here we have prepared a number of possibilities for you to explore:

1. "Steal like an artist!" is great advice from Austin Kleon. Luckily we are not at school anymore and copying is accepted as a method of learning and developing things further without getting punished. So, actively look for inspiration around you! The internet is a wonderful and almost infinite resource, but don't forget about "the real world". It offers loads of visual inspiration, just take a look around: advertisements, magazines, newspapers, street signs, stickers, graffiti, flyers and much more. Look for stuff which you find worth stealing and go for it. Build on this. Draw and redraw, merge different things into something new, modify and adapt ideas and images according to your interests and for your own needs.

2. Practice! According to the "10,000 hour rule" by Malcolm Gladwell it takes roughly 10,000 hours of practice to achieve mastery in any field. So no stress, just keep on doodling! It takes time and practice to develop and to become fluent with your visual vocabulary and visual language, just as with any other language. Collect symbols, icons and pictures and compile your personal visual dictionary. Note down the most important words, concepts and theories you deal with in your work or projects, do research, sketch and draft icons and symbols. Sketch an object 50 times to make it really "your own". Play with the shape of the object, make it very tiny, blow it up, change the proportions, etc. You can also meet at the local pub to practise and play drawing games with others, usually this is quite fun.

3. Draw every day! Start implementing visuals, step by step, into your everyday life and work. Spice up your shopping, or to-do-lists, with little drawings, make a little template for your Skype meetings, sketch random objects from your desk, etc. Why not establish a creative habit or routine around drawing?! Here we can give you two nice examples from our friends which might trigger your imagination and motivate you to start your own project: Our friend and colleague Julia from Austria started a drawing journal quite some time ago. She is drawing an image in it every day, which symbolises each day in her life. So far she has filled already more than one full book with her drawings and it is still going on and growing every day. Elsewhere, Kati started an impressive drawing project once which you can now even find at the book shops in her country. She transcribed popular Estonian movies into little pictograms and fulfilled her dream of publishing her first book. There are many more inspiring blogs online with examples of what wonderful things people have created and done.

4. Get your personal sketchbook at the local art shop! Choose a material, colour and format that is appealing to you and which is easy for you to carry around. Remember: The best sketchbook is the one that you can always take with you! The same goes for your markers and pens. Choose them wisely, they are extensions of your hand ;-)

"Find the courage to find time for yourself. That's one. The second: don't be afraid of new things. And, the third, see your aim always in front of you, keep it simple and don't lose that aim."

Aija Auzina, participant at VF+ training

Materials

Regarding the materials you'll need, our advice is: Start with some basic tools like a black marker and paper which is readily available for you, you'll probably find some colours (markers, felt tips, pencils, crayons, etc.) around your desk. Later, you can visit your local art shop and take a look around to find some inspiration there. Try out different materials, feel free to experiment, or stick to the materials you like and feel comfortable with. These will be your friends and companions on your visual journey… You don't need much to get started!

In our experience, the following materials proved to be useful for working with groups more visually: Simple A5, A4 and A3 sheets of paper make sense for flexible usage in different settings.

Flipchart paper is a nice medium size format and usually available at seminar rooms or in the stationery shop around the corner. You can also go bigger by sticking more sheets of flip chart paper together! Rolled packing paper (white or brown) is another nice and cheap option if you decide to go big.
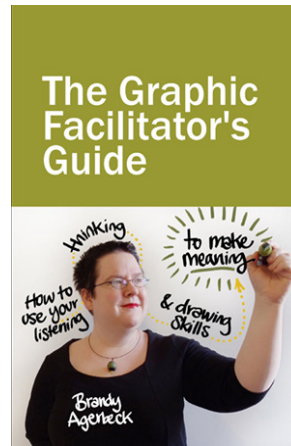
For colouring, many of our colleagues in the visual field use dry pastels, however normal coloured chalk from the classroom also works to a certain extent. Be aware that you need some kind of fixative spray for protection if you want to keep and re-use your posters. Others prefer block-shaped wax crayons or coloured markers.

The most common marker types are probably the ones with a chisel tip, or a bullet tip. The chisel tip is useful for strong and visible handwriting; the bullet tip is thinner and many people use it for drawing and outlining. Markers and pens with a brush tip are already a bit more artistic and can be used for advanced lettering and drawing. As always it is a matter of your preferences.
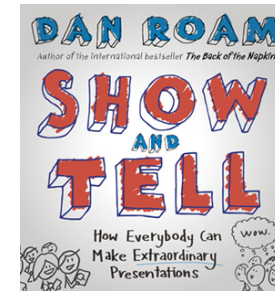
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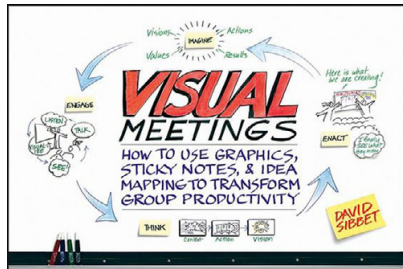
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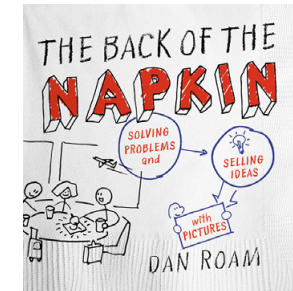
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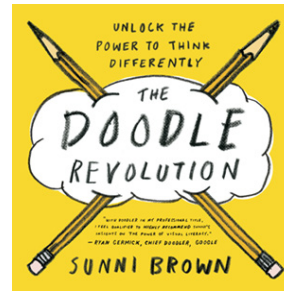
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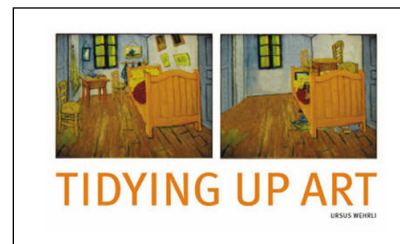
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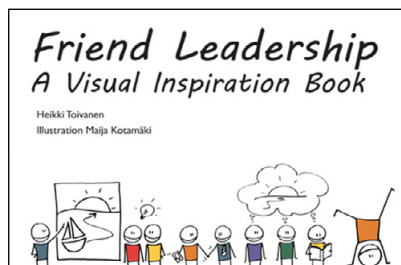**Mike Rohde:** The Sketchnote Handbook: The illustrated guide to visual note taking, 2013

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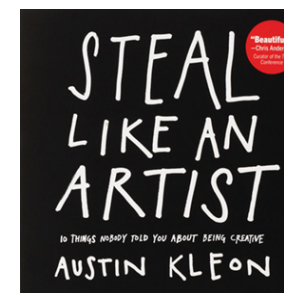
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Authors

Deniss Jershov, born in Estonia in 1976, has been living many lives, but currently lives in Tartu, teaches graphic design and works as a trainer and facilitator locally and internationally. He believes in creativity as the ultimate purpose of every human being, but at the same likes to find proofs and evidences of why some tools work better than others.

Torben Grocholl, born 1984 in Berlin, has studied Political Science and Communications in Vienna and Copenhagen. He currently lives in Graz/Austria and is working as a freelance trainer and facilitator in the European youth field and non-formal education. He is passionate about creative facilitation and the power of visual language.

Kati Orav, born in Estonia in 1981 and has been interested in teaching and leading since childhood, so, no surprise, that currently she is working as a trainer and process manager. She believes that creating right conditions, asking right questions and using supportive tools can help people to discover creativity and potential to make a change. One of her great missions in life is to promote graphic visualisation as an approach to simplification of strategic thinking and project management, and also to help people to find the courage to doodle.

Feedback

Last but not least, we are very curious and looking forward to hear from you and get some feedback:

1. What did you find most interesting, useful or not useful about this book? What is missing? What would you like to read and learn more about?

2. Which tools and methods did you try out and what are your experiences of working more visually? Does it change anything? What is the impact? What is still difficult? Share your experiences and stories with us!

3. Did you develop or discover any nice visual tool, template or game which proved to be useful for educational activities? Please share it with us!

4. What are the things you stumbled across and you would like to develop further? What are the things you still wonder about? What is confusing and/or not clear yet? Tell us!

5. If you come across some nice resources, books, articles, videos, etc., feel free to let us know and to share it with the Creative Learning Cookbook community online!

6. Also, check the Creative Learning Cookbook Tumblr at creativelearningcookbook.tumblr.com to have a glance at project pictures, videos, participants and, of course download your free copy of Visual Facilitation, Creaive Writing and Storytelling cookbooks.

7. And, of course, we will be more than happy to cooperate with you on your next training or seminar on Visual Facilitation. We have already tried 1, 2, 3 and 7-days training formats, but are open to any invitations to share ideas, skills or just write a new book. Drop us a line at creativelearningcookbook@gmail.com

How to Move On?