

Tool: 3D Mapping

Overview

3D Mapping is a tool we use to bring multiple dimensions and perspectives to understanding how an idea, initiative or system might evolve.

The power of the practice lies in working with your hands, rather than only thinking about your current situation and how it might evolve. Trusting the knowledge of your hands, you're less likely revert back to habitual ways of thinking about the present and imagining the future and more likely to discover new ways forward.

Process

Set Up

People & Place

3D Mapping can be done individually or with a team. When working collectively, team size ideally consists of 5-8 people. To respect social distancing guidelines, a team can do the 3D Mapping exercise online.

Time

Individually, the process will take about an hour. As a team, allow 2 hours for the process and debrief. You will also need time to obtain materials and for set-up.

Supplies

See 3D Mapping Workshop Materials (below)

Roles

- If you are doing this individually, skip ahead to the next section. If you are working as a team:
- One Facilitator/Scribe from the core team
- 5-8 people max per-group (including facilitator). Multiple groups of 5-8 can do 3D modeling at the same time.

Sequence

Step I: Reflect on Vision, Intention and Core Team

Before you begin mapping current reality, spend a few minutes to reflect on the following questions which build upon the first two prototyping principles. Record your reflections in a journal or on a piece of paper:

Crystallize vision and intention:

- What is wanting to be born in my life and work right now?
- What future stands in need of me to come into reality?
- What questions have energy for me now?
- What questions is my prototype seeking to explore?

Form a core team:

- Who could help me most to bring my intention into reality?
- Starting small and then broadening the circle, who could be my
 - Core team?
 - Core holding group?
 - Supporting network?

Step II: Map Current Reality

As a team (or individually), use the materials you've obtained to form a model that represents current reality and includes a seed of the emerging future possibility you want to be in service of. Each object in the model will represent a different element, quality (inner or outer) or stakeholder of the system. Let your hands create the model (don't overthink it). Create your model in about 10-15 minutes if working individually or in pairs.

For teams: if working online, designate one team member (who has a good camera setup) as the team's map holder. As the map holder places objects onto the table, they can discuss with the other team members what the object represents. Other team members can then take turns instructing the map holder to move objects into place. If working in person, team members can instead each name and add elements to the model. Either way, add and move elements one person at a time to get into a co-creative flow as the process unfolds. Include: inner and outer realities, internal and external stakeholders, and your own roles. The process should take 25-30 minutes if working as a team.

Step III: Reflection from Different Directions

Walk around the model and reflect on it from different directions. If you're working in a team, the facilitator/scribe reads aloud the following questions and captures key data points on a flipchart for the group. If you're working alone, keep this worksheet with you and read the following questions to yourself.

"0.8": The Seed Idea For My Prototype

- What do I love about this model?
- Where do I see the seeds of future possibility around which I could quickly create a prototype that allows me to explore the future by doing?
- How might others feel about this situation?

Platforms And Spaces (Soil)

- What are the essential relationships (connections or separations) between the parts and what feelings do these relationships generate?
- How can I / we create collaborative platforms and generative holding spaces that provide a fertile 'soil' for my 'seed' idea to grow and evolve?

Listen To The Universe

- What are the key messages I / we're hearing from the various stakeholders?
- What is the real need my prototype is aiming to address?
- What are the most important barriers or bottlenecks that, if removed, could help the current system to evolve?

Integrating Head, Heart And Hand

- Where do the different sources of power lie in this system?
- What do you sense as the highest future potential that is being called for in this situation?
- For the highest future potential to land, what is mine / ours to do?

Step IV: Sense and Co-Shape The Emerging Future

- Now change the model so that it better represents the emerging future you want to be in service of. If you're working with a team, do this together.
- Begin with a moment of intentional stillness. For a minute or two, just gaze at the model in light of this question: What highest future possibility is trying to manifest / is trying to be born?
- Then, after a couple of minutes, silently move into a process of modifying the model so that it better represents the future that you want to co-shape. Teams can do this collectively.

Step V: Harvest and Capture Key Insights

(For teams: a scribe can capture the essential points on the flipchart)

Reflect on the Key Differences between Model 1 and 2

- What are the most important structural differences between model 1 and 2?
- What key intervention shifted the old structure (model 1) into the new (model 2)?
- What did you do first? What was the first significant change that you undertook?

Step VI: Vision, Intention and Core Team

Reflect on how the modeling experience is further crystallizing or modifying your vision and intention, and also your definition of the core team. Refer back to what you wrote in your journal before beginning the 3D mapping practice. Update your entries as needed.

Crystallize vision and intention:

- What is wanting to be born in my life and work right now?
- What future stands in need of me /us to come into reality?
- What questions have energy for me now?
- How can I / we clarify and evolve the questions that my prototype seeks to explore?

Form a core team:

- Who could help me most to bring my intention into reality?
- Starting small and then broadening the circle, who could be my
 - Core team?
 - Core holding group?
 - Supporting network?

Step VII: Actions

What actions can I plan in the next 3-5 days to explore the future by doing? For ideas, refer back to what you did first (Step V).