TEAMSTORMING

GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS
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TEAMSTORMING

GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS

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INTRODUCTION
Welcome to the Participants Guide to TeamStorming! TeamStorming combines the creativity of brainstorming and team-building exercises with the rigour of a systems thinking approach.

There is no doubt as to the benefits of applying systems-thinking to problem solving in a way that can be adopted at the heart of a Systems Engineering approach. Such approaches, however, often necessitate a strong understanding of the theory and practice behind Systems Engineering and require knowledge of advanced modelling notations, such as the Systems Modelling Language (SysML). Senior members of staff often do not have the time or resources required to be trained in these techniques, yet have a strong need to reap the benefits of systems thinking and Systems Engineering.

There is, therefore, a cadre of senior people, ranging from senior managers right up to director level, who have a need to produce ideas that form a structured and rigorous output that can then be used as an input to Systems Engineering activities. On top of this, there are also many non-technical people out there who would find, quite understandably, anything with the word ‘engineering’ in it too intimidating.

The TeamStorming methodology enables this.

The target audience for TeamStorming is senior management, programme managers, CTOs and company directors, as well as any non-technical stakeholders. The exercises require no formal training nor knowledge of any specific notations, modelling languages nor complex tools.

The benefits of TeamStorming are as follows:

- Structured brainstorming focused on answering a specific question
- Enhanced team working and communication
- Encouragement of all participants to contribute, regardless of their role or background
- No need for complex notations, modelling languages or tools
- A structured output that is driven by a system model and that can be used by systems engineers

TeamStorming is not just another set of team-building exercises. The TeamStorming methodology has been developed using a best-practice Systems Engineering approach that is designed to provide useful and valuable outputs that can then be used as a formal input to your business’s Systems Engineering activities.
About this book
This document, the ‘TeamStorming Guide for Participants’ is intended as a reference document to be used by participants in a TeamStorming session. It presents an overview of TeamStorming in the section An Overview of TeamStorming, discusses the concepts associated with TeamStorming in the section The TeamStorming Session, discusses the question to address in the section The Question, gives details on how to play each game in the section The Games, provides some examples of output from the games in the section Examples and concludes with references in the section References and a mapping from concepts to games in the final section Appendix - TeamStorming Concepts to Game Mapping.
AN OVERVIEW OF TeamStorming

A typical TeamStorming workshop consists of a number of well-proven brainstorming exercises that allow a group of people (typically ranging from 12 to 40) to work in small teams in order to answer a specific key question that relates to their business. Such questions may include how best to develop the ideas for a new or improved product, how to improve the business, abstracting and defining needs for a new work initiative and how to implement new processes or methodologies into an organisation.

Unlike other approaches, TeamStorming is not just a series of disconnected exercises, but is underpinned by a systems model that enables the teams to produce a landscape that can be used as a formal input to Systems Engineering activities.

The exercises include defining factors (such as ideas, stakeholders, products, services, actions, etc.) that may be relevant to the question and then identifying key roles that hold an interest in the question. These factors are then grouped into affinities (common themes that link a number of factors), which are then voted upon by the participants in order to prioritise the most important affinities. The key roles are then explored by developing a number of empathy maps that put the delegates in the shoes of these roles, and the different perceptions of each are then explored.

Based on a combination of these affinities and empathy maps, each team develops a number of storyboards that define how the affinities may be achieved. Each group is then split into one of two broad categories: beavers, who work towards identifying positive actions that enable the storyboards, and monkeys, who work towards identifying negative actions (monkey wrenches) that disrupt or destroy the storyboards.

Each storyboard is then executed with rival teams of beavers and monkeys playing their respective positive and negative actions. New positive actions are generated aimed at pre-empting or mitigating against the negative actions. Based on these positive actions, future actions that need to be taken by the business are identified.

All of these outputs are then collated into the landscape that provides the way forwards for the business with regard to the considered question.

Each TeamStorming session will typically last around a full working day, however, it is also possible to run a subset of the games in a few hours, known as TeamStorming Lite. Variations to Games for TeamStorming Lite are described in the Game descriptions.
THE TeamSTORMING SESSION

TeamStorming involves a number of concepts and different ways of playing the various TeamStorming games. This section describes these concepts and discusses the three ways that the games are played.

TeamStorming Concepts

TeamStorming comprises a number of key concepts that form the basis for the TeamStorming exercises. These concepts are shown on the diagram below.

Figure 1 Key TeamStorming Concepts

The diagram in Figure 1 shows the concepts and terminology used the TeamStorming methodology. Each term is defined as follows:

- **Question.** The Question states the main purpose of the TeamStorming exercises in the form of a simple question that needs to be answered.
- **Factor.** A Factor describes a particular feature or attribute that relates to the original Question. Examples of Factors include, but are not limited to: stakeholder Roles, Ideas, Actions, Organisations, Things, etc. Factors may be represented as simple text statements or simple drawings.
- **Affinity.** An Affinity groups together one or more Factor into some sort of logical grouping. An Affinity cannot exist without its constituent Factors.
- **Car Park.** The Car Park is the repository for any Factors that do not naturally form part of any Affinity.
- **Empathy.** An Empathy represents the sensations that a single Role is experiencing. The Empathy defines these sensations whilst considering
the Question. An Empathy is further explored in relation to one or more Affinities through one or more Story Board.

- **Role.** A Role is the role of a person, organisation or thing that has an interest in the original Question. A Role may be originally identified as a special type of Factor.

- **Story Board.** A Story Board represents a specific scenario, a sequence of events or occurrences, that, when executed successfully, results in achieving some of the sensations defined in an Empathy for a particular Affinity.

- **Action.** An Action represents something that is done.

- **Solution Action.** A Solution Action is a special type of Action that represents a positive Action that has been identified that helps to achieve the successful execution of a Story Board.

- **Outstanding Action.** An Outstanding Action is a special type of Action that represents a positive Action that has been identified as a result of playing a Story Board and directly counteracts a Monkey Wrench.

- **Monkey Wrench.** A Monkey Wrench is a special type of Action that corrupts or disrupts a Story Board.

When referring to one of these concepts in this guide, the term will be capitalised. For example ‘Role’ refers directly to the concept defined in this diagram.

### Playing the TeamStorming Games

Each TeamStorming session is run as a series of Games according to a set of processes. All Participants take part in each Game, which may be run in a number of different ways:

- As an individual Participant, where Participants play the Game by themselves.
- As Teams, where Participants are divided into small Teams to play the Game.
- As a Group, where all Participants play the Game together.

Each Game has a serious objective but the Games are intended to be enjoyable exercises that encourage creativity and out-of-the-box thinking.
THE QUESTION

Central to TeamStorming is the Question that states the main purpose of the TeamStorming exercises in the form of a simple question that needs to be answered.

Defining the Question

The Question is set prior to the main TeamStorming Session and will drive everything that is done during the Session.

The Question should be as concise as possible and have a well-defined scope. Fundamental to defining a good Question that will result in good, solid outputs is the Golden Rule – ‘42’.

‘42’

Consider the age-old question:

‘What’s the answer to Life, the Universe and Everything?’  

Now consider the answer:

‘42’

If the Question is very broad with a wide scope, is highly speculative and tries to address too many issues, then be prepared for an equally-broad or abstract answer!

Example questions

There are really no limits on the type of questions that can be asked, but here is a list of some example question that may be useful for reference:

- How do we streamline our interaction with customers?
- What is the future for our new business capability?
- How will people use our new product?
- What are the basic requirements for our new project or system?
- How do we enter a specific new market?
- How do we run our new business successfully?
- How do we resolve a specific problem?
- How can we improve our company’s image?

As you can see, there is a very wide scope of potential questions, but try to make each as concise as possible.

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1 The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy”, Douglas Adams, 1979
THE GAMES

This section describes each of the TeamStorming Games according to the:

- **Goal.** What is intended to be achieved by playing the Game.
- **Approach.** The tasks that need to be carried out by the TeamStorming Participants.
- **Rules.** Any rules or constraints that need to be considered when playing the Game.
- **Artefacts.** What will be produced and consumed throughout the Game.
- **Resources.** Any resources that are needed in order to play the Game.
- **TeamStorming Lite variation.** How the Game changes when using TeamStorming Lite.

Each Game is facilitated by the Lead and Support Facilitators, who will guide the Participants and answer any queries.
X Factors

Goal:
To identify a number of factors that relate to the chosen question.

Approach:
The following Steps are executed during the Game:

- **Identify Factors.** Each Participant takes a set of cards and thinks of a number of Factors that relate to the chosen question, writing one factor per card.
- **Table Factors.** The Factor cards are then placed onto a table so that each is visible.

Examples of Factors include, but are not limited to:

- **Role.** The role of a person, organisation that has an interest in the Question.
- **Idea.** A notion that may relate to the original Question.
- **Action.** Something that needs to be done that relates to the original Question.
- **Organisation.** A business or business unit that has some interest in the original Question.
- **Thing.** Anything else that has an interest in the original Question.

Rules:
The following rules should be applied when performing this Game:

- **This Game is carried out as individual Participants, rather than as a Group.**
- **One Factor is written for each card.**
- **The Factor may be defined using text or drawn as a picture or a combination of both.**
- **Try to limit the number of Factors that you generate to six or under.** If you can only think of one or two, this is fine, do not feel obliged to generate six!
- **The Factors generated should come from your own mind – don’t worry about what other Participants are doing!**
- **Write the Factors using marker pen.**

Artefacts:
The following artefacts will be used during the Game:

- **Question,** used as an input

The following artefacts will be produced during the Game:

- **Completed Factor cards**

Resources:
The following resources are used during the Game:

- **Blank Factor cards**
- **1 marker pen per Participant**

TeamStorming Lite variation:
Limit the Factors to stakeholder Roles only.