

Vision map

What is a vision map?

Analogies from other areas of life help explore new perspectives. Visualization is useful for filling out ideas in an intuitive way. A map with all different aspects of topography turned out to be vast enough to record all different kinds of idea "landscapes". At the same time, the map provides helpful questions like: "Where in my project/vision/idea are nature reserves that must be preserved in any case?" or "Where in my project/vision/ideas are the wells, the natural resources, the points of interest, the ruins, the dangerous cliffs, etc."

It was developed by Jutta and Boris Goldammer from the Visionautik Akademie.

Experience level of the facilitator

self explanatory, no experience needed

Location requirements

enough space to spread all the maps.

Preparation (excluding materials)

Prepare or buy a map for each participant. For more information see the Materials section.

Prepare a table with creative materials.

Make sure there is enough space for the participants to spread out their maps. It is not necessary that they all work in the same room. It is nice to have some light boards to stick the maps to -- that gives the participants the flexibility to also work

outdoors or put them on an easel. Otherwise you can work on tables, on the floor or stick them to the walls. Find the right ground according to what's available in your workshop space and what your participants might need or want.

Getting used to analogies

If people are not familiar with working with analogies you can do a little introduction game in the circle (or in small groups if the group is very large) where the participants say something about themselves like "If I were a plant I would be a(name of the flower, e.g. a sunflower) because.....(e.g. as they turn always to the sun and I am a very optimistic person with the ability to see the light in a situation). Animals are also a suitable topic.

Give instructions

Hand out the maps and the legends and explain the task: They should draw/paint/create a map that visualizes their project/idea/vision. Introduce the idea of analogies with a few examples and make sure they have all understood the principle about working with geographic analogies. Some people might have a fear of painting. Encourage them to be amateurish, the idea is not to paint a beautiful picture. Maps are meant to give orientation, they don't need to be artistic. They can of course, but that's not important. Tell them the meaning of the legend is just a proposal. They should give the topographic items the meaning they find helpful.

Tell them to find a place where they want to work, set a time when you want to come together again and offer to be there to help and answer questions.

Give them time

You should leave at least two hours of time to work on it. Our participants often worked with the map during a development process over several days or weeks. Whenever something new occurred or changed, they added a new layer, a new scribble or picture. The map is work in progress.

Harvest

The method self-contains the harvesting. A nice version of group harvesting is to make a vernissage of the maps. Provide a festive ambience, prepare glasses with prosecco or juice and classical music, maybe there is even someone who can play a live piece on the guitar or piano. Introduce the vernissage with a few appreciative words about the purpose of the exhibition and the gifted artists.

Split the group in half. One half stands next to their map and explains what their map is about and answers questions. The other half stroll along the maps as in a vernissage, asking questions, enjoying watching, getting inspired, giving feedback and further ideas. After a while (20-30 minutes) swap the groups and the other half can show their maps.

Individual visions

If people work individually on figuring out about their vision/future project and don't know yet how to start, it is good to scan what is really important in that whole field.

Viewpoints in a group

This is a nice way to individually explore viewpoints in a group where there has been a lot of thinking and talking. It adds space to the process, slows down the thinking mind and is a good grounding exercise. Also, some people can think and develop more easily in a non-verbal way and with individual space. It helps integrate ideas from people who are not so good at expressing their ideas or who are more introverted.

Use your surroundings

If you are in an interesting diverse landscape, let's say a seminar house with a lake and woods, hills, etc. around, you can invite your participants to sketch the real surroundings and go to the places in nature and give them the meaning for their project/idea/vision. It can be very powerful to anchor the idea in the physical surrounding and create spaces with "vision memories" just as the Aboriginal people from Australia connect ideas, knowledge and memories to a certain physical space to help the mind remember.

MATERIALS

- **Maps:** Print the (soon) attached template on A0 paper and a cover template on A3 cardboard. Fold and glue together. Make sure to do it together with someone and have a good conversation aside or to listen to a good audiobook; it takes a while to prepare them. But it is worth it, people LOVE to have their own map with their name on it and they value the love and care you put into it. If you have a lot of time with the participants you can also let them craft their own map.

- **The minimalist way** is to give each person a flipchart paper, but it is not the same.
- **A printed list of legend symbols** and their meaning to inspire each participant. You'll find a legend template attached soon.
- **Creative Materials:** Pencils, pens, colors, brushes, old magazines, stuff to glue on (feathers, leaves, collected flat items, glitter stuff, fabrics etc.), scissors and glue. It is great to have a huge collection that supports the participants to think their ideas in terms of abundance.
- **Tables** to put the map on and/or large, light boards (we like to use large canvases, they are light and robust) and/or easels.

Preparation Time

Create materials quick and dirty

20 min

Create materials love and care

4 hours