

NAS Toolkit

A series of industry-leading tools and frameworks to help coaches and clients move their work forward intentionally, equitably, and effectively.

NAS

Supported in part by
an award from:
**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
for the ARTS**
arts.gov

Table of Contents

- 1. Ladder of Inference**
- 2. Know / Don't Know**
- 3. Iceberg Identity**
- 4. WOOP Framework**
- 5. Fierce Conversations**
- 6. Conductor's Intent**
- 7. Social Styles Survey**
- 8. Check Your Baggage**
- 9. Theory of Change**
- 10. Empathy Map**
- 11. Advocacy vs. Inquiry**
- 12. Situational Leadership Model**

Ladder of Inference



A visual tool to expose and explore human reasoning



TIME FRAME

15 minutes, with optional reading before or during the session



COMPLEXITY

Medium



AUDIENCE

Individuals, Teams, and Communities



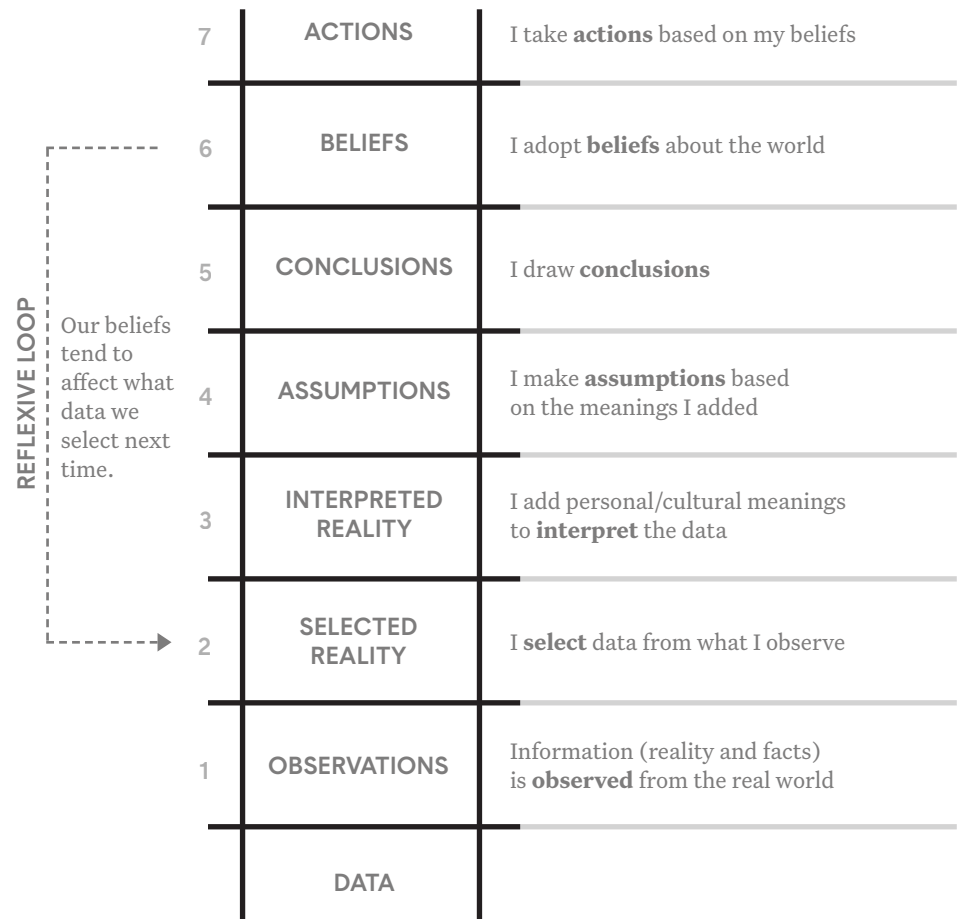
COST

Free



BEST USED

When a person or team is getting derailed by single or collective rushes to judgement or battles over what they think they “know”. Especially good during times of greater complexity and/or ambiguity. It can help a person come to a clearer, better decision with conscious thought of the data and interpretations.

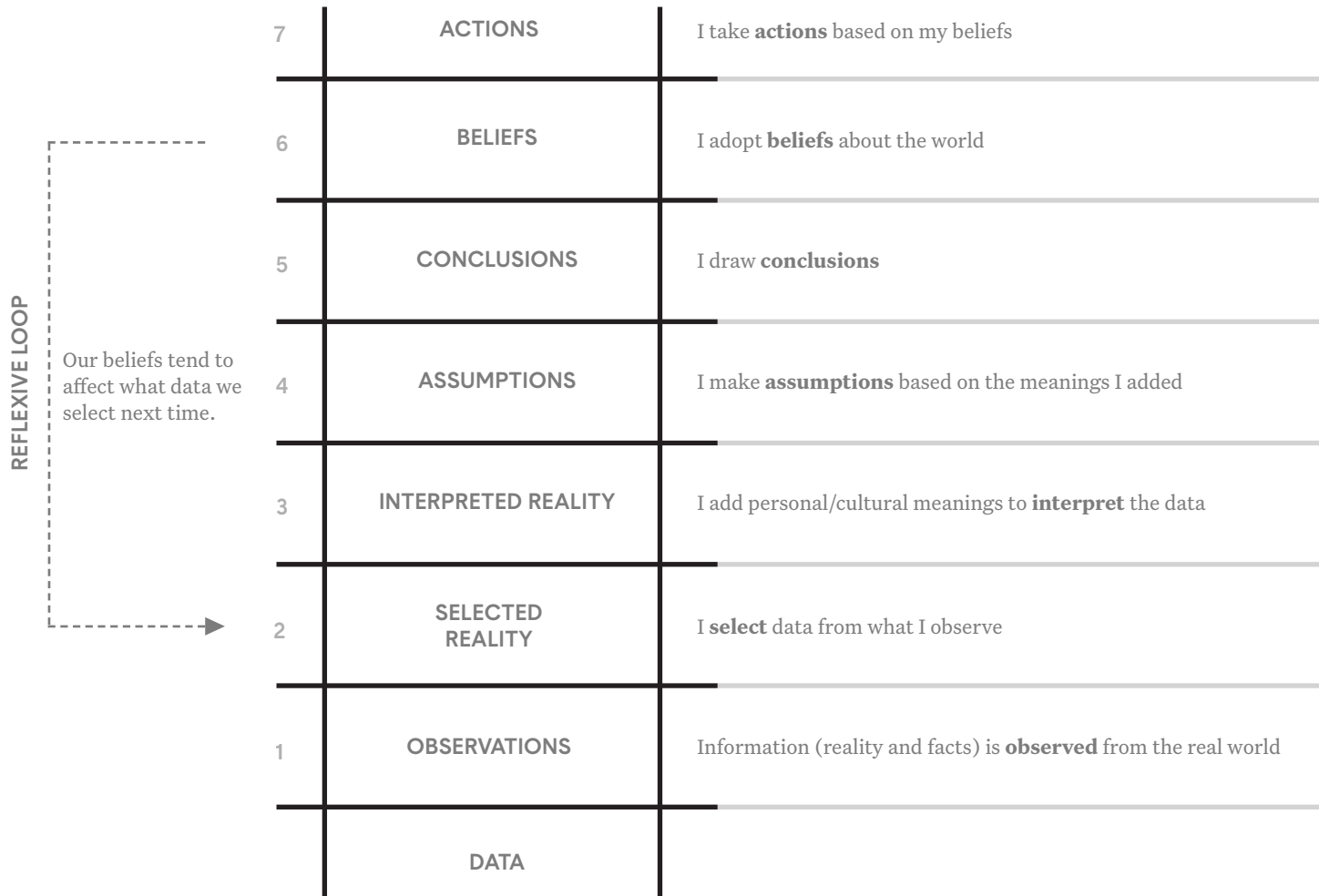


ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



Harvard Extension School Blog Post:
“Solving the Problem with Problem-Solving Meetings”

The ladder of inference was initially developed by the late Chris Argyris, former professor at Harvard Business School, and elaborated on in numerous publications including *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization* (Peter Senge, Richard Ross, Bryan Smith, Charlotte Roberts, Art Kleiner).



Ladder of Inference

Know / Don't Know



A grid to reveal both our known and unknown unknowns.



TIME FRAME

About 15 minutes, optionally run through an example



COMPLEXITY

Low to Medium (easy to explain, tougher to apply)



AUDIENCE

Individuals, Teams



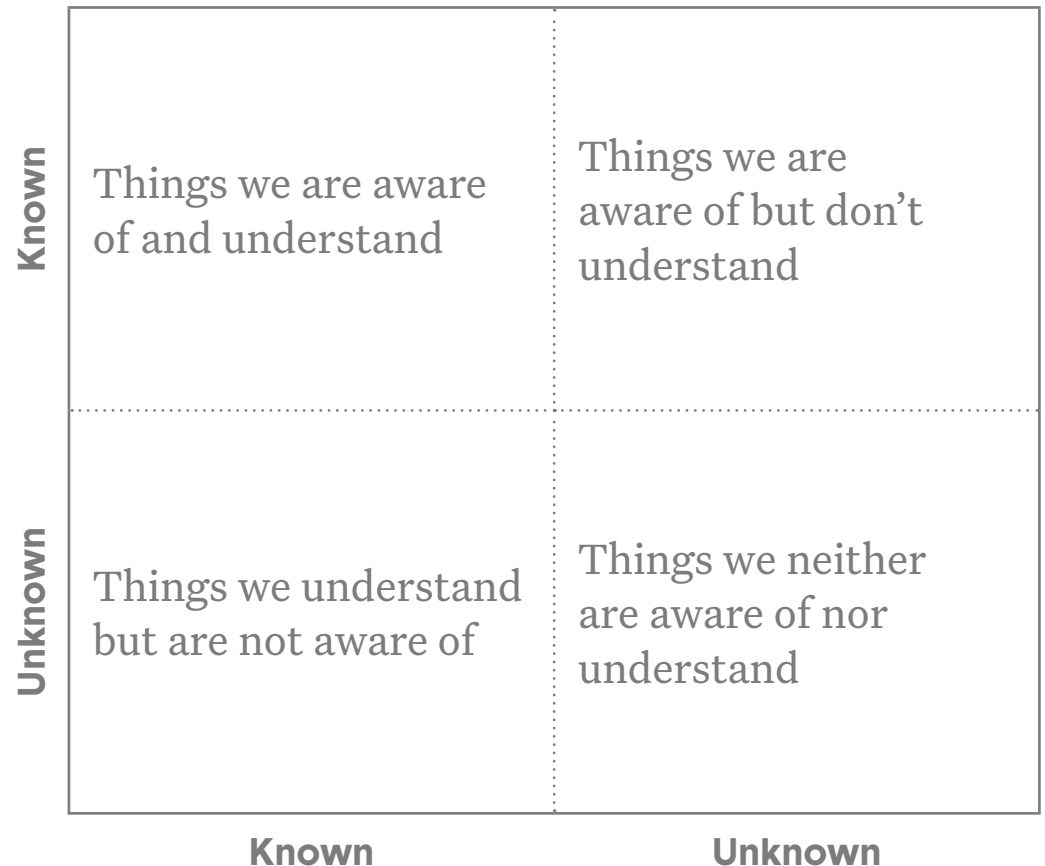
COST

Free



BEST USED

For decision making and to help think through risk. The Unknown/Unknown is what can kill a project, sink a ship, hit you over the back of the head because you don't see something coming.



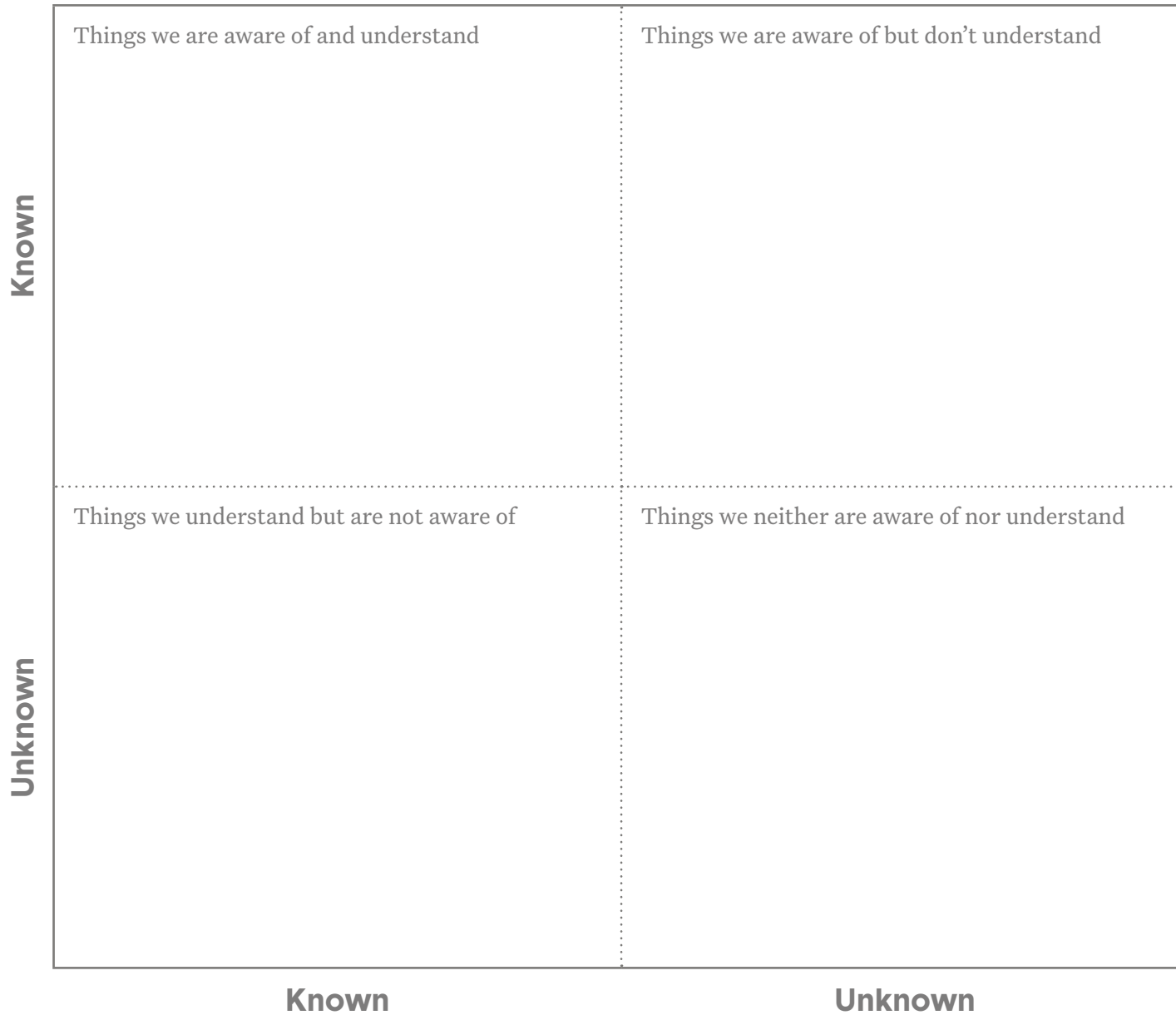
ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



UX Collective Medium Article:

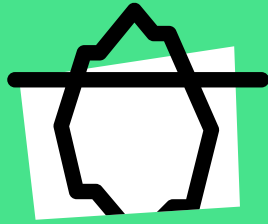
“The knowns and unknowns framework for design thinking”

Based on Johari Window, this matrix is associated with a popular phrase coined by Donald Rumsfeld: “There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don't know we don't know.” [Additional tool reference available here.](#)



Know / Don't Know

Iceberg Identity



A tool to help explore the complexities of our identity and how we might view others.



TIME FRAME

5 min. to explain,
2-5 min. to complete,
optional debrief.



COMPLEXITY

Low



AUDIENCE

Individuals, Teams;
Works across cultures
and ages



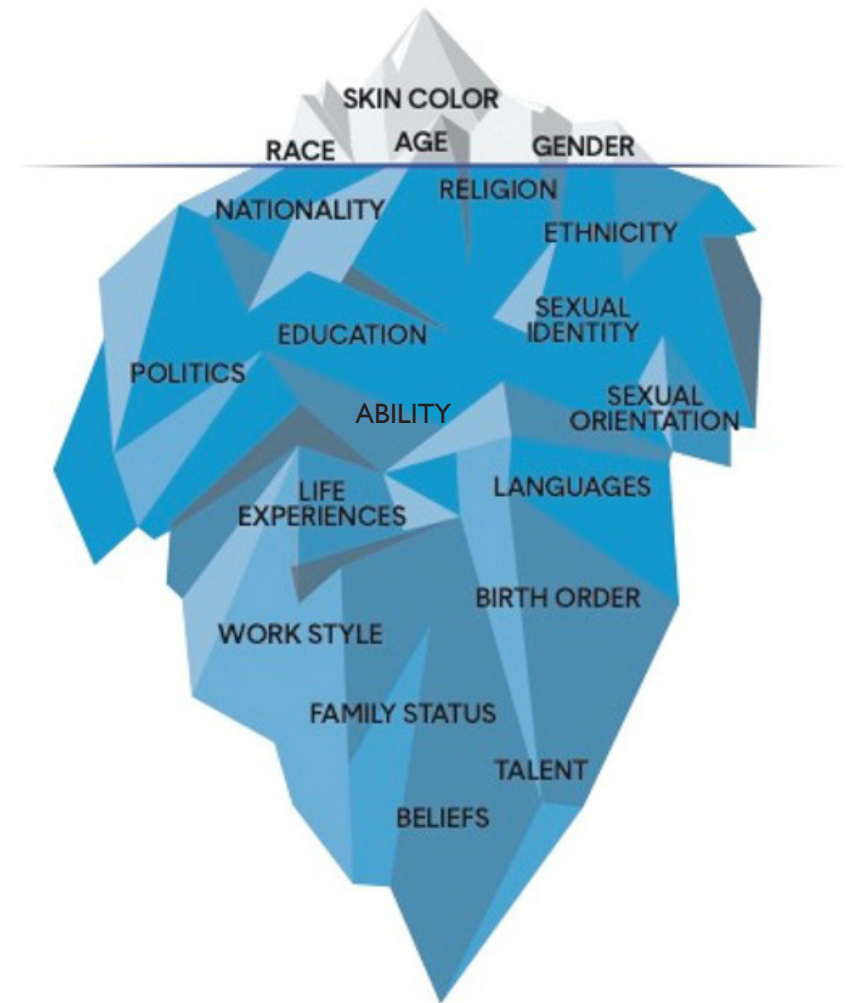
COST

Free



BEST USED

With a group that is new to each other; with someone who is exploring more of who s/he/they are beyond the classic professional characteristics of job title, training, etc.

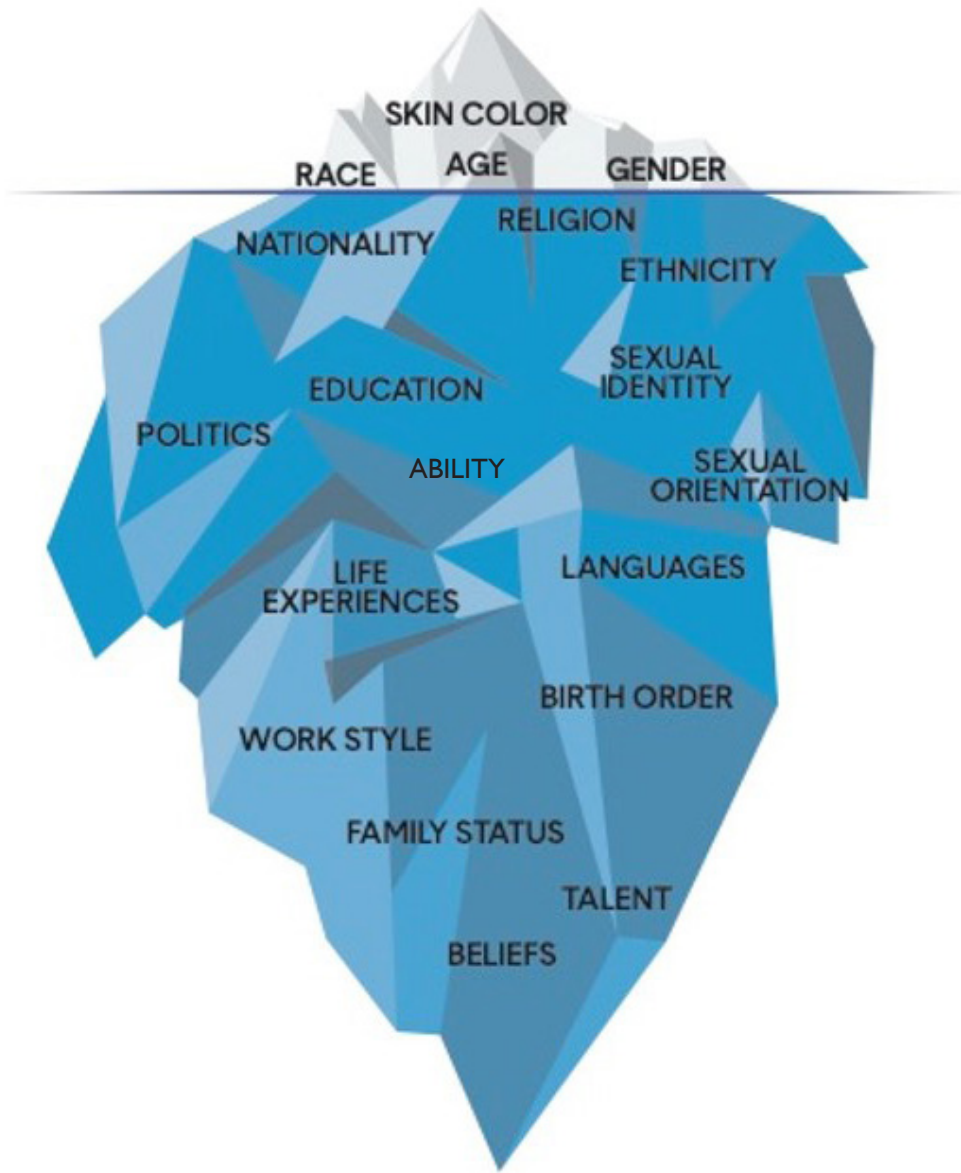


ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



The Great Courses Daily Website:
“The Iceberg- Visible and Hidden Identity”

Our own identity is like an iceberg. And like an iceberg only a small percentage is visible “above the waterline”. This means that most of the iceberg is invisible unless we plunge below the surface of the water. A surface-level look alone doesn’t allow us to see the depth and breadth of the full iceberg, of the person. This tool helps us 1) think through the complexity and richness of our identities, and 2) question our assumptions of how we see others.



Iceberg Identity

WOOP Framework



A tool that helps you hone in on goals, identify obstacles, and create a resilient plan.

TIME FRAME
3-20 minutes,
depending on
reflection time

COMPLEXITY
Low

AUDIENCE
Individuals, Teams

COST
Free

BEST USED
Anytime you're taking on something challenging
or when you're helping someone else think through
goal attainment

1. Wish

Think about the next four weeks (or another timeframe that is appropriate). What is the one dearest wish you would like to fulfill? Pick a wish that feels challenging to you but that you can reasonably fulfill within the timeframe you specified.

Make a note of your wish in 3-6 words:

- Is this wish dear to you?
- Do you think you can achieve it?
- Is it challenging for you?
- Did you summarize it in 3-6 words?

3. Obstacle

What is it within you that holds you back from fulfilling your wish? What in you might stop you? It might be an emotion, an irrational belief, or a bad habit. Think more deeply - what is it really? Take a moment and fully imagine your main inner obstacle.

Make a note of your main inner obstacle in 3-6 words:

- Is your obstacle an inner obstacle?
- Did you summarize it in 3-6 words?
- Did you take enough time to imagine this obstacle? If not, close your eyes and imagine it now.

2. Outcome

What would be the best thing, the best outcome about fulfilling your wish? How would fulfilling your wish make you feel? Take a moment and imagine this best outcome as fully as you can. Sketch it or take notes on another sheet of paper, if needed.

Make a note of your best outcome in 3-6 words:

- Is it a truly fulfilling outcome?
- Did you summarize it in 3-6 words?
- Did you take enough time to imagine this best outcome? If not, close your eyes and imagine it now.

4. Plan

What can you do to overcome your obstacle? Identify one effective action you can take or one effective thought you can think to overcome your obstacle.

Make a note your action or thought in 3-6 words:

Last step! Fill in the blanks below:

If

then I will

- Did you find an effective action to overcome your obstacle?
- Did you summarize it in 3-6 words?
- Did you visualize the if-then statement happening?

1. Wish

Think about the next four weeks (or another timeframe that is appropriate). What is the one dearest wish you would like to fulfill? Pick a wish that feels challenging to you but that you can reasonably fulfill within the timeframe you specified.

Make a note of your wish in a few words:

- Is this wish dear to you?
- Do you think you can achieve it?
- Is it challenging for you?

3. Obstacle

What is it within you that holds you back from fulfilling your wish? What in you might stop you? It might be an emotion, an irrational belief, or a bad habit. Think more deeply - what is it really? Take a moment and fully imagine your main inner obstacle.

Make a note of your main inner obstacle in a few words:

- Is your obstacle an inner obstacle?
- Did you summarize it in 3-6 words?
- Did you take time to imagine this obstacle? If not, close your eyes and imagine it now.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WOOP was developed by Gabriele Oettingen and Peter Gollwitzer. [Learn more about the science behind the tool at woopmylife.org](http://woopmylife.org).

2. Outcome

What would be the best thing, the best outcome about fulfilling your wish? How would fulfilling your wish make you feel? Take a moment and imagine this best outcome as fully as you can. Sketch it or take notes on another sheet of paper, if needed.

Make a note of your best outcome in a few words:

- Is it a truly fulfilling outcome?
- Did you summarize it in 3-6 words?
- Did you take time to imagine this best outcome? If not, close your eyes and imagine it now.

4. Plan

What can you do to overcome your obstacle? Identify one effective action you can take or one effective thought you can think to overcome your obstacle.

Make a note your action or thought in a few words:

Last step! Fill in the blanks below:

If

then I will

- Did you find an effective action to overcome your obstacle?
- Did you summarize it in 3-6 words?
- Did you visualize the if-then statement happening?



Fierce Conversations



A framework for improving effectiveness and clarity in communication – especially when it comes to difficult conversations

TIME FRAME
20 minutes for this particular framework

COMPLEXITY
Low

AUDIENCE
Individuals, Teams

COST
Check website for book and course costs

BEST USED
To help think through how you want to approach a difficult conversation, or as a team learning experience to improve communication throughout the organization.

PREPARATION

Map out conversations in advance

Who	Topic / Issue:	Ideal Outcome:

COMMITMENTS

As the initiator of the conversation...

1. Practice courage when managing conflict
2. Be present and listen
3. Tackle the toughest challenges
4. Understand your own emotions relative to the situation
5. Make space for silence
6. Choose a neutral and safe environment

DURING THE CONVERSATION

Tips to have a fierce conversation:

1. Name the Issue
2. Give examples of the behavior in question
3. Describe how you feel about the situation
4. Explain what is at stake for you, the other person, the organization.
5. Identify how you (may) have contributed to the problem at hand
6. Indicate your wish to resolve the problem with the other person
7. Invite the other person to respond
8. Actively listen, paraphrase, dig for full understanding = Empathy statement.
9. What have we learned? What else wishes to be said? How can we move forward from here?
10. Review the agreement and identify a method by which you can hold each other accountable for the success of the resolution.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

Susan Scott's TEDx Talk: "The Case for Radical Transparency" 

COMPLEMENTARY TOOL

Ontario's Ministry of Education: Tip Sheet for Courageous Conversations 

BOOK

Harvard Negotiation Project's *Difficult Conversations* Book 

People shy away from having frank, candid conversations which can negatively affect engagement, morale, and work outcomes. Susan Scott has created a number of resources to navigate these conversations. [Learn more about Susan Scott's work and book at fierceinc.com.](https://fierceinc.com)

PREPARATION

Map out conversations in advance

Who	Topic / Issue:	Ideal Outcome:

COMMITMENTS

As the initiator of the conversation...

1. Practice courage when managing conflict
2. Be present and listen
3. Tackle the toughest challenges
4. Understand your own emotions relative to the situation
5. Make space for silence
6. Choose a neutral and safe environment

DURING THE CONVERSATION

Tips to have a fierce conversation:

1. Name the Issue
2. Give examples of the behavior in question
3. Describe how you feel about the situation
4. Explain what is at stake for you, the other person, the organization.
5. Identify how you (may) have contributed to the problem at hand
6. Indicate your wish to resolve the problem with the other person
7. Invite the other person to respond
8. Actively listen, paraphrase, dig for full understanding = Empathy statement.
9. What have we learned? What else wishes to be said? How can we move forward from here?
10. Review the agreement and identify a method by which you can hold each other accountable for the success of the resolution.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This framework was developed by Susan Scott. [Learn more about Susan Scott's work and book at fierceinc.com.](https://fierceinc.com)



Fierce Conversations




Conductor's Intent



A tool to empower initiative, improvisation, and adaptation by providing guidance of what a successful conclusion looks like.


This tool is originally referred to as “Commander’s Intent” and comes from the military. NAS often refers to it as the “conductor’s intent” to bring it more into our sector.

 **TIME FRAME**
30 minutes

 **COMPLEXITY**
Low

 **AUDIENCE**
Teams, Community

 **COST**
Free

 **BEST USED**
In team projects or external collaboration to help communicate the path forward. Can be especially useful in uncertain times or when working on complex, iterative projects.

Create your Conductor’s Intent in this box. Every project should have a Conductor’s Intent. The purpose is to help set a “north star” that helps team members make project choices without directly checking in with their leader.

Example: A yoga studio once gave a Conductor’s Intent to all staff that they were to satisfy the needs of customers, if the cost was under \$20. That gave agency to the staff members and supported their confidence in solving problems when a manager was not there to consult.

Guiding Questions: What is the most important goal for team members to base their decisions on? Are there any constraints that need to be noted?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



Harvard Business Review Article:
“Manage Uncertainty with Commander’s Intent”

A little more about the origin of this frame: the best crafted plans are only that until they are put into motion. In war, a great deal was unpredictable – from the weather to how information was gathered, transmitted and interpreted, to the ways in which each person would handle the stress of any given situation. To move from plan to effective execution, a simpler frame was created setting forth a clear objective for the “battle” along with left and right boundaries (what was acceptable or not) – in this way, people could continue to accumulate information as they moved through uncertainty and manage the circumstances they faced in real time with more adaptability - still accomplishing what was needed.

“The role of Commander’s Intent is to empower team members and guide their initiative and improvisation as they adapt the plan to the changed battlefield environment. Commander’s Intent empowers initiative, improvisation, and adaptation by providing guidance of what a successful conclusion looks like” (Harvard Business Review, Nov. 2010). The term comes from the military, and NAS often refers to it as the “conductor’s intent” to bring it more into our sector.

Create your Conductor's Intent in this box. Every project should have a Conductor's Intent. The purpose is to help set a "north star" that helps team members make project choices without directly checking in with their leader.

Example: A yoga studio once gave a Conductor's Intent to all staff that they were to satisfy the needs of customers, if the cost was under \$20. That gave agency to the staff members and supported their confidence in solving problems when a manager was not there to consult.

Guiding Questions: What is the most important goal for team members to base their decisions on? Are there any constraints that need to be noted?



Conductor's Intent

Social Styles Survey



A diagnostic instrument to better understand preferred styles of communicating, acting, thinking and making decisions



TIME FRAME

20 minutes to complete survey; 1 hour to discuss and debrief



COMPLEXITY

Low



AUDIENCE

Teams, Community



COST

TBD



BEST USED

Within teams or organizations. Can be used individually but has the most impact when it can be discussed within a group

Analytical

THOUGHTFUL, RESERVED & SLOW-PACED

People with an Analytical Style are typically described by others as quiet, logical and sometimes reserved or cautious. They tend to appear distant from others and may not communicate unless there is a specific need to do so.

Driving

CONTROLLING, DECISIVE & FAST-PACED

People with a Driving Style are seen by others as direct, active, forceful and determined. They initiate social interaction and they focus their efforts and the efforts of others on the goals and objectives they wish to get accomplished.

CONTROLS →

← ASKS

TELLS →

Amiable

FRIENDLY, SUPPORTIVE & RELATIONSHIP-DRIVEN

People with an Amiable Style openly display their feelings to others. They appear less demanding and generally more agreeable than others. They are interested in achieving a rapport with others who often describe them as informal, casual and easy going.

Expressive

ENTHUSIASTIC & EMOTIONAL

People with an Expressive Style tend to be more willing to make their feelings known to others. They can appear to react impulsively and openly show both positive and negative feelings. They are typically described by others as personable, talkative and sometimes opinionated.

← EMOTIONS

COMMUNICATION STYLE SELF-ASSESSMENT



Resource by Vantage Point (Vancouver, BC)
Self-Evaluation PDF

Social Styles Survey is a diagnostic instrument that helps people better understand their preferred style of communicating, acting, thinking and making decisions. It's a fun and easy tool for opening up conversations on your team about how people have different preferences for giving and receiving information. If not fully understood, these differences may block understanding.

[Learn more about the Social Style Model here.](#)

Analytical

THOUGHTFUL, RESERVED & SLOW-PACED

People with an Analytical Style are typically described by others as quiet, logical and sometimes reserved or cautious. They tend to appear distant from others and may not communicate unless there is a specific need to do so.

CONTROLS →

Driving

CONTROLLING, DECISIVE & FAST-PACED

People with a Driving Style are seen by others as direct, active, forceful and determined. They initiate social interaction and they focus their efforts and the efforts of others on the goals and objectives they wish to get accomplished.

← ASKS

TELLS →

Amiable

FRIENDLY, SUPPORTIVE
& RELATIONSHIP-DRIVEN

People with an Amiable Style openly display their feelings to others. They appear less demanding and generally more agreeable than others. They are interested in achieving a rapport with others who often describe them as informal, casual and easy going.

← EMOTIONS

Expressive

ENTHUSIASTIC & EMOTIONAL

People with an Expressive Style tend to be more willing to make their feelings known to others. They can appear to react impulsively and openly show both positive and negative feelings. They are typically described by others as personable, talkative and sometimes opinionated.



Social Styles Survey

Check Your Baggage



This tool challenges leaders to take a closer look at what they think they know about a community.

TIME FRAME
20-60+ minutes,
depending on data-
gathering time

COMPLEXITY
Low

AUDIENCE
Individuals, Teams,
Community

COST
Free

BEST USED
When working with a new group or community or to shake up thinking and lead to new understanding in a longstanding partnership. The tool essentially asks us to “consider the source” to sort fact from fiction, assumption or rumor.

PART 1

Confronting and Accounting for Preconceived Notions

First, briefly describe the beneficiary population or community.

Second, list out all the assertions you may have about this community. Then work through columns 2-4 for each assertion.

1. Assertion: pre-conceived notion that you have about a community	2. Judgment: factual and verified; verifiable but not actually known; opinion; prediction; interpretation...	3. Source: published research; media; a witness; rumor; personal experience...	4. How does it shape your work?

PART 2

Identifying a gap of understanding about a community.

Of the items you identified above, what is an assumption that you have been making about this community that is not verified? Compose a statement or a question that identifies a critical gap in your understanding of this community.

PART 3

Bridging the gap of understanding about a community.

Now that you know what you don't know, create a reference list of all the resources that could be useful in answering the question you wrote in Part 2, that would help you gain a deeper understanding of this community. Sources may include studies of the community such as environmental impact reports, feasibility studies for key developments, academic research; studies of demographic characteristics and political behaviors; planning documents, documents that present an image of the community to the public; or data from research that you plan to conduct yourself. If there is information that you need and can not find, feel free to bullet those items too.

This framework was developed by Maria Rosario Jackson and is taught in the [Executive Program in Arts and Culture Strategy](#) program.

PART 1

Confronting and Accounting for Preconceived Notions

First, briefly describe the beneficiary population or community.

Second, list out all the assertions you may have about this community. Then work through columns 2-4 for each assertion.

1. Assertion: pre-conceived notion that you have about a community	2. Judgment: factual and verified; verifiable but not actually known; opinion; prediction; interpretation...	3. Source: published research; media; a witness; rumor; personal experience...	4. How does it shape your work?

PART 2

Identifying a gap of understanding about a community.

Of the items you identified above, what is an assumption that you have been making about this community that is not verified? Compose a statement or a question that identifies a critical gap in your understanding of this community.

PART 3

Bridging the gap of understanding about a community.

Now that you know what you don't know, create a reference list of all the resources that could be useful in answering the question you wrote in Part 2, that would help you gain a deeper understanding of this community. Sources may include studies of the community such as environmental impact reports, feasibility studies for key developments, academic research; studies of demographic characteristics and political behaviors; planning documents, documents that present an image of the community to the public; or data from research that you plan to conduct yourself. If there is information that you need and can not find, feel free to bullet those items too.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

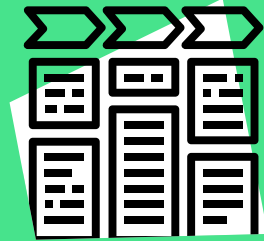
This framework was developed by Maria Rosario Jackson and is taught in the [Executive Program in Arts and Culture Strategy](#) program.



Check Your Baggage



Theory of Change



A tool essential for program planning; it provides a process of thinking about how and why change will happen



TIME FRAME

About 60 minutes for the first draft; iterate over time



COMPLEXITY

Medium



AUDIENCE

Teams, Community



COST

Free



BEST USED

Best used for program planning when designing a new program or expanding an existing program

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
What resources and assets do we need to do our work?	What are the key activities we need to carry out to deliver value to our key beneficiaries?	What observable, quantifiable, measurable indicators demonstrate that we are faithfully doing our activities, and give some indication that those activities immediately helped someone?	If these outputs happen in sufficient quantity, how will key features of peoples' lives improve?	How will the world look different if these outcomes come to pass?

Additional equity-focus questions and concepts to consider prior to drafting a theory of change:

- 1. Problem / Opportunity Statement:** What problem will be addressed, or opportunity will be seized through your work/organization?
- 2. Priority Population:** Think about the priority population and/or community in which your work takes place. Describe the priority population and/or community.
- 3. Equity Context:** Describe the lived experience of the priority population from a historical, structural, and/or institutional equity context.
- 4. Results:** What does your art/organization make possible for the priority population and/or community?
- 5. Power & Demand:** What role did the priority population and/or community have in determining the results you wish to achieve? How do you know that wish for you/your organization to deliver it?
- 6. Assumptions:** Think at a high level about what you will create and deliver to the priority population and/or community. What assumptions are you/your organization making to assure the likelihood of success?
- 7. Levers of Key Activities:** What levers are involved in creating results with the priority population and/or community?
- 8. Resources & Support:** What support or resources (also known as inputs) are needed for you/your organization to be effective in delivery results?

This framework is taught in the [Executive Program in Arts and Culture Strategy](#) program. The equity-focused questions are developed by Sidney Hargro. You can also learn more about the Theory of Change framework at theoryofchange.org.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
What resources and assets do we need to do our work?	What are the key activities we need to carry out to deliver value to our key beneficiaries?	What observable, quantifiable, measurable indicators demonstrate that we are faithfully doing our activities, and give some indication that those activities immediately helped someone?	If these outputs happen in sufficient quantity, how will key features of peoples' lives improve?	How will the world look different if these outcomes come to pass?

Additional equity-focus questions and concepts to consider prior to drafting a theory of change:

- 1. Problem / Opportunity Statement:** What problem will be addressed, or opportunity will be seized through your work/organization?
- 2. Priority Population:** Think about the priority population and/or community in which your work takes place. Describe the priority population and/or community.
- 3. Equity Context:** Describe the lived experience of the priority population from a historical, structural, and/or institutional equity context.
- 4. Results:** What does your art/organization make possible for the priority population and/or community?
- 5. Power & Demand:** What role did the priority population and/or community have in determining the results you wish to achieve? How do you know that wish for you/your organization to deliver it?
- 6. Assumptions:** Think at a high level about what you will create and deliver to the priority population and/or community. What assumptions are you/your organization making to assure the likelihood of success?
- 7. Levers of Key Activities:** What levers are involved in creating results with the priority population and/or community?
- 8. Resources & Support:** What support or resources (also known as inputs) are needed for you/your organization to be effective in delivery results?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

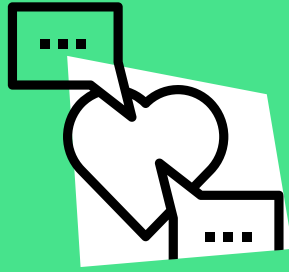
This framework is taught in the [Executive Program in Arts and Culture Strategy](#) program. The equity-focused questions are developed by Sidney Hargro. You can also learn more about the Theory of Change framework at theoryofchange.org.



Theory of Change



Empathy Map



A collaborative visualization used to articulate what we know about a particular type of user

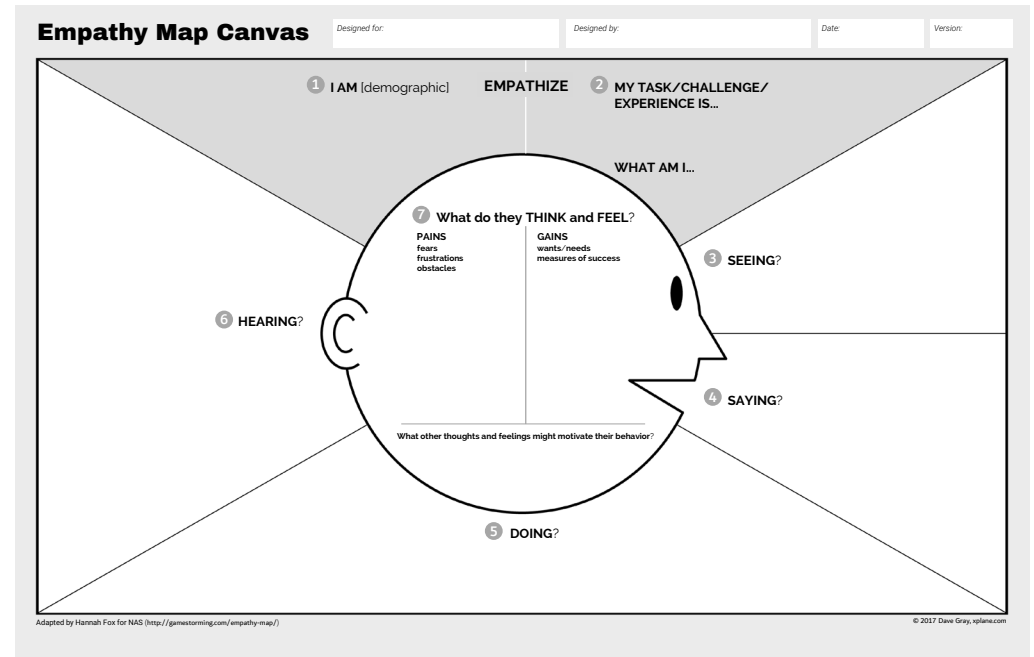
TIME FRAME
90 minutes - 2 hours

COMPLEXITY
Medium

AUDIENCE
Collaboratively with team or community

COST
Free

BEST USED
Best used for program design specifically when using a human-centered design thinking approach. It can also be used for continued program planning and implementation. The tool externalizes knowledge about users in order to 1) create a shared understanding of user needs, and 2) aid in decision making. It is best done collaboratively with a team or community, but can be done individually as well.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



UX Booth Article:
“Empathy Mapping: A Guide to Getting Inside a User’s Head”

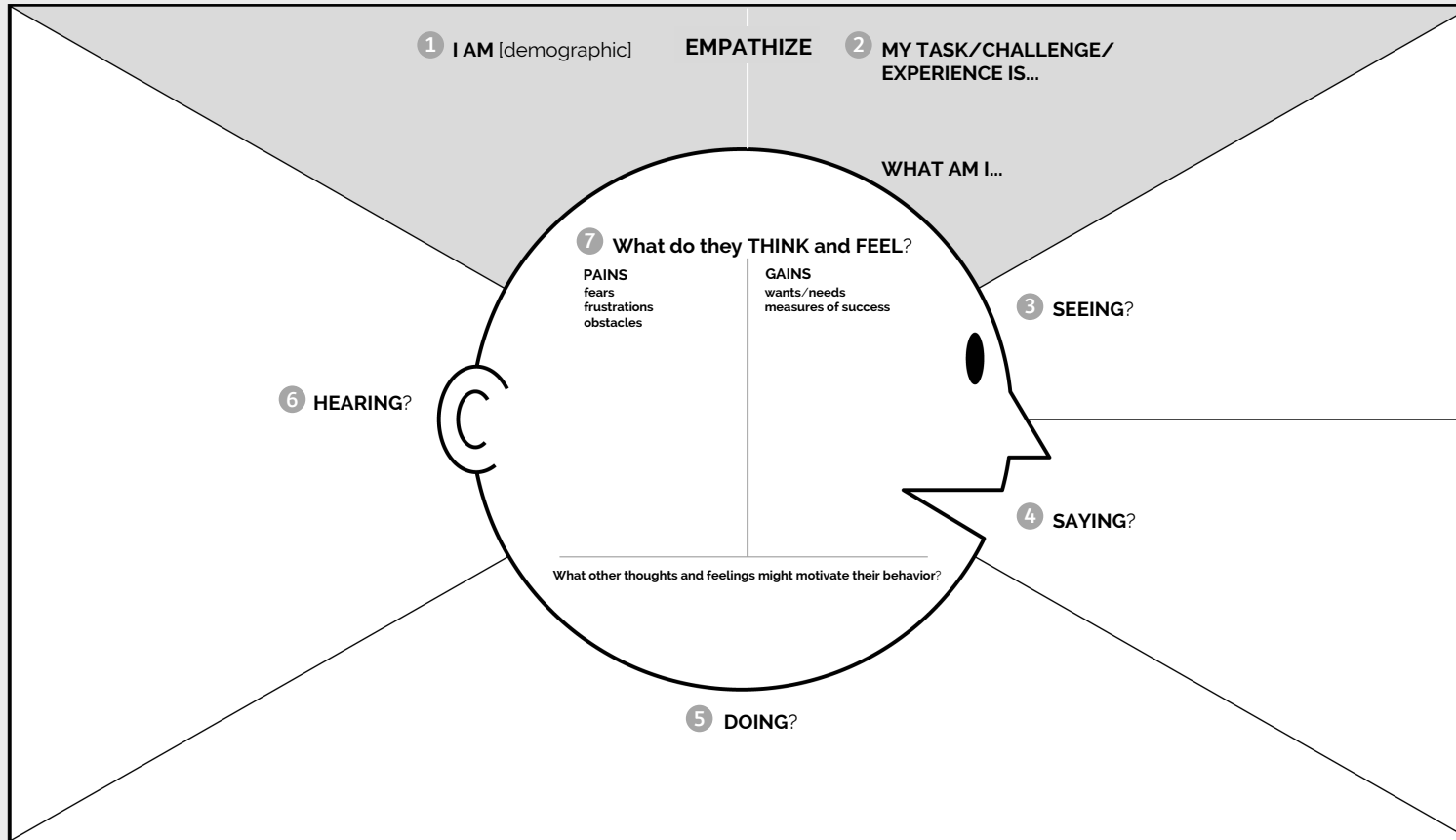
Empathy Map Canvas

Designed for:

Designed by:

Date:

Version:

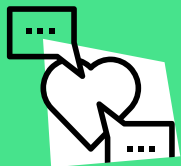


Adapted by Hannah Fox for NAS (<http://gamestorming.com/empathy-map/>)

© 2017 Dave Gray, xplane.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

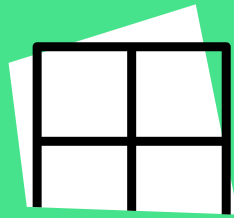
This framework was originally developed by David Gray. You can access the [original framework here](#).



Empathy Map




Advocacy vs. Inquiry




A tool to guide conversations towards common goals, strengths, alignments, mutual benefits and open communication

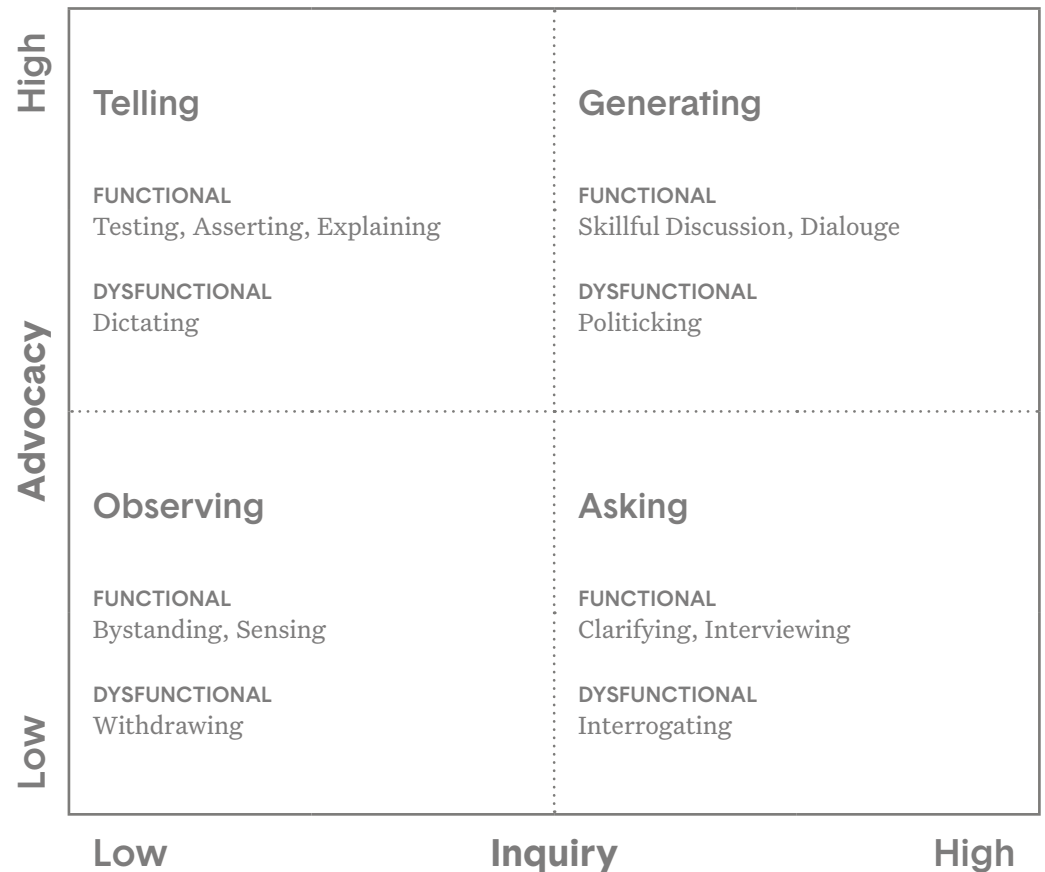
 **TIME FRAME**
Variable

 **COMPLEXITY**
Medium

 **AUDIENCE**
In a dyad or group conversation

 **COST**
Free

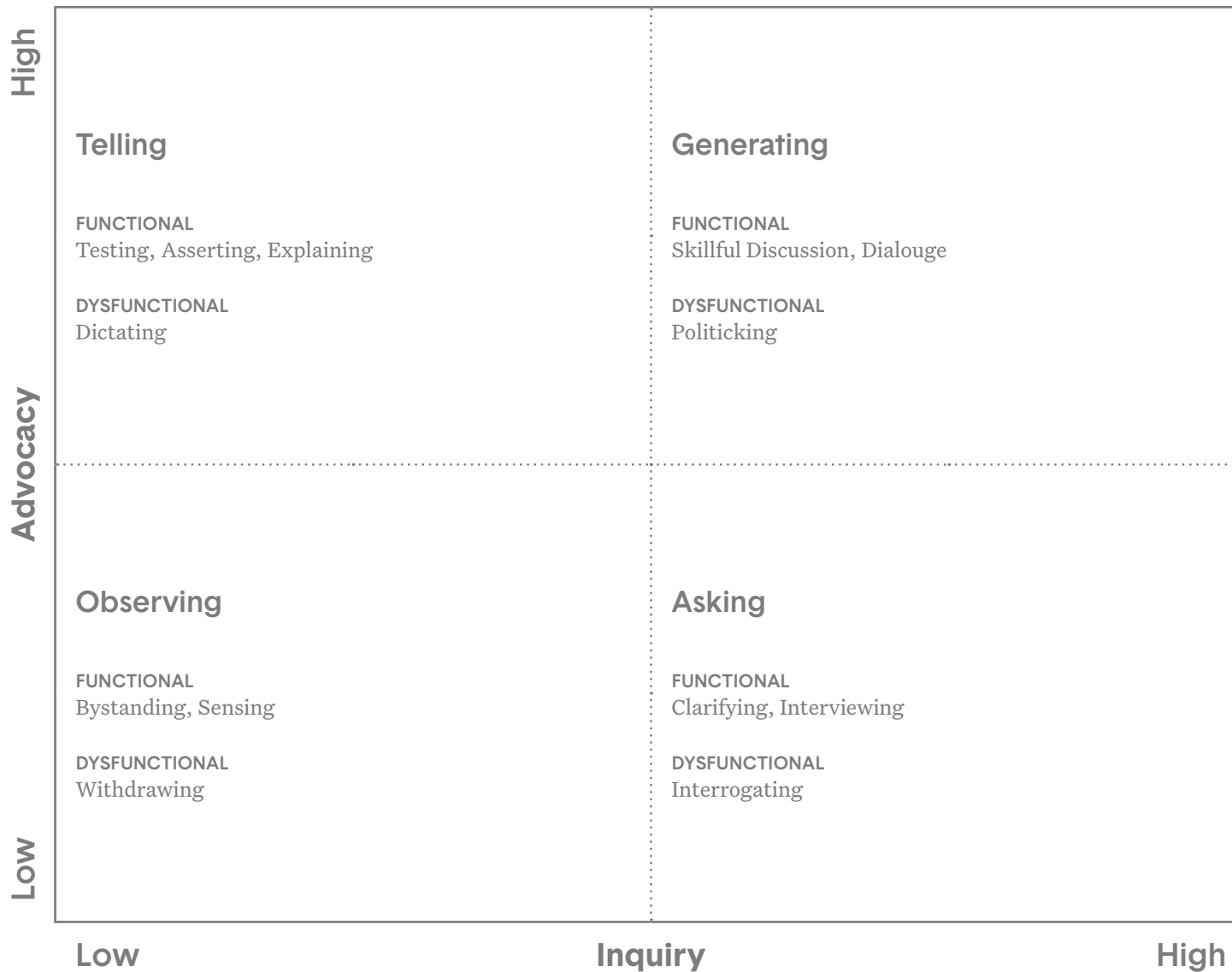
 **BEST USED**
Best used when needing to collaborate or when having a difficult conversation. The tool combines both advocacy – how ideas are presented and explained and inquiry – how questions are raised and answered.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



Blog by Brad Hurst:
“Balancing Inquiry & Advocacy in Educational Systems”



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

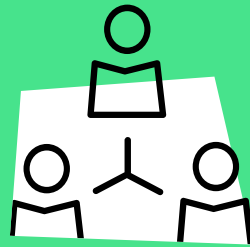
This framework was originally developed by T.C. Tomkins. You can access the [original study here](#).



Advocacy vs. Inquiry



Situational Leadership Model



This tool analyzes the supervisor/subordinate relationship through both a leadership and follower lens

TIME FRAME
10 minutes

COMPLEXITY
Medium

AUDIENCE
Individual

COST
Free

BEST USED
To help build managerial skills and improve effectiveness and efficiency of team-based work. This tool analyzes the supervisor/subordinate relationship on two levels: leadership behavior and follower readiness. It can help supervisors determine the right level or support for their employees, taking the employee's ability to do the task and the relationship between the two people.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

Free Management Book Excerpt:
Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This framework was originally developed by Hershey & Blanchard.



Situational Leadership Model

