

Introduction to Crystal Mapping

Crystal Mapping lets you organise, share and present information in a way that helps the thinking process, enhances understanding and aids communication. It aims to help you arrange and display information in a visually appealing, logically connected and easily presentable manner. With so much information and potential complexity involved in almost everything we do in business and life these days, Crystal Mapping helps you 'pull everything together' and communicate and present information in a logical and ordered manner so that others understand the bigger picture as well as the detail.

It works by first creating a naturally evolving circular map of the key elements of whatever you want to communicate. This acts as the direction and navigation system enabling you and others to see how everything is connected and fully inclusive and how to get from one key point to another. Once this is complete you can then add as much or as little detail in terms of text, pictures, hyperlinks and attachments as you like to clarify each segment.

By making it easy to understand how thoughts, ideas and potentially disparate pieces of information fit together, Crystal Maps help you get your message across with style and ease.

Moreover, delivering information in Crystal Map format helps to stimulate further ideas and new insights and reveals patterns and relationships which might not otherwise be apparent. This helps you to process and absorb data and learn with less effort. So, you're not only communicating better with your audience you're also getting them to think and to truly understand - in other words they'll have a well rounded view of the bigger picture.

Crystal Mapping helps you to think, plan, organise, learn, solve problems, present and make decisions and can be used by anyone who understands the value of visually joined up thinking to effective communication.

Key concepts behind Crystal Mapping

Crystal Mapping is based on the key principles of Visualization, Unity, and The Power of Three.

Visualization

The ability to improve thinking and learning using visualisation methods is well understood from educational research on Visual Learning techniques and from Tony Buzan's work on Mind Mapping® in the 1970's and 80's. Similar to Mind Mapping®, a good Crystal Map blends right and left brain functions of colour, image and rhythm with logic, words and sequence to harness your brains full potential.

Anecdotal evidence has been around a long time in support of this view e.g. 'a picture paints a thousand words', 'seeing is believing' etc. There is also a large body of empirical evidence from academic research in educational theory and cognitive psychology supporting the primacy of visual imagery recognition. What research in this area basically shows is that if you want people to remember or learn something - show them a picture.

Adding colour, shape and pattern to the generally monochromatic written word adds emphasis and assists learning and communication.

Being able to understand how things fit together is critical for learning. It is also vital if you want to get your point across to an audience. Most of us need to see how information fits into the bigger picture and to follow the logic of a proposition in order to understand fully the point(s) being made.

Being able to see where you are going and where you've been helps you to embed the story and internalise the information

Mind Mapping® talks of radiant thinking as the brain's natural thought linkage process. Crystal Mapping's circular methodology takes this a step further by providing a truly radiant, circular framework within which to think, learn and communicate.

Unity

The circle is the universal symbol of Unity. Using a circular methodology Crystal Maps help to portray inclusiveness and convey a sense of belonging so that discrete pieces of information or ideas, however apparently disparate, always retain a link to a unifying centre.

Similarly, circles force the brain/eye naturally toward the centre which further helps to emphasize inter-relatedness and inter-dependence.

Being able to deliver micro information within a 'joined up' macro context has enormous benefit in helping people to understand potentially complex information.

Crystal Maps are easy to build and simple for viewers to navigate via visual logic, colour and connection.

The Power of Three

Three has always been a symbolic number and has been used universally for communicating ideas and concepts. For example the Greeks wrote of the Three Fates, the Three Graces and the Three Furies and the Bible alludes to the power of three in the form of The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost.

Similarly, in philosophy, Hegel proposed a triadic evolution of thought through Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis and in grammatical terms a simple proposition needs three elements; a Subject, a Predicate and Copula to connect the other two.

In mathematics three is the lowest number of straight lines needed to form an enclosed space and the old maxim of "tell them once, tell them twice and tell them again" is used by leaders and public speakers everywhere to emphasize key points and clarify messages.

Consequently, our use of three radiating circles in any one map representation is to add additional emphasis and to utilize the power of three in communicating key information.

For example making a map three levels deep which shows you where you are in relation to where you've been and where you want to get to is a useful method for constructing the basics of a goal / personal development map.

In Summary

Combining these concepts with Crystal Mapping's easy to use map drawing features provides you with a flexible and powerful tool you can use in any number of applications - from communicating company strategy or presenting a sales proposal in a business environment to revising for Biology exams or creating an inspired class-work project in an educational setting.

By building on new ideas and the pioneering work of the past, our vision is to help people everywhere Think, Learn and Communicate in a joined up manner. In so doing we hope to enhance progress towards the "mentally literate world" as first proposed by Tony Buzan.

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