

Young Innovators



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Young Innovators Visual Tools for Problem Solving

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#YoungInnovators



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What are visual tools?

- Visual tools are operational **co-creation tools** referring to design thinking, transition management, consulting and community design.
- Each tool consists of **a canvas** and **operating instructions**

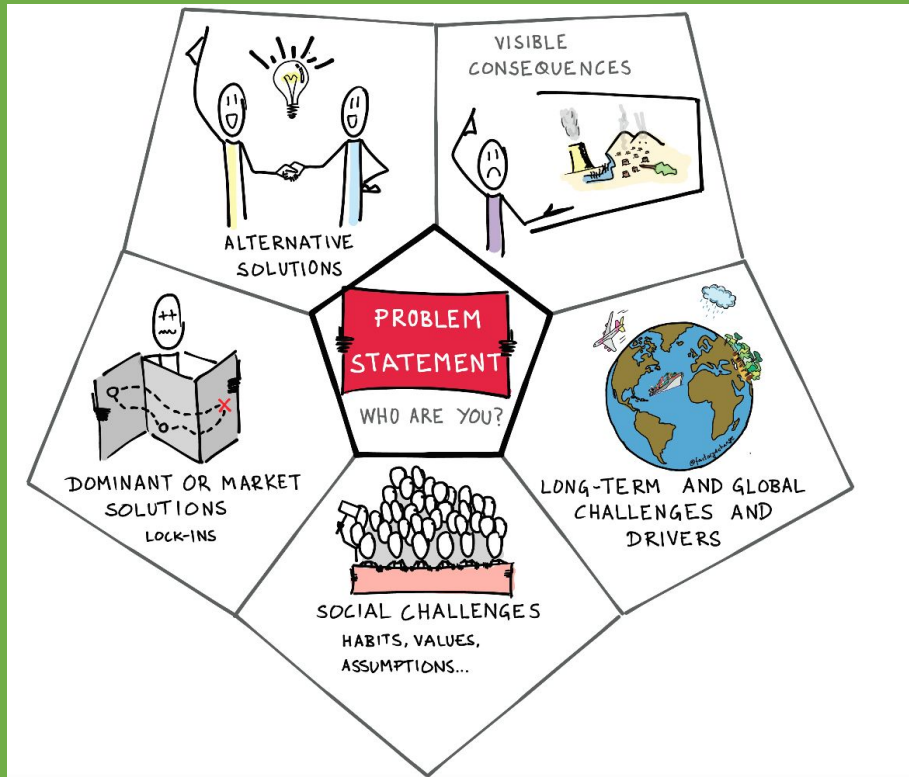
Visual tools are useful because they:

- Support **group work** and are compatible with **interdisciplinary** and **intercultural groups**
- Are **challenge-led** and based on **system thinking** – applicable to complex problems
- Are **empirical**: the degree of refinement depends on the contents brought in by group members
- Are **iterative**: repeating the exercise refines results
- Support the development of a **shared narrative**
- Teach a **design** perspective: *empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test*
- Are **interconnected**. Results from one tool feed into a the next
- Are **adaptable**

How do we work with them?

- **In groups**
- Within a well-defined **time frame**
- With a **short set of instructions**, generally provided in a step-by-step manner
- Usually supported by a **facilitator**
- The activity ends with two communications per group:
 - Presentation of **results**
 - Some **debrief** about the **process**

The Pentagonal Problem



How many: For 1 to 10. Ideally 4 to 6.

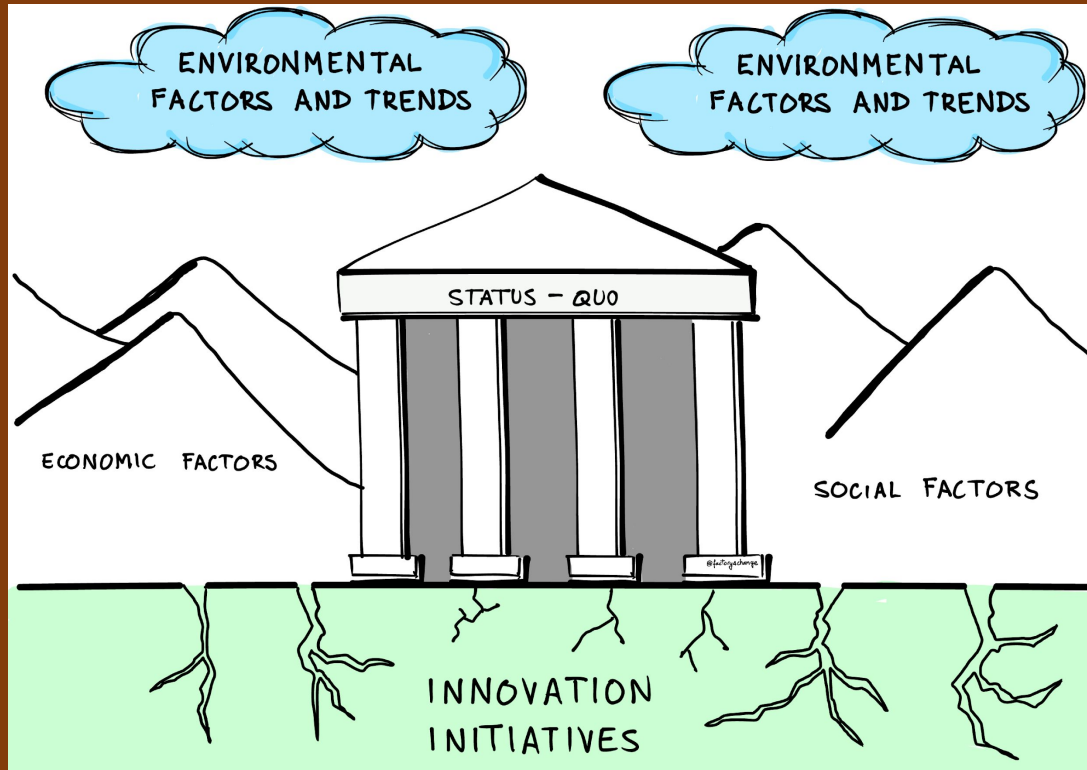
How long: 40-60 min

Difficulty: Low

- **What you get:** Better understanding of the challenge you are facing, its causes, consequences and potential solutions.
- **What you need:** Basic knowledge of the problem and the different stakeholders involved as well as an open mind to see the issue at hand from different perspectives.
- **What is next:** With this depiction of the challenge you might opt either for a deeper analysis of the stakeholders or for an enriched description of the system and challenge. That is, you might go for the stakeholder analysis tools or the system analysis methods (like the Context Map or the Visual Story)



The Context Map



How many: For 1 to 10. Ideally 4 to 6.

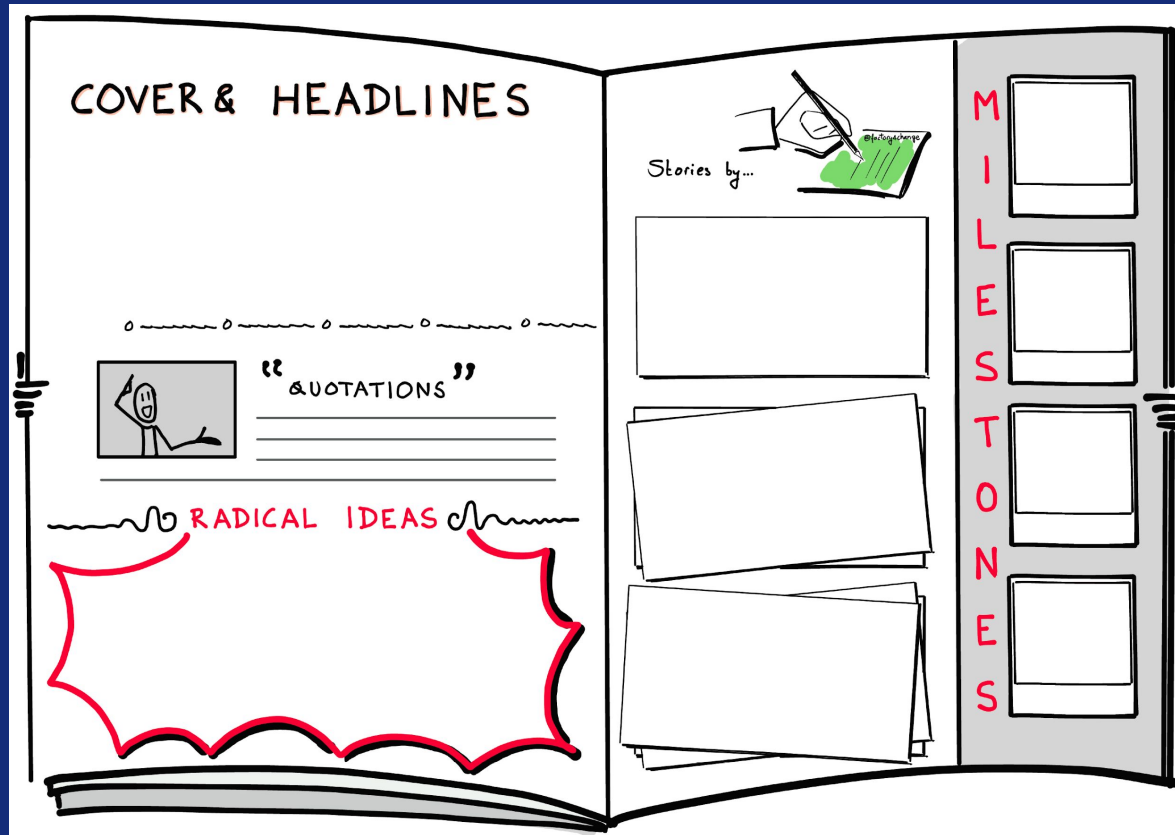
How long: 40-60 min

Difficulty: Medium

- **What you get:** An enriched picture of the context or system in which your challenge is embedded along with a sense of direction for different factors influencing each other.
- **What you need:** Access to different sources of information about the social, economic, technological and environmental context. Ideally, you should also have an idea about innovative initiatives taking place in the same area you are working on.
- **What is next:** Once you have this broad perspective of the challenge, it is time to either deepen your understanding or envision the future you want or what the reality may look like in 10 or 20 years time.



The Cover Story

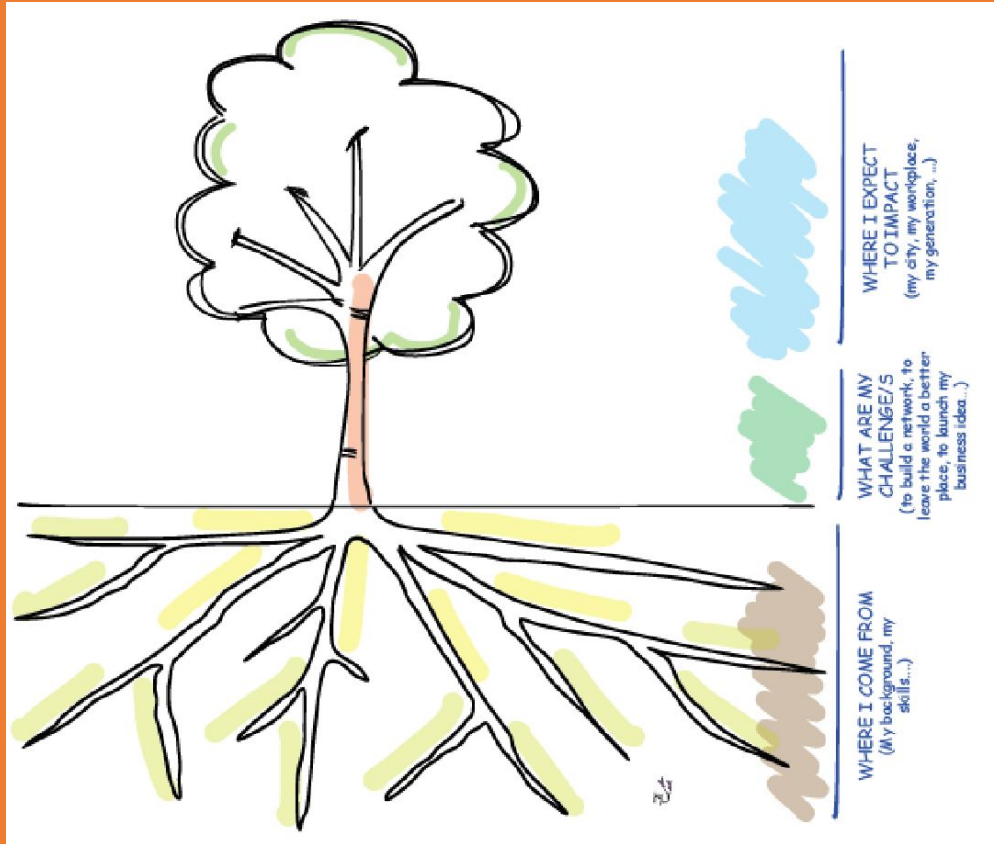


How many: For 1 to 10. Ideally 4 to 6.

How long: 60-90 min

Difficulty: Low

- **What you get:** A visual description of the best future scenario you can imagine for the current situation. It is a visual story on how reality was transformed as a consequence of your innovation initiatives.
- **What you need:** A sense of the possibilities of the current reality and the ability to dream with no constraints. This is not about listing solutions but rather about imaging a new future.
- **What is next:** Your vision provides you with a sense of direction for the current reality to evolve to. So, as to come up with innovative solutions in that direction you will first need to identify different trajectories of change by back casting changes from the future vision to the present time



The Actor Tree

What you get: A visual description of the skills, competencies and background that a person or team brings in in relation to a challenge. When used for groups it could help to team up and acknowledge the specificities and differences of the people in the group.

What you need: For group presentation you need the challenge idea and team members

What is next: In a team variation, the goal is to visualize and acknowledge the differences within a team. If used individually, it will offer a chance to pitch about oneself.

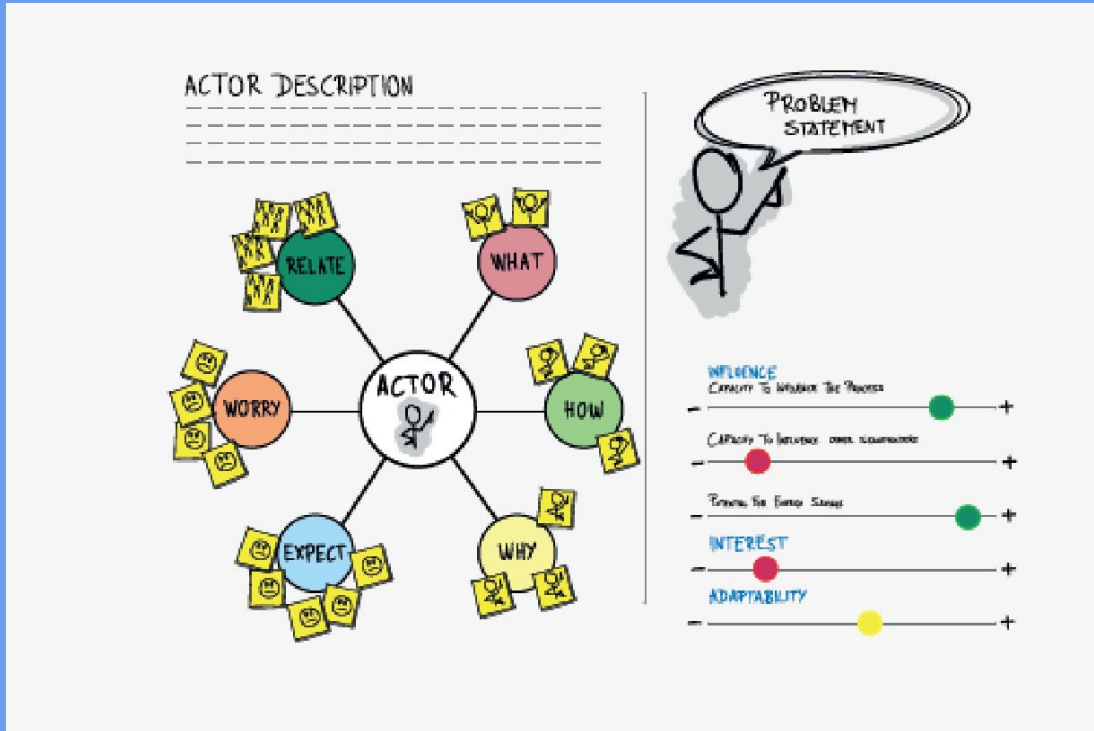
How many: For 1 person or for a team.

How long: 40 min

Difficulty: Low



Credential Cards



How many: For 1 to 10.

How long: 40-90 min

Difficulty: Low

What you get: A comprehensive and visual depiction of how the stakeholder relates to the project and its context and a better description of a specific actor around your challenge, with a focus on their willingness to support your innovation initiative

What you need: The tool requires knowledge of the actors involved and especially how their actions or behavior relate to the project. In training environments it is crucial for the teacher to provide sources of information.

What is next: after collecting the credential cards for different stakeholders you may want to plot them according to their “interest”, “influence” and “adaptability”