Cognitive mapping allows complex strategic situations to be managed effectively by capturing local insights and using graph-theoretical tools to uncover organizational insights.

Cognitive mapping – managing strategic complexity

1. Cognitive mapping allows complex strategic situations to be managed effectively by capturing local insights and using graph-theoretical tools to uncover organizational insights.

2. Interviews and workshops are used to elicit, and elaborate, a “cause and effect” model.

3. Important dynamics such as feedback and “dilemmas” are formally identified.

4. Centrality metrics are used to locate key issues.

5. Cluster analysis highlights emerging strategic themes (and, consequently, key issues).

6. Clusters are organized hierarchically to highlight the emerging strategy.

Realizing the future (Bryson, 1995)

- Candidate goals create possible issues which exist in a context of possible options supported by assertions.
- Decide on goals/not goals.
- Explore strategic issues.
- Discuss context.
- Workshop process.
- Jointly created guide to realizing the future.

Goals may be achieved by implementing strategies that consist of a portfolio of agreed-upon actions supported by assertions.

Decide on goals/not goals
Explore strategic issues
Discuss context
Workshop process
Jointly created guide to realizing the future

Goals/Disasters
Issues/Strategies
Options

Clusters are organized hierarchically to highlight the emerging strategy.

Goals/most desired outcomes
Strategies/key issues (found by looking for complexity)
Options, assertions, supporting facts, from which actions are identified

Cluster analysis highlights emerging strategic themes (and, consequently, key issues).

Clusters are organized hierarchically to highlight the emerging strategy.

Goals/most desired outcomes
Strategies/key issues (found by looking for complexity)
Options, assertions, supporting facts, from which actions are identified

Cluster analysis highlights emerging strategic themes (and, consequently, key issues).

Central analysis highlights emerging strategic themes (and, consequently, key issues).