An Introduction to Systems Thinking and Wicked Problem Solving™
By Tom Wujec

How to Run DrawToast Workshops

DrawToast workshops are a great way to get groups to think freshly about mental models. In just 3 minutes, each person sketches a diagram of how to make toast. When comparing diagrams, people are shocked at how diverse the diagrams are, revealing a wide range of models of what's important in making toast. It's a great launch pad for drawing out what's really important to the group.

There are 8 Simple Steps to the DrawToast Exercise:

**Step 1: Prepare**
Get the ingredients: felt markers, thick paper stock, sticky notes or index cards, and masking tape. Stage your room with tables, chairs, and a clear wall where you can post your work. It's important to have enough room for all participants to see everyone's creations.

**Step 2: Invite**
In your invitation, set expectations that your meeting will focus on building a systems model of an important challenge - clarifying your vision, improving cash flow, figuring out the next bold challenge. Begin with a simple design exercise.

**Step 3: Conduct**
Run the meeting informally. Hand out markers and paper to everyone and ask people to draw a picture of how to make toast. Give them 2-3 minutes. You may want to play toast-making music...

**Step 4: Reflect**
Have each person hold up their drawing for all to see. (Let the laughter start) Have the group place their drawings on a large wall space and comment on the drawings; pointing out which are simple and complex, which have people and which don't.

**Step 5: Video**
Play the TED.com DrawToast video and let it explain the big ideas about systems thinking. After it plays, ask the group how many nodes they drew and what kind?

**Step 6: Draw Your Challenge**
Have people draw a picture how to improve what they are working on as a group. This can include almost anything, strategic or tactical. See 'Draw Questions' for inspiration. Make sure people draw individually and in silence.

**Step 7: Share**
Have people work at tables showing and explaining their diagrams. Compare and contrast the diagrams and see what is similar and different between them. What links and nodes are common?

**Step 8: System**
If you have the time, have the group develop a systems diagram of the challenges using sticky notes and drawn links. Building on the previous individual diagrams, have groups of 4-6 people create nodes and links to solve the challenges.

http://www.drawtoast.com/