



Unfolding the Napkin: The Hands-On Method for Solving Complex Problems with Simple Pictures

By Dan Roam

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Unfolding the Napkin: The Hands-On Method for Solving Complex Problems with Simple Pictures By Dan Roam

An original workbook companion to the acclaimed business bestseller *The Back of the Napkin*

Dan Roam's *The Back of the Napkin*, a *BusinessWeek* bestseller, taught readers the power of brainstorming and communicating with pictures. It presented a new and exciting way to solve all kinds of problems—from the boardroom to the sales floor to the cubicle jungle.

The companion workbook, *Unfolding the Napkin*, helps readers put Roam's principles into practice with step-by-step guidelines. It's filled with detailed case studies, guided do-it-yourself exercises, and plenty of blank space for drawing. Roam structured the book as a complete four-day visual-thinking seminar, taking readers step-by-step from "I can't draw" to "Here is the picture I drew that I think will save the world."

The workbook teaches readers how to:

- Improve their three "built-in" visual problem solving tools.
- Apply the four-step visual thinking process (look-see-imagine-show) in any business situation.
- Instantly improve their visual imaginations.
- Learn how to recognize the type of problem to choose the best visual solution.

If *The Back of the Napkin* was a guide to fine dining, *Unfolding the Napkin* is the cookbook that will soon be heavily marked up and dogeared.

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Editorial Review

Review

"In 2008, Roam's *The Back of the Napkin* soaked up some book-of-the-year love from *The Financial Times*, *Businessweek* and Amazon.com. Roam's point was that problems can be better solved by drawing simple pictures, regardless of artistic ability. It's easier to see solutions visually, and it's also the revealing process of physically diagramming a problem, the argument goes.

To discover truly breakthrough ideas, intuitively develop those ideas and share those ideas effectively with others, we need pictures," Roam writes.

Since then, the management consultant and his Sharpies have conducted workshops at an impressive list of organizations, including Boeing, Pfizer, Google, Microsoft, Wal-mart and the U.S. Senate. Now, with *Unfolding the Napkin*, Roam squeezed his four-day workshop into a workbook so everyone can follow along.

It's a simple concept, but when Roam arrives at a solution for last year's economic crisis by drawing intersecting circles representing financial services, the auto industry and declining energy supplies, it's clear that *Napkin* is nothing to sneeze on.

-*USA Today*, Jan. 4, 2010

Whoever draws the best picture of a problem is the most likely to solve it.

Dan Roam offers a simple explanation about how to draw a problem/solution picture.

Draw a circle in the upper left corner of a sheet of paper and label it me. Draw a cloud-shaped circle in the lower left; label it my problem. Draw the shape of a closed Swiss army knife on the center of the page. Add and label "blades" (what you see, what to look for, what if..., how, when, where, why, how much, etc.) that deal with me and my problem. Those blades help you think of others that will help identify the problem, alternatives and solution.

What Roam drew on one page took me 90 words to describe, by the way.

-*The Dallas Morning News*, Dec. 26, 2009

About the Author

Dan Roam is founder and president of Digital Roam Inc., a management consulting firm that helps businesses solve problems through visual thinking. He has brought his unique approach to clients such as Microsoft, Wal-Mart, Wells Fargo, the U.S. Navy, HBO, NewsCorp., and the U.S. Senate. He lectures around the world for clients and at business conferences.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Melvin Belknap:

Often the book *Unfolding the Napkin: The Hands-On Method for Solving Complex Problems with Simple Pictures* has a lot of details on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of benefit. The book was published by the very famous author. The author makes some research just before writing this book. This specific book is very easy to read; you will get the point easily after reading this article book.

Susan Hare:

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Maria Blanco:

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Rigoberto Adams:

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