

THE ASK MATT TABLETOP GAME: AN UNORTHODOX APPROACH TO MAPPING EMERGING KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

The difficulty and poor results of strategic planning raises an important question, "How might the strategic planning process be improved?" Or, more specifically, "How will we know we have the information we need to set and achieve our goals?" Part of the problem is that we do not know "what we know." The seemingly obvious answer of acquiring "more data" does not help, because we already suffer from data overload or "data smog." So, merely having "more or better" data is not sufficient. It is not enough, for example, for a manager to know that the results of a huge report are "true;" the manager needs to know what to "do" to gain specific results.

It would be useful to surface and evaluate the strategic knowledge of managers to know, in advance, if they have the necessary understanding to set strategic goals and make strategic decisions.

The ASK MATT game is focused on surfacing, crystalizing, and evaluating the strategic knowledge of a group. The players co-create a map which they may then use (after the game) to clarify research needs, set goals, and assess strategic options for business operations. In short, the game creates a map for managers to more easily navigate the complexities of the business world

This game is unique because it provides a space for players to collaboratively create a new knowledge map that is highly tailored to their specific situation. While we have presented this description as a game for business, the game is equally useful for non-profits, community coalitions, and policy development. It should even prove useful for developing more effective theories (models) within the academic world.

In the present playtest, within the allotted time, we will briefly explain the process of play, and "walk" the players through the turns. We will then facilitate a session encouraging conscious reflection, meaningful conversation, and the identification of opportunities for improving the game.