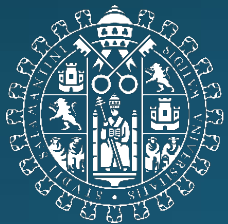


Challenges and Institutions in Global Security

Master in Global and International Studies



VNiVERSIDAD
D SALAMANCA

Fulton T. Armstrong

American University
Syracuse University

Washington, DC

∞ Welcome ∞

Supporting Policy Through Actionable Analysis

Session 6: Sharpening our Analysis and Honing our Tradecraft

DATES / TIMES

Session 1	Wed	11 Dec	4pm-7pm
Session 2	Thu	12 Dec	4pm-7pm
Session 3	Fri	13 Dec	6pm-9pm
Session 4	Wed	08 Jan	4pm-7pm
Session 5	Thu	09 Jan	4pm-7pm
Session 6	Fri	10 Jan	10am-1pm
Session 7	Mon	13 Jan	10am-1pm
Session 8	Tue	14 Jan	10am-1pm

All times CET

Questions or Comments
from
Previous Discussions?

QUIZ

REVIEW and PREVIEW

Name: _____

True or False or “Not confident of my answer” (T, F, NC)

- _____ 1. Good analysis is often just common sense, but it is common sense that has been validated through a thoroughly conscious process.
- _____ 2. The purpose of analysis is to help decisionmakers make decisions without showing a preference for one option or other.
- _____ 3. The model on the analytical worksheet can be applied to the topic of a thesis or Capstone research project.
- _____ 4. Not all elements of the model have to be included in the written and oral products you give policymakers.
- _____ 5. Drivers and indicators are essentially the same thing.
- _____ 6. The people who make decisions are our bosses, so we should avoid giving them analysis that they will find contrary to their wishes.
- _____ 7. We should respect decisionmakers’ interest in making themselves look good in public.
- _____ 8. If we’re not comfortable with a question from a decisionmaker, we should suggest a rephrasing that we can be comfortable with.
- _____ 9. The vast majority of issues worth analyzing can be approached the same way.
- _____ 10. Linear thinking is preferable in analytical products.
- _____ 11. Brainstorming is helpful only when discussing scenarios.
- _____ 12. Once you have identified the drivers of a situation, it is not appropriate to change them as you develop your scenarios.
- _____ 13. Validating information – determining “real” and “fake” – is one of the first key steps of an analytical project.
- _____ 14. The implications of scenarios tell decisionmakers why they should care, and the probabilities of scenarios communicate the urgency of the issue.
- _____ BONUS: It’s OK for an analyst to have a bias on an issue as long as they’re honest and adjust their conclusions if the bias is not supported by the facts..



QUIZ

QUIZ

Name: _____

True or False or "Not confident of my answer"
T, F, NC

- ____ 1. Good analysis is often just common sense, but it is common sense that has been validated through a thoroughly conscious process.
- ____ 2. The purpose of analysis is to help decisionmakers make decisions without showing a preference for one option or other.
- ____ 3. The model on the analytical worksheet can be applied to the topic of my TFM.
- ____ 4. Not all elements of the model have to be included in the written and oral products you give policymakers.
- ____ 5. Drivers and indicators are essentially the same thing.
- ____ 6. The people who make decisions are our bosses, so we should avoid giving them analysis that they will find contrary to their wishes.
- ____ 7. We should respect decisionmakers' interest in making themselves look good in public.
- ____ 8. If we're not comfortable with an answer, we should suggest a rephrase.
- ____ 9. The vast majority of issues are seen the same way.
- ____ 10. Linear thinking is preferable to non-linear thinking.
- ____ 11. Brainstorming is helpful on its own.
- ____ 12. Once you have identified the drivers of a situation, it is not appropriate to change them as you develop your scenarios.
- ____ 13. Validating information – determining "real" and "fake" – is one of the first key steps of an analytical project.
- ____ 14. The implications of scenarios tell decisionmakers why they should care, and the probabilities of scenarios communicate the urgency of the issue.

¿How did you do?

Does the analysis set up policymaker to make good policy?



Do the drivers set you up to do good analysis?



- Relevance?
- Hierarchy?
- Inclusiveness and balance?
- Meaningful trends?

Discussion

What do you see on policymakers' plates today?



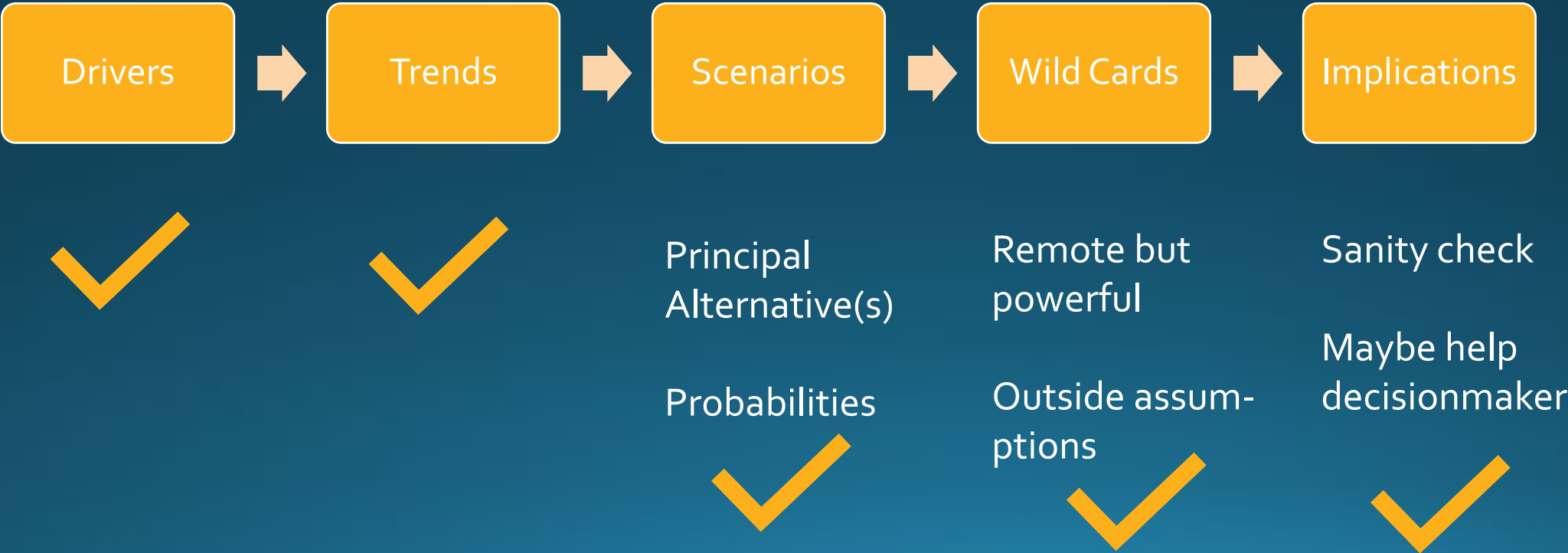
How well prepared do you think the policymakers are to deal with them?



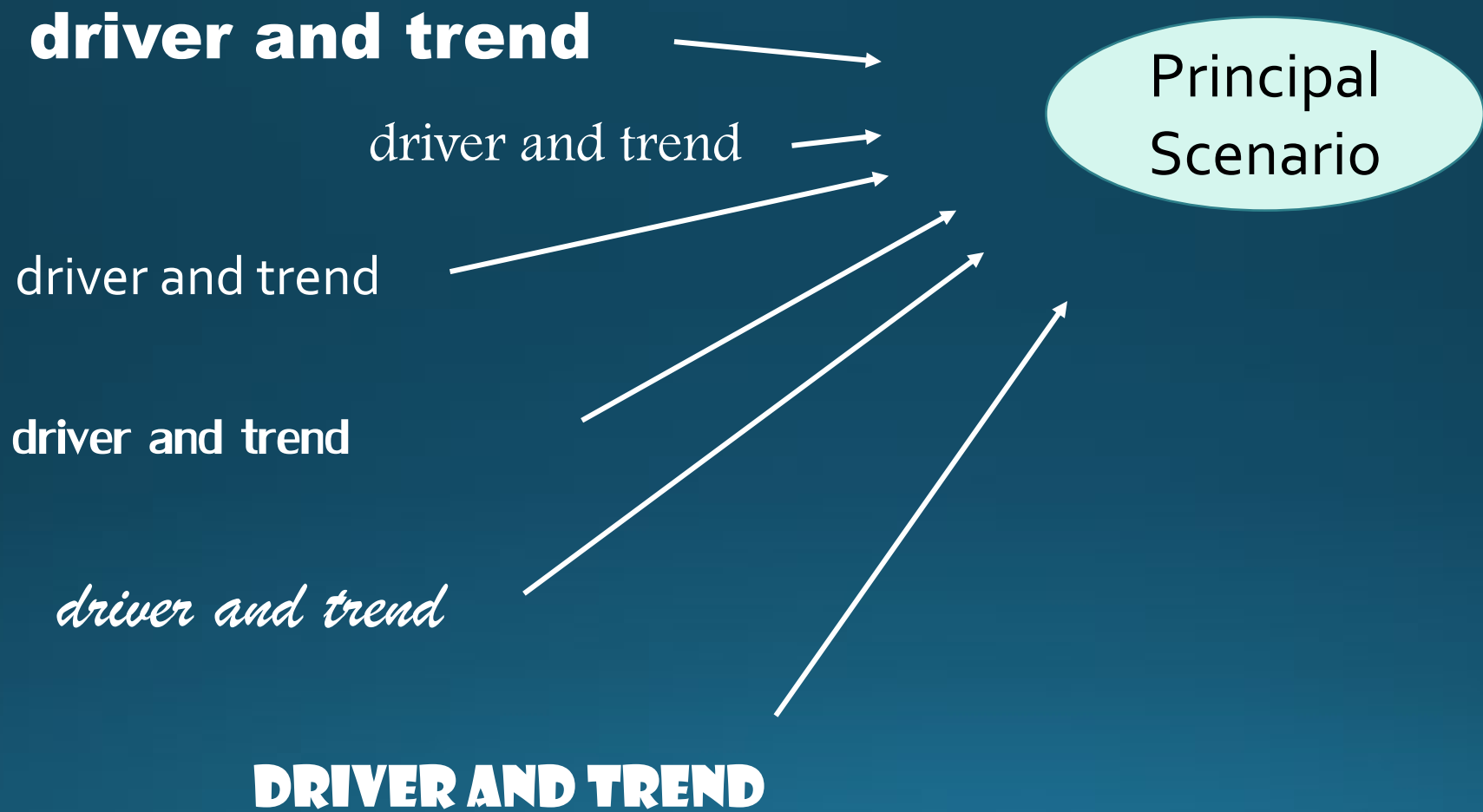
What issues would you prioritize if you were policymakers today?



Let's finish our analytical model



Building the Principal Scenario



Building the Alternative Scenario: Central America Migration



WHY do an alternative scenario (or two)?

Helps test your drivers.

Helps test your main scenario.



Raises sophistication,
confidence in
judgments.

Results in better product for
decisionmaker?



Prepares them and
educates them.



May's Brexit Deal Failed. What Happens Now?

By ALLISON MCCANN and STEPHEN CASTLE **UPDATED** January 25, 2019

scenario building

The New York Times

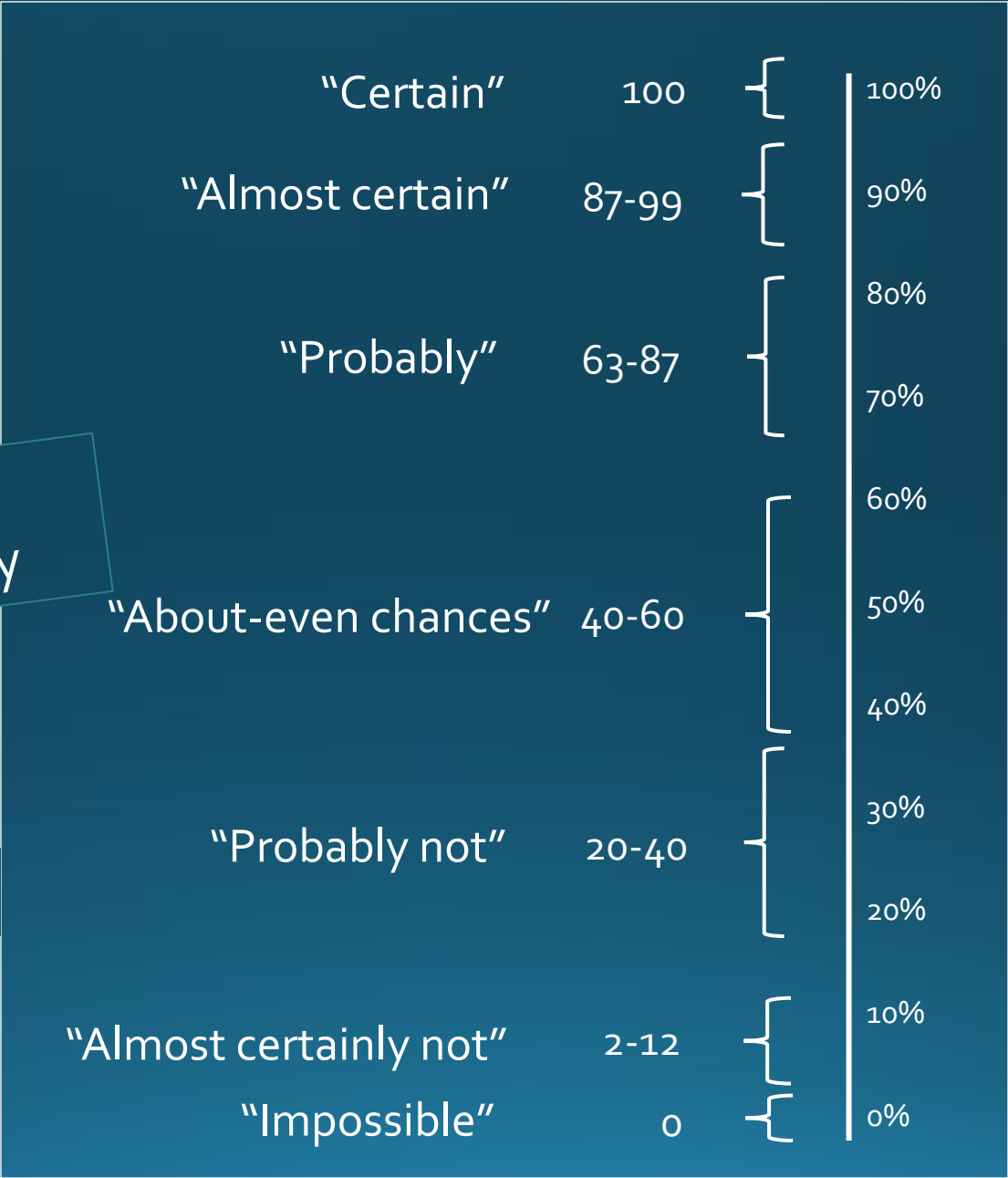
January 2019

REVIEW

How do we state probability?

What CIA analysts say

"It's art, not science."



Source:
Informal CIA Working
Paper

“Wildcards”

- Extremely low probability; impossible to predict ...

but ...
- Changes our analysis drastically
- Something that, in our list of assumptions, we calculate as beyond our analysis



Analyzing Implications

What importance do the current situation and the scenarios have for the decisionmaker?

Why should they pay attention?

How can events affect their interests?



Assumes, of course, knowledge of decisionmaker and interests.

So, with a thesis sentence at the top, that's the whole model.

Name: _____

Building Analysis

Thesis _____

Framing _____

Drivers & Trends	Driver	Trend
Driver 1:		
Driver 2:		
Driver 3:		
Driver 4:		

Scenarios

Scenario 1: _____

SIS Sharpening Analytic Skills

Scenario 2: _____

Wild Cards

Wild card 1: _____

Wild card 2: _____

Implications

Implication 1: _____

Implication 2: _____

Implication 3: _____

Other Points

2

You should have noticed that ...

It's not a linear process, but spiral.



COMMENTS?

Let's look now at the analysis you've built.

PREPS: Sections in the guide on Confidence
Mind-mapping
Other analytical models } pp. 66-76

UPDATE YOUR ANALYTICAL WORKSHEET
with scenarios, wild cards, implications, and “other points”

Do you have a thesis?
What's your framing?
How do your drivers and trends look?
What are your scenarios and probabilities?
What wild cards have you identified?
What implications do you see?



Name: _____

Building Analysis

Thesis

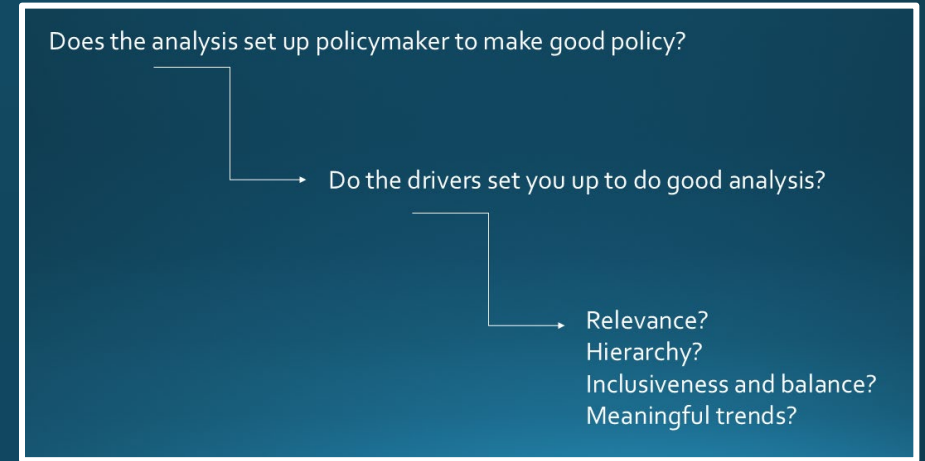
Framing

Drivers & Trends	Driver	Trend
Driver 1:		
Driver 2:		
Driver 3:		
Driver 4:		

Scenarios

Scenario 1: _____

And ... TODAY



Session 6: Sharpening our Analysis and Honing our Tradecraft

How comfortable are you with your analysis?

If you're comfortable, what can you do to make yourself less comfortable?

If you're UNcomfortable, what can you do to make yourself more comfortable?



My analysis may be brilliant, but how can I be sure?

Have I examined everything? Have I been fair?

BRAINSTORMING

Purpose: Ensure analysis considers all relevant information and interpretations

Definition: Process of liberating ourselves from established line, avoiding linear thinking, and building confidence in the completeness of our analysis.

Guidelines:

Neutral peer leader

No judging

Quantity over quality

No defending

Keep the ball moving

Loose structure

Everyone talks

Keep it light



TIPS and TRICKS

Write notes *before* talking starts – to avoid “anchoring bias.”

Cast the question with a *different* actor – e.g., “What would X do?”

Write and talk quickly – without filtering.

Do not judge your or others’ ideas – just keep moving.

Consider something funny – e.g., substituting animals for people.

Carry someone else’s idea to next step(s).

Try “starbursting” – i.e., thinking of rapid-fire questions about the topic.

Brainstorming

Building Analysis	
Name: _____	
Scenario 2: _____	
Is there something I'm missing? Are there other interpretations to explore? How can I improve my analysis?	
Thesis	_____
Framing	_____
Drivers & Trends	Driver
Driver 1:	_____
Driver 2:	_____
Driver 3:	_____
Driver 4:	_____
Scenarios	Scenario 1: _____

2

Let's do a little BRAINSTORMING

- Lead a brief discussion
 - Brief current thinking
 - Look at drivers/trends
 - Look at scenarios
- Prof will take notes

- Do you have a thesis?
- What's your framing?
- How do your drivers and trends look?
- What are your scenarios and probabilities?
- What wild cards have you identified?
- What implications do you see?

Name: _____

Building Analysis

Thesis

Framing

Drivers & Trends	Driver	Trend
Driver 1:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Driver 2:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Driver 3:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Driver 4:	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Scenarios

Scenario 1: _____



A useful way of organizing thoughts ...

MIND-MAPPING

Using a diagram to show the relationships between facts and thoughts

hierarchical
cause-effect or sequence
can include wild cards???

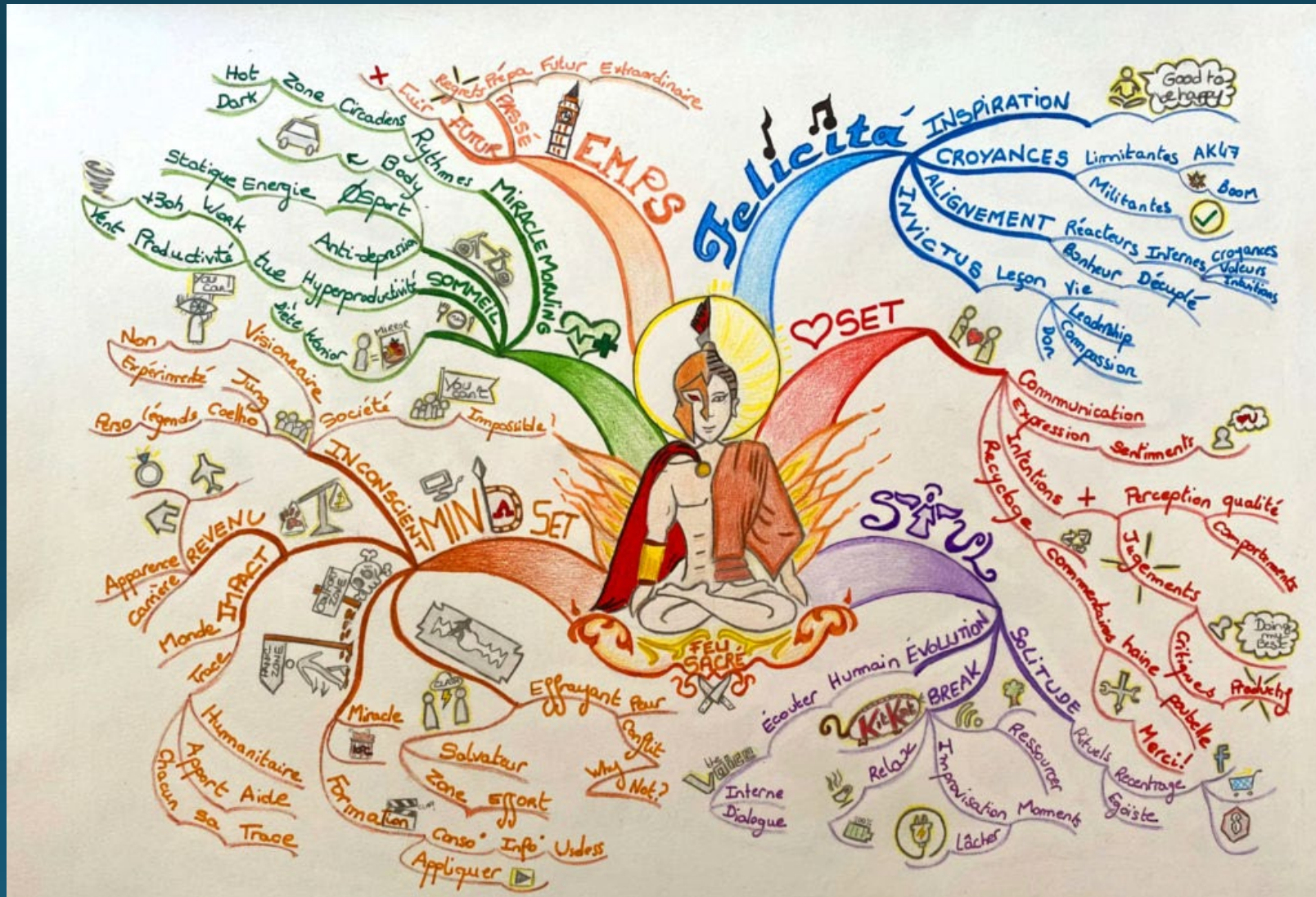
British academic Tony Buzan
(1942-2019)



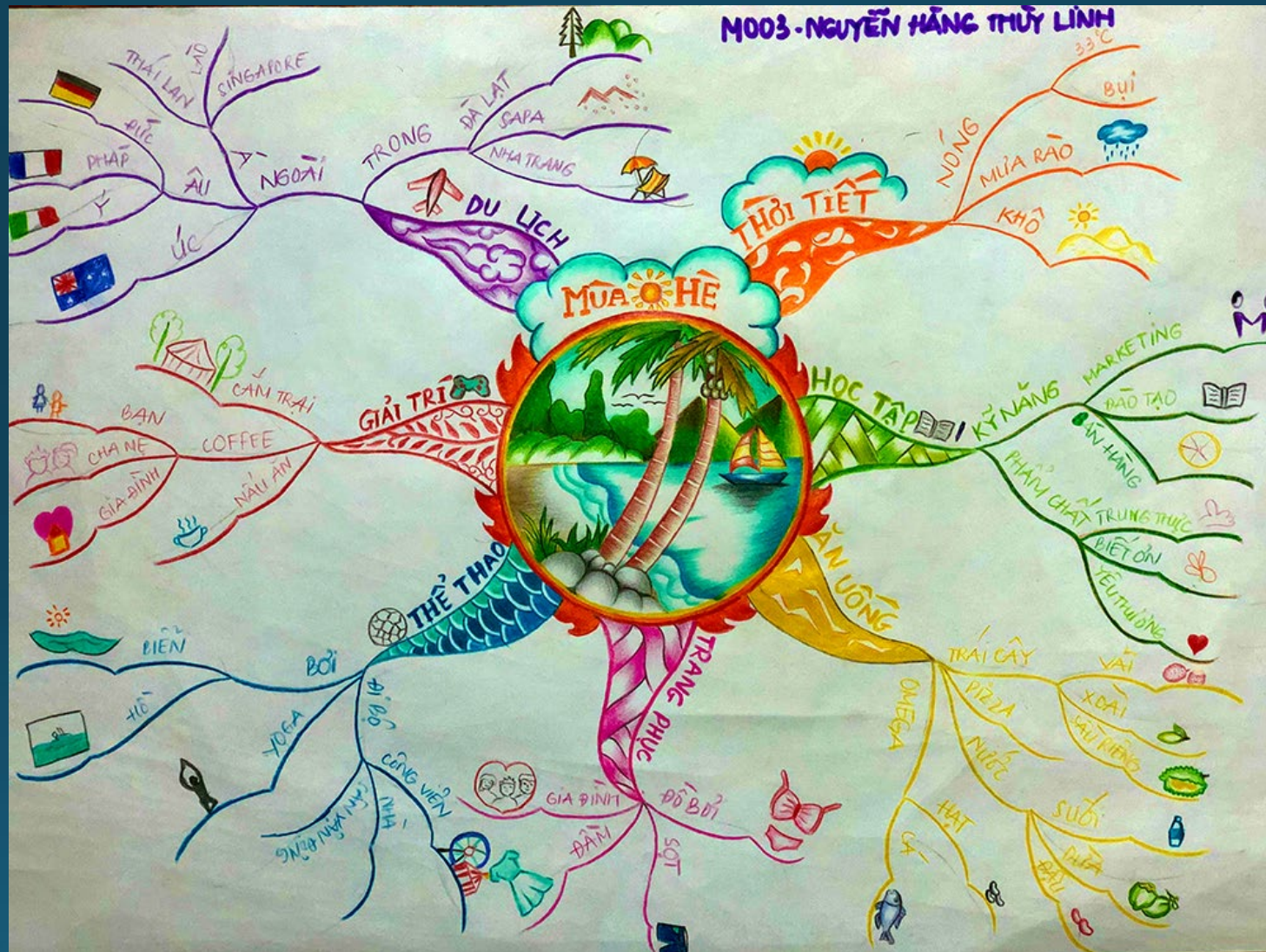
FIRST PLACE on recent WORLD MIND MAPPING DAY : Nguyen Thi Thu Hong – VIETNAM

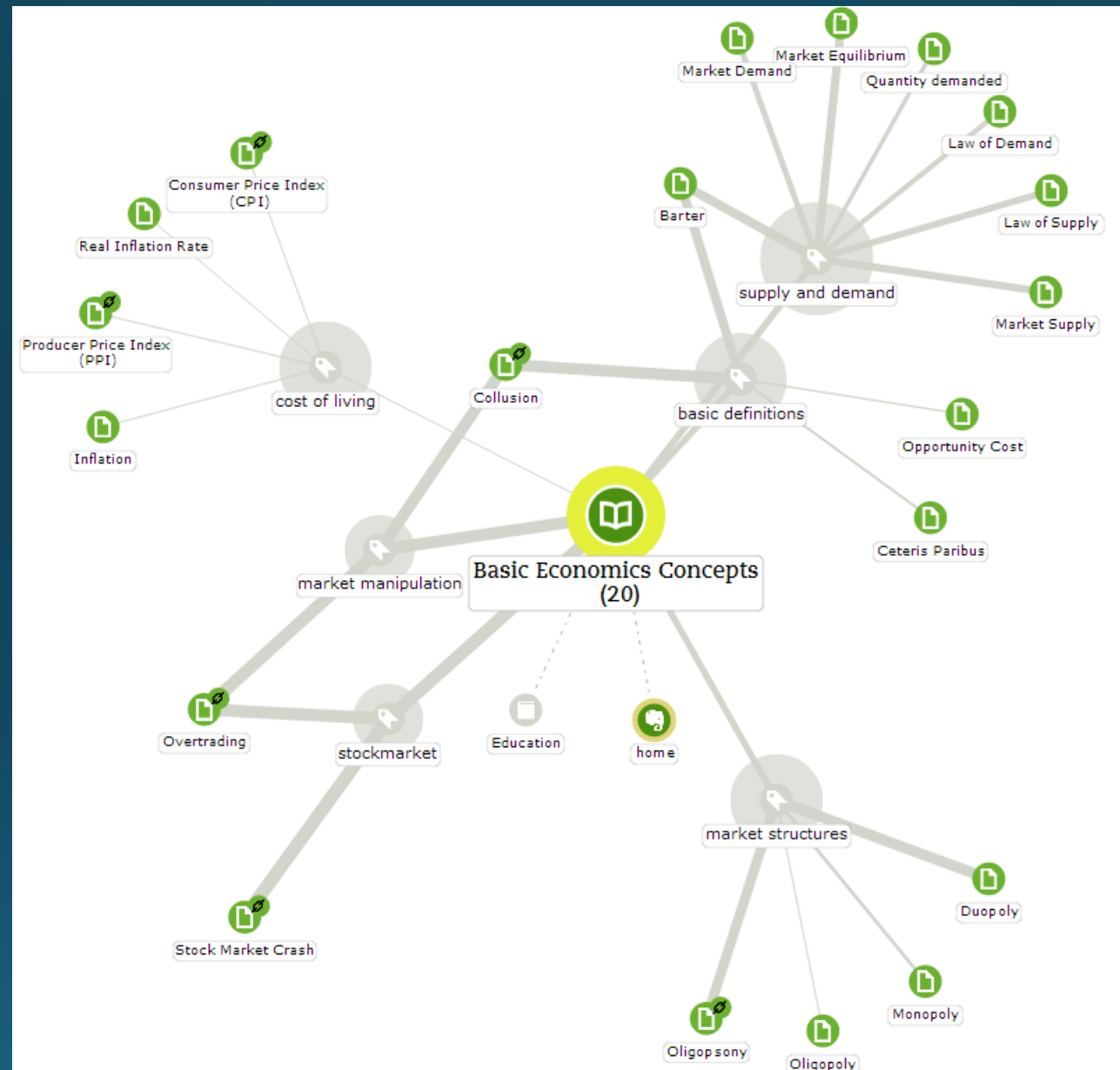


SECOND PLACE: SPAIN (in French)

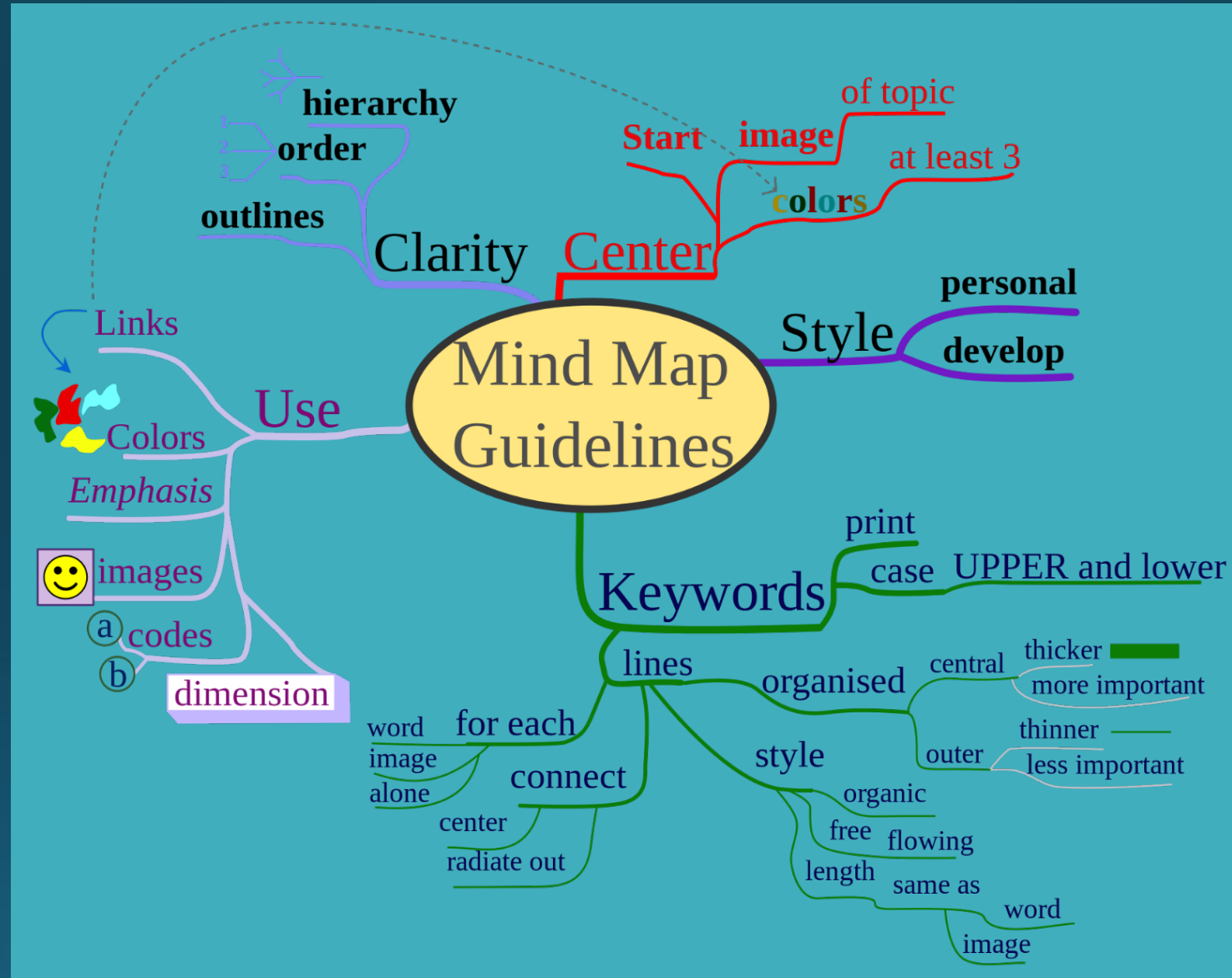


THIRD PLACE: VIETNAM

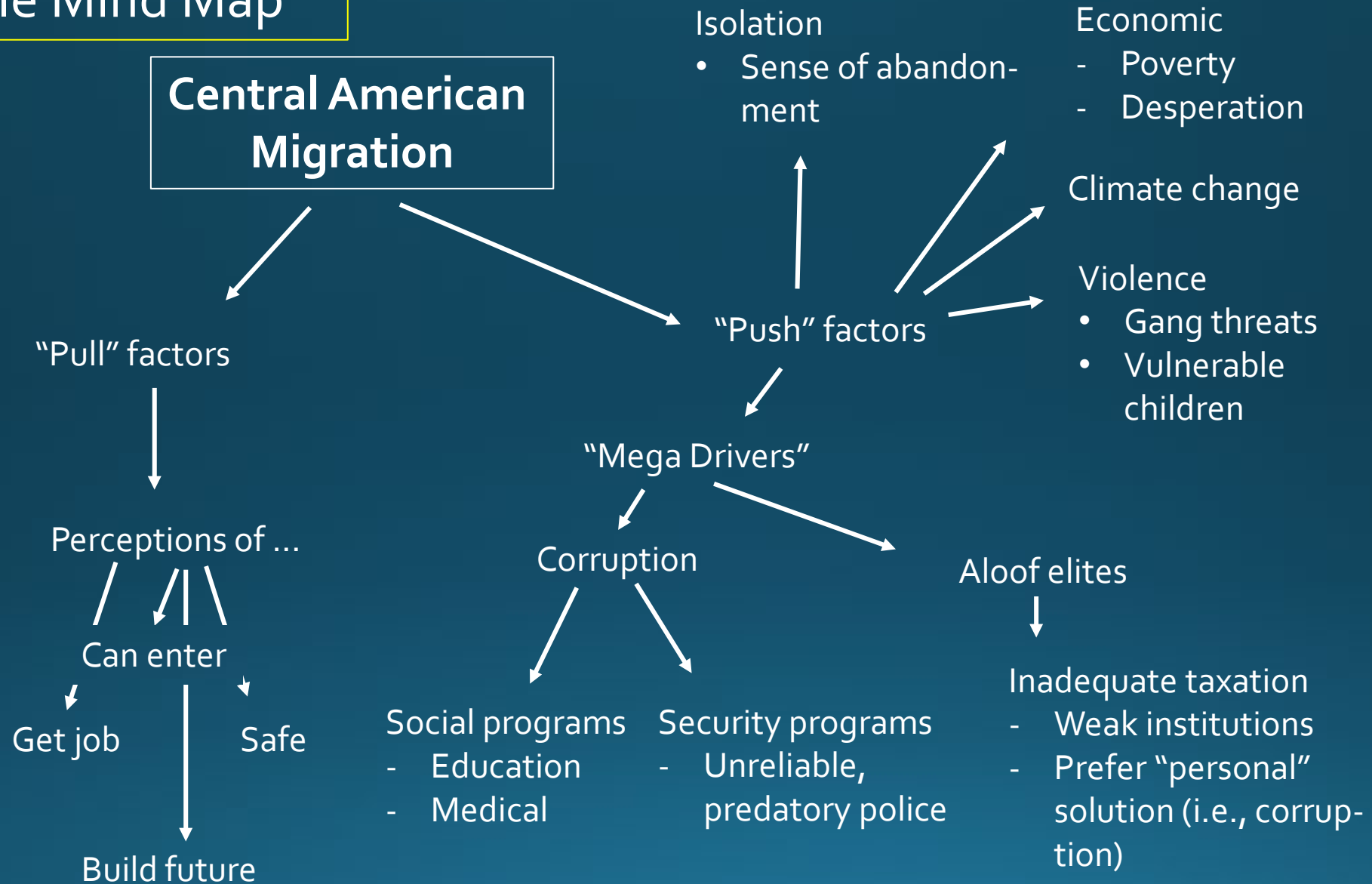




Mind map showing broad concepts for studying economics, with concepts tagged by perceived significance.



A Simple Mind Map



Discussion

When you look at your worksheet, do you see areas that would benefit from brainstorming or mind-mapping?

Are you OPEN to new ideas?
What are legitimate criteria for canceling them?

Thesis

Framing

Drivers & Trends

Driver

Driver 1:

Driver 2:

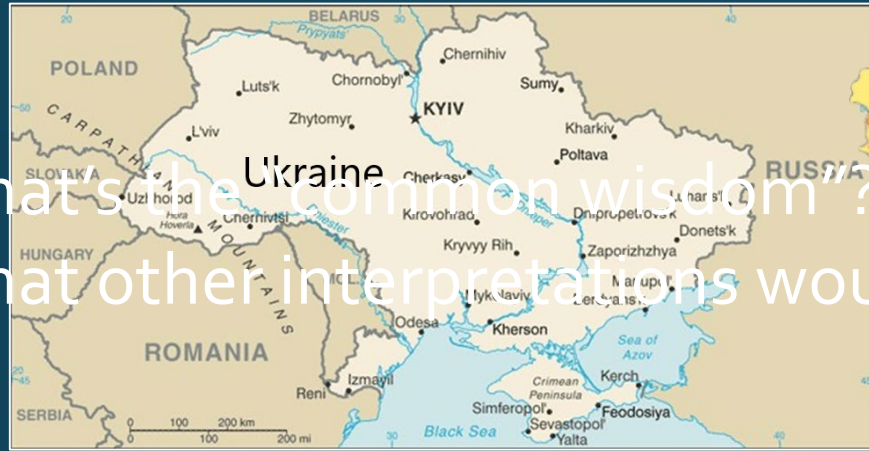
Driver 3:

Driver 4:

Scenarios

Scenario 1:

How about when you look at other big issues?



What's the common wisdom?
What other interpretations would you explore?



I want Greenland,
Panama Canal,
and Canada

Quick review of other analytical methods that you can use
to enrich your thinking

Other Models

Chronological

Clarifies cause-effect of events

Other Models

Flow chart

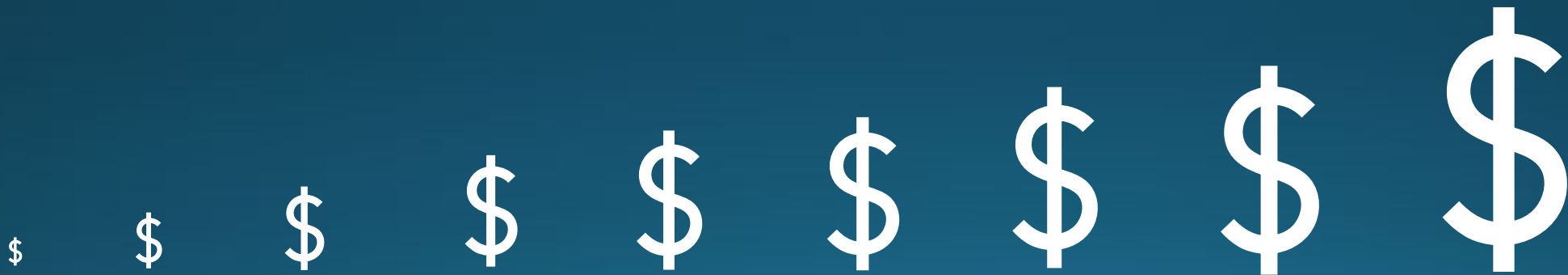
Clarifies processes



Other Models

“Value-chain”

Indicates the value-added at each stage of a process ... for economic analysis



Other Models

“Event-flow”

Indicates the patterns in a series of events, including places, victims, circumstances, suspects, etc. ... for criminal analysis

Other Models

Decision Matrix Helps achieve an understanding of the interests (and decision costs) of decisionmakers

Most basic structure:

Strengths
Weaknesses
Opportunities
Threats



Other Models

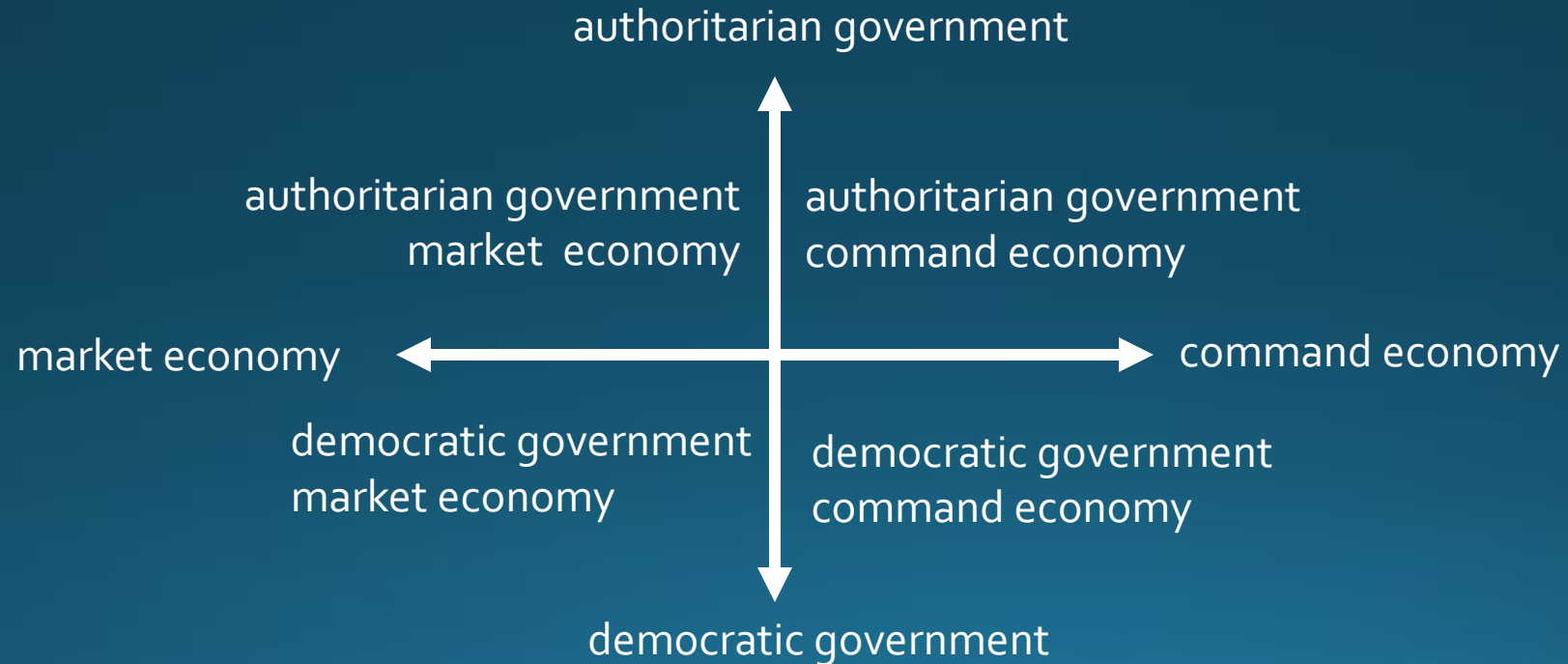
Link Analysis

Reveals the relationships between possible actors ... useful for CT, CN, and criminal analysis

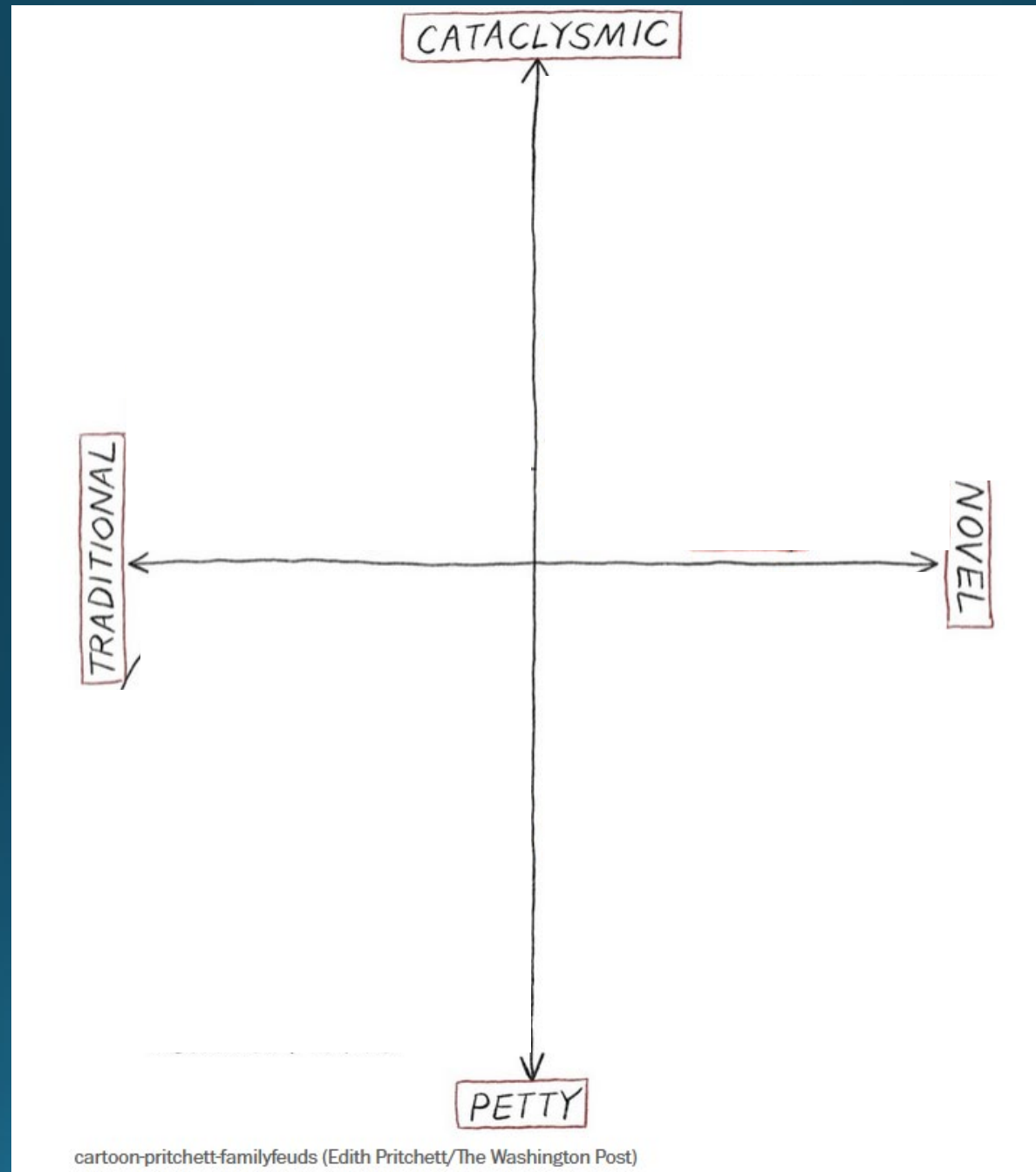
Other Models

Scenarios Quadrant

Explores possibilities based on variable key factors



“Let’s Start a
Family Feud”



Edith Pritchett
15 December 2023

The Washington Post



"Let's Start a Family Feud"
Edith Pritchett
15 December 2023

The Washington Post

But ... (imho)

The DRIVERS model does more

- Combines many elements of other models
- Gives the decisionmaker something ACTIONABLE
- BUT these can contribute to and stimulate

Questions? Comments? Concerns? Suggestions?

Time to do a little more?

SEE IT ON-LINE

The “Other” CIA Manual

Analytic Thinking and Presentation for Intelligence Producers

Analysis Training Handbook

How does CIA train
its analysts?

(Posted on Blackboard)

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Who We Are and What We Do

Our Job Is

Our job as intelligence officers is to:

- Define intelligence problems and issues clearly.
- Anticipate trends and developments.
- Provide our consumers with judgments and insights.
- Tell our consumers what is *really* happening in a situation.
- Be responsive to our consumers.
- Evaluate raw information critically to determine its relevance, reliability, and weight as evidence.
- Extract key points from raw information or otherwise identify what is important in a sea of detail.
- Make meaningful characterizations about data by “synthesizing” them into judgments that are greater than the data they’re based on.
- Deal with ambiguity, uncover and test assumptions, reconcile conflicting information, and guard against bias, subjectivity, deception, and “politicization.”
- Consider the views of others.
- Evaluate alternative scenarios.
- Assess implications for our consumers.

Our Job Is Not

It is not our job to know everything.

- We have to make judgments on the basis of information that is incomplete, conflicting, and of varying degrees of reliability.
- We need to provide the best possible answer given the time and information available.
- We do not pile up detail. Data dumps are not the way to show our expertise.
- And we are not historians.

Define the problem

“Be responsive”

Determine reliability

To think

Not historians
(or academics)

Analytic Mission

As intelligence analysts, we “synthesize”:

- We interpret, not describe.
- We render the complex simple.
- We read, weigh, and assess fragmentary information to determine what it means, to get the “big picture.”
- That is, we draw conclusions that are greater than the data they're based on. One plus one equals three!
- We see the forest, not just the trees:
 - Synthesizing takes an *inordinate* amount of time up front. You have to know your bottom line before you write or speak, because your bottom line comes first and drives the rest of your written or oral product.

Sound analytic thinking and good analytic communication require us to do two major things:

- **Conceptualize**—focus, frame, and advance defensible judgments.
- **Craft**—write or speak so clearly and simply that the reader cannot possibly misunderstand our message. To put it another way: Everyone who reads what we have written or hears what we have said comes away with *exactly* the same message. Our job is not done until that is accomplished.

← But also to deal with gaps in information

When To Write

Questions To Ask Yourself: What? And So What?

- ☐ Is there a hook (or peg)?
- ☐ Does it meet threshold?
- ☐ What can I add that's unique?

Event Driven

- You need a *hook* (or *peg*)—a development that gives you an opportunity to write.
- The development can be a single event. For example:
 - An election or coup.
 - A terrorist incident.
 - An unexpected budget cut or personnel reduction.
 - An international financial development.
 - The seizure of an unusually large amount of drugs.
 - A series of events taking place in the account you follow.
 - An ongoing story in your account.
- The event can be *happening now*, *forthcoming*, or something you *predict*.

Meeting Threshold

- The event *must* meet *threshold*. Threshold is a *significant departure from the norm* that warrants the attention of your consumers because it has implications for their interests.

Adding Analysis

- You have to go beyond what's said in the press or what the basic facts are to add something unique.
- You must provide judgments or insights that answer one or more of your consumers' questions:
 - What is *actually* going on?
 - What does it mean?
 - What might happen next or in the future?

Crafting Titles

Contracts With
the Reader

Titles As Contracts

Colombia: Antidrug Policy *Under Pressure*

Libya: Aerial Refueling Program *Revived*

Office of Personnel: Budget Reductions *Limit Employee Assistance*

- A title is the first step in the conceptualization process, which goes on to state your focus (statement of synthesis) and lay out your case.
- Your title is a *pledge* that creates an expectation in the reader's mind. It should be analytic, not descriptive, and convey your *focus (statement of synthesis)* in abbreviated form.

Zeroing in on the Focus

If you can't summarize your bottom line in one sentence, you haven't done your analysis.

Statement of Synthesis

The focus can be called the:

- Statement of synthesis.
- Big picture and bottom line.
- What and so what.
- Core assertion.
- Major judgment or point.
- Or whatever your office wants to call it.

Finding the Right Level of Generality

- General or Detailed?**
- You'll have to struggle with how general or detailed your statement of synthesis will be. Determining this is your judgment call.
 - No formula exists for easily deciding what level of generality is right. This skill takes time and practice to develop.
- Imagine an Umbrella**
- To help yourself, imagine being out in the rain. How big an umbrella do you need? That depends on what's under it. You may need a regular-sized umbrella, or you may need a circus tent to cover everything that's relevant.
 - You have to find a balance between general and detailed. That balance *depends on the story you need to tell*. You don't want a statement of synthesis that's so broad it covers everything you're going to say in your paper or so narrow that you aren't telling a relevant story.
 - If your story is about ethnic strife in Europe, you don't want a statement of synthesis that talks about the future of Western civilization, and you don't want one that talks about one group's inability to plant its crops.

If not an umbrella, perhaps a foundation made of planks and supports.

The Inverted Pyramid Paragraph

The inverted pyramid paragraph is a basic structure for all intelligence writing—from one paragraph to a 20-page paper.

Broadest To
Narrowest

Each paragraph *begins* with a core assertion.

- The remaining sentences in the paragraph *prove, support, or explain the core assertion*. They are sourced as necessary and move:
 - In *decreasing order* of importance or . . .
 - From *highest to lowest* level of generality or detail.
- Thus, a paragraph begins with a *bang* and ends with a *whimper*.
 - This design gives the busy reader the most important thing first.
- Each paragraph has **only one main point**.
 - The *core assertion* has *absolute control* over what else is in the paragraph.
 - If you promise the reader in the core assertion that you will discuss A, you can't go on to talk about B, C, and D.
- Each paragraph can be two to five sentences.



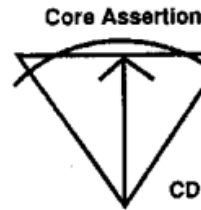
“Core assertion has absolute control”

Three Types

- The inverted pyramid paragraph has three versions.
- Each varies in the kind of support it gives its core assertion.

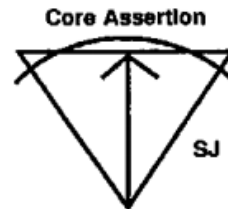
Version I

- Begins with a core assertion.
 - Statements of *evidence* (E) follow the core assertion.
 - They are facts that *prove the core assertion*. They are in decreasing order of importance or from highest to lowest level of generality or detail.
 - They are sourced as necessary.
- *Contextual data* (CD)—if relevant—end the paragraph.
 - They are facts, attributed to a source, that add texture, richness, backdrop.
 - They are “oh-by-the-way” statements and are not strictly speaking evidence.



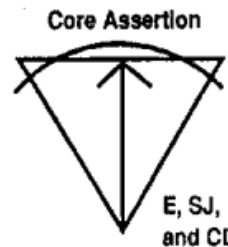
Version II

- Begins with a core assertion, which is the *primary* judgment in the paragraph.
- *Secondary judgments* (SJ) follow the core assertion.
 - They provide *additional analysis of or insights on the core assertion* and are in decreasing order of importance or from highest to lowest level of generality or detail.
 - Version II is a paragraph of speculation, premises, conjecture, interpretation.
 - Alert the reader with phrases like “we believe.”



Version III

- Begins with a core assertion.
- Blends evidence (E), secondary judgments (SJ), and contextual data (CD). E usually precedes SJs.
 - In decreasing order of importance or from highest to lowest level of generality or detail.
 - Sourced as necessary.

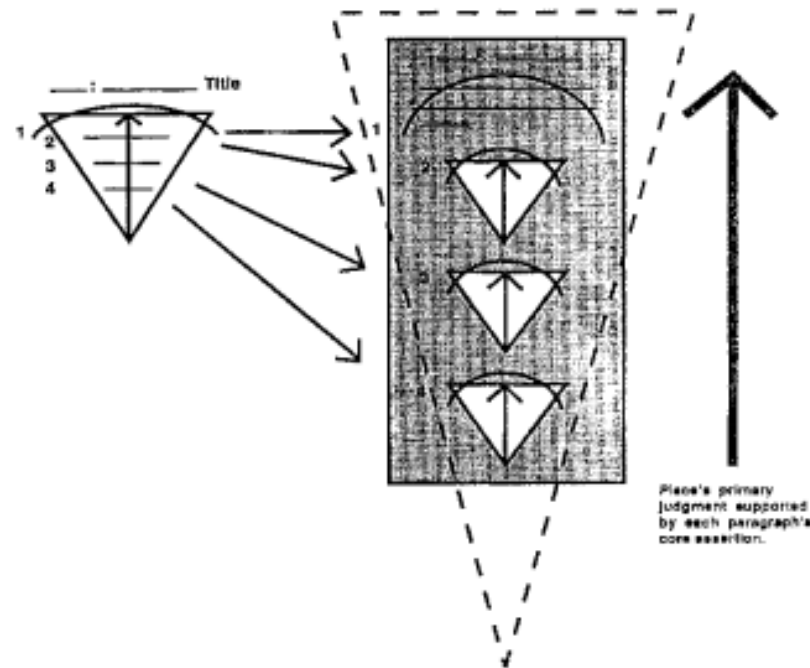


(Perhaps a bit overdone.)

Expanding a Single Paragraph to a Multiparagraph Line of Reasoning

- This process turns *version II*—a core assertion followed by supporting secondary judgments—into a series of paragraphs.
- It forms a template for a simple piece and for *each section of a longer paper*—you advance your line of reasoning as one large inverted pyramid paragraph.
- The process also illustrates how to expand your basic judgments into a longer piece and *maintain consistency of focus*.
- Go through the process of creating a version II paragraph before writing a section of a paper—this will help you keep control over your judgments and maintain consistency of focus in the section

(Ditto.)



Basic Principles of Analytic Writing

1. Determine the big picture.
2. Put conclusions first.
3. Organize logically.
4. Understand different formats.
5. Use specific language.
6. Think simple and concise.
7. Strive for clarity of thought.
8. Use the active voice.
9. Self-edit.
10. Know the reader's needs.
11. Develop patience.

Developing Analytic Objectivity

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Handling Review and Coordination

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Another training guide

A Tradecraft Primer:
Structured Analytic Techniques
for Improving Intelligence Analysis

Prepared by the US Government

March 2009

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

Introduction 1

How To Use These Techniques 5

Diagnostic Techniques 7

 Key Assumptions Check 7

 Quality of Information Check 10

 Indicators or Signposts of Change 12

 Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH) 14

Contrarian Techniques 17

 Devil's Advocacy 17

 Team A/Team B 19

 High-Impact/Low-Probability Analysis 22

 "What If?" Analysis 24

Imaginative Thinking Techniques 27

 Brainstorming 27

 Outside-In Thinking 30

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 Alternative Futures Analysis 34

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Selective Bibliography 40

Next Class: MONDAY
13 January
10:00am CET
ROOM 253A

Communicating Analysis for Impact

PREPS: 1. Sections in the guide on Words, Grammar, Sentences
Technology of Writing
What about AI?
Principles and Tips
How to Write Analysis

} pp. 77-126

2. Begin to finalize YOUR ANALYTICAL WORKSHEET.
3. Prepare BRIEFING PREPARATION FORM.

Challenges and Institutions in Global Security

Master in Global and International Studies



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