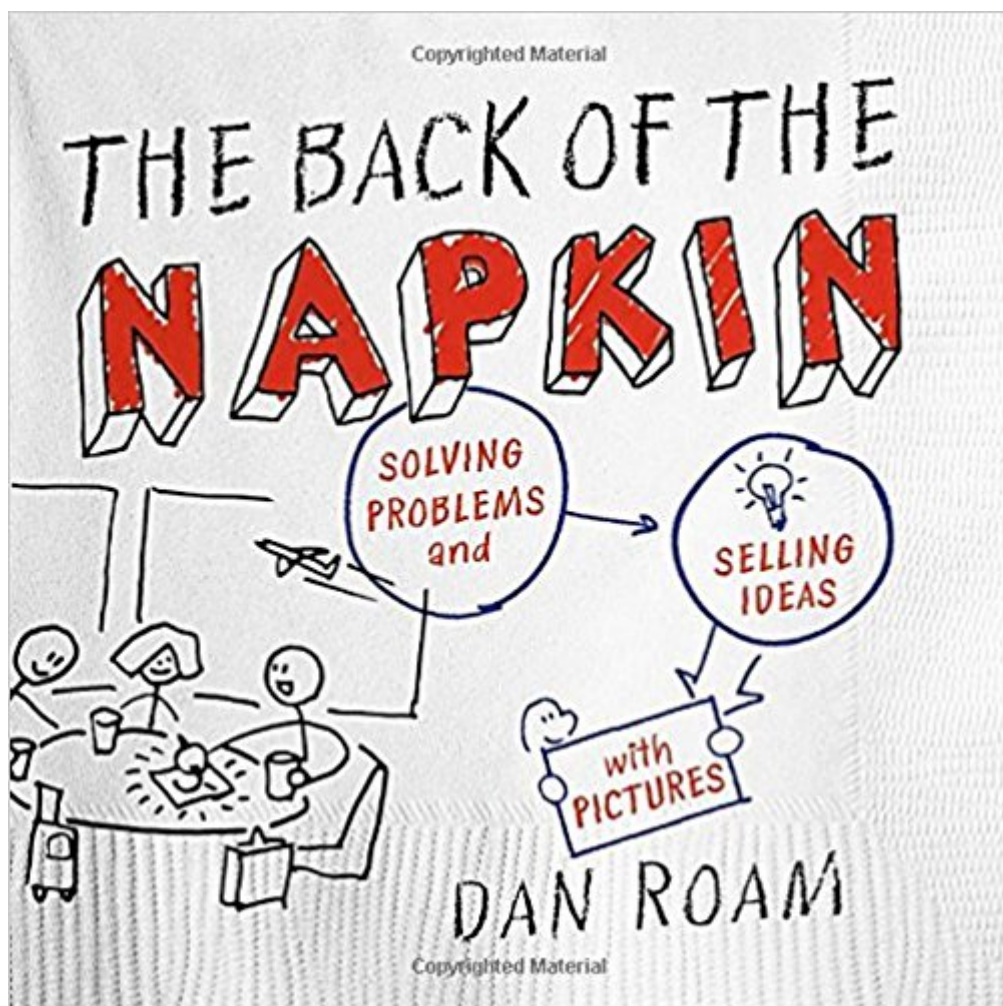The book was found

The Back Of The Napkin (Expanded Edition): Solving Problems And Selling Ideas With Pictures

Synopsis

The acclaimed bestseller about visual problem solving-now bigger and better "There is no more powerful way to prove that we know something well than to draw a simple picture of it. And there is no more powerful way to see hidden solutions than to pick up a pen and draw out the pieces of our problem."So writes Dan Roam in The Back of the Napkin, the international bestseller that proves that a simple drawing on a humble napkin can be more powerful than the slickest PowerPoint presentation. Drawing on twenty years of experience and the latest discoveries in vision science, Roam teaches readers how to clarify any problem or sell any idea using a simple set of tools.He reveals that everyone is born with a talent for visual thinking, even those who swear they can't draw. And he shows how thinking with pictures can help you discover and develop new ideas, solve problems in unexpected ways, and dramatically improve your ability to share your insights.Take Herb Kelleher and Rollin King, who figured out how to beat the traditional hub-and-spoke airlines with a bar napkin and a pen. Three dots to represent Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio. Three arrows to show direct flights. Problem solved, and the picture made it easy to sell Southwest Airlines to investors and customers.Now with more color, bigger pictures, and additional content, this new edition does an even better job of helping you literally see the world in a new way. Join the teachers, project managers, doctors, engineers, assembly-line workers, pilots, football coaches, marine drill instructors, financial analysts, students, parents, and lawyers who have discovered the power of solving problems with pictures.

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Customer Reviews

BusinessWeek's best innovation book of the yearA Fast Company best business book of the yearThe (London) Times business creativity book of the year"A must read for younger generation managers."-BusinessWeek"Roam shows that even the most analytical right-brainers can work better by thinking visually."-Newsweek"[Roam] shows you how to create simple drawings...that are simple but effective tools in breaking down complex notions and letting you share an idea across cultures and levels of expertise with aplomb."-Fast Company"As painful as it is for any writer to admit, a picture is worth a thousand words. That's why I learned so much from this book. With style and wit, Dan Roam has provided a smart, practical primer on the power of visual thinking."-Daniel H. Pink, author of A Whole New Mind"Inspiring! It teaches you a new way of thinking in a few hours-what more could you ask from a book?"-Dan Heath, author of Made to Stick"This book is a must read for managers and business leaders. Visual thinking frees your mind to solve problems in unique and effective ways."-Temple Grandin, author of Thinking in Pictures"If you observe the way people read or listen to things in the early 21st century, you realize that there aren't many of us left with a linear attention span. Visual information is much more interesting than verbal information. So if you want to make a point, do it with images, pictures or graphics...Dan Roam is the first visual consultant for the customer. And the message sticks."-Roger Black, Media design leader, author of Websites That Work"Simplicity. This is Dan Roam's message in The Back of the Napkin. We all dread business meetings with their mountains of documents and the endless bulleted power points. Roam cuts through all that to demonstrate how the use of simple drawings-executed while the audience watches-communicate infinitely better than those complex presentations. Is a picture truly worth a thousand words? Having told us how to communicate with pictures, Roam rounds out his message by explaining that 'We don't show insight-inspiring pictures because it saves a thousand words; we show it because it elicits the thousand words that make the greatest difference.' And that is communication that works."-Bill Yenne, author of Guinness: The 250 Year Quest for the Perfect Pint

As the president of Digital Roam Inc., Dan Roam has helped leaders at Microsoft, Google, Wal-Mart, the Federal Reserve, Boeing, and the U.S. Senate solve complex problems through visual thinking. Dan and his whiteboard have appeared on CNN, MSNBC, ABC News, Fox News, and NPR. He lives in San Francisco.Visit: www.thebackofthenapkin.com

Like many books, "Back of the Napkin" seems to have begun with a brilliant very short concept that someone (correctly) thought would sell like hotcakes if padded out into a full-length book. The

author really does present significant insights, but the irony is that they would have been best summarized literally on the back of a napkin, rather than dragging them out into full book form. So it reads like a 300-slide PowerPoint presentation advocating brevity.The sequel, "Unfolding the Napkin" (which I also read) is better thought out, serves more as a method, and contains more visual examples - but it still rehashes pretty much the same material as the first book in order to make its point, so reading both books was redundant in my opinion.

Using the principles of the book - keep it short. The book has 3 basic premises: (a) the RIGHT picture is worth a thousand words and (b) there are only a few basic picture types. Match the right picture to the right situation and you have powerful communications that can make the sale before losing the audience. The book does show you how to do this, and how to think about it. However, the book overthinks itself and could be better for following its own advice!Longer, more traditional review.Based perhaps on the simplicity of the title, some reviewers have expressed disappointment that this book does not provide a simple silver bullet than can turn chaos into strategic plans and market dominance, all in the space of a paper napkin. True, it does not do that. What it does provide is a bundle of silver bullets that attack specific problem types -- and then a whole bundle of "user's manuals", one for each type of bullet and each way you could use it, and that does create levels of complexity that defy the original premise.The book sets up the basic frameworks (the types of story that need to be told and the ways in which those can be depicted). The author then creates a matrix (codex) of those combinations - well, OK, we can live with that ... But then we add another level of elaboration for each of the axes of the matrix. That is where it gets pretty complicated in there. To some extent one wonders whether this extra throw-weight comes from an effort to create a "serious" book rather than "powerful business presentations for dummies". The parcel of extra pages actually are useful once you get past the point of saying "well, yeah" to the basic premises, and once you wade through them carefully and long enough. Of course that is the anti-thesis of the original idea! That could put you off the whole project, but it would also be a mistake.The book's themes and illustrations will definitely help you think about what message you are trying to sell to whom. In narrowing down your presentation to a few proven themes you will definitely force yourself to separate the essence from the "cool graphics" or the "tons to words to convince you that I really have spent a lot of time thinking about this". The truth is that if you have not convinced someone of your position, saying more of the same thing isn't going to convince them either; you need to say something that appeals to their understanding of the world. For the most part, a briefing is supposed to be short (hence "brief"), not a battle of attrition. You want a head-nod because people agree with

you, not because they are going to sleep. The approaches laid out in this book will help you get positive buy-in rather than sleepy acquiescence, and in the end that will have lasting impacts.Buy it, use it. Use the principles and frameworks. As you get familiar with them, the additional drill-downs will become clearer.

I took about a month and a half to convert a PowerPoint presentation into hand-drawn, anthropomorphized illustrations using "Back of the Napkin" (BOTN) tools.Fair amount of work, but wonderful, wonderful insights into how to "say" what I was trying to "say" in my slick PowerPoint slides. The book and tools hold your hand into much greater understanding and appreciation of how people think and receive information - and how thinking through the situation/opportunity/challenge using the BOTN methodology makes things clearer to both presenter and presentee.

I was looking all over for a book on how to use a whiteboard more effectively.I've found that in my workplace in silicon valley, everyone appreciates people who can use the whiteboard effectively to demonstrate ideas, track status or discuss problems. Interviews, meetings, trainings, demonstrations - you can express yourself so much better if you use a whiteboard. But information with some basic guidelines and a framework on how to draw was hard to come by - and almost all the folks I've worked with are no better at drawing or explaining themselves visually than I am.Then coincidently around the same, Dan Roam was invited in to give an hour long lecture at my company. I was quite fascinated when I watched the lecture- this guy really knew how to do it! As soon as I learned that he had books out there, i bought em all and I'm now half way through the first one.I really really like the way the book is structured and the examples he's used. Like any new skill one learns, you have to make it a point to practice - even copy the diagrams in the first few chapters that he uses to get you used to drawing.The layout and design of this book is very well done. You do feel like you're reading a book written by someone with a design background. The material is very lucid, non-academic and the examples are compelling.Will add more to the review once I've completed the book.

This is a book about using graphic illustrations to communicate. It has scores of illustrations, most of them simple, many of them cute, all of them hand-drawn. The author wants to teach us how to use graphics and his copious use of graphics helps make the point. Unfortunately, however, the illustrations are printed in a book format that is too small. The physical size of the printed pages is 6 1/2 x 7 with wide margins whereas a more typical page size (a book grabbed at random from a

stack on my desk) is 6 x 9. Everything about this book is too small, including the type font. The difficulty in reading the illustrations, many of which have short words and/or numbers packed into a small area around the graphic elements, distracts greatly from the flow of information. It actually had the effect on me of undermining the core idea of the book, that I should be communicating more through graphics. I propose rule #1 for graphic communications; graphics have to be easy to see and read if they are to have impact. The publisher (Penguin Group) and the author should be ashamed of themselves. The physical format they chose is oxymoronic relative to the subject matter and greatly diminishes the value of this book as a learning tool.

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