

Mapping the Power of the Mind for Business Efficiency

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DUBAI — Next time when CEOs and senior managers in Dubai sit down to plan new strategies for beating the downturn, some may start off the task with a set of basic tools: colour pencils and blank unlined paper.

The more tech-savvy among them might opt for a special software solution as well.

In both the cases, they would be using curved lines, symbols, words and images. Instead of power point presentations and bulleted lists, this time they would come up with colourful drawings — the Mind Maps.

According to their proponent Tony Buzan, Mind Maps are colourful, highly organised, memorable diagrams that work in line with human brain's natural way of doing things.

In *The Ultimate Book of Mind Maps*, the author of 85 international best-selling books says: "Mind Maps are brilliant route-maps for the memory, allowing you to organise facts and thoughts in such a way that your brain's natural way of working is engaged right from the start.

This means that remembering and recalling information later is far easier and more reliable than when using traditional note-taking techniques."

Originated in the late 1960s, Tony Buzan's Mind Maps are now used by millions of people around the world — from the very young to the very old — whenever they wish to use their minds more effectively.

So, why Mind Maps for CEOs now?

"The [economic] crisis is causing all kinds of exhilarating bankruptcies. But, all the bankruptcies are caused by one big underlying bankruptcy — the bankruptcy of thought," says the multifaceted veteran who is also a celebrated lecturer, media personality and an adviser to governments, businesses, professional bodies, universities and schools on the brain, learning and thinking skills.

"During a crisis, many people panic. Opportunities are there for only the bright people who see them and seize them. It's only when one thinks well that he will be able to do it. We are teaching the business community how to think better and find out their own solutions. It's like fishing lessons. Instead of giving fish to a person, you can teach him how to fish," he told *Khaleej Times* during his fifth visit to Dubai as part of his current tour to address leadership in times of crisis.

"Mind Map is a manifestation of the way the human brain works. It is not a specifically different technique. If you use the brain in the way it is designed to work, it works better. Mind Map is a thought tool to enhance professional and personal success," said Buzan who carries 22 fine colours, 22 medium colours and eight highlighters when globetrotting.

But in a place like Dubai, where corporate executives spend half their lives on laptops, there could be more users for his iMind Map software solution.

Apart from business heads, Buzan addressed special educators in Dubai to help them use Mind Maps for improving the skills of special needs children. Several educational institutions here have invited him to teach the technique of Mind Mapping. Also, there is a growing list of government entities and private organisations interested in Mind Mapping.

To top it all, Dubai now has the first certified Mind Mapping Instructor working with Right Selection, a company which uses Mind Maps in all its activities. No wonder Dubai is going to be featured in Buzan's next book *Mind Maps in Business* scheduled to be out by August.

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