

The Mind Mapping one-day workshop

Delivered through Buzan Training by Tony Buzan

Cost is £350 per person to attend the open workshop

“Make your brain your hobby” was the key message underpinning this workshop delivered by Tony Buzan, the creator of Mind Mapping.

I was really looking forward to learning how I can unlock my mind’s untapped potential and to become a more creative thinker. I was not disappointed!

I am not new to the concept of Mind Mapping but, with Buzan Training claiming it can “boost creativity” and “improve thought, organisation and planning”, my expectations were high.

This was the first time in years that Buzan (pictured) had run a course for the general public in the UK and the room was full of people eager to learn from the expert. The event attracted a nice mixture of L&D/education practitioners, business people and people who were just generally interested in how to become more creative.

There was a definite buzz to the event – participants were keen to learn and were open to everything Buzan had to offer. He pitched his

delivery just right – there was a minimum of jargon and plenty of stories that people could relate to and practical exercises to enjoy.

The day kicked off with a summary of Buzan’s achievements. Highlights from an impressive CV include: author of 98 books; mind-coach to members of the GB Olympic team; advisor to the governments of Singapore, Mexico and China; creator of the World Memory Championships.

Buzan then told us a story from his school days. I was wondering where it was going until I realised it served to explain why he is so passionate about learning.

A mini keynote speech about the study of creativity followed. It rather neatly linked into an entertaining exercise to benchmark the group’s current level of creativity. He asked us to think of as many uses, and non-uses, for a paperclip as we could! It highlighted that we are guilty of using less than 1 per cent of our brain’s capacity to solve problems, memorise and think creatively.

After the break, we finally began to learn about the how to create Mind Maps, and why, when following certain rules, they can improve our creative thinking.

We were also introduced to what he described as “the brain’s operations manual” – his recommendations for improving your word power, developing logic, taking up a sport and so on, to help nourish the brain and keep it sharp.

The afternoon provided us with more opportunities to create Mind Maps under Buzan’s encouraging guidance. Our doodling and colouring was interspersed with the latest findings in left- and right-brain thinking. The importance of colour and images in aiding memory was also introduced.

Buzan’s depth of knowledge of the subject is impressive. Anyone expecting a stuffy and aloof academic would be pleasantly surprised: he has an infectious enthusiasm. His relaxed, humorous and committed delivery struck the



REVIEWS



right balance between authoritative and approachable.

A well-produced course manual was supplied at the close of the workshop, which, in addition to the complementary coloured pens and drawing pad, added value to the experience. I found the information provided easily accessible. I just wish we had time to cover the practical application a bit more.

I guess, however, that Mind Maps are not for everyone. Drawing pictures and colouring in could seem childish to some but learning from the creator of Mind Maps has encouraged me to continue. It is not every day that you get to spend a whole day learning from the insights of a world-leading thinker. Personally, as a trainer, I was motivated by his positivity and it was brilliant to be able to observe his skill as a facilitator and how his use of video clips, diagrams, PowerPoint, flipcharts, stories and, of course, drawing helped transfer the learning

JASON YEOMANSON

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 POOR ★

CONTENT ★★★★★
 INNOVATION ★★★★★
 CLARITY ★★★★★
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