

DECISION EXPLORER 'TASTER' WORKSHOP COMPUTER EXERCISES

I - Overview

This is a navigation exercise so you can understand what a developed map looks like in Decision Explorer. Its purpose is to start to familiarise you with DE's structure and some of its tools. However, only one of the analysis tools-cluster-is described in this 'taster' workshop.

We are going to start by looking at a model that has already been developed in Decision Explorer. It is a focus group discussion on the impact of the introduction of a no-smoke rule at ABC Industries. Five members of staff have participated in the focus group. This particular model was not developed with the group but from the transcription of the tape recording. The questions were open-ended and the interviewer did *not* use the laddering technique (see the file - Decision Explorer and Cognitive Mapping) in asking questions. However, in mapping the transcript, the laddering technique was used.

If you use the NSFocusGroup file with the demo version of Decision Explorer, you will not be able to create new elements (even if you delete an element first) or new tabs. But you will be able to do all of the following exercises.

NOTE: For those of you who have looked at NUD*IST, you may recognise the transcript from the NoSmoke Tutorial which comes with that package.

1. Tabs

First look at the tabs at the bottom of the window.



These are different views of the same model. The tab labelled FocusGroup has the overall model in its map display side. Each of the five participants has their contributions to the focus group mapped out in different views. There are also views for 3 of the themes discussed in the focus group - company benefits, territory, and no smoke territory. There is also a tab to be used as a scratchpad.

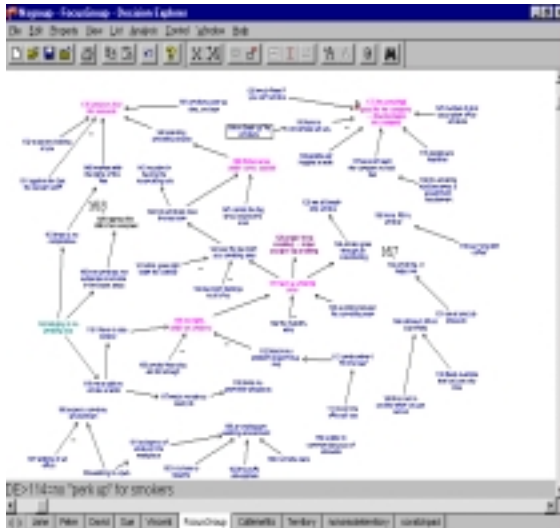
2. Views

Go through each of these views in turn. See if you can get a sense of what the focus group discussion was about. Decision Explorer assigns a number to each element of the map as you create them. If you prefer to view the map without the numbers, click on *Properties/Model Display* and untick *Show Numbers*.

On some of the maps there is a dashed arrow which leads to just a number. That refers to where this part of the model fits into the overall model. To see what element that number belongs to, type BRING in the Command Line and the number (e.g. Bring 56), and that element will come into view. (The Command Line will appear automatically at the bottom of the screen when you start typing.)

3. Display Scale

Experiment with the scale of the display. If you look at the FocusGroup view, you will notice that the writing is quite small and hard to see. You will be able to see the writing by selecting an element (*put the mouse cursor on an element and click the left mouse button*) and looking at the Command Line which appears just above the bottom scroll bar. The Command Line always begins DE>. You will see that the text of the selected element is clearly written in the Command Line. (see below)



You can change the scale of the text from the Menu Bar. **Select View/ Display Scale.** You will see that you have 6 choices. Experiment with them.

You can quickly expand or shrink the view by 5% by holding down the ALT key and pressing] (to expand) or [(to shrink).

NOTE: When you start a new map in DE the default display scale is Normal. As your map gets crowded, you should switch to Fit-to-Window view. The text will automatically shrink as you add more elements so that the map still fits on the screen.

4. Text Display

You have been looking at the map display side of all the views up to now. But each view is like a piece of paper with two sides - on one side is the map display and on the other side is text. To switch from 'one side of the paper to the other' go to the Menu Bar and **select View**. You will see that you can then select either, **Map Display** or **Text Display**. **Select Text Display**.

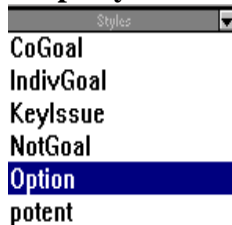


5. Text Display

Go through the views now in Text Display mode. The text side is where results of various types of analysis are placed. If you look at the text display side of Vincent, you will see the results of a search (using the FIND command) for the elements containing the word 'smoke'. As these are results of analyses, it does not matter if they are overwritten as you can always run the search again (and if you are adding new material to the map you will want to run the analysis again). However, there may be results of certain analyses you want to keep. You can protect the view, so it does not become overwritten by going to the Menu Bar and *selecting* **View/ Protect View**.

6. Styles

You will have noticed that some of the elements (concepts) in the map are different colours. That is because they have been coded to a particular style. To see what styles have already been assigned to this project, go to the Menu Bar and *select* **Property/ Show Style Selector**. (See below.)



You can see that styles have been set up for Company Goal (CoGoals), Individual Goals, Key Issues, Not Goal, Option, and Potent.

To see which elements (concepts) have been assigned to these styles, move to the view marked ScratchPad. Then type in the Command Line (the Command Line will appear automatically when you start typing), L then press the ENTER Key. This will give you a list of all the elements (concepts) in the model.

NOTE: If you accidentally activate the Command Line, press the ESC key to get out of it.

The style selector will still be in the upper right hand corner. Click on one of the fuchsia coloured elements. You will see in the style selector that the style KeyIssues will be highlighted. Scroll down until you come to a purple element. Click on it and you will see in the style selector that the style NotGoal will be highlighted. Check out the other colours in the list.

Another way to check what elements are assigned to a style is to type in the Command Line: L followed by the name of the style. E.g. L CoGoal. Check out each style in this way. [Do not worry about overwriting the lists.]

7. Sets

An element can be assigned to only one style but it can be assigned or coded to many different sets. To check what sets already exist in this model, type in the Command Line: LS. Ignore for the moment the sets that begin with cluster and hieset. These were generated by using DE's analysis tools. Cluster is covered later in this 'taster workshop'. But you can see that each respondent in the focus group discussion

belongs to a set e.g. Jane, Vincent etc. And there is a set for smokers and a set for non-smokers.

To check out what elements are in a particular set, first make sure you are in another view (except for the Focus Group view) by clicking on its tab. Then, type in the command line: L and the name of the set. Do this for the non-smoker set (L nonsmokers). Explore more sets. To remind yourself what sets there are, just click on the ScratchPad tab where they will still be listed.

8. Clusters

Clusters are ways of 'chunking' large models into manageable parts. They are a natural set of linked elements (concepts) which do not overlap. They are useful for identifying themes in a map. We will not be discussing them in detail in this 'taster workshop'.

A cluster analysis has already been performed for this map. You can tell because clusters appear in the list of sets you generated above. There are 8 clusters in this map. They are named Cluster1, Cluster2 etc. Examine the elements in each cluster to determine what 8 themes reflect the content of the focus group. You can do this by listing the elements by using the command - L Cluster1. Or you can see them mapped out by using the command Map Cluster1. Write out the 8 themes that they suggest when you finish. Think about whether it matches the general impression you had of the map when you first checked out each view.

9. Boolean Searches

You can use boolean searches to pull out different combinations of sets. The command LSS stands for List Set Similarities. It is the boolean 'and'. You can use it here to see what smokers had to say about territory issues. In the command line, type LSS smokers territory. Then do the same for non-smokers and compare the results.

10. Memo Cards

Each element (concept) can have a memo card where you can write additional information about the element. Element no. 34 has a memo card already. You can tell because there is a paper clip symbol next to the element. To view the memo card, click on the element with the right mouse button. A pop-up menu will appear. Click on View Memo Card. The memo card will now appear. To close it, click on the upper right hand corner of the card.

To create a memo card, right click on an element and select in the pop-up menu box, View Memo Card. An empty memo card will appear. Give it a title and type what you want in the box. Try writing a memo card.

This is the end of the 'taster' workshop of Decision Explorer. I hope you have a better understanding of the structure of the software and some of the things you can do with it.