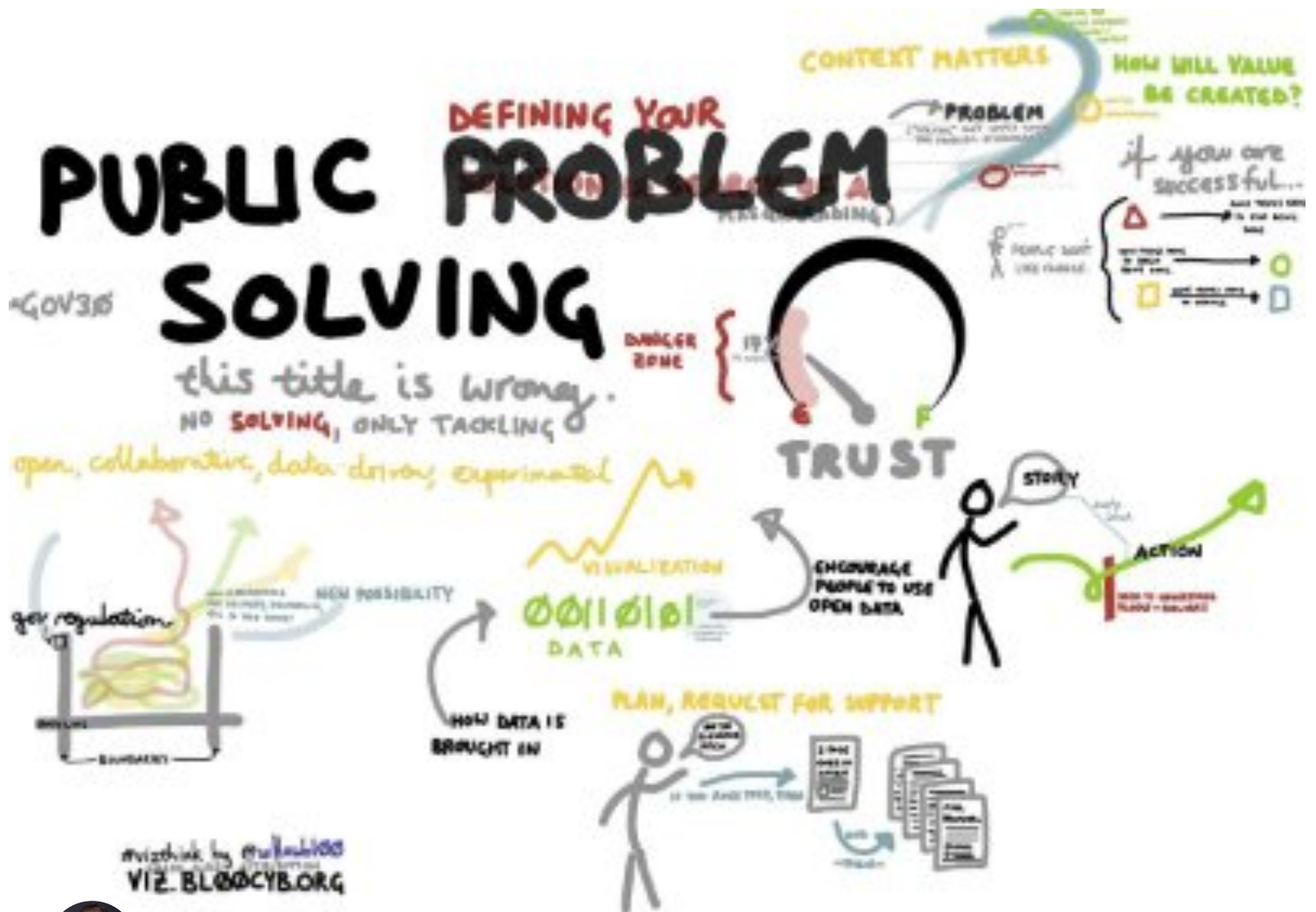




Nigel Green

VPEC-T: A Ten Minute How To Guide

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VPEC-T is a technique for solving knotty problems, and stimulating innovative designs. It was first used to solve a tricky problem in UK Criminal Justice in 2006, but has since been applied to a multitude of different problem solving situations: market sense-making, business process improvement, I.T. requirements, social, and personal challenges.

Following my recent post "[Making Sense Of A Pluralistic World](#)", this is a practical "How To" guide for those interested in the thinking discussed.

VPEC-T problem solving needs a clear context to frame the thinking - and this starts with a question. Here are a few of the questions explored with VPEC-T:

Criminal Justice: How do we improve the accuracy and timeliness of information shared between the Police and the Prosecution Service?

Child Protection: How can the various agencies involved in Child Welfare share information about children at risk without sharing case file details?

Energy Utility (China): How can we share information with a U.S. based ‘Energy Optimization Service’ SaaS provider without breaching Data Sovereignty regulations & our Customer data protection needs?

Energy Utility (China): How do we create a Cyber Security culture? And how do we measure adoption of good security habits?

High Street Bank: How can we deliver one seamless experience to our customers, and at the same time, maintain independent Lines Of Business internally?

Retail Company UK: How can we adopt a event-sourcing/Microservices architecture?

Food & Beverage Brand: How do explain to my bosses why the current global ERP mandate is un-workable and will lead to an expensive failure?

Cloud-based IoT Start-up: We understand the value of an Event-Driven /Event-Sourcing architecture, but we’re not clear on how we handle the sharing of event data across user defined, multi-company, Value Networks in a way that protects sensitive data?

A Line Manager: How should I go about providing comprehensive 360 feedback about my bosses, colleagues and staff?

Once the question is clear, it’s worth spending a few moments thinking about the five VPECT dimensions: Values, Policies, Events, Content and Trust.

Figure 1.

(Click to see a more [readable diagram](#)).

The aim of this map is to provide a starter-for-ten checklist of things you might consider when doing a VPEC-T analysis - whether sitting at your desk, or in a workshop. A full poster size version is available for workshops. (see note at the end of this post).

Think about the particular problem/topic you want to explore and either make a note of the “Stations” on the map (Figure 1) that seem most applicable, or develop your own areas to explore under each dimension: V-P-E-C-T. Also consider how each dimension affects behavior: V Defines, P Directs, E Triggers, C Informs and T Dominates (Figure 2).

Figure 2.

It doesn't matter which dimension you explore first, for example: a Criminal Justice question might start with Values or Trust, on the other hand, a design question about the applicability of a Microservices architecture might consider Events first ([Event-Storming](#) is a great starting point). However, to get the most from the framework, make sure you spend time on all five aspects.

Please bear in mind VPEC-T is a [heuristic approach to problem solving](#), and as such, doesn't prescribe a method or practice. Those who use it, however, claim it helps them [answer often-difficult questions and consider alternative solutions](#). And some have found it stimulates

more innovative design.

Just for the fun of it, here are a few of my VPEC-T exercise questions from the master class I'm currently working on:

| *What should you highlight in your Resume?*

| *How would you improve your experience of I.T. at work?*

| *What are the implications for U.S. foreign policy in the Trump presidency?*

| *What might be the impact of Brexit on the U.K. and on the rest of the world?*

| *Is Global Warming a myth or reality?*

*The VPEC-T framework was first published in our book "[Lost In Translation](#)". If you have 3 minutes you can help me with shaping my [next book](#), and VPEC-T training material [here](#). **You'll get a free Navigating VPEC-T poster in return.***

Additional links that help explain how the thinking is applied:

See how VPEC-T the [Found In Design](#) tools are being applied to a large scale change programme [here](#).

* [On Wikipedia](#) * [A Review](#) * (Google search "VPEC-T" for others).

Thanks, Nigel.

Credits:

Event Storming [Daniel Whittaker](#)

Artwork: [@willowbloo](#)

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