



**Name of Process: *ToP Historical Scan Process***  
**(also known as Wall of Wonder, Environmental Analysis or Trends Analysis)**

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| <b>Intent</b>                    | Reviewing the past to prepare for the future—to enable a group to share and learn from their varied perspectives of a journey through history.  |
| <b>Use</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a context for future planning</li> <li>• Reviewing action plans</li> <li>• Project evaluation</li> <li>• Creating a meaningful story of a group’s experience</li> <li>• Discerning the historical roots of conflict</li> <li>• Analyzing trends and directions</li> <li>• Personal reflection</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Recommended size of group</b> | Typically 10-20, although it can be adapted for individual use or with large groups (100 or more).  |
| <b>Optimal time needed</b>       | From half an hour to two hours or more, depending on the size of the group and the depth and richness of the product ownership desired.   |
| <b>Level of participation</b>    | Very high—involving individual and small group work as well as plenary discussion.  |
| <b>Difficulty to facilitate</b>  | The method draws heavily on the ToP Focused Conversation and Consensus Workshop Methods, therefore knowledge of these is helpful but good basic facilitation skills will be sufficient  |
| <b>Resources needed</b>          | A “sticky wall” (a large piece of rip stop nylon fabric, sprayed with remount spray) or similar so you can post up a lot of data. Otherwise a large wall where you can use A5 post-its or A5 cards with tape loops. In addition you need: Mixed colours, broad tip magic markers—enough for everyone; a large number of A5 cards or A5 size post-its in different colours; some “dots” or “stars” to stick on the cards during the exercise. You can ask people in advance to bring mementos of various sorts to share, e.g. photos, documents, souvenirs, etc. |
| <b>Pre-work required</b>         | Preparation of space—a circle of chairs or an U-shaped table, or small cabaret-style tables and chairs for a larger group facing the sticky wall. Preparation of A4 or larger sheets for Focus Questions, row & column headings, chapter & overall titles and trends; and perhaps table instructions on a flip chart page, power point, overhead slides or handouts for a larger group.   |
| <b>Follow-up required</b>        | Documentation and circulation of the workshop product and/or following learning points, discussions or decisions.   |



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| <p><b>Placing cards on the wall</b></p> | <p><b>Placing the data on cards: Each group should—</b><br/>         Select 8 to 10 items that were significant in shaping this time period.<br/>         Select some from each of the levels down the side.<br/>         Be sure to select from across the time period.<br/>         Remind them to be sure that the date and level are indicated on the card.</p> <p><b>Collect two cards from each group and put these up. Ask for questions of clarity.</b> Continue putting up cards until all are up.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Organising</b></p>                | <p><b>REFLECT ON WHAT’S UP THERE:</b><br/>         Which are public events you observed? You participated in?<br/>         What have we forgotten to mention? Add cards if needed.</p> <p><b>DIVIDE THE WHOLE TIME INTO 4-6 DISTINCT PERIODS</b><br/>         Where do you see 2 or 3 cards in the same timeframe which together mark or “symbolise a period” (put a star on each)?<br/>         Where else? Which events or times signal for you the turning points or shifts from one period to another? Locate these using arrow cards.</p>  | <p><b>Have sticker dots, stars or a marker to mark the cards pointed out by the group. Have cards with an arrow drawn up.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>Naming</b></p>                    | <p><b>Quickly give each of the newly created time periods a 2-4 word descriptive title which captures what was happening.</b><br/>         Do this by reflection briefly on each period;<br/>         What was going on?<br/>         What was unique<br/>         What was the mood?<br/>         This was the time of _____<br/>         Repeat for each period.</p> <p><b>NAME THE ERA</b><br/>         If we were to write a book on this time period or create a television series, what title would we give to this? Get a number of answers.</p>   | <p><b>Have coloured cards ready for the titles</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Reflection</b></p>                | <p><b>Looking across the time; where do you see things which are related in that they are part of the same major trend moving across this whole period.</b><br/>         Put a symbol on cards making up one trend.<br/>         Identify 3-7 different trends using different symbols.</p> <p><b>Name the major trends</b><br/>         Using a flip chart page placed to the right of the wall, talk through and name each of the directions (trends)</p> <p><b>Let the wall speak back to us.</b><br/>         We created this art form in the last hour or so. Now sit back and let it address us.<br/>         What is it saying to you individually?<br/>         What is it saying to us as a group?</p> | <p><b>Have flip chart paper ready</b></p> <p><b>Have someone ready to take notes during this conversations since it is very important to document these reflections.</b></p> |

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| <b>Closing</b> | <p><b>Reflect on the exercise.</b><br/>         What happened to you as we worked?<br/>         What happened to us as a group as we worked?<br/>         How are we different?<br/>         Thinking back over what we did, where were key insights or revelations for you?</p> <p><b>List the implications</b><br/>         One more question:<br/>         How has this exercise pushed your understanding of who we are?</p> <p>What new issues, questions, insights have emerged for you?</p> <p>What practical implications do you see for us and our work?</p> <p><b>Closing and announcements</b></p> | <p><b>Have a flip chart paper ready on which to list the implications.</b></p> |
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*This is an illustration. You can have as many categories down the side as you want but they should move from the most immediate toward the global; the same for the time periods.*

## Title (name of group)

|                                  | 1990—1995 | 1995—2000 | 2000—2005 | 2005—2007 |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Our group</b>                 |           |           |           |           |
| <b>The larger organisation</b>   |           |           |           |           |
| <b>Our nation (region, etc.)</b> |           |           |           |           |
| <b>The world</b>                 |           |           |           |           |

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**The International Association of Facilitators**  
<http://www.iaf-world.org>  
 For more information about “The Methods Workbook”  
 contact the European Regional Representative at [rep.europe@iaf-world.org](mailto:rep.europe@iaf-world.org).  
 Publication of this method by the IAF should not be understood to be either an endorsement or recommendation of the method.