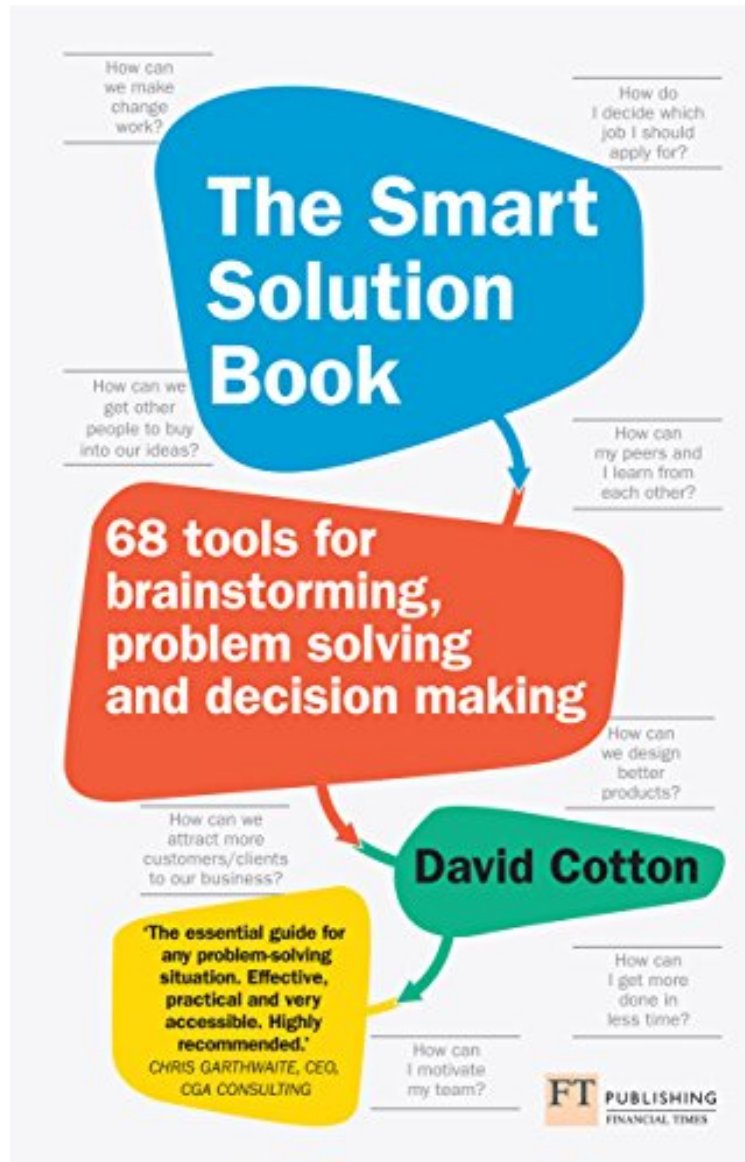


(Read now) The Smart Solution Book: 68 Tools for Brainstorming, Problem Solving and Decision Making

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David Cotton

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David Cotton : The Smart Solution Book: 68 Tools for Brainstorming, Problem Solving and Decision Making before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Smart Solution Book: 68 Tools for Brainstorming, Problem Solving and Decision Making:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Find your favorites By investing by the books Some books will hardly blow your mind but they can still broaden your professional toolbox and as such be very handy and practical.

Independent on which line of business you are in you will have to solve problems and this book presents a number of tools for doing this. David Cotton is a former employee of Arthur Andersen and PwC turned freelance corporate trainer and author. The focus of many of the solutions Cotton discusses is to use the so-called wisdom of the crowd; or at least a small group; to generate the desired results or insights. The book has a center part where each of the 68 problem solving techniques gets a short chapter. The tools are further divided into those that are more suitable for individuals and small groups, for larger groups and for groups engaged in business games. In reality though, many of the methods can be scaled up or down to work for groups of varying sizes so the division is hardly set in stone. Two introductory chapters and one closing chapter frame all these methodologies. In the introduction Cotton discusses which tools to use plus some problem solving essentials. The text on essentials I found to be perhaps the most rewarding part of the book as it looks to more overarching and general themes in problem solving such as the stages the process often contains and the problems that frequently occur. Then the closing chapter very briefly discusses how to share and implement the solutions that have been generated. For each method Cotton starts the section with a description of the tool, when to use it and what is needed in terms of material. Then he presents a chronological checklist on how to practice it and finally brings forward the potential pitfalls in its usage. The recurring headlines make it very easy to get a grip of each tool but it also makes reading the book from start to finish a bit choppy. Each of the 68 tools is presented over 1 to 4 pages. Some are more elaborate but some are quite simple. The author places a heavy emphasis on activities meant to foster free associations and to get everybody in a group to contribute their creativity; improved varieties of collective brainstorming. Often the methods are meant to get to the core of a problem or to bring forward details around it through harvesting the opinions of many and without letting dominating persons in the group biasing the solution generation process. When there are so many tools to choose from it is easy to find a number of personal favorites. I appreciated some like Cartesian Logic (#7), GROW (#13), Osborn-Parnes's Critical Problem Solving Process (#15), Deming's PDSA Cycle (#21) and Challenging Assumptions (#29) that helps you structure the problem solving process; Reverse Brainstorming (#5), Appreciative Inquiry (#16), Who Else Has Solved This Problem (#31) and Retirement Speeches (#58) that allow you to change perspectives; and finally The Ripple Effect (#39), The Solution Effect Analysis (#43) and Action Learning (#49) which allow you to analyze the potential consequences of a proposed solution before it is implemented. Still, the tools portrayed in The Smart Solution Book are in my view mainly targeting the internal or external person who is to lead exercises at corporate events. For me this is a bit too narrow to generate a top rating. For someone that is about to host such a session it could instead prove very useful. Indeed, simply finding one tool that solves the Gordian knot and delivers the business result required would obviously make the book a bargain. This is a review by investingbythebooks.com

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION OF PROBLEM-SOLVING TOOLS, GAMES AND TECHNIQUES USED BY BRAINSTORMERS, GAMECHANGERS AND TRAILBLAZERS. As working life becomes more complex, we are increasingly faced with problems which may at first seem insoluble. The Smart Solution Book is your guide to solving these problems, whatever their size. The Smart Solution Book explains each tool in detail; what it is, when and how to use it, its strengths and its limitations. The tools range from quick fixes, which can be used by someone working alone, to large scale solutions which can be used by groups of 100 and more. You can also use the tools separately or in combination with each other. Frame problems so they can be solved. Find a solution to even the most intractable problem. Enjoy the process of problem solving, whether alone or in collaboration with others. Become more creative in your thinking so that, over time, solutions begin to present themselves. The Smart Solution Book will change your way of thinking about business problems: apply the techniques and see the solutions unfold. "The essential guide for any problem solving situation. Effective, practical and very accessible. Highly recommended." Chris Garthwaite, CEO CGA Consulting "There isn't a single individual or organisation that could fail to benefit from the many practical approaches to problem-solving in this book. Everyone should read it!" Andrew Hilton, Managing Director, Corporate Training Partnerships Ltd "F. Durrenmatt says 'What concerns everyone, can only be solved by everyone' - and David's book is the practical guide to getting everyone fully engaged with a creative technique to solve any of your challenges." Peter Schwanhütter, Partner, papilio ag, Zurich

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The Smart Solution Book will change your way of thinking about business problems: apply the techniques and see the solutions unfold. About the Author David Cotton spent 21 years with Arthur Andersen and PwC before becoming a freelance trainer in 2002. He has worked in four continents and more than 40 countries, delivering a wide range of training in management, leadership, communication skills, business networking, confidence building, dealing with difficult people, change management, business strategy, coaching and mentoring.

David's clients span local and national government and nearly every industry sector and include the European Parliament, European Commission and many of its agencies, the United Nations, BBC, Syrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Russian Federal Commission, Croatian MOD, PwC, most of the major Middle Eastern oil and gas companies, Manchester Business School and many others. He has published scores of articles and more than a dozen books, including Key Management Development Models (FT Publishing, 2015).