# Strategy finder

# GUIDE GETTING STARTED

by Prof Dr Colin Eden, Jan 2025



# Strategyfinder Consulting Software GmbH FN 623983y, ATU80524309 Muenichreiterstrasse 25 A-1130 Vienna Austria First Edition, Jan 2025 Author Copyright © Colin Eden ISBN: 978-3-903556-01-0

All rights reserved. No part of this publication or the information contained herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, by photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the publisher's written permission. The processing or reproduction of this publication using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized use of AI for copying, translating, summarizing, or otherwise transforming this content in any form is a violation of our intellectual property rights. Legal actions will be taken against any parties that breach these restrictions.

Although all care is taken to ensure the integrity and the quality of this publication and the information herein, no responsibility is assumed by the publishers nor the author for any damage to the property or persons as a result of the operation or use of this publication and the information contained herein.



# **Contents**

Getting Started with Using Strategyfinder	4
Step 1: Log on to Strategyfinder	4
Step 2: Create a new Model  Entering a statement	
Moving a statement	5
Editing a statement	6
Step 3: Try some simple brainstorming  Create a new tab/view	
Rename the 'new view' called View 2.	6
Zooming and Panning	7
Thematic/Topic clusters	7
Using Categories: Providing a topic title for the clusters	8
Listing and editing from a list	9
Searching for statements	10
The brainstorm might be complete at this stage	10
Step 4: Develop the Structure of the 'brainstorm'	
Changing links	11
Re-organise layout to show structure	11
Step 5: Analysis  Count in- /outgoing links	
Detect loops / Loop potency	14
Step 6: Viewing different aspects of the model  Create a map showing all dependencies or influences of a statement	
Show hidden links	16
Hide statements from a view/tab	17
Step 7: Categorising the material – goals, strategies, options, actions	18
Possible Issues in Using Strategyfinder	19
CATALOGUE STRATEGYFINDER MANUALS AND GUIDES MANAGING THE SOFTWARE PLATFORM	20
STRATEGYFINDER PRIMARY USES - METHODS	21

# Strategy **→** finder

SYSTEMIC RISK MANAGEMENT	21
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	21
TEAM SOLUTION FINDING – MANAGING MESSY AND COMPLEX PROBLEMS	22
OTHER TRIED AND TESTED USES FOR STRATEGYFINDER	23
FACILITATOR GUIDES	24
THE STRATEGYFINDER WEBSITE https://www.Strategyfinder.com	24

# Getting Started with Using Strategyfinder

This document provides a quick way of getting to know *Strategyfinder* as a 'single user' (no other participants).

You may have just been supplied with access to *Strategyfinder*: either as a purchaser or as someone with access to *Strategyfinder* belonging to someone else. In either case you will have been given access through a given email address and password. You will hive been given access either as an Administrator or as a SuperUser (if you have been given access as a User – participant – then ask for the access to be changed to SuperUser so that you have access to all of the features of *Strategyfinder*). You may wish to use this guide by completing only the first 3 steps. Note that there is also a *Strategyfinder* – the Basics manual without a use example that will be helpful.

# Step 1: Log on to Strategyfinder

It is better, if possible, to use a computer that is connected to a monitor (preferably greater then 21"). This is not essential but does allow you to see more material on the screen without having to Zoom or Pan.

Open any web browser.

Access: YOURNAME. *Strategyfinder*.com where "YOURNAME" is the name of the *Strategyfinder* server you have been given access to.

The login page will appear:





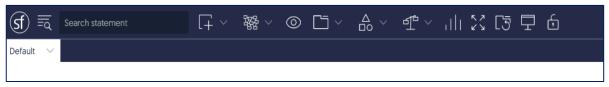
Enter the Email address and Password you have been given and click on Login:



# Step 2: Create a new Model



The following appears: the main 'icons'/menus that you will use, and a blank 'white board'

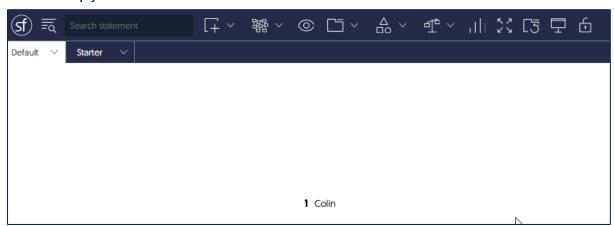


The blank 'view' has a tab name of 'Default'. As your experiment bin getting started continues you will create new tabs/views to show different aspects of the model you create.

# Entering a statement

The default tab/view is usually used for participants to enter their name in order to show they are fully logged on to *Strategyfinder*. In your case you are the only participant, so add your name to the view by 'double clicking' anywhere on the white space, typing your name, and hitting the 'enter' key.

Your name will now appear on your screen (if there were other participants then their name would also appear on this 'default' view). Your name will have the number "1" against it. This is simply a reference number.



# Moving a statement

Click on the statement, hold the mouse click down and move the statement.

# Editing a statement

Double click on the statement. Edit the statement (note that a spell checker works) and then hit 'enter'.

# Step 3: Try some simple brainstorming<sup>1</sup>

Choose a topic, for example: "what do I want from my next vacation?"

The topic may, of course, relate to a work problem you are trying address, or to a personal situation (as in the example). But, bear in mind that this document is about 'getting started' and so the topic need not be a real situation, but should be one where there is some degree of complexity, so that different features of *Strategyfinder* can be experienced.

# Create a new tab/view

Click on the '+' at the top right, just under the back icon



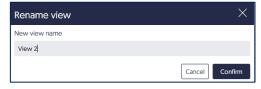
A new view will appear and it will be called "View 2".

Rename the 'new view' called View 2.

Click the drop down chevron next to "View 2" label:

Click on 'Rename view'.



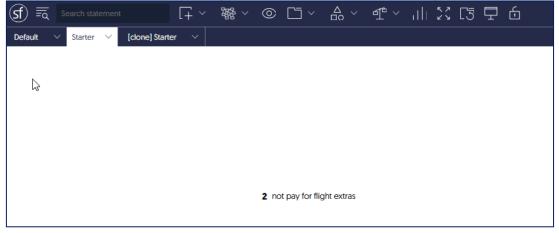




And type a new name for the view, for example "Starter"

Brainstorm the topic: what do I want from my next vacation?

Double click on the white space type an feature or requirement of your next vacation.

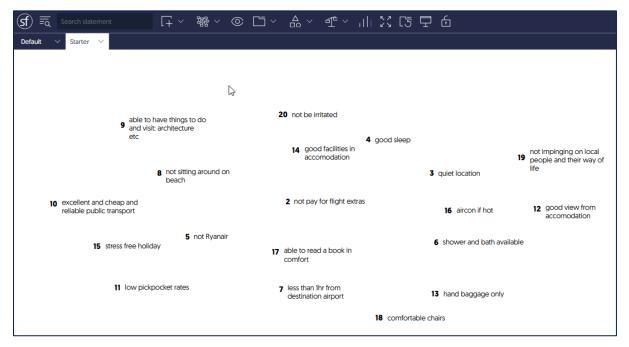


<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> There is a *Strategyfinder* manual available that provides full details of running a Brainstorming workshop with multiple participants -



For example, the first feature stated here is "not pay for flight extras" and it will automatically be given the next reference number: "2".

# Continue to add statements:



19 statements have been added to the "Starter" view. They have been scattered around the 'white board'.

# Zooming and Panning

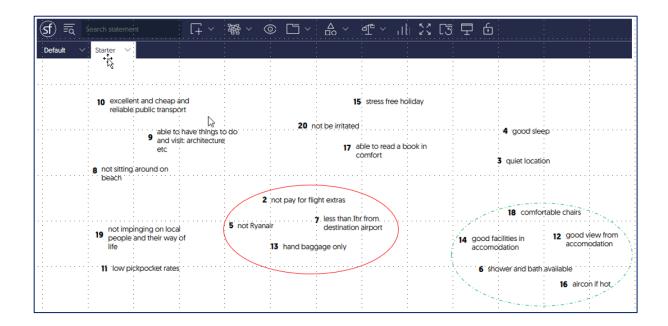
Sometimes there may not be enough space to add all the statement required. In this case the material can be zoomed – where the statement each become smaller and so leave more space on the view. To zoom in or out simply use the scroll on the mouse.

If statements are now so small they are difficult to read then zoom in to make them larger and then 'pan' the material in order to see a part of the material. Pan by holding down the right click and moving the material.

# Thematic/Topic clusters

They could be moved around the view into clusters representing themes or topics. This is not an essential process. Sometimes clustering can be helpful in providing an initial summary view<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> When using *Strategyfinder* for multi-participant workshops such as Solution Finding, Strategy Finding, Systemic Risk Mitigation etc the manual suggests clustering as an important way to engage the group with an initial 'gathering' if statements from the participants – see *Strategyfinder* manuals for full detail of this process.



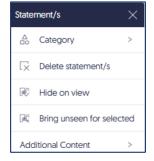
In the example we can see that the statements have been moved to create 6 clusters. For example, the cluster with a solid oval (red) is about flying, and the dashed (green) oval is about accommodation.

Using Categories: Providing a topic title for the clusters

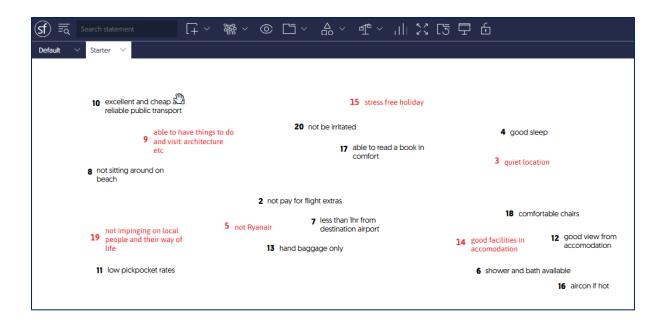
It can be helpful to provide a 'tag' for each cluster, that can act as a reminder of the cluster topic. This is particularly useful when there are a large number of clusters.

For each cluster choose one of the statements that best describes the topic of the cluster:

- i) select these statements by holding down the shift or ctrl key and clicking on each statement in turn.
- ii) right click one of the statements and a selection box appears:



Choose 'Category' and a new selection box is added showing a range of 5 default categories: GOALS, STRATEGY, ACTION, Option, FOCUS. Click on 'FOCUS' and the selected statements will change to red. Thus, the topics are now shown in red, with one topic for each cluster:



# Listing and editing from a list

Use the Show/Hide statement list icon at the top left



This will list all the statements.

Statements not on the tab/view will harm against them.

This icon can be clicked to bring the statement on to the tab/view.

Clicking on allows the statement to be edited from the list.

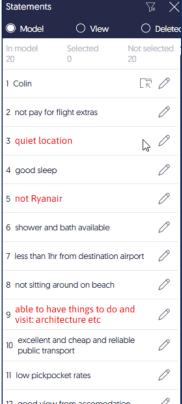
Edits will mean the statement is changed throughout the model:

on all views and all lists

Clicking the funnel icon allows the list to be made for each of the Categories in use. For example, click on FOCUS (which is shown to have 6 statements in the list) and the list will be modified to show only those statements.

Similarly, the buttons can show a list of statements on the current view or deleted statements:

O View O Deleted

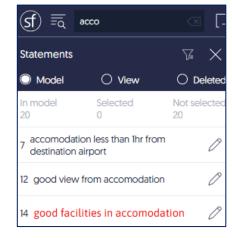


# Searching for statements

Use the Search facility at the top left. A search can be conducted on any text, including

numbers.

Here the search was to find all statements about accommodation:



The brainstorm might be complete at this stage

and often is when working with a group. That is the manager/leader may now have enough ideas to work with<sup>3</sup>.

# Step 4: Develop the Structure of the 'brainstorm'

The material/statements are usually not independent of each other. One statement may have a causal impact on another. For example, #10 excellent and cheap and reliable public transport may be believed to have a positive impact on #15 stress free holiday.

# Linking

Adding a link (arrow) FROM #10 to #15 will show this dependence. The statement at the head of the arrow will usually represent the outcome (usually the outcome that is desired of the 2 statements). In the example the desired outcome is a stress-free holiday and public transport contributes to this outcome – it is one, of possibly many, 'causes'.

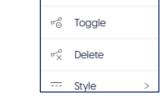
To add a link/arrow:

hover over the statement number of the statement to be at the 'tail' of the arrow and a

'cross' appears;

hold the mouse left button down and move the cursor; an arrow will appear;

with the cursor move the arrowhead to cover the statement to which the arrow is to go; release the mouse button.



Change direction

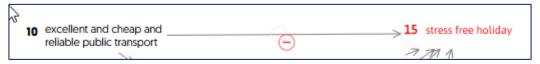
Link

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> See the *Strategyfinder* – Brainstorming manual

# Changing links

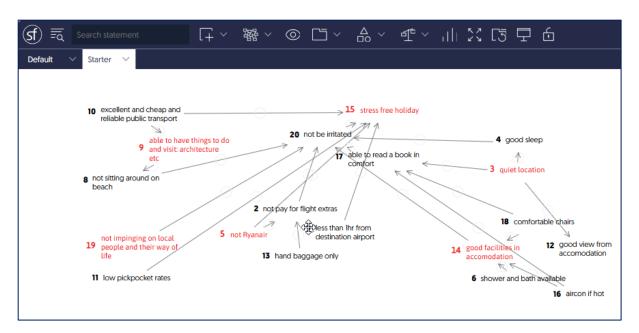
Right click on the arrow:

'Toggle' allows a minus-sign to show on the arrow indicating that the statement at the tail of the arrow has a negative impact on the statement at the head of the arrow. Thus:



The above would mean that excellent public transport would lead to 'not' stress free holiday.

'Style' enables the use of dashed or dotted arrows, highlighted (red) arrows, and a return to the default arrow.



The above figure shows one possible vicious cycle related to vaccination – the arrows represent the direction of causality.

# Re-organise layout to show structure

Having linked the statements it can be very helpful to see the network – causal map – laid out as a hierarchy, with outcomes at the top and influences at the bottom.

However, it is often useful to retain the 'messy' structure for future reference to the initial 'starter' view.

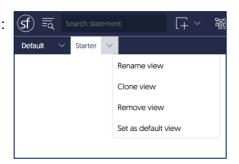
There are 2 obvious ways of re-organising the causal map:

i) use the 'clone view and re-arrange' option. This will create a new view/tab and re-organise the current tab into a hierarchy.

ii) make a clone of the view and manually re-arrange. This way can be helpful because it can act as a review of statements and links, and often leads the addition of other ideas.

RECALL that any changes in links and edits of statements will be reflected in all views and lists.

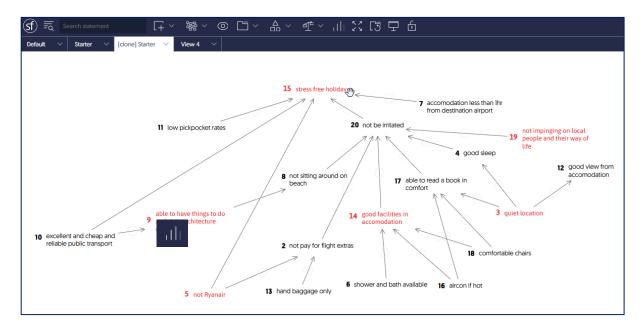
Use the tab/view drop down menu:



Select 'Clone view' and Strategyfinder creates a copy of the view in a new tab/view:

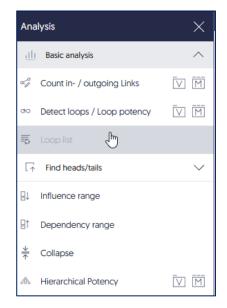


The causal map can now be manually re-organised to create a hierarchy without disturbing the layout of the 'Starter' view – although as edits and changes in links are made they will be reflected in all views and lists.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> A full description can be found in Strategyfinder - Analysis Manual

# Strategy finder



Many of the analyses shown can undertake the analysis on the current view/tab or on the whole model: choose either of ...

The most often used analyses are at the top of the list.

# Count in- /outgoing links

produces a list where the tabs provide a count of number of Outgoings, Ingoings, or both Ins/Outs.

For the example brainstorm the following results appear when requested for the whole



The analysis of Ins/Outs often gives an indication of central statements that if deleted then the model would change significantly. In the statistics above we see that #7 is central to the causal map, with 7 links to/from it, which possibly indicates a key-criteria for the holiday!

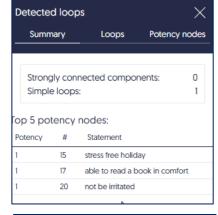
# Detect loops / Loop potency

Often causal maps reveal vicious and virtuous cycles that are likely to be very significant for finding effective solutions to problems or developing sound strategies. This option finds and feedback loops shown in the causal map.

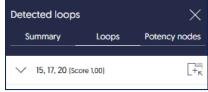
Often the loops discovered prove to be erroneous and the result of incorrect linking. However, the analysis enables a new view to be automatically created showing a loop so that it can be validated.

Our brainstorm model has no loops. However, let us suppose that we believe that a stress-free holiday will facilitate reading a book in comfort (a plausible belief!) then there would be a link from #15 to #17. Adding this link to the model and then using the Detect loops analysis

will show:



Clicking on the 'Loops' tab shows:



And clicking on the icon will mean that a new tab is created and a map of the loops shown.

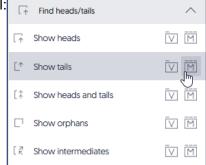
The 'Potency nodes' tab in the analysis reveals which of the statements in many lops are drivers for most loops. In the example we have only one loop and so all statements in loops have the same potency.



# Find heads/tails

This analysis provides for many straightforward searches that can be undertaken on the

current view or on the whole model:



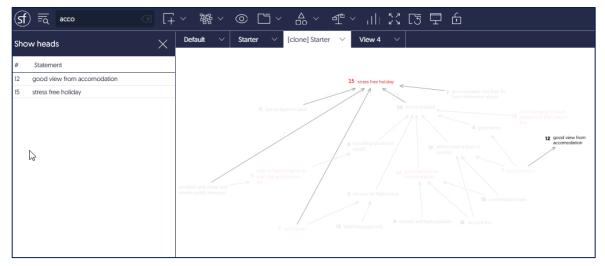
Show heads reveals all statements with no out-arrows – final outcomes that are often 'Goals'.

Show tails reveals all statement with no in-arrows – drivers.

Show orphans reveals all statement with no in or out-arrows – disconnected from the rest of the causal map (often because they were missed when considering links and so might now be linked).

Show intermediates reveals all of the statements that have both in and out-arrows.

The reveal from the analysis greys out all of the statements on the current view that are not meeting the requirement of the analysis. Thus, for reveal of heads we see:



Note that after the analysis, in order to get that map without greyed out statements, use the 'Reset view' icon on the top row

All other analysis options are discussed in the Analysis manual.

# Step 6: Viewing different aspects of the model

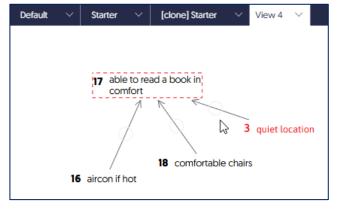
Create a map showing all dependencies or influences of a statement Select the statement of interest (a red dashed box appears around it).

Use the 'Analysis' menu , select the 'Mapping' option, and either 'Influence range' or 'Dependency range'.

Strategyfinder will create a new tab/view and show all of the statement and links that either the selected statement influences or the statements on which the selected statement is dependent.

For example, if #17 is selected and dependencies are requested then the new tab/view will

show:



# Show hidden links

When viewing a part of the whole model (as above when the focus was on #17) it is often useful to see how this part of the model links to the rest of the causal map. Show hidden links enables this.

Click the 'Mapping' icon on the top row



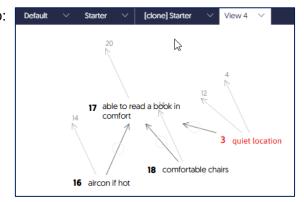
Click 'Show hidden links'

And choose whether to see all 'on'

Or 'Selected only' Or not show them 'Off'

Turning the hidden links on will change the view to:



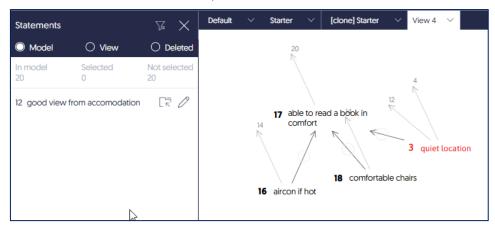




If you want to add any of these statements to the map then either:

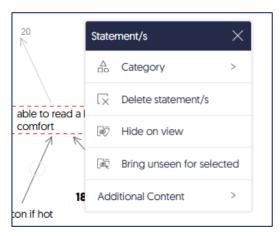
i) search for the statement number and bring the statement to the map

Here we are curious about #12, that comes from #3.



ii) use right click and 'Bring unseen for selected' which will give the option of bring ins, outs, or both ins and outs for the elected statement.

Here statement #20 has been selected.



# Hide statements from a view/tab

Right click the statement and choose 'Hide on view'. Note this does not DELETE the statement from the model it simply means it does not show on this particular view.

Note that a selection of statement can be hidden by selecting them and the right clicking and choosing 'Hide on view'.



Step 7: Categorising the material – goals, strategies, options, actions Strategyfinder enables statements to be categorised. There are default categories provided: Goal, Strategy, Option, Action and Focus. These categories have been designed for use in problem solving, strategy making and risk management<sup>5</sup>.

In the brainstorming example we may, for example, wish to regard the final outcomes (#15 and #12 as obvious 'Goals' along with #20). Goals are regarded as non-optional outcomes.

Strategies are usually optional outcomes that deliver Goals, and require a portfolio of actions to make them work m- they are complex outcomes. In the example we might regard #14 as a strategy: aiming to get accommodation that provides good facilities – may not yet be fully specified by #6, #16 and #18, and may be defined by what is on offer and so a complex outcome to achieve.

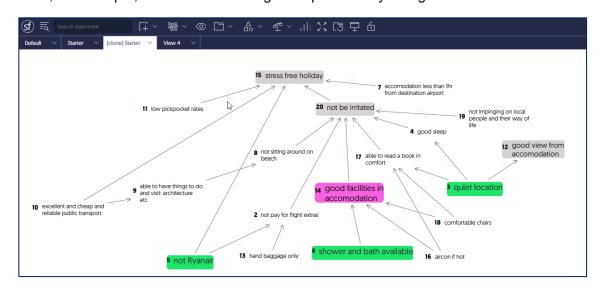
Options are those possible Actions that deliver Strategies. Sometimes obvious actions can be located by considering the number of out-arrows, and also 'Hierarchical potency' analysis helps – see Analysis manual.

In deciding 'Actions' for our brainstorm we may choose to prioritise key requirements as Actions.

Categorisation is achieved by right clicking, choosing 'Category' and selecting the category. Several statements can be categorised at the same time by selecting several and right clicking.

Categories can be reset to the default by 'Reset category'.

Thus, for example, in our brainstorming example we may categorise as follows:



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See the *Strategyfinder* Strategy Finding, Solution Finding and Systemic Risk manuals for more discussion of their use.



# Possible Issues in Using Strategyfinder

As with all software there can be unknown bugs. These are reported and dealt with as fast as possible and your server updated.

However, because *Strategyfinder* is browser based and will often involve many participants in many different locations there can be synchronisation problems. These are most often caused by: i) slow or intermittent internet, ii) too many programs open on a user's computer, iii) too many tabs of the browser open.

The easiest resolution is i) close other programs and other browser tabs, and ii) do a browser refresh: the circular arrow at the top left of the browser  $\leftarrow$   $\rightarrow$   $\bigcirc$ 



# CATALOGUE STRATEGYFINDER MANUALS AND GUIDES

# MANAGING THE SOFTWARE PLATFORM

# Strategyfinder CASE EXAMPLE - TEAM SOLUTION FINDING

ISBN 978-3-903556-15-7

Shows how a real 45min workshop unfolded to enable the group to develop a consensus around a portfolio of actions. Worth looking at before reading other manuals.

# **Strategyfinder - GETTING STARTED**

ISBN 978-3-903556-01-0

This is the best manual when using sf for the first time. It takes you through a single user brainstorming session: including entering statements, linking them, using categories, and some simple but useful analyses.

# **Strategyfinder – THE BASICS**

ISBN 978-3-903556-02-7

Introduces Strategyfinder: functionality, analytical capabilities, main strengths. Goes through what all the icons do: settings, entering statements and links; categorising statements; evaluations – rating and preferencing; analysis; managing views; archiving, synchronisation and export/import.

# Strategyfinder –EVALUATION RATING AND PREFERENCING

ISBN 978-3-903556-06-5

An important and very useful feature of Strategyfinder is the ability use two different types of evaluations: rating and preferencing. These enable all participants to evaluate statements in a variety of ways and for the facilitator/leader to gain a sense of the degree of consensus within the group. This manual provides detail of how-to setup rating and preferencing evaluations.

# Strategyfinder - GUIDE - GETTING STARTED: PARTICIPANT ACCESS

ISBN 978-3-903556-17-1

Describes the different ways of giving participants (and others) access to a Strategyfinder model.

# <u>Strategyfinder – ANALYSIS TOOLS</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-03-4

Introduces all the analysis tools available, with examples.



# Strategyfinder – BACKGROUND THEORIES, RESEARCH AND CONCEPTS

ISBN 978-3-903556-00-3

Presents the background, research, and concepts to the development of Strategyfinder and the associated methods over the past 40 years. The methods have been in use in a wide range of organisations across the world for several decades and these experiences have provided an important research base for the development of the software and methods.

# STRATEGYFINDER PRIMARY USES - METHODS

# SYSTEMIC RISK MANAGEMENT

Strategyfinder tool and method is the only known way of acknowledging risk as a system of interconnected risks. The method has been particularly successful in major project risk management and pandemic risk management, as well as many other messy risk situations.

# <u>Strategyfinder - METHOD - SYSTEMIC RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT SUMMARY</u> ISBN 978-3-903556-11-9

Capturing risks and showing causal links models a risk system. This manual shows, in summary, the process for constructing the model of the risk system and developing effective risk mitigation strategies and action programmes.

# Strategyfinder - METHOD - SYSTEMIC RISK DETAIL

ISBN 978-3-903556-07-2

Shows, as a step-by-step guide, all stages of the process for constructing the model of the risk system, conducting appropriate analyses of the system, and developing effective risk mitigation strategies and action programmes.

# STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

These set of manuals show different aspects strategy making. Each method can be used independently of others, however together they work a portfolio of highly important parts of strategic thinking and strategic management.

# <u>Strategyfinder – METHOD - TEAM STRATEGY FINDING SUMMARY</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-10-2

Strategic management needs to be practical and capable of implementation. Thus, it must address the key issues the organisation faces in creating strategic success. This method has been used extensively by top management teams in many countries and many industries in public/not-for-profit organisations as well private/for-profit companies. It is based on a series of 4 half day workshops with the members of the management team connected to Strategyfinder from the own chosen location.



# Strategyfinder - METHOD - TEAM STRATEGY FINDING DETAIL

ISBN 978-3-903556-09-6

Shows, as a step-by-step guide, all stages of the process for strategy development and the creation of agreed strategies and action programmes.

# <u>Strategyfinder – METHOD - DISCOVERING AND EXPLOITING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE</u> ISBN 978-3-903556-12-6

Competitive advantage is known to follow from exploiting distinctiveness, and distinctiveness comes from understanding and exploring the network of distinctive competences and distinctive assets. This method shows how to discover and explore distinctiveness and so develop effective strategies to exploit and develop competitive advantage. The method has been used not only in the commercial sector but also the public sector (including police forces, health service, etc).

# Strategyfinder - METHOD - STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

ISBN 978-3-903556-08-9

A crucial part of any effective strategy or problem solution is understanding the responses of key stakeholders and developing strategies the manage them. Stakeholders are often a social and influence networks with various levels of power and interest in managing their own responses to your strategies and solutions. This method uniquely helps develop effective stakeholder management.

There also brief manuals available for using Strategyfinder to help manage strategy delivery and monitor progress, and also some effective ways of presenting an agreed Strategyfinder strategy. In addition, organisations often favour starting strategy making with a SWOT analysis – Strategyfinder is very effective at moving a SWOT analysis to strategy development. These guides/documents are available on request.

# TEAM SOLUTION FINDING - MANAGING MESSY AND COMPLEX PROBLEMS

# <u>Strategyfinder – METHOD - TEAM SOLUTION FINDING</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-13-3

Many, if not most, organisational problems are a system of interacting issues that have soft as well as mathematical relationships. This method enables the 'owners' of the problem, as well as possible experts able to help suggest solutions, to get together to understand the systemic nature of the problem and so develop an effective and practical solution. Significantly the participants need not be in the same location and are able to bring together a team perspective and to co-create a jointly owned systems view. With this method and Strategyfinder there deliberations can be fast and highly productive (see the example real case: 'Strategyfinder — a real case example of team solution finding in 45min).

The Strategyfinder 10min video shows how a manager was able to get the views of his team, without the need for a meeting, prior to attending an important meeting (see YouTube "Strategyfinder Briefing Workshop@).

When analysts address problems by constructing mathematical models or simulation models it is crucial they understand the nature of the problem as seen by those who will have the



responsibility to implement any solution. This method enables analysts to undertake fast problem construction with the client group. (24pp)

The manual assumes familiarity with Strategyfinder – the getting started manuals.

# OTHER TRIED AND TESTED USES FOR STRATEGYFINDER

# Strategyfinder – REVERSE ENGINEERING TEXT INTO A STRATEGY MAP

ISBN 978-3-903556-23-2

Reverse engineering a published mission statement/strategy statement can provide a good to revisiting strategy development. It can also 'test' a mission/vision statement for thoroughness and logic. This method helps gain clarity in understanding a report/documents(s). The manual illustrates the process using a published mission statement and provides a set of 'rules' for reverse engineering.

# <u>Strategyfinder – ESTIMATION USING AN ADAPTED DELPHI TECHNIQUE</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-14-0

A range of experts in the estimating topic produce independent estimates of the likely cost of a new and probably complex project (using the rating facility in Strategyfinder), they then explain the key factors that impacted their estimate (using the 'blind gather' facility in Strategyfinder), everyone now re-estimates in the light of knowing these factors, and the process is repeated until the range of the estimates gets smaller and the average and median moves to what can then be regarded as the best estimate. An important outcome is a range of possible risk factors and factors crucial when undertaking the traditional estimating.

# Strategyfinder - METHOD - BRAINSTORMING ISBN 978-3-903556-04-1

Brainstorming can easily be done using 'sticky-labels' on a wall, however using Strategyfinder can offer benefits of i) anonymity and so opening up possible ideas that would not surface otherwise, ii) show causal, or other, connections between ideas, and so iii) analyse the structure the inter-related ideas, iv) use categories to help see different characteristics of ideas, v) undertake anonymous evaluations of the ideas against a variety of criteria. This manual describes a simple process for doing brainstorming.

# Focus Groups

The Team Solution Finding and Team Strategy Finding methods each provide a basis for fast and highly effective focus group work. With Strategyfinder, participants in the focus group can be located anywhere with an internet connection. The early stages of these methods offer little more than other 'whiteboard' software. However, Strategyfinder allows for causally connecting statements from participants, and most importantly both during and after a focus group workshop the material can be analysed in a variety of ways.

In addition, the methods allow for the focus group to go beyond expressing view and the linkages. The group can be facilitated to providing their own agreed solutions.



# **FACILITATOR GUIDES**

# <u>Strategyfinder - GUIDE - MULTI-ORGANISATION COLLABORATION GUIDE</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-16-4

Based on extensive experience, the guide introduces a range of issues to pay attention to if using Strategyfinder for Multi-Organisation Collaboration when faced with messy problems, or the need to construct a joint strategy, when an input from a collaborative multi-organisation group is required.

The Strategyfinder Team Solution Finding and Team Strategy Finding methods are particularly effective for addressing 'Grand Challenges' and 'Future Shocks'. These require commitment from many organisations agreeing to work together. Many features of Strategyfinder methods help: high group productivity, anonymity when appropriate, able to explore degree of consensus on potential agreements, and participants can join from their own organisational location.

Eden, C., Paulsen, S., Gonzalez, J. 2024. Breaking the Cycle in Norway. In Resilience in Action. IBM Institute for Business Value (accessible from IBM web site) provides a brief summary of multi-organisational collaboration in Norway. And, Ackermann, F. 2024. Managing grand challenges: Extending the scope of problem structuring methods and behavioural operational research European Journal of Operational Research 319, (2), 373-383 discusses some of the issues.

# Strategyfinder - GUIDE - IDENTIFY AN OPTIMUM GROUP OF PARTICIPANTS

ISBN 978-3-903556-05-8

Getting together an optimum group of participants is important for all strategy, risk, solution finding workshops. Ensuring both an adequate range of expertise is represented and crucial power-brokers (implementers) are present is crucial. This guide uses Strategyfinder to help with the identification of the best group of participants and helps with getting the group size to a reasonable level.

# **Strategyfinder – GUIDE - FACILITATION NOTES**

ISBN 978-3-903556-22-5

This guide provides a set of notes about the role of a facilitator/leader/manager when using Strategyfinder. A workshop checklist is provided. The guide also includes suggested further reading.

# THE STRATEGYFINDER WEBSITE

# https://www.Strategyfinder.com

The web site provides a variety of video support.

Strategyfinder Consulting Software GmbH FN 623983y, ATU80524309

Dr Anita Reinbacher Muenichreiterstrasse 25 A-1130 Vienna Austria Mail@Strategyfinder.com

ISBN: 978-3-903556-04-1

# Strategy finder

# GUIDE - GETTING STARTED PARTICIPANT ACCESS

by Prof Dr Colin Eden, Jan 2025



All rights reserved. No part of this publication or the information contained herein may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, by photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the publisher's written permission. The processing or reproduction of this publication using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized use of AI for copying, translating, summarizing, or otherwise transforming this content in any form is a violation of our intellectual property rights. Legal actions will be taken against any parties that breach these restrictions.

Although all care is taken to ensure the integrity and the quality of this publication and the information herein, no responsibility is assumed by the publishers nor the author for any damage to the property or persons as a result of the operation or use of this publication and the information contained herein.



# **Getting Started: Participant Access**

# Contents

Getting Started with Strategyfinder: Participant Access	4
Types of Users	4
Administrator	4
SuperUsers	4
Users	4
Editors	4
SuperUser Setting up a User (participant)	5
If a User is already registered on a Strategyfinder server	5
If a User is NOT already registered on a Strategyfinder server	5
Registering a new user	6
Inviting a new User to a Model	7
CATALOGUE STRATEGYFINDER MANUALS AND GUIDES MANAGING THE SOFTWARE PLATFORM $\dots$	9
STRATEGYFINDER PRIMARY USES - METHODS	10
SYSTEMIC RISK MANAGEMENT	10
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	10
TEAM SOLUTION FINDING – MANAGING MESSY AND COMPLEX PROBLEMS	11
OTHER TRIED AND TESTED USES FOR STRATEGYFINDER	12
FACILITATOR GUIDES	13
THE STRATEGYFINDER WEBSITE https://www.Strategyfinder.com	13



# Getting Started with Strategyfinder: Participant Access

This manual provides guidance on setting up users (workshop participants) and SuperUsers.

You may have just been given access to Strategyfinder: either as a purchaser or as someone with access to someone else's Strategyfinder. In either case, you will have been given access via a given email address and password.

You will have been given access either as an Administrator or as a SuperUser (if, as a purchaser, you have been given access as a User - Participant - ask to have your access changed to SuperUser so that you have access to all the functions of Strategyfinder).

This manual works in conjunction with 2 other manuals: Strategyfinder - The Basics manual and Strategyfinder - Getting Started (with an example).

# Types of Users

# **Administrator**

These users have full control over a Strategyfinder server. In particular, they can create Users and SuperUsers and change passwords. They can also deactivate Users. They can do everything a SuperUser can do.

# SuperUsers

These users can create models and use all the Strategyfinder capabilities to edit a model. They can create users, add users to a model, change the editor of a model.

SuperUsers are typically the facilitator/manager of a workshop. Although sometimes a SuperUser may be an observer who has all of the capabilities of a facilitator.

#### Users

Users are participants in a modelling workshop. They have limited control over Strategyfinder processes and can only access models that have been assigned to them by a SuperUser or Administrator.

# **Editors**

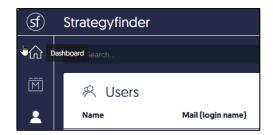
A SuperUser can transfer some control of the model to one of the participants (an Editor), who can then transfer control to another User (a Participant).

# SuperUser Setting up a User (participant)

# If a User is already registered on a Strategyfinder server

They will appear in the Users list either as an active User or inactive User:

Select the User icon and a list of Active Users will appear.



Users can be listed by first name or email.

If a User cannot be found it may be because the User has been made inactive. Select 'inactive' at the top right to view a list of inactive users, or select 'all' to view all registered Users:



If a User is active then they can be attached to a model (see below), if they are inactive they can be switched to active.

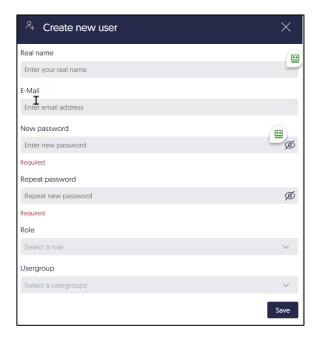
# If a User is NOT already registered on a Strategyfinder server

Then they will need to be registered or invited as a User (participant).

# Registering a new user

Select the User icon on the left

Click on 'New' at the top right (see above). The 'Create new user' box will appear:



Fill in the form and click 'Save'.

# NOTES:

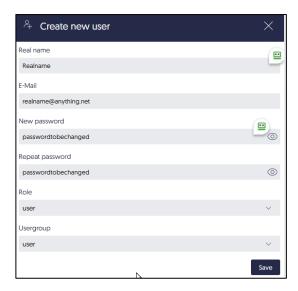
'Real name' can be any set of characters you wish to use to identify/search the user.

'E-mail' does not have to be a real email address, but of course it usually is.

'Password' is usually something very simple as the User will be able to change it to their own choice if they wish.

'Role' and Usergroup': both entries will be the same. A SuperUser can only setup other SuperUsers (if the licence allows it) or Users (possibly a limited number based on the license), while an Administrator can also setup Administrators.

# For example:



Here a User will be invited to use the login details of 'realname@anything.net' regardless of their actual email address.

# Inviting a new User to a Model

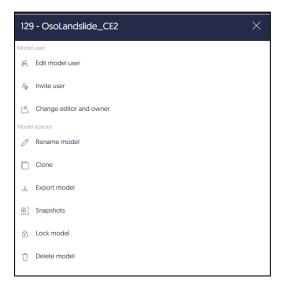
Select the Model icon and a list of models will appear:



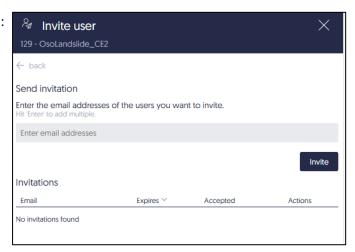
Click the three dots to the right of the name of the model you want to invite the User to open (under 'Actions' (note that a model must already have been created):



This will open the options for that model:



# Click on 'Invite user':



In this case a real email address must be used as Strategyfinder will send an email to the user.

After clicking 'Invite', the User will receive an email with an invitation containing a URL to click on. When the user clicks on the URL, Strategyfinder will open and the participant will be invited to log in with their email address and a password of their choice. Once logged in, the model they have been given access to will be listed and clicking on the model name will open the model.

Once a user has accepted an invitation, they will remain an 'active' User unless deactivated by a SuperUser or Administrator. Once a user has accepted an invitation then they will remain as an 'Active' user unless they are deactivated by a SuperUser or Administrator.



# **CATALOGUE**

# STRATEGYFINDER MANUALS AND GUIDES

# MANAGING THE SOFTWARE PLATFORM

# Strategyfinder CASE EXAMPLE - TEAM SOLUTION FINDING

ISBN 978-3-903556-15-7

Shows how a real 45min workshop unfolded to enable the group to develop a consensus around a portfolio of actions. Worth looking at before reading other manuals.

# **Strategyfinder - GETTING STARTED**

ISBN 978-3-903556-01-0

This is the best manual when using sf for the first time. It takes you through a single user brainstorming session: including entering statements, linking them, using categories, and some simple but useful analyses.

# <u>Strategyfinder – THE BASICS</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-02-7

Introduces Strategyfinder: functionality, analytical capabilities, main strengths. Goes through what all the icons do: settings, entering statements and links; categorising statements; evaluations – rating and preferencing; analysis; managing views; archiving, synchronisation and export/import.

# Strategyfinder -EVALUATION RATING AND PREFERENCING

ISBN 978-3-903556-06-5

An important and very useful feature of Strategyfinder is the ability use two different types of evaluations: rating and preferencing. These enable all participants to evaluate statements in a variety of ways and for the facilitator/leader to gain a sense of the degree of consensus within the group. This manual provides detail of how-to setup rating and preferencing evaluations.

# Strategyfinder - GUIDE - GETTING STARTED: PARTICIPANT ACCESS

ISBN 978-3-903556-17-1

Describes the different ways of giving participants (and others) access to a Strategyfinder model.

# <u>Strategyfinder – ANALYSIS TOOLS</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-03-4

Introduces all the analysis tools available, with examples.



# <u>Strategyfinder – BACKGROUND THEORIES, RESEARCH AND CONCEPTS</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-00-3

Presents the background, research, and concepts to the development of Strategyfinder and the associated methods over the past 40 years. The methods have been in use in a wide range of organisations across the world for several decades and these experiences have provided an important research base for the development of the software and methods.

# STRATEGYFINDER PRIMARY USES - METHODS

# SYSTEMIC RISK MANAGEMENT

Strategyfinder tool and method is the only known way of acknowledging risk as a system of interconnected risks. The method has been particularly successful in major project risk management and pandemic risk management, as well as many other messy risk situations.

# <u>Strategyfinder - METHOD - SYSTEMIC RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT SUMMARY</u> ISBN 978-3-903556-11-9

Capturing risks and showing causal links models a risk system. This manual shows, in summary, the process for constructing the model of the risk system and developing effective risk mitigation strategies and action programmes.

# <u>Strategyfinder - METHOD - SYSTEMIC RISK DETAIL</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-07-2

Shows, as a step-by-step guide, all stages of the process for constructing the model of the risk system, conducting appropriate analyses of the system, and developing effective risk mitigation strategies and action programmes.

# STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

These set of manuals show different aspects strategy making. Each method can be used independently of others, however together they work a portfolio of highly important parts of strategic thinking and strategic management.

# Strategyfinder - METHOD - TEAM STRATEGY FINDING SUMMARY

ISBN 978-3-903556-10-2

Strategic management needs to be practical and capable of implementation. Thus, it must address the key issues the organisation faces in creating strategic success. This method has been used extensively by top management teams in many countries and many industries in public/not-for-profit organisations as well private/for-profit companies. It is based on a series of 4 half day workshops with the members of the management team connected to Strategyfinder from the own chosen location.



# <u>Strategyfinder – METHOD - TEAM STRATEGY FINDING DETAIL</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-09-6

Shows, as a step-by-step guide, all stages of the process for strategy development and the creation of agreed strategies and action programmes.

# <u>Strategyfinder – METHOD - DISCOVERING AND EXPLOITING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE</u> ISBN 978-3-903556-12-6

Competitive advantage is known to follow from exploiting distinctiveness, and distinctiveness comes from understanding and exploring the network of distinctive competences and distinctive assets. This method shows how to discover and explore distinctiveness and so develop effective strategies to exploit and develop competitive advantage. The method has been used not only in the commercial sector but also the public sector (including police forces, health service, etc).

# <u>Strategyfinder – METHOD - STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-08-9

A crucial part of any effective strategy or problem solution is understanding the responses of key stakeholders and developing strategies the manage them. Stakeholders are often a social and influence networks with various levels of power and interest in managing their own responses to your strategies and solutions. This method uniquely helps develop effective stakeholder management.

There also brief manuals available for using Strategyfinder to help manage strategy delivery and monitor progress, and also some effective ways of presenting an agreed Strategyfinder strategy. In addition, organisations often favour starting strategy making with a SWOT analysis – Strategyfinder is very effective at moving a SWOT analysis to strategy development. These guides/documents are available on request.

# TEAM SOLUTION FINDING - MANAGING MESSY AND COMPLEX PROBLEMS

# Strategyfinder - METHOD - TEAM SOLUTION FINDING

ISBN 978-3-903556-13-3

Many, if not most, organisational problems are a system of interacting issues that have soft as well as mathematical relationships. This method enables the 'owners' of the problem, as well as possible experts able to help suggest solutions, to get together to understand the systemic nature of the problem and so develop an effective and practical solution. Significantly the participants need not be in the same location and are able to bring together a team perspective and to co-create a jointly owned systems view. With this method and Strategyfinder there deliberations can be fast and highly productive (see the example real case: 'Strategyfinder – a real case example of team solution finding in 45min).

The Strategyfinder 10min video shows how a manager was able to get the views of his team, without the need for a meeting, prior to attending an important meeting (see YouTube "Strategyfinder Briefing Workshop@).



When analysts address problems by constructing mathematical models or simulation models it is crucial they understand the nature of the problem as seen by those who will have the responsibility to implement any solution. This method enables analysts to undertake fast problem construction with the client group. (24pp)

The manual assumes familiarity with Strategyfinder – the getting started manuals.

# OTHER TRIED AND TESTED USES FOR STRATEGYFINDER

# <u>Strategyfinder – REVERSE ENGINEERING TEXT INTO A STRATEGY MAP</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-23-2

Reverse engineering a published mission statement/strategy statement can provide a good to revisiting strategy development. It can also 'test' a mission/vision statement for thoroughness and logic. This method helps gain clarity in understanding a report/documents(s). The manual illustrates the process using a published mission statement and provides a set of 'rules' for reverse engineering.

# <u>Strategyfinder – ESTIMATION USING AN ADAPTED DELPHI TECHNIQUE</u> ISBN 978-3-903556-14-0

A range of experts in the estimating topic produce independent estimates of the likely cost of a new and probably complex project (using the rating facility in Strategyfinder), they then explain the key factors that impacted their estimate (using the 'blind gather' facility in Strategyfinder), everyone now re-estimates in the light of knowing these factors, and the process is repeated until the range of the estimates gets smaller and the average and median moves to what can then be regarded as the best estimate. An important outcome is a range of possible risk factors and factors crucial when undertaking the traditional estimating.

# Strategyfinder - METHOD - BRAINSTORMING ISBN 978-3-903556-04-1

Brainstorming can easily be done using 'sticky-labels' on a wall, however using Strategyfinder can offer benefits of i) anonymity and so opening up possible ideas that would not surface otherwise, ii) show causal, or other, connections between ideas, and so iii) analyse the structure the inter-related ideas, iv) use categories to help see different characteristics of ideas, v) undertake anonymous evaluations of the ideas against a variety of criteria. This manual describes a simple process for doing brainstorming.

# **Focus Groups**

The Team Solution Finding and Team Strategy Finding methods each provide a basis for fast and highly effective focus group work. With Strategyfinder, participants in the focus group can be located anywhere with an internet connection. The early stages of these methods offer little more than other 'whiteboard' software. However, Strategyfinder allows for causally connecting statements from participants, and most importantly both during and after a focus group workshop the material can be analysed in a variety of ways.

In addition, the methods allow for the focus group to go beyond expressing view and the linkages. The group can be facilitated to providing their own agreed solutions.



# **FACILITATOR GUIDES**

# Strategyfinder - GUIDE - MULTI-ORGANISATION COLLABORATION GUIDE

ISBN 978-3-903556-16-4

Based on extensive experience, the guide introduces a range of issues to pay attention to if using Strategyfinder for Multi-Organisation Collaboration when faced with messy problems, or the need to construct a joint strategy, when an input from a collaborative multi-organisation group is required.

The Strategyfinder Team Solution Finding and Team Strategy Finding methods are particularly effective for addressing 'Grand Challenges' and 'Future Shocks'. These require commitment from many organisations agreeing to work together. Many features of Strategyfinder methods help: high group productivity, anonymity when appropriate, able to explore degree of consensus on potential agreements, and participants can join from their own organisational location.

Eden, C., Paulsen, S., Gonzalez, J. 2024. Breaking the Cycle in Norway. In Resilience in Action. IBM Institute for Business Value (accessible from IBM web site) provides a brief summary of multi-organisational collaboration in Norway. And, Ackermann, F. 2024. Managing grand challenges: Extending the scope of problem structuring methods and behavioural operational research European Journal of Operational Research 319, (2), 373-383 discusses some of the issues.

# Strategyfinder - GUIDE - IDENTIFY AN OPTIMUM GROUP OF PARTICIPANTS

ISBN 978-3-903556-05-8

Getting together an optimum group of participants is important for all strategy, risk, solution finding workshops. Ensuring both an adequate range of expertise is represented and crucial power-brokers (implementers) are present is crucial. This guide uses Strategyfinder to help with the identification of the best group of participants and helps with getting the group size to a reasonable level.

# <u>Strategyfinder – GUIDE - FACILITATION NOTES</u>

ISBN 978-3-903556-22-5

This guide provides a set of notes about the role of a facilitator/leader/manager when using Strategyfinder. A workshop checklist is provided. The guide also includes suggested further reading.

# THE STRATEGYFINDER WEBSITE

# https://www.Strategyfinder.com

The web site provides a variety of video support.

Strategyfinder Consulting Software GmbH FN 623983y, ATU80524309

Dr Anita Reinbacher Muenichreiterstrasse 25 A-1130 Vienna Austria Mail@Strategyfinder.com

ISBN: 978-3-903556-17-1