

**YOUR GUIDE TO
SYSTEMS THINKING:
THE ICEBERG MODEL**



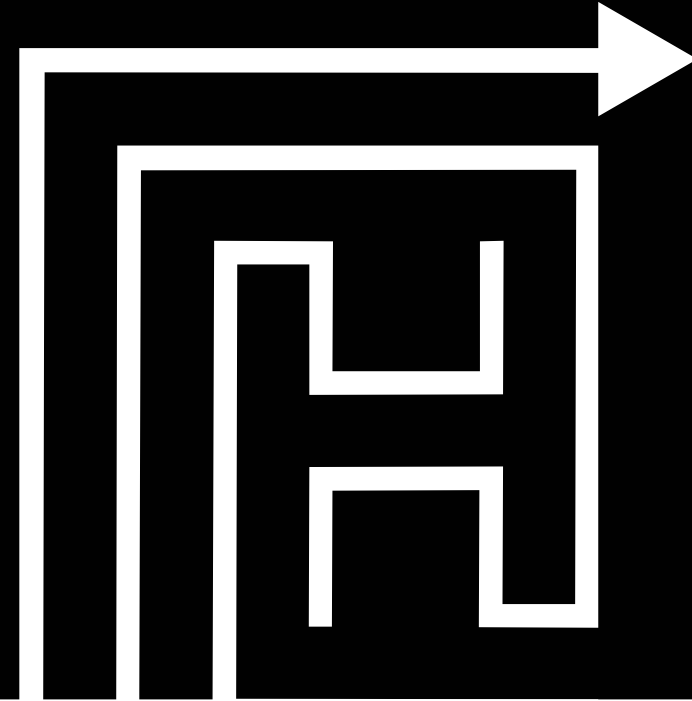
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LINKING LOCAL AND GLOBAL

ISSUES IN A EVER CHANGING COMPLEX

WORLD REQUIRES IN-DEPTH KNOWLEDGE



Facilitating diverse cultural needs and perspectives and serving as a meeting point is a crucial function performed by CHOs. To continue playing this role effectively, they must navigate an increasingly complex world and effectively link local and global issues, and in order to achieve this, it is advantageous for CHOs to possess knowledge of systems thinking.

THE ICEBERG MODEL

We know that an iceberg has only 10 percent of its total mass above the water while 90 percent is underwater. But that 90 percent is what the ocean currents act on, and what creates the iceberg's behavior at its tip. Global and local issues can be viewed in this same way.



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**FOUR LEVELS OF
THINKING**

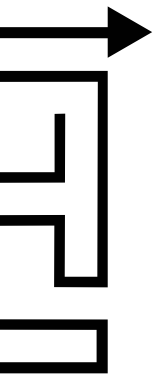
FOUR LEVELS OF THINKING

1. The event level

At the event level, we usually experience the world, such as discovering that we have caught a cold one morning. Although issues identified at the event level can be resolved with minor adjustments, the iceberg model reminds us not to presume that every problem can be remedied by treating the symptom or altering at the event level.

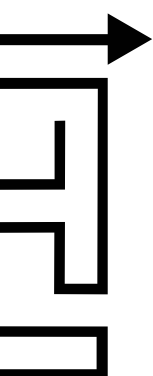
2. The pattern level

Looking beyond the event level often reveals recurring patterns. Identifying these patterns, such as a link between insufficient rest and frequent colds, can aid in forecasting and preventing future events.



FOUR LEVELS OF THINKING

3. The structure level



Beneath the pattern level is the structure level, where the reason behind the observed pattern is typically found. Structures, such as a new promotion policy causing increased work stress, poor eating habits during stressful periods, or limited access to healthy food options, could be contributing factors to catching a cold. Structures can encompass the following:

Physical things like vending machines, roads, traffic lights or terrain.

Organizations like corporations, governments and schools.

Policies like laws, regulations and tax structures.

Ritual habitual behaviors so ingrained that they are not conscious.



FOUR LEVELS OF THINKING

4. The mental model level

Mental models are composed of attitudes, beliefs, expectations, values, and morals that sustain the functioning of structures. These beliefs are often internalized subconsciously from our family or society, and we may not be cognizant of them. Some mental models that could contribute to catching a cold include perceiving career success as integral to personal identity, regarding healthy food as overly costly, or considering rest as unproductive.

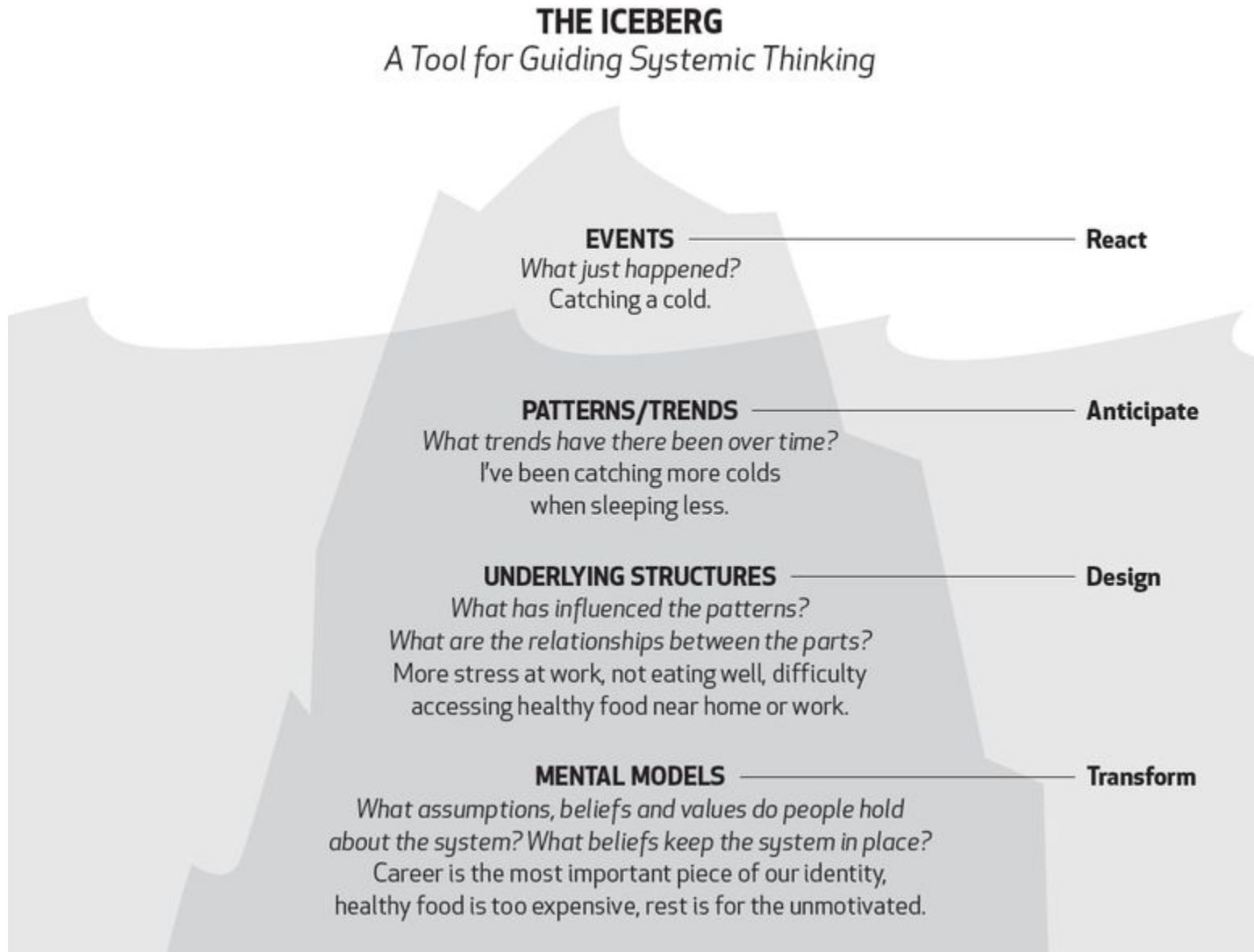
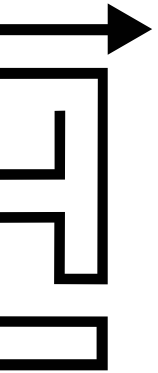
02



**PUTTING THE LEVELS
TOGETHER**

PUTTING THE LEVELS TOGETHER

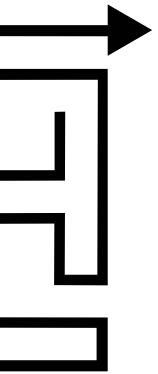
Take a look at the model on the right of the Iceberg Model for a scenario of catching a cold.



YOUR TURN - RELATE TO YOUR OWN CONTEXT

Choose a recent occurrence that has caught your attention due to its urgency, importance, or interest. For instance, a recent weather event, the ongoing pandemic, a controversial court verdict or a high-profile legal case, a local policy modification or a contentious issue, recent military confrontations between countries, or an issue you have recently faced personally.

At the top of the iceberg, write down the observable aspects of the event, and proceed to work your way down through patterns, underlying systems, and mental models, adding as many as you can recall. As you reflect more on the event, it may also be beneficial to move back and forth between the various levels of the iceberg.



Source: Hyper Island

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