



## Concentration of effort

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## Term

The essence of a concentration of effort is to concentrate the limited means (resources) on the solution of a difficult problem.



## Context

The goal of the situation analysis is to decide which of the objects should be dealt with primarily, in other words to make a concentration of efforts.

For this, overviews, showing the span of knowledge at a certain point in time (snapshot), are the base.

The variety of different point of views simplifies the creation of packages. They force to make assumptions on presumably important things in the future (exploring).



## Orienting questions for determining these core points are:

- With which things is a routine-type solution not visible/possible; which type of task applies? This raises the question of a purposeful task.
- Which things correlate and therefore have to be treated in an integrated manner? This applies when creating packages.
- What are the scopes of objects, whose relevance for space possibly is significant? This affects width and depth of the expected effects.
- Which objects could – if clarified and implemented – have an impact on the desired spatial development? This applies for the use or creation of synergies.

The determined core points can also be preliminary; they are based on the initial hypotheses. It is only during the first phase of the clarifying process («exploration phase») that it can be determined whether it is worth to further occupy oneself with the hypotheses and, if the answer is yes, how.



## Situation assessment and concentration of effort.

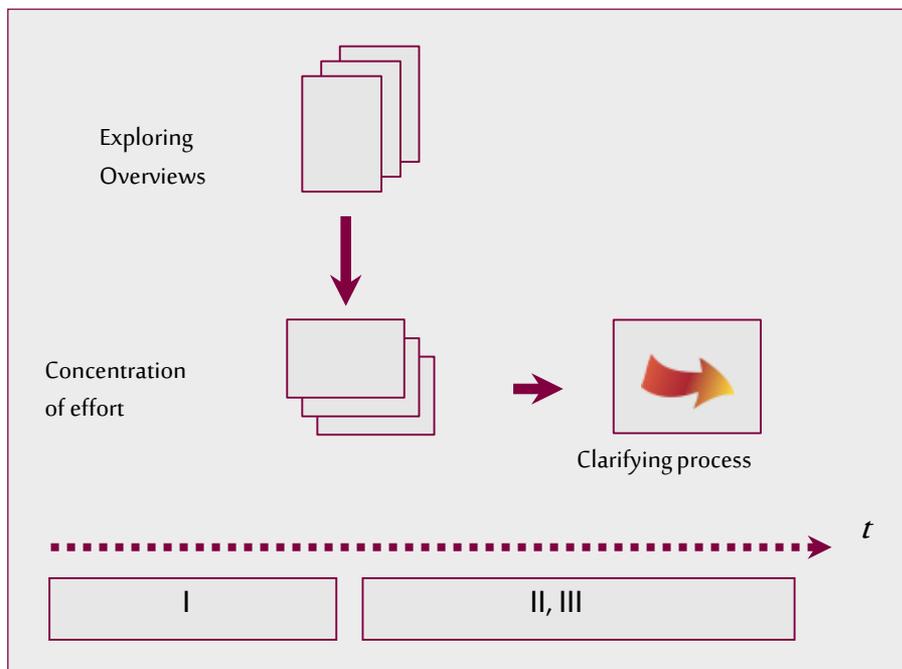
- A situation assessment is an occasion, which, along with the corresponding concentration of effort, represents a milestone in the clarifying process.
- Situation assessments should help gaining an overview when clarifying and solving difficult tasks and help prepare decisions.
- Regular situation assessments are occasions for clarifying difficult points of view, interests and beliefs of the involved stakeholders.
- Main goal: **Concentration** of the available forces on those activities that are of relevance when solving difficult tasks.



Regular and systematic state of affairs

Concentration of effort

*Situation assessment*  
*Overview and concentration*



Topics

I Current state and recent developments

II Forseeable developments  
(Level of circumstances)

III What should / what can you do?  
With what should you deal with  
(Concentration of effort /  
setting core points)  
(Level of actions)



*now*

*Stage*

*Snapshot*

*Graphic by R. Signer*



## Objects I

„(...) Concentrations of effort are strategic decisions. At their core, such decisions are defined by concentrating the limited means onto the solution of a difficult problem and by influencing small successes with one large success. This requires in advance thought on the relationships between single task parts, as far as they are already known. By installing special organisational measures, the concentration on core tasks (or core points) of spatial relevance is exemplified. “

(Scholl 1995:37, translated)



## Objects II

Central questions for a concentration of effort:

- Which set of problems are important and urgent?
- Can these sets of problems be treated in the frame of personal and financial resources?
- Do these sets of problems have to be treated within a certain time frame?
- Which measures have to be implemented under any circumstances?



## Objects III

Naming the crucial conflicts / crucial possibilities of action

- What is of special relevance for the development of a space?
- Which objects deserve an in-depth occupation during the process of finding solutions?
- But also: From which perspective are you acting? Is it the correct one?

In-depth observation of central conflicts – naming causes

Throwing out routine tasks

- But: check if it really is a routine task....



**Those who want to coordinate everything end up coordinating nothing.**

A concentration of effort serves the purpose of leading the available forces towards the central questions.



Abbildungen: M. Nollert

Making a concentration of effort is not easy, especially if the conflicts are multi-layered. Only by exploring, simulating and evaluating the occurrences and possible circumstances can the strategically relevant factors be filtered from a apparently obscured situation.

However, “to concentrate oneself” does not mean just doing, what seems easy!



## Misunderstandings

You cannot jump over the original task with a concentration of effort – to concentrate oneself does not mean to leave out questions unanswered.

- Example: Development concept for a district/city/region; Justify why topics/places are left out of the project,
  - because they are so clear, that they can be looked at independent from other developments
  - because there is no problem.
  
- Possibility: Exemplified work on a reoccurring question and showing its transferability onto other places!
  
- The concentration of effort doesn't have to (like other terms) be used as special chapter or title in reports – it is just important to carry it out during the planning process.



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