

Mind Mapping

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Description:

A mind map is a graphical diagram used to link, group, and organize ideas, thoughts, concepts, actions, and information into a connected pattern around a single issue. A mind map is created around a single issue, drawn as an image and described by a keyword in the center of a blank piece of flip chart paper. As the improvement team develops the mind map through brainstorming and other creative techniques, connections develop which demonstrates how different ideas are connected directly to the central concept and how other related ideas branch out from those. The mind map diagram is similar to a Tree Diagram³ which is made up of ideas or concepts that are connected by lines. The person interpreting the Tree Diagram must understand the ideas that are written and then develop a mental image of all the connections. The mind map is the mental image that shows the connections in one step.

Mind maps can be created by hand on a blank sheet of flip chart paper or by using many of the software packages that are available. Other names for Mind Maps include Spider Diagram, Idea Sun Bursting, Bubble Mapping⁴ or Tree Diagrams.

When to Use:

A Mind Map is a creative tool that can help an improvement team to design solutions to existing problems, create a new process, create a new service, or explore and develop objectives for a strategic goal. This tool helps an improvement team to think outside the box in a non-linear fashion and determine how things are connected to the issue at hand. It's also a very intuitive way to organize your thoughts, since mind maps mimic the way our brains think—bouncing ideas off of each other, rather than thinking linearly.

The Mind map helps an improvement team to generate ideas very quickly and it encourages them to explore different creative pathways. Another technique to help get the creative juices

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³ Public Health Quality Improvement Encyclopedia, Public Health Foundation, 2012, pp.145-146

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thinking_Maps

flowing in the improvement team is the SCAMPER Technique⁵ which can be used in conjunction with the Mind Map tool.

Construction Steps:

Figure 1⁶ shows a way to construct a mind map. This illustration demonstrates how easy it is to decipher a mind map since everything is connected to the central theme or concept.



Figure 1

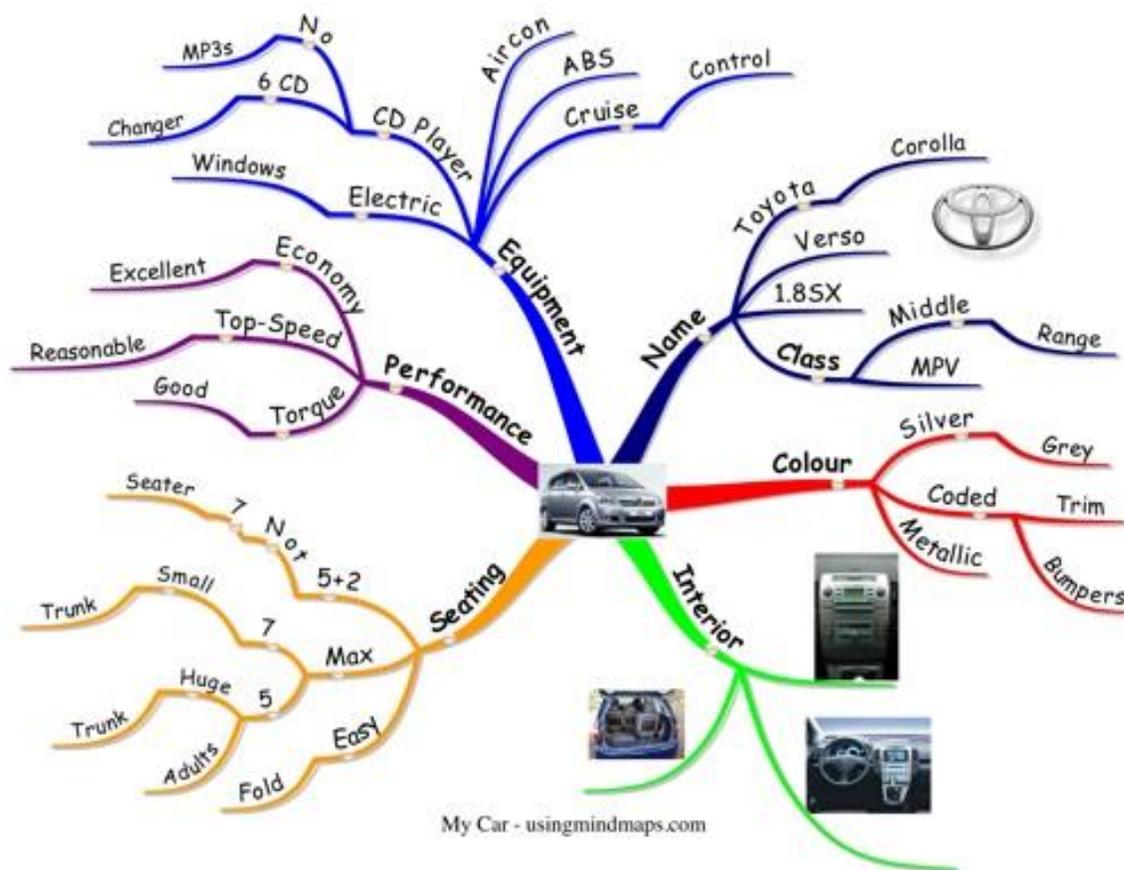
1. In Figure 1, the Mind Map starts in the center with a main concept that the map will revolve around. The main concept should be described by a key word and an image. Having a large area to draw the map gives the improvement team room to be creative, free flowing, and spread out collective ideas.
2. Images or pictures are used to enhance the central idea and sub-ideas: *A picture is worth a 1,000 words.*
3. Colors are used throughout the Mind map to stimulate the brain and it makes the Map look vibrant, which helps stimulate creativity of others on the improvement team.

⁵ http://www.phf.org/resourcestools/Pages/SCAMPER_Technique_Tool.aspx

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mind_map

4. Main branches are linked to the central image and then connect the lower level branches. These linkages help round out the Mind Map. These sub-branches will also contain words that elaborate on the topic of the branch it stems from. This helps develop and elaborate on the overall theme of the mind map.
5. Keywords are used on the branches to explain the concept it represents and to help the reader understand the logic of the flow and connections.
6. Curved lines are used in a Mind Map rather than straight lines as in a tree diagram. The curved lines show that the Map is free flowing, not rigid like a Tree Diagram, and allows for connections to be drawn that may impact multiple areas.

Mind Map Example:⁷



⁷ <http://www.usingmindmaps.com/mind-map-by-example.html>