Mind Mapping
The Creative Way to Outline

Mind mapping is a visual depiction of an idea, concept or issue. There are many variations of this concept. One of the most popular was developed by Tony Buzan. There are many advantages to this approach, including:

- You can see the whole idea on one sheet of paper.
- You can see relationships between ideas, and
- An idea can be viewed in depth.

This is also a great way to integrate individual thinking into a group effort.

Mind Mapping Guidelines

Mind mapping was designed to help people gain rapid access to their intelligence by using specific techniques that are brain-compatible. By following these guidelines, your memory and creativity will be improved:

1. Start the mind map in the center of a page with a topic or stated goal. Starting in the center reflects the nature of the brain's thinking processes and leaves space to develop ideas from the central core.

2. Attach main themes and attributes to the central image on lines using large letters. The brain works by association, and if the lines are attached the ideas will internally be similarly "attached."

3. Lines are connected to lines. Keeping all the elements of the mind map together reflects the associative nature of the information.

4. Print words. It may take a little longer to print, but printing is easier to read. And printed words have the advantage of immediate "photographic feedback."

5. Print words on lines. Printing the words on the lines connects them to the mind map, and by association, to all other ideas on the map.

6. Use one key word per line. Every word has an enormous range of associative possibilities. Placing the key word alone on a line gives the brain more freedom to "branch out" from that word.

7. Use color throughout the mind map. Color is a major stimulator of all forms of thought, and especially enhances creativity and memory.

8. Use images throughout the mind map. Use of imagery multiplies creative thinking effectiveness by as much as 30 times. The images don't have to be perfect, as long as you understand what they represent.

9. Use codes and symbols. Personalized codes using various shapes add a "fourth dimension" to a mind map and enhance the mind mapper's ability to analyze, define, structure and organize.
MINDMAPPING

I. Goals/Outcomes

1. To gather information from relevant stakeholders about a key issue
2. To stimulate some creative thinking within a group
3. To arrive at a methodology to solve a problem or to deal with a key issue
4. To capture and then organize the group's thinking

II. Background/Context

Mindmapping was created and popularized by Tony Buzan in his 1983 book, *Use Both Sides of Your Brain*. It is one of the most creative problem-solving tools ever designed. Mindmapping is the visual depiction of an idea, concept, or issue. It taps both the left and right side of the brain and enables the user to “map” out the complexity of a problem or issue in a practical and powerful way. It helps organize information and thought processes without stifling new and different ideas.

It can be used for project planning, defining goals, action planning, note taking, identifying values, or creative problem solving. It is one of our favorite tools and, when used appropriately, can be a stimulating and interesting tool to use in many different settings. It enables a facilitator to integrate individual thinking into a group setting.

One of the key elements that makes mindmapping work is that there is no judgment about the ideas that are created. All ideas are valid, so they are captured on the mindmap.

Mindmapping never fails to generate more ideas than the traditional linear listing we have all experienced. It also tends to produce ideas of higher quality because people build on the contributions of others and see connections between ideas they wouldn’t see on a long list of brainstormed ideas.

We are going to present an adaptation of a traditional mindmap, which usually limits the ideas created to one word. We have found that capturing the essence of what people suggest, and not limiting it to one word, is most productive.