Effective Project Management Using Mind Maps™

- Seminar Handout
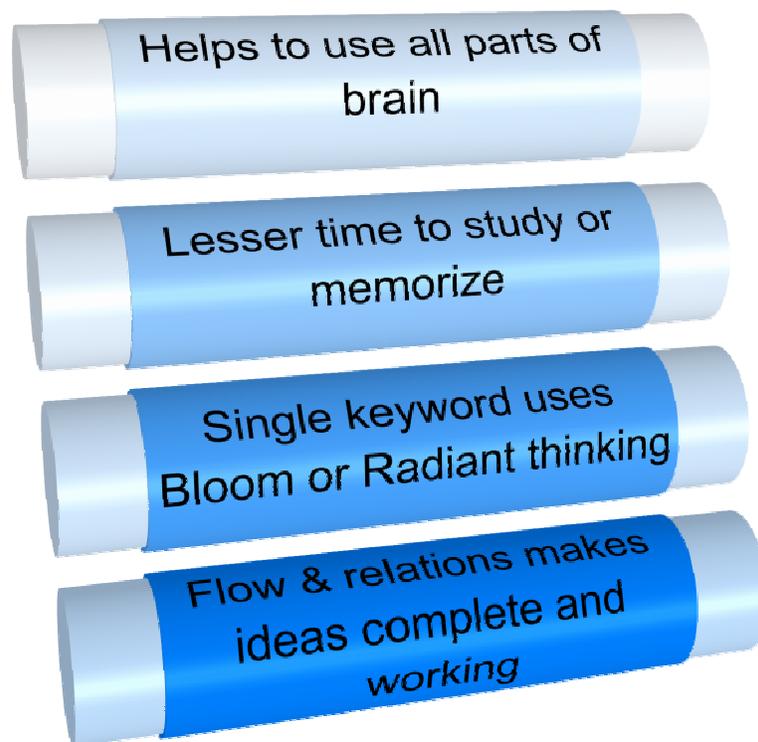
Babou Srinivasan, PMP®

June - 2010

Definition

Mind Mapping is a powerful graphical technique that brings out full cortical skills with the use of colors, numbers, images and words which are arranged around a central idea resembling sun radiation.

Mind Maps are created in the same way how human natural thinking process works hence it brings out complete brain potential.

Why to use Mind Maps?

Mind Maps are excellent thinking tool that helps us in performing our day-to-day activities with full capacity. Here are the four main reasons to use Mind Maps:

Helps to use all parts of brain

Lesser time to study or memorize

Single keyword uses Bloom or Radiant thinking

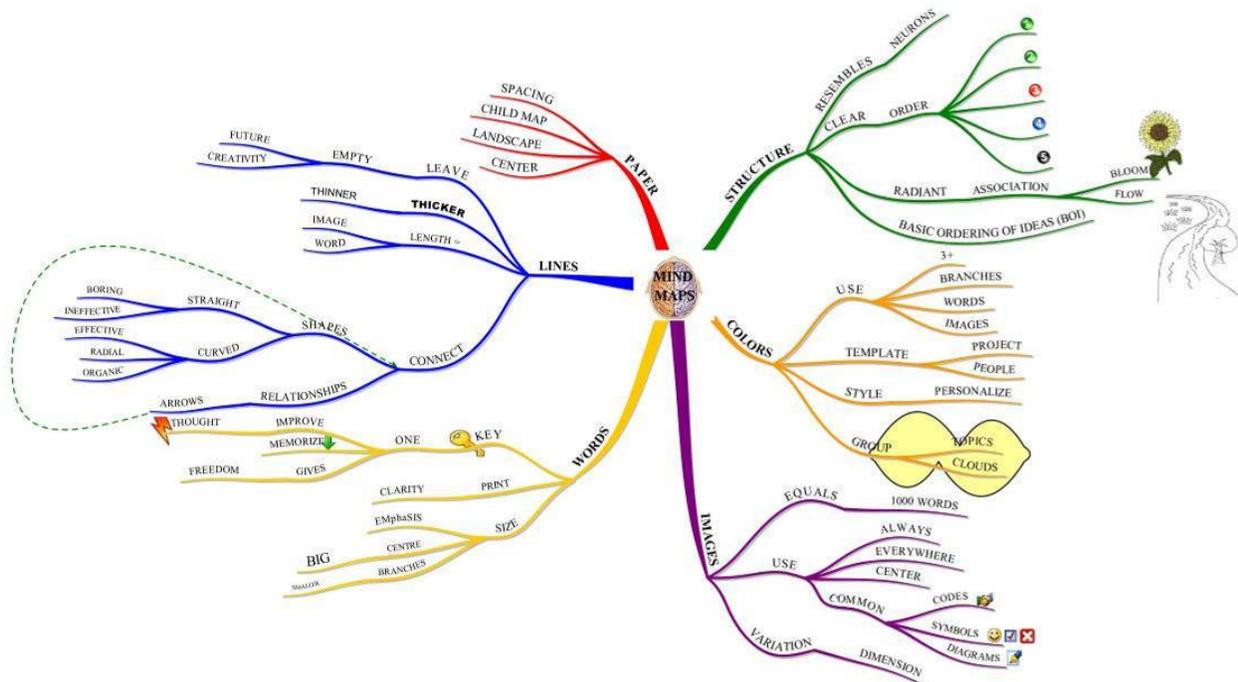Flow & relations makes ideas complete and working

Mind Mapping Applications

Mind Maps are having applications in almost all areas like personal life, education, profession, business, etc. Here are few application areas:
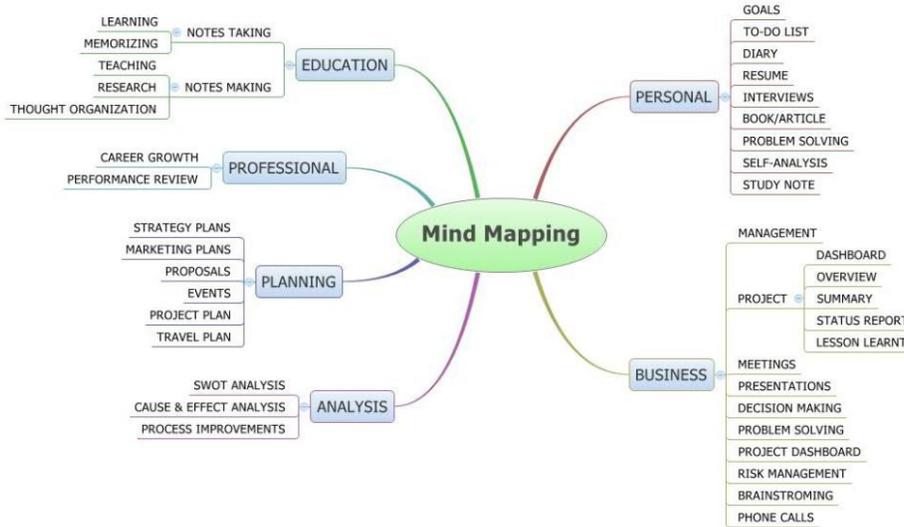
Mind Mapping Rules

Mind Mapping rules and recommendations are presented comprehensively in below Mind Map.

Mind Map rules are categorized under six main topics –

1. Structure

2. Colors

3. Images

4. Words

5. Lines

6. Paper

How to Mind Map?

1. Central Idea - Image/Keyword

Always start with a central idea image or keyword. In case you are doing a problem solving, put the problem in the center of the mind map. Image or keyword needs to be in such a way that it is appropriate for the topic & it evokes further idea generation process.

2. Decide & add primary(or root) ideas

Primary ideas are the one which come to mind as soon as the central topic is spelled out. It may be random when you start the mind mapping learning process and eventually you will find thoughts getting more organized later. These primary root ideas are the first level ideas that branch out from the central theme. These are also called as Basic Ordering of Ideas (BOI), which helps the mind map to evolve with unlimited levels of ideas.

3. Use colors

By nature, colors are everywhere in our lives. Our brain is attracted & stimulated by colors. We need to use at least 3 or more colors in Mind Maps. Specific color coding of common items or using existing schemes (like Red for Attention, Green for Good, etc) make mind maps more understandable.

4. Write keywords

Keywords are the backbone for Mind Maps. It is placed in each branch. The use of single keyword per branch i) improves thought ii) gives freedom iii) less item to memorize hence make learning activity a fun. We need to use CAPITAL LETTERS for better readability. We can vary the dimension and color of the keyword and convey different meanings more effectively. It may be a bit difficult to

practice single keywords but it really helps to bring out full brain potential instead of using sentences.

5.   Draw images

Images also produce a great impact on brain thinking activity just like colors. One image can convey the meaning of thousand words. We need to use images everywhere in the Mind Map. We must use an image in central topic instead of a keyword. Images can be simple drawings, clip arts, diagrams, photos or even 3D objects. We must use appropriate images and try to make them funny.

6.   Perform connections & associations

Purpose of Mind Maps accomplished when the connection of branches and their associations between them are complete. In brain, related ideas are connected and stored associative – this makes recollection a lot easier. The connection branches are drawn as lines which can be straight(less effective), organic or radial (more effective) that comes out of its parent branch. The primary idea branch lines are drawn thicker and the subsequent level branches thinner lines. The line lengths need to be equal to the keyword or length of the image.

7.   Add relationships, group with clouds & identify with personalized codes/images

An idea has complex interconnection with other ideas which need not be from the same main branch. These types of interconnections can be made through relationship lines that generally have an arrow. Relationships give a more complete way to relate ideas under different items depicting cause or effect for solution approaches. Grouping ideas in a branch using color coding is a visual enhancement for greater memory assimilation.

Who is the first person going to get benefited by your Mind Map?

It is YOU!

Yes, first of all, you should get benefited out of it than anyone else in the world. It is the output of your thinking process. It is a place for you to get/put information from/to your brain. Personalization of codes & images used in mind maps helps you to grasp fast as it is output of what you like the most. It also gives way for others to understand your ability to present your ideas in a consistent way.

Mind Mapping Software

Mind mapping technique is very well supported by a number of software vendors. Almost all software satisfies the basic rules of mind mapping & they differ only by the capability of handling different options user requires like integration with other software, online collaboration, maintenance cost, etc. Here is a mind map about mind mapping software:
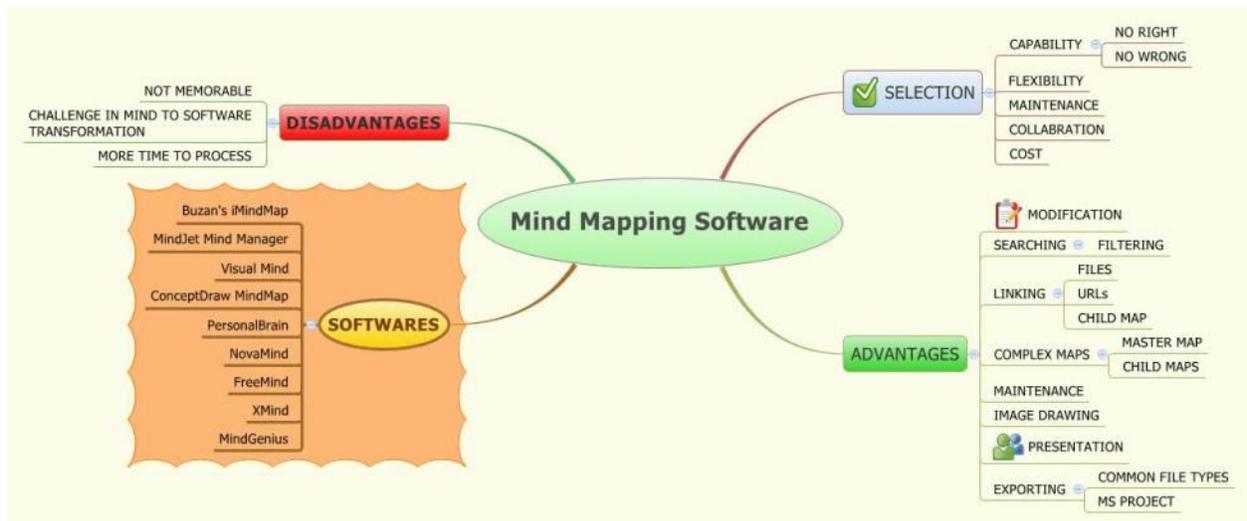
Benefits of Mind Mapping Technique

After started using Mind Mapping Technique, you will feel following benefits for sure!

1. Structured approach
2. Increased productivity
3. Effective management
4. Better work efficiency

Bibliography

1. Buzan, T. and B. Buzan, *The mind map book : how to use radiant thinking to maximize your brain's untapped potential*. 1994, New York: Dutton.
2. Nast, J., *Idea mapping: how to access your hidden brain power, learn faster, remember more, and achieve success in business*. 2006, Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.
3. Power Tips and Strategies for Mind Mapping Software – Chuck Frey (2nd Edition)
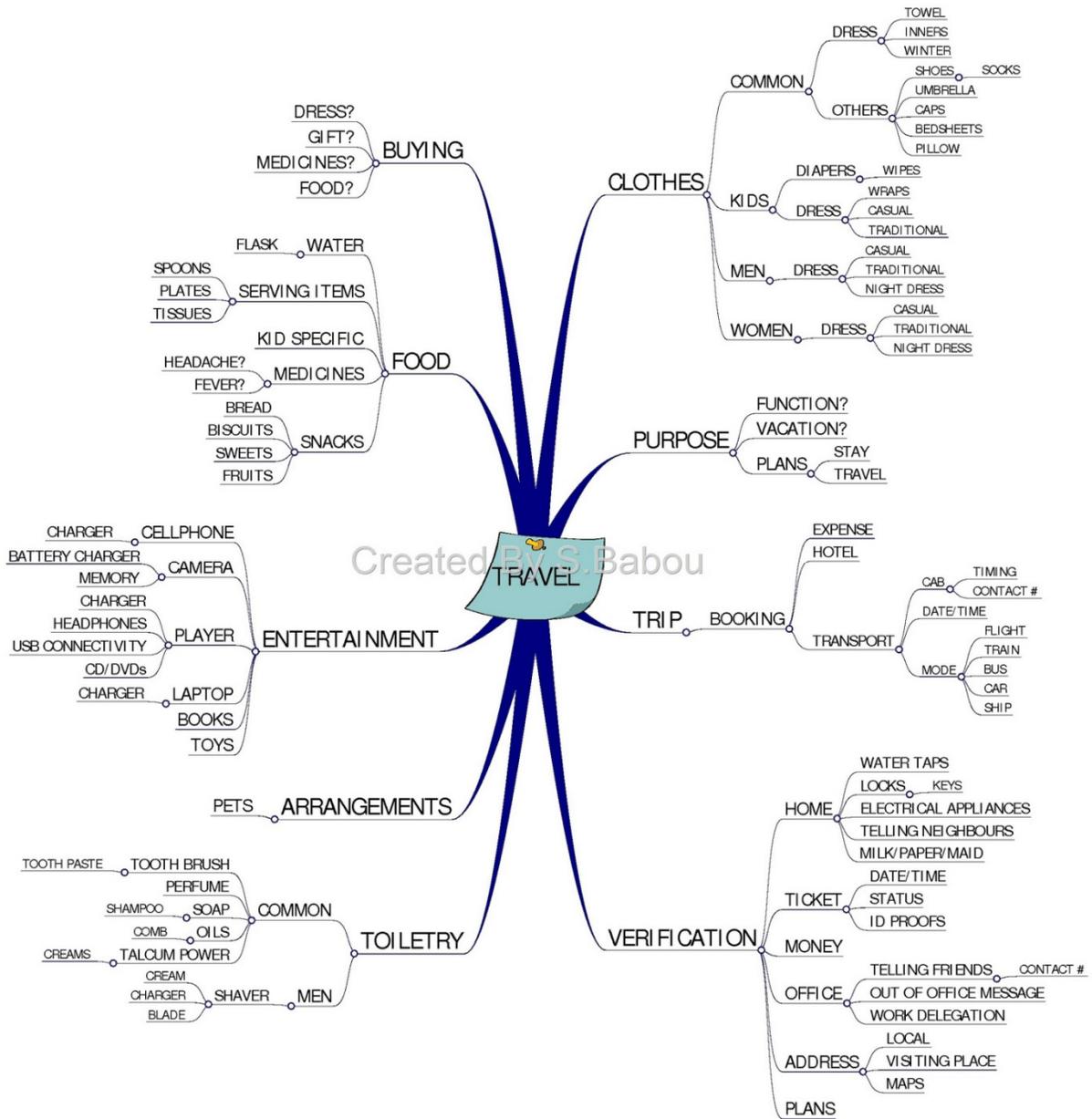
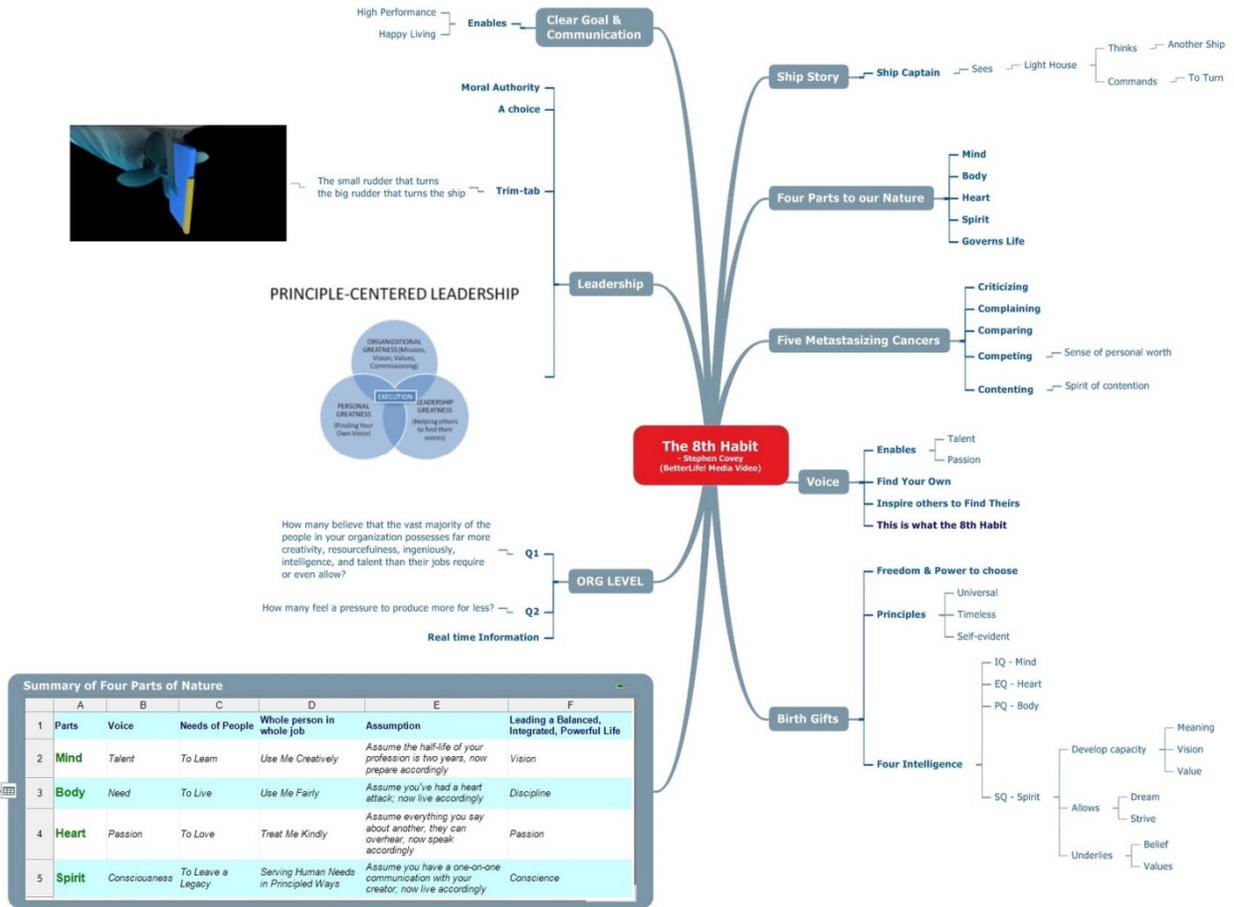# Mind Map - Examples

Status Report
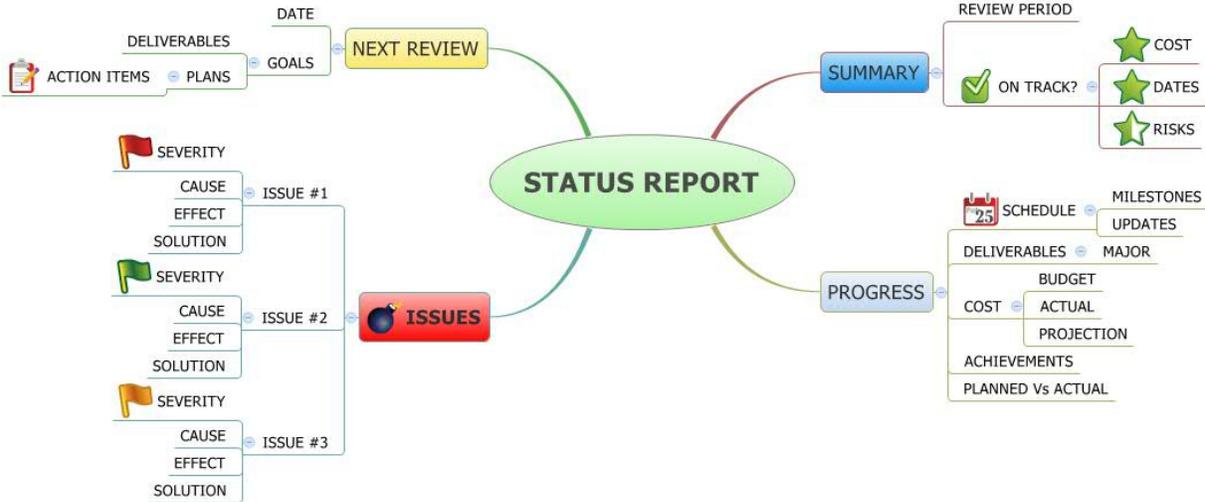
WBS
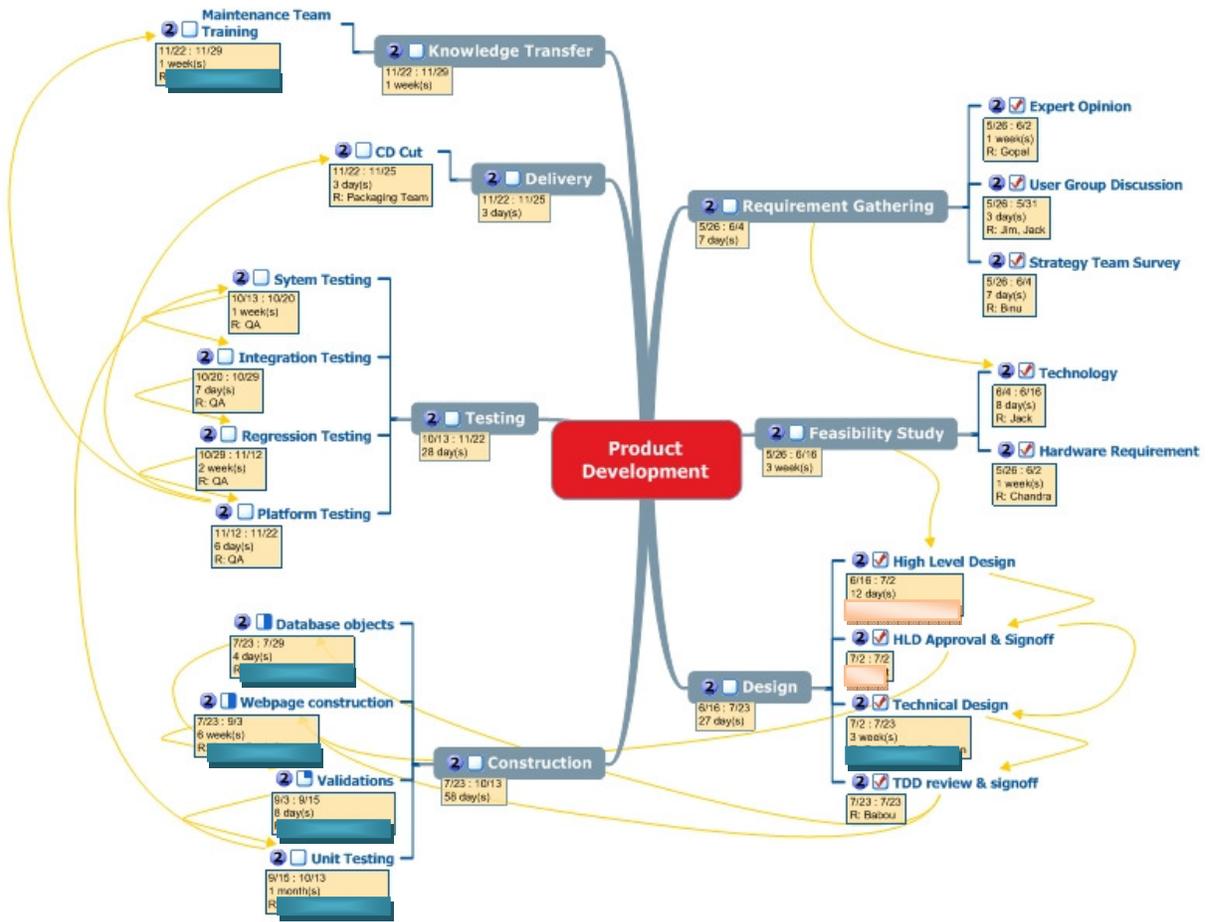
ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	Resource Names
1	**Requirement Gathering**	**7 days**	**Wed 5/26/10**	**Fri 6/4/10**		
2	Expert Opinion	5 days	Wed 5/26/10	Wed 6/2/10		Gopal
3	User Group Discussion	3 days	Wed 5/26/10	Mon 5/31/10		Jim,Jack
4	Strategy Team Survey	7 days	Wed 5/26/10	Fri 6/4/10		Binu
5	**Feasibility Study**	**15 days**	**Wed 5/26/10**	**Wed 6/16/10**		
6	Technology	8 days	Fri 6/4/10	Wed 6/16/10	1	Jack
7	Hardware Requirement	5 days	Wed 5/26/10	Wed 6/2/10		Chandra
8	**Design**	**27 days**	**Wed 6/16/10**	**Fri 7/23/10**		
9	High Level Design	12 days	Wed 6/16/10	Fri 7/2/10	5	
10	HLD Approval & Signoff	0 days	Fri 7/2/10	Fri 7/2/10	9	
11	Technical Design	15 days	Fri 7/2/10	Fri 7/23/10	10	
12	TDD review & signoff	0 days	Fri 7/23/10	Fri 7/23/10	11	
13	**Construction**	**58 days**	**Fri 7/23/10**	**Wed 10/13/10**		
14	Database objects	4 days	Fri 7/23/10	Thu 7/29/10	12	
15	Webpage construction	30 days	Fri 7/23/10	Fri 9/3/10	10,12	
16	Validations	8 days	Fri 9/3/10	Wed 9/15/10	14,15	
17	Unit Testing	20 days	Wed 9/15/10	Wed 10/13/10	16	
18	**Testing**	**28 days**	**Wed 10/13/10**	**Mon 11/22/10**		
19	Sytem Testing	5 days	Wed 10/13/10	Wed 10/20/10	17	QA
20	Integration Testing	7 days	Wed 10/20/10	Fri 10/29/10	19	QA
21	Regression Testing	10 days	Fri 10/29/10	Fri 11/12/10	20	QA
22	Platform Testing	6 days	Fri 11/12/10	Mon 11/22/10	21	QA
23	**Delivery**	**3 days**	**Mon 11/22/10**	**Thu 11/25/10**		
24	CD Cut	3 days	Mon 11/22/10	Thu 11/25/10	22	Packaging Team
25	**Knowledge Transfer**	**5 days**	**Mon 11/22/10**	**Mon 11/29/10**		
26	Maintenance Team Training	5 days	Mon 11/22/10	Mon 11/29/10	22	

Project: Project Plan.mpp
Date: Wed 5/26/10

Task		Milestone	◆	External Tasks
Split		Summary		External Milestone ◇
Progress		Project Summary		Deadline ◇

Page 1

Travel

The 8th Habit by Stephen Covey

For more Mind Maps example please visit my blogs

http://leadershipchamps.wordpress.com
http://babousrini.blogspot.com