MindManager

Unlocking the potential of knowledge management:

A practical guide

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Introduction

Introduction

"What people say, what people do, and what people say they do are entirely different things" - Margaret Mead

When we are asked to describe how we did something, we usually give a rational explanation based on what we think people want to hear. It's uncommon for people to say, "I just did it the way I always have".

Not only have we all observed this everyday phenomenon from others, we often do it ourselves. It may be because sometimes it's just not possible to give a short description of how we performed a task, we just don't have the right words to explain exactly what we did, or that we simply can't re-interpret what really happened. Surveys of intent are notoriously unreliable because people say one thing then actually do something else, even if they don't intend to.

This effect represents a significant challenge that is at the heart of **Knowledge Management (KM)**. Some of the many goals of any KM system are to share knowledge and skills within an organization, to improve performance, and ensure that valuable lessons are not forgotten. However, this proves to be difficult without a system in place that ensures essential data and information is properly captured, stored, and shared.

It may be that knowledge which has been stored but never tested by anyone is not as valuable as people thought and hoped. What starts out as "Knowledge Management" can easily turn into "Information Management", which can prove to be worth much less. We often delegate responsibility to the reader to correctly convert information into knowledge and action. If the reader doesn't do this, we frequently blame them rather than the actual KM system itself.

Therefore, the challenge for anyone involved in knowledge management is, "how can I unlock the potential of the knowledge and information siloed within my organization and turn them into actionable processes?"

More scientifically, **Schoen and Argyris** say we use two theories of action: "Theory in use,"", which is what we do, and "Espoused theory," which is what we say we do. The Espoused theory is not intended to actively mislead but is instead a combination of intention and hope, modified by external factors. Closing the gap between these two theories is the route to improved individual and team performance. Actions should be consistent with words. **In this e-book**, we cover how to accomplish this and more.

The knowing-doing gap

The knowing-doing gap

This separation is also described as the "knowing-doing gap,", or the disconnect between knowledge and action in this gap. We just do things like we always have rather than thinking about why or how we do them that way.

The good news is that you don't need an expensive Knowledge Management solution to improve knowledge transfer within your organization. Instead, you can work from the edges inwards, leading by example rather than by policy.

By focusing on **learning by doing** (as opposed to merely communicating information), we apply our knowledge to actual work in real time. This effort brings experts and **users** closer together, helping the expert to better understand how to communicate their knowledge so that it can be used effectively. This encourages a collaborative culture more than any top-down policy.

Making
the most
of Knowledge
Management

Making the most of Knowledge Management

[Roger L. Martin](#) says that 40% of us now have "creativity intensive" jobs. A "creativity intensive" job requires imagination, judgment, skill, and experience to tackle an endless stream of new challenges. Additionally, many people, especially [knowledge workers](#), have realized that they are unofficial project managers and must manage their work independently.

This realization has become even more apparent to the working population due to changes in work practices over the last couple of years. Now, more people are working without regular in-person contact with their colleagues and the benefit of chance conversations at the coffee machine. This adjustment means that we all need to be more acutely aware of how we work because we get fewer daily course corrections. Being mindful of our tactics and being open to learning from others is more important than ever.

So, how does Knowledge Management help in these situations? The international standard for Knowledge Management, ISO 30401, says, "Knowledge Management has no single accepted definition.". However, for many organizations, Knowledge Management is about protecting and preserving vital assets.

Many Knowledge Management solutions are centered on capturing and distributing information. They treat knowledge as an asset to be managed. Often, they use technology to find and deliver the right information to the right person at the right time.

But the task of converting knowledge into real improvement is often left to the end users. It is not unusual for organizations to produce grand business plans then revert to putting out fires or handling problems as they arise, assuming their plan will implement itself.

Similarly, Knowledge Management projects sometimes hope that capturing and distributing information is enough, and the information will somehow automatically be absorbed by its audience and lead to better outcomes.

However, we already know that what gets written down is likely to be idealized and rationalized, and not ready to turn into action.

How can we improve performance through knowledge transfer?

Knowledge Management is not an outcome by itself. It is a part of continuously improving the capabilities and performance of an organization or team. It is not just a question of having good information. It includes sharing skills and wisdom learned from experience.

There are many definitions of data, information, knowledge, and wisdom.

At **MindManager®**, we define knowledge as something that you learn by doing. To close the gap between knowing and doing, we need to **learn by doing**, not by simply having access to information.

Using MindManager within a Knowledge Management initiative is centered on three important ideas:

- **Encourage and help your subject experts to communicate their expertise in ways that can be applied to real work.** This is more than simply writing down what they know. The experts themselves will benefit from teaching and coaching others. This is the basis of the **Feynman Technique** (originated by physicist Richard Feynman). One step is to try to explain to a child something that you just learned. This tests whether you really understood it yourself, and whether you can describe it in your own words. The gap between thinking you know something and being able to explain it becomes evident.

- **Encourage your team to reflect on how things are done, not only on getting to the finish line.** Many conversations in business are centered on whether something has been done and if not, why not. Conversations about how it was done are vital for the future and are the basis for improvement.

- **Start small with a few people in your team and grow by learning what works.** Success can be copied; mistakes can be fixed. Despite conventional wisdom, you don't always need to "boil the ocean" and start with organizational policies, KM specialists, and IT infrastructure.

MindManager is a unique workspace for conversations *and* action

At first glance, MindManager appears to be a mind mapping software that is handy for brainstorming. After all, MindManager software is a highly effective visualization tool that enables brainstorming and ideation, along with some technical features that make collaboration and sharing simple and intuitive.

MindManager offers various ways to visualize information and ideas, including mind maps, flow charts, tables, non-linear networks, timelines, and more. Visualization is much more effective at communicating ideas than linear text, and MindManager makes visualizations that are interactive, dynamic, and responsive to status.

However, the bigger picture of what MindManager is capable of is even more astounding. **What really matters is not what the software can do, but what it enables you to accomplish.** The process of developing, connecting, and communicating ideas is what creates real value, not the software itself. MindManager enables **conversations** with yourself and with others that reveal meaning and understanding.

A conversation centered around a MindManager map effectively creates shared understanding. Simply developing a mind map yourself can open an internal conversation where your perceptions and ideas may change.

We have all had the experience of realizing that we knew the answer to a problem while explaining it to someone else. Oftentimes, this new idea or thought process was always inside of you, it just needed to be unlocked by externalizing your thinking.

Additionally, a spin-off benefit of using MindManager for knowledge management is that concepts can develop into outcome-focused workspaces for the "creativity-intensive" work that is increasingly prominent in today's business world. Your visualizations can be extended with annotations, links, task data, and status information, turning them into plans for action.

Two applications for using MindManager for knowledge management

MindManager can be applied to knowledge management in two ways. First, it can be used to directly create and deliver something useful, such as a document, a presentation, an analysis, or a plan. Many of MindManager's technical features are oriented towards these types of outputs.
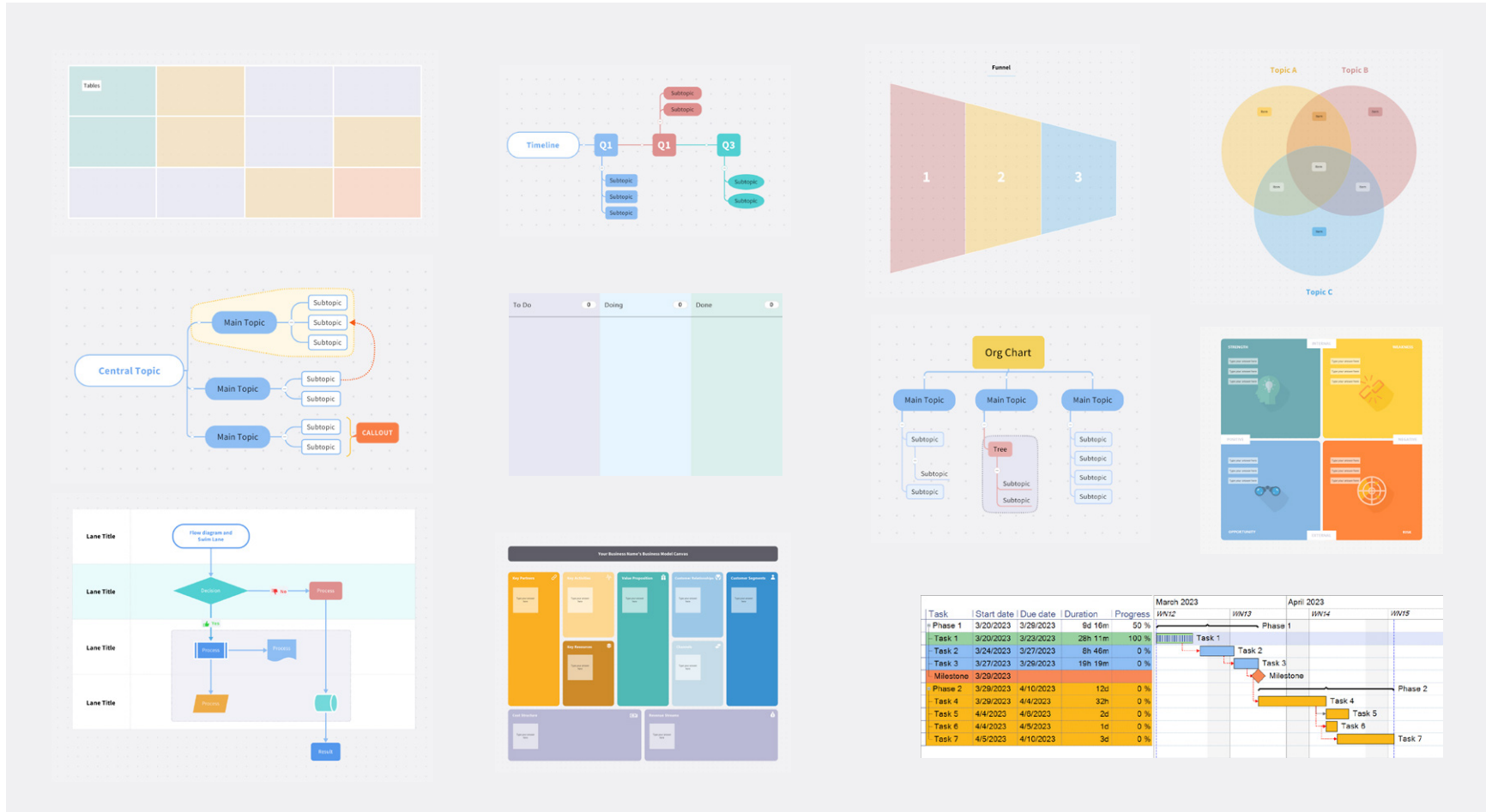
Examples of diagrams created in MindManager

The second application is more subtle and much more powerful. MindManager can be used to track the delivery, deployment, and functionality of something that exists elsewhere, by capturing the tasks as well as the necessary resources behind them. For instance, MindManager is not an online ordering system by definition, but it can capture, describe, and communicate the tasks performed by one, helping users to better understand how such a system works.

Moreover, MindManager can be utilized to capture and outline the strategy, requirements, decisions, design thinking, issues, and opportunities behind your online ordering system. This is the kind of critical knowledge that needs to be understood by its audience, not just one or two key experts.

Unfortunately, this domain of expertise is rarely written down. That's why it's vital to externalize knowledge, so it can be understood, discussed, and developed by the masses. This second-level application requires fewer technical features of the software and instead encourages more thinking about ways to communicate concepts.

MindManager can be highly effective at all levels—for individuals, small teams, or larger groups. Moreover, it is not a structural IT solution that requires careful alignment with policy and strategy. Rather, MindManager is highly effective when integrated at levels that suit each organization, whether it's used by just one or two thought leaders, or a whole department.

MindManager Workbooks enable double-loop learning

MindManager Workbooks enable double-loop learning
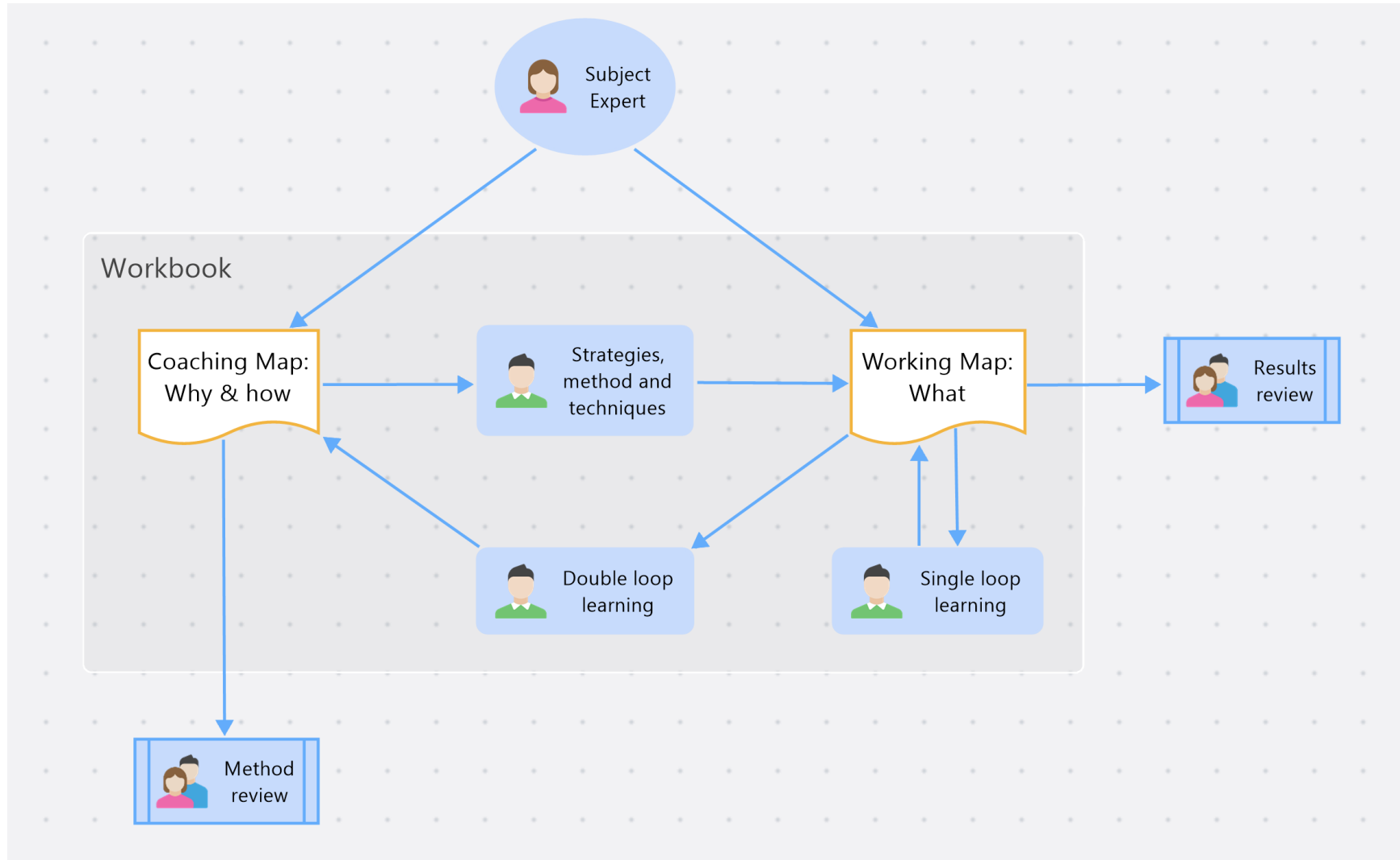
Double-loop learning example with separate working and coaching maps

Most people create single-sided maps for their project, assignment, ideas, or problem to solve, as opposed to double-sided maps.

Schoen and Argyris describe an approach to learning called double-loop learning. **Double-loop learning is where you consider whether your goal is the right objective, and critically evaluate the methods you are using.** If something is not right, you examine the method that produced it. This is also called "reflexive learning," as it involves thinking about the relationship between the method and results.

Double-loop learning is contrasted with single-loop learning where you evaluate your results and make adjustments to reach your objectives. If something is not right, you fix or change it.

A MindManager Workbook is a pair of closely related maps that each make up one of the two loops in double loop learning: a Working Map and a Coaching Map.

The **Working Map** captures the "what" of your work, which is what many people use mind mapping software for today. It contains results, plans, decisions, and information.

The **Coaching Map** captures the "why" and "how" of your work, or the objective you wish to accomplish and why it is important. It describes the approach you are taking and what you have learned from developing the Working Map. In an environment where you are trying to continuously improve, utilizing both maps becomes incredibly important.

Using separate maps for Working and for Coaching gives you a structure for knowledge transfer and **learning by doing**. Separate **Coaching** and **Working maps** help you to:

- **Deliver something concrete in a Working Map**, whether it is a plan, a solution to an issue, or a document. The Working map captures the "what" of your work, and the Coaching map captures the "why and how".

- **Learn by doing**, by thinking about why and how you are doing something as you perform the task and capturing it in your Coaching Map.

- **Benefit from the knowledge and experience of others**, by starting with a template Working Map and Coaching Map prepared by a subject expert.

- **Discuss the methods or processes separately from the results.** Here you would discuss the Coaching Map and potential improvements to the process, providing feedback to the subject experts.

How to create Workbooks using MindManager

A MindManager map is represented as a singular file. When creating, you can create a map from scratch or use one of the pre-built template maps, which offers some pre-defined content fields. MindManager's template gallery has dozens of options that work across all areas of business and commerce. Additionally, you can save your own maps as templates, add them to the template gallery, and then use them to start new projects in the future.

As mentioned, a **Workbook** is a collection of closely related maps which, together, form a cohesive unit. This is like the collection of sheets in a spreadsheet document. An example of a Workbook is a Working Map describing a specific piece of work together with its associated Coaching Map describing how you got there.

Workbooks are very easy to create and use in MindManager. To turn a regular map into a Workbook, you just attach another MindManager map to it in an obvious place, such as the Central Topic.

This attached map is the "Coaching Map", which describes the thinking and process behind the main map. The main map becomes the "Working Map", which captures the results of your work. These two maps then stay together as a pair. The Coaching Map always belongs to its parent Working Map.

A template workbook consists of a skeleton Working Map with a skeleton Coaching Map already attached to it.

If you need to send someone your Working Map without revealing the Coaching Map, you can password-protect the Coaching Map.

MindManager has features that allow you to keep certain maps or attachments private when necessary. For example, you can hide your Coaching Map when you share your Working Map if some people are only interested in the results rather than the process.

To see how this works, have a look at the **Small Project template** workbook and open the Coaching Map attached to the Central Topic.

You can quickly turn an existing map into a Workbook by inserting another MindManager map as an attachment in a place that is easy to find, such as the Central Topic. You can then use the attached map to capture the process behind your work.
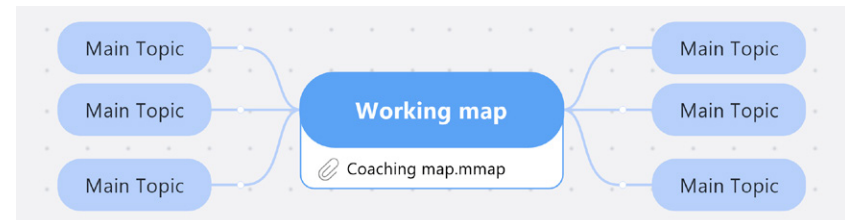
*A Coaching Map is simply an attachment at the center of a Working Map*

What is in a Working Map?

MindManager is commonly used to create plans, develop documents and presentations, solve problems, create new concepts, make decisions, and manage detailed information. Most Working Maps will be organized hierarchically, which helps users to navigate to the right area while staying focused on an outcome. Some maps can also include diagrams showing other perspectives of the situation, process, or workflow.

For example, one common format is a **dashboard map**, which contains signposts to areas that need attention, such as overdue tasks.

This range of applications for Working Maps covers many of the tasks undertaken by knowledge workers, for example, making a business plan or project plan.

Some of these Working maps will be ad-hoc, and some will be part of the value chain of the organization. For the latter, it is important that all stakeholders understand the maps and are not faced with a range of individualistic approaches. It is also important that the advantages of using MindManager for this application are well understood in comparison to alternatives.
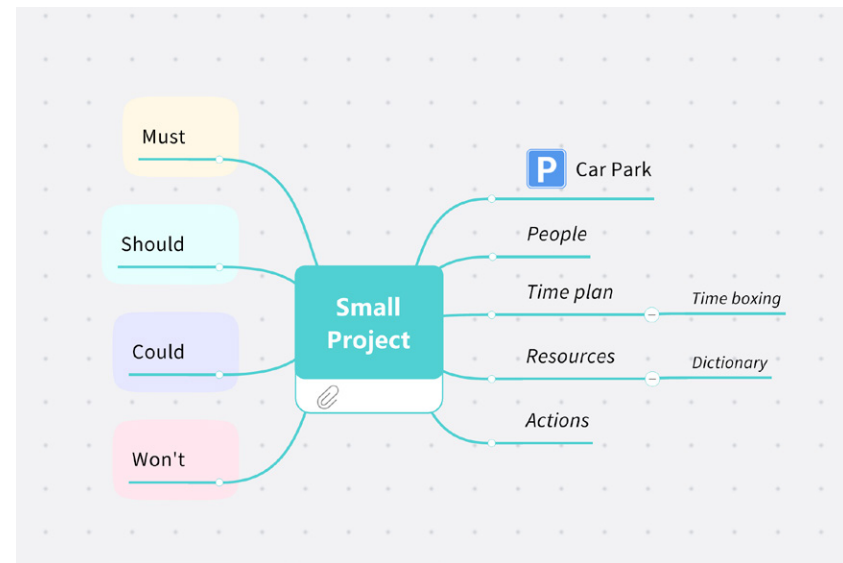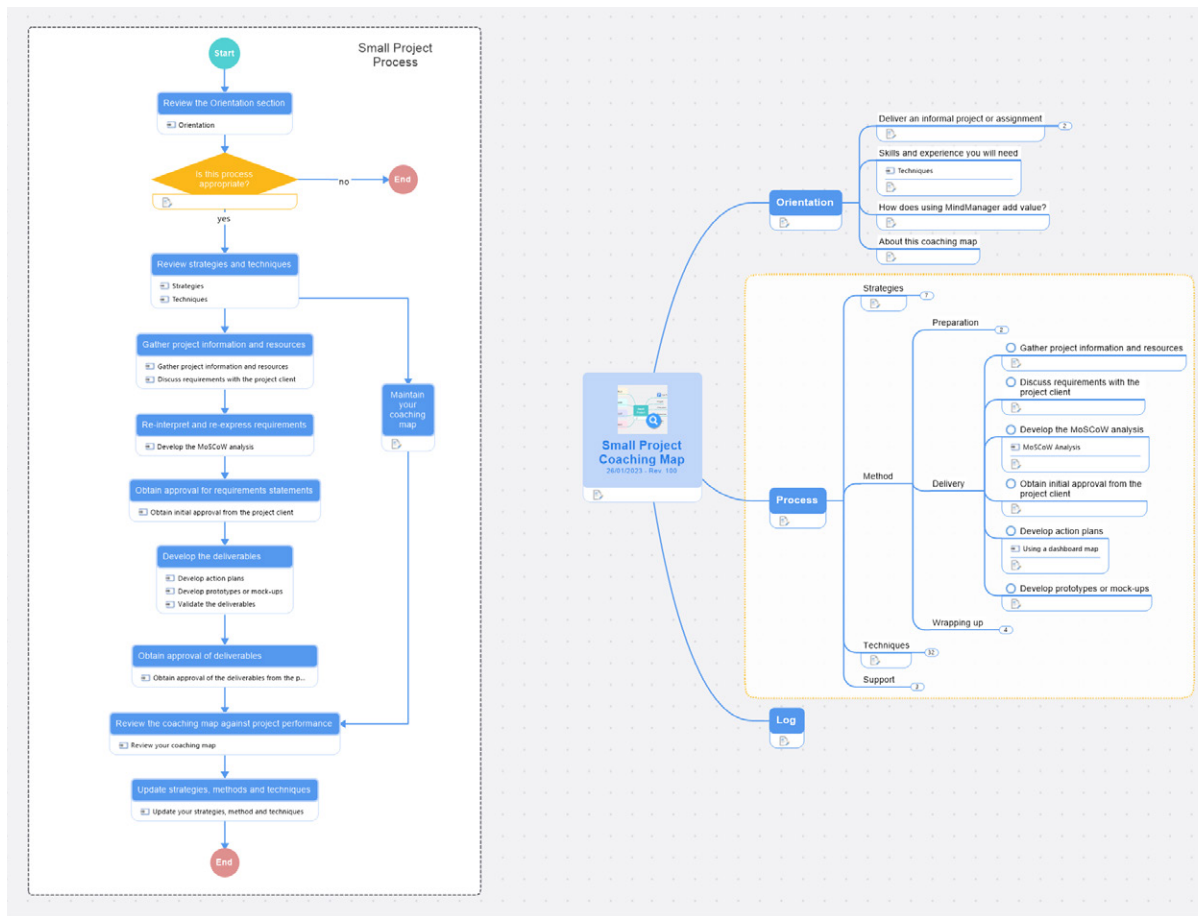

The Working Map from the Small Project workbook

What is in a Coaching Map?

A **Coaching Map** describes the process behind the Working Map. Essentially, it captures the lessons learned while working on the assignment or project. Separating the Coaching Map makes the Working Map more easily understandable to stakeholders.

When creating a Coaching Map, ensure that any stream-of-conscious thoughts or ideas are eliminated from the version you share with others. While capturing those thoughts at the beginning of the process is valuable, once you reach the point of sharing the map it should only contain pertinent or relevant information.

The Working Map from the Small Project workbook

A Coaching Map can contain:

- Orientation to help the user to determine whether this is the right process for their assignment and whether they have enough experience to use it effectively. There needs to be a degree of alignment between the user and the author of the Coaching Map so that the contents are meaningful to the user. The Coaching Map should start at the user's level of knowledge and build from there.

- Insights into why MindManager is a competitive way to deliver this task. This helps the user to get the most from using MindManager.

- An overview of the strategy and priorities. It's beneficial to know what the most important aspects of the work are.

- A step-by-step description of the method for developing the Working Map and the outcome. This may be shown as flow charts, sequences, or checklists.

- Descriptions of techniques and tools used. For example, using a **Flow chart**, **Gantt Chart** or **Kanban Board**.

- A glossary of technical terms to avoid any ambiguity.

- A place to keep a log of important decisions or events throughout the project. Evaluating how well the process helped the user to cope with events is part of the review.

- Information about the author and how to contact them for feedback.

- Information on where to find other users with similar experiences.

- Related resources that will be helpful for this task such as people, information, and tools.

The initial Coaching Map should be written by a Subject Matter Expert (SME) who can effectively share their knowledge with others. Writing a Coaching Map is different from describing your specialist knowledge as it does not aim to teach directly. Instead, it guides the user through the step-by-step process of completing a defined task. Therefore, the SME must be able to see and describe things from the user's perspective rather than their expert view.

> For the Coaching Map to be successful, it is critical that it is adopted by the user so that they can expand on it with their own learning experiences, thoughts, and ideas. If the process needs to be varied, the user can modify the Coaching Map. The modified Coaching Map can then be the basis for further discussion and feedback.

The Coaching Map for a business process within an organization will be specific to that organization. It will reflect proprietary and industry knowledge, and information about other users, communities, and resources.

Three templates to start your Knowledge Management journey

We have included two template workbooks with this e-book so you can try Workbooks out yourself.
You will need MindManager software installed—either a licensed or trial version will work.

Download the templates!
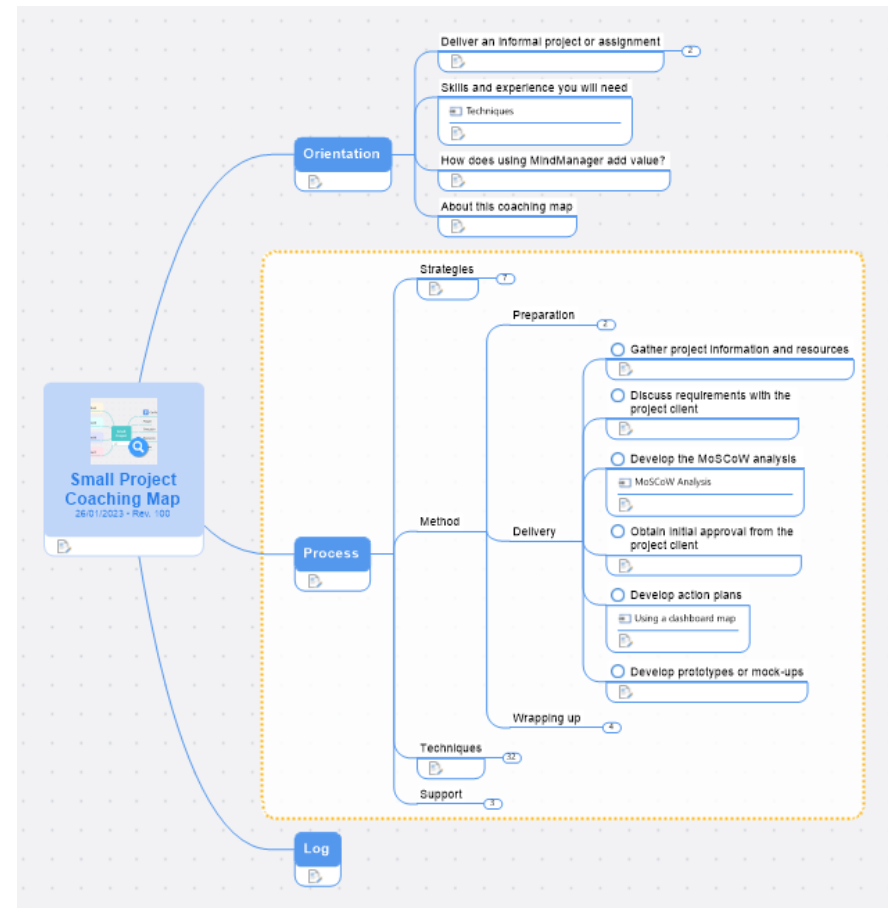
The Small Project workbook contains two maps ready for use

The **Small Project Workbook** is a MindManager map designed to help you plan and execute a small project. It consists of a template Working Map for describing and tracking a small project and a template Coaching Map which describes the ideas and process behind it.

Access link for Small Project workbook

*We've designed a template workbook which you can customize to suit your organization's needs.*

For the Small Project Workbook, it's important to describe the strategy and approach so that they can be discussed, customized, and improved on. It can be a great starting point for your own organization's unique workbook. You can add your own principles, internal resources, techniques, and insights from the project management experts in your organization.

The **Generic Workbook** is a MindManager template map to help you create a new workbook from scratch. It contains an empty Working Map in the default MindManager theme and a skeleton Coaching Map attached to the central topic. The skeleton Coaching Map gives some headings and initial content to get you started on your own Workbook.

Tracking projects is one of the most popular use cases for MindManager. If you use it for project work, consider building your own Coaching Map over time to gather the principles, methods, and techniques that have worked for you.

The Knowledge Transfer Template is a MindManager map that can be used to prepare for the departure of key personnel (in order to manage risk upon their departure), or to extend the capabilities and capacities of a team by sharing critical knowledge.
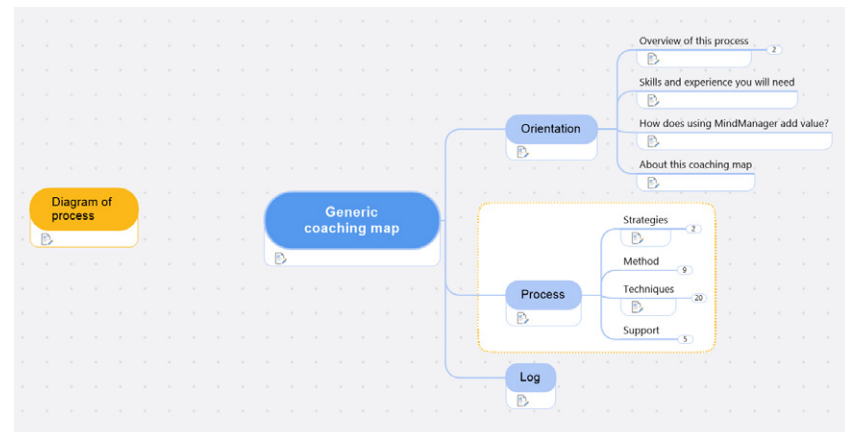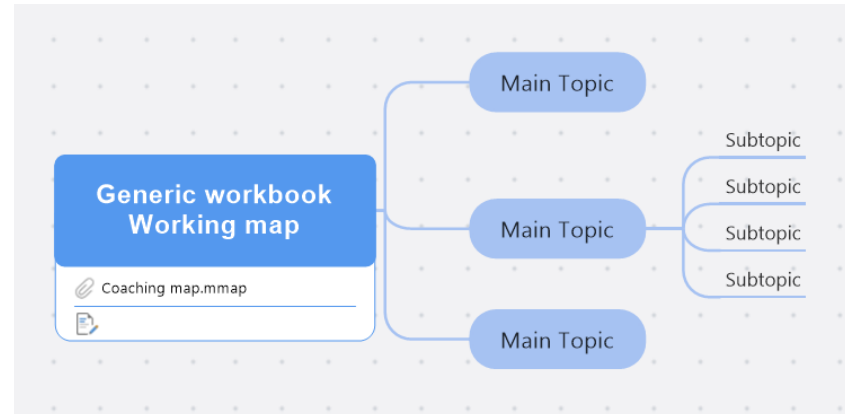
The Generic Workbook contains two skeleton maps

Why maintaining knowledge is essential

Why maintaining knowledge is essential

The diagram above shows that a user doesn't need to wait for the expert to re-issue an updated Template Workbook in response to new lessons learned from completing a project. Instead, their own personalized Workbook can be re-used for the next project while sharing their ideas with the expert.

Capturing and sharing knowledge and processes and sharing it with users who can learn by doing is only the first step in an ongoing process. Knowledge and information quickly get out of date, especially in fast-changing business areas. Therefore, regular maintenance is always needed, no matter what process you use for knowledge transfer and capture.

Scheduled reviews of knowledge management resources are easy to defer or put off to a later date. But once a document is outdated, its value diminishes. Unfortunately, getting an old documented updated and relevant again can be difficult and there is a strong temptation to simply start over.

MindManager is a great tool to ensure documents don't become outdated. When someone uses a MindManager workbook to complete a task, they take on the stewardship of their copy of the Coaching Map. They are responsible for annotating and updating their copy of the Coaching Map based on how, when, and what they are learning by doing.

This continuous improvement of the knowledge management process with MindManager can branch out into multiple paths. The user can repurpose their customized copy of the Coaching Map the next time they do this work, building up their own knowledge. In addition, they can use it to explain

to stakeholders why they needed to vary the process and what they learned. They can also use it to share feedback with the Workbook author so improvements can be integrated into the base version for future users.

In the MindManager Workbook model, maintenance is distributed across the users, not reliant on a centralized review and update procedure. Feedback and improvements originate from real-world use. The performance of the process can be directly related to success or failure in the outcomes. The shared Coaching Maps can be used as the basis for a joint review and discussion, where users can compare notes with each other or with subject experts.
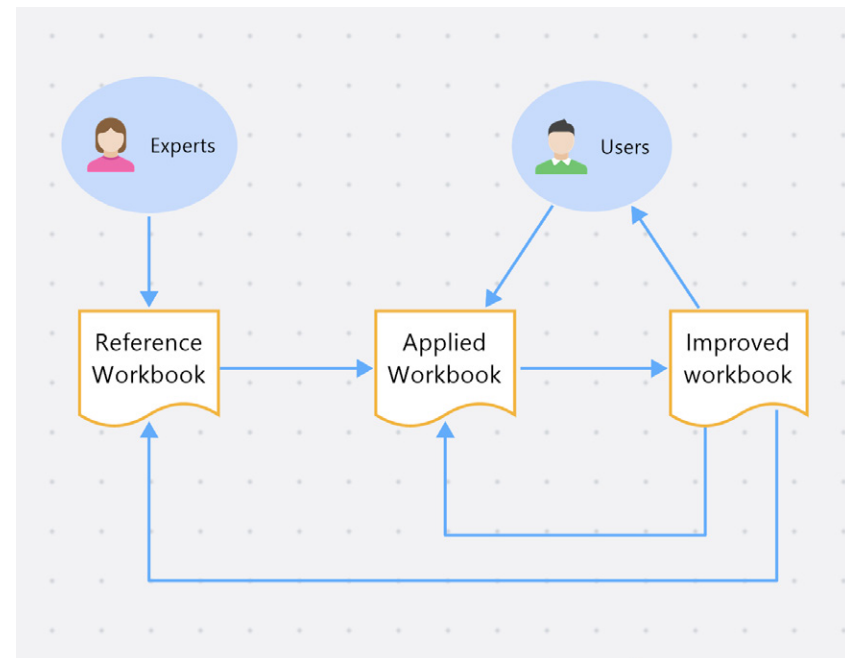

A knowledge maintenance lifecycle using Workbooks

Case Study: Knowledge Management from the perspective of an artist

Case Study:
Knowledge Management from the perspective of an artist

In the following case study, we see how Knowledge Management expert Stephanie Barnes from Entelechy integrates brainstorming in mind maps into a process of discovery. This is not what you typically expect to read about when investigating knowledge management. Instead, you are more likely to be presented with IT-based architecture and technologies. **Nevertheless, capturing elusive tacit knowledge is the foundation for transferring expertise.**

Stephanie uses art to defocus and stand back from the details, allowing more fundamental ideas to surface unforced. Everyone will have their preferred interventions, such as exercise, a manual pastime, or anything that takes our attention and imagination. The exact method is less important than the principles involved. Accordingly, business-oriented MindManager users can take key learnings and ideas from Stephanie's process and apply them to their organizational needs.
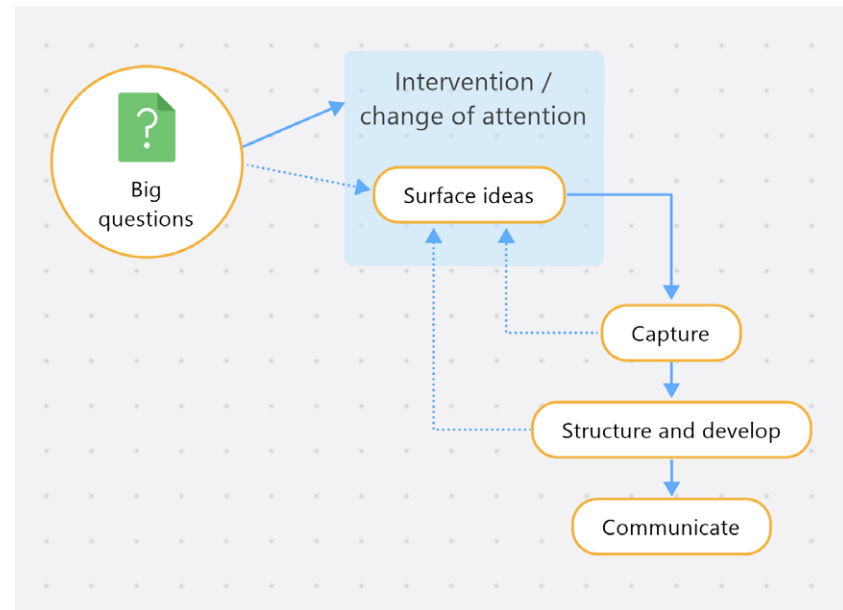
Using an intervention to defocus and let ideas surface

Making Brainstorming creative and fun: a real-world example

Stephanie Barnes, Chief Chaos Organizer, Entelechy

Knowledge is human. The question for people is often about capturing it and sharing it with others. How to best do that? It's been said, "We know more than we can say, and we will say more than we will write down" (source unknown, although it's similar to something Michael Polanyi is known to have said). So, how do we capture as much as we can? By making it fun and enjoyable, of course.

Using **Radical Knowledge Management (Radical KM)** is one way to make it fun, especially if we are trying to capture tacit knowledge and create something new and innovative.

What is Radical Knowledge Management?

Radical KM is about adding creativity and arts-based interventions to knowledge management. The reasons for doing this are many and varied. Creativity and arts-based interventions allow us to look at the world differently. For example, they activate our curiosity, which facilitates continuous learning; they enable sustainable mindsets and resilience, as well as help to transform organizational culture when we let them.

The thoughts and ideas generated in these arts-based activities can be captured in mind maps. This approach to capturing the results of brainstorming can be done whether one is brainstorming by themselves or as part of a team.

The Challenge

The following is a description of how I have used the technique in my work as an independent knowledge management consultant.

I often find myself brainstorming on my own, creating an outline for a report, an article, a workshop, or some other deliverable for a client. One of my favorite brainstorming methods, especially when I'm feeling stuck or uncertain, is to paint or doodle. These activities help me relax, and free up my mind from whatever the question I'm trying to brainstorm about. They make space for something magic to happen; I am seldom disappointed.

When I paint, for instance, I start by writing the question down on the canvas. This practice helps focus my mind and allows me to move on (this question becomes the center of my mind map). I then begin to paint by tapping into my intuition. What color to use? What tool to use? How to apply the paint? What marks to make? How to mix the colors? Do I want to mix the colors? What designs to make?

I pay attention to all kinds of things as I paint. I pay attention to the ideas about the question I started with that pop into my head while I paint or after I paint, and I make note of those in the mind map. Thoughts might pop into my head for hours or days afterwards, and I add them all to the mind map.

The Solution

Depending on the problem I am trying to solve, I may have several painting sessions. Each painting session may bring up new thoughts, so I leave the mind map open on my laptop and enter the new thoughts and ideas after the painting session. During the initial capture process, I do not judge, reorganize, or edit the mind map. I capture the honest thoughts and ideas that have come up through the painting process.

When the painting is complete, and I'm satisfied that I have brainstormed everything and captured it in the mind map, I start the organizing and editing process. I may also add more thoughts and ideas that come up through organizing and editing.

Once I've organized and edited the mind map, I start to think about how I'm going to convey the ideas to the people that I'm working with. What story am I going to tell? What are people going to want to hear about? What is going to be important for them? That process lets me further refine the mind map.

The Conclusion

After the story I'm sharing is settled, the final step is the creation of a document or a slide deck, or some other artifact that I want to use in communicating the ideas and thoughts to my client.

I share my initial mind maps with select groups who have co-created the mind maps, since it can be challenging to capture the full story of the creative process in a mind map alone. Rather, the mind map informs the creation of a document, slide deck, or other deliverable.

I've found mind maps to be a useful tool in my Radical KM work because they allow me to go with the flow of the creative process and capture what comes up as it comes up in a fun and enjoyable way. I do not have to worry about order or what belongs where. Instead, I can just capture it and discover the patterns, connections, and story afterward when they become clearer rather than jumping to conclusions and potentially missing an essential piece of the puzzle.

Invariably, people often realize they know much more than they thought they did. The challenge is structuring it so that other people can follow the ideas.

The next step is to identify a piece of work or well-defined activity that is valued by the organization and create a skeleton or model of what it looks like upon completion. This activity is not a training exercise. Rather, it is something that must be embedded in the value chain of your organization. People internalize lessons better when it really matters. This is the template Working Map that users will aim to develop to achieve the task's objectives.

Behind this template Working Map, you can then create a Coaching Map that helps users to understand why and how this work is done. This guides them through the process of completing their project and is also the starting point for their reflections on how well things are going.

Getting started

Getting started

Getting started: Subject experts

If you are an expert on a particular subject or process (often referred to as a **subject matter expert**) within your organization, creating MindManager Workbooks to help others to gain from your knowledge has multiple benefits:

• Your expertise will be protected by sharing it.

• Your team will be more productive and innovative.

• You will learn more about your own area of expertise by teaching and coaching others.

• Organizations value experts who can teach others more than experts who just have a valuable skill.

Some people naturally fear that knowledge management initiatives will mean they are no longer indispensable at work. However, if the organization's management really intends to reduce reliance on individuals, then it will eventually happen regardless, one way or another. Therefore, your best strategy is to pre-empt it by advancing your expertise through teaching and coaching others.

The kernel of "Knowledge Management" is the conversion of **tacit knowledge** into **explicit knowledge** or written knowledge that can be transferred. Tacit knowledge is information which cannot be written down, making this challenging.

Tacit knowledge can be seen when an expert senses or recognizes a pattern that is not visible to less experienced people. Often, these experts can respond intuitively and make decisions that are difficult to rationalize or explain logically.

An example of tacit knowledge is having good technique at golf. You can't get good at golf by someone telling you that it's important to hit the ball straight. You can only learn it by teaching yourself.

An indirect approach to transferring tacit knowledge is likely to be more effective than a direct approach. Creating opportunities for people to learn by themselves is more productive than just expecting them to read, comprehend, and act.

Even though they may be able to follow a step-by-step method, they will be able to cope with exceptions and surprises that the real world always throws at them if they know the principles and strategy behind the method.

Most people know a lot more than they think they do. Therefore, the first step of capturing and transferring knowledge is to **know what you know**.

Most people find it difficult to find the words and concepts to communicate their knowledge. For that reason, making a simple mind map in MindManager can be of tremendous value for scoping out the subject and capturing the fundamentals.

Making logical lists of steps, tasks, or other items requires too much detail too early. Instead, you can use MindManager to frame the big picture and then fill in the details. Knowing what you know is more about uncovering insights organically than extracting them analytically. Allowing ideas to incubate after an initial brainstorm often produces new insights.

Getting started: Team Leaders

If your team uses agreed processes for defined business tasks, establishing organized knowledge transfers within the team can lead to performance improvements and personal development.

The first step of the process is to focus on which business processes can be effectively implemented or tracked with MindManager software. Your team may already be using MindManager, but its usage has yet to be mutually agreed upon.

The advantages of using MindManager must be clear to everyone involved, especially if the process involves stakeholders who may not expect to deal with MindManager maps. Using **techniques and collaboration tools** to help you make information easy for other stakeholders to access should be a vital part of the process.

You may already have team members who also use MindManager and/or are interested in enhancing their skill set. Therefore, they can help you encourage its use at your organization otherwise assist in bringing the process to life.

Expert knowledge of MindManager is not a primary consideration, though, because the important part is the separate descriptions and understandings of the outcome and the process behind it. This can be achieved with the software's standard features.

A MindManager user and the subject expert can build a template Working Map for the task and a template Coaching Map to help users learn the process by delivering it.

Getting started: Individual users

If you are an individual user of MindManager, there are many benefits that support continuous improvement to your work, even if others at your organization don't use it (yet).

For example, many people use MindManager when planning projects. If you have a project already under way in a MindManager map, add a Coaching Map to it and begin to capture insights into your process, such as:

- What are the benefits of using MindManager for this task?

- What works well, and what doesn't?

- What barriers have you encountered?

- Which parts happened as expected, and what was unexpected?

- What would you do differently next time, and why?

This Coaching Map can be the starting point for the next time you do a similar piece of work.

You can also use it to explain to your manager how you approached the task, what worked well and what could work better. If you can demonstrate a successful outcome, your manager may encourage you to coach others or turn your Working Map and Coaching Map into a template Workbook for others to use.

This would then be a basis for joint discussion of shared improvements and an exchange of ideas. Converting your Coaching Map from personal notes into a resource for other people to use will take some effort but will be rewarded by further insights and improvement.

As an added bonus, using MindManager makes it simple to showcase and capture your positive contributions and outcomes at work, which is perfect for when it is time for performance reviews and similar activities.

Conclusion

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Thank you for reading our e-book. We hope you have found some ideas that will help your organization. A few of the primary reasons that MindManager is particularly effective for knowledge management include:

- Its versatility as a platform for capturing and communicating ideas in a range of visual formats.

- The capability to develop key knowledge documents like mind maps and visual diagrams of processes or tasks, as well as providing an outline or structure for work performed elsewhere.

- It captures not only key information, but also status, context, meaning, decisions, issues, and resources.

- This rich workspace enables thinking, learning, collaborating, and communicating.

These factors make MindManager a valuable element of a Knowledge Management system that aims to transfer knowledge and skills, not just simply distribute information. It is productive to use on any scale, from one or two people up to a whole department.

By explicitly separating the working information (the Working Map) and the method (the Coaching Map) in a pair of interdependent maps, you can:

- Support learning by doing, making users responsible for their own learning.

- Use MindManager to capture knowledge and transfer it from experts to users.

- Enhance expertise by helping subject experts teach and coach others.

- Record learning experiences and real-time changes in the method.

- Discuss and evaluate methods against outcomes achieved.

- Compare the merits and results of different methods.

- Distribute maintenance across the user base rather than keeping it centralized.

MindManager gives you a capable platform for accelerating continuous improvement across your team without needing to commit to a company-wide knowledge management strategy. These approaches can be piloted on a small scale and incrementally developed with a focus on team performance.

Resources

Try MindManager Today

BONUS: get access to our free map templates

Glossary

Glossary

- **Knowledge Management:** Improving performance by sharing knowledge and transferring skills.

- **Knowledge worker:** Someone who adds value to information by solving issues or creating something original Knowledge workers typically use high-level communication skills to work independently and collaboratively in order to accomplish complex tasks, often by using the latest technology. Most notably, a knowledge worker is someone who can learn and adapt to a shifting workplace and help create solutions.

- **Value chain:** The processes in your organization that directly create value for customers.

- **Explicit knowledge:** Information in text or images.

- **Tacit knowledge:** Know-how inside people's heads that can't necessarily be written down.

- **Learning by doing:** Discovering what you need to know and do by attempting to do it yourself.

- **Subject Expert (or Subject Matter Expert)**: Someone who has a specific skill that should be shared with others.

- **User (of a Knowledge Management process):** Someone who learns new skills by using a KMS.

- **Workbook:** A pair of MindManager maps, a Working map and a Coaching map.

- **Working Map:** The map in a Workbook that describes the results and outcomes of a piece of work.

- **Coaching Map:** The map in a Workbook that describes the thinking behind the Working Map and the method for developing and delivering it.

- **Single-sided map:** Typically, a working map that describes the outcomes and results.

- **Double-sided map:** A pair of maps where one map is an attachment inside the other.