Mind Map


Make Your Own Mind Map

1. Begin with a large sheet of blank white paper and six or more colored pens. The bigger the paper, the greater the freedom to express your associations. Place the paper horizontally in front of you. A horizontal disposition makes it easier for you to keep all your key words upright and easy to read.

2. Start your mind map by drawing a representative image in the middle of the paper. Draw it as vividly as you can, using more than one color. Have fun and don’t worry about the accuracy of your drawing.

3. Now print key words or draw images on lines radiating out from your central image. (Remember to print on the lines, one key word or image per line, and keep the lines connected.) If you feel stuck, choose any key word on your mind map and immediately print your first association with that word—even if it seems ridiculous or irrelevant. Keep your association flowing and don’t worry about making sure that every word is “right.”

4. When you feel you have generated enough material through free association, look at the result: all your ideas spread across one page. As you examine your mind map, you will see relationships that help you organize and integrate your ideas. Look for words that appear repeatedly throughout the map. They often suggest major themes.

5. Connect related parts of your mind map with arrows, codes and colors. Eliminate elements that seem extraneous. Pare you mind map down to just the ideas you need for your purpose. Then put them in sequence, if necessary. This can be accomplished with numbers or by redrawing the mind map in clockwise order.

Some tips for keeping your mind map neat, easy and organized.

- Keep your central image in the center of the page and limit its size.
- Use angled and curved lines as necessary to keep all your key words upright and easy to read.
- Use just one word per line and be sure to print the key words.
- Make the lines a bit thicker at their origin and print your letters at least one-quarter inch in height so they are easy to read.
- You can print some letters even larger for emphasis.
- Make each word the same size as the line underneath it. This saves space and allows you to see connections more clearly.
- If possible, use large sheets of paper. This helps to avoid crowding and encourages you to think big.
- Do not be concerned if your first draft seems disorganized. You can make a second or a third draft for further clarification.