# HpO Gizmos: Mind Maps

**Mind Mapping** is a note taking technique that displays information graphically in a simple way. Mind maps help to surface main ideas and explore ideas linking to them. They also help to build connections between main ideas and visually display this. Mind Maps can be used to summarise information or think through complex problems.

## Process:

1. Write the key idea/issue in the centre of the page, and draw a circle around it.
2. For a first level idea, draw a line from the circle in any direction, and add a heading along this line. Keep it clear and simple.
3. For ideas radiating from this point, draw lines out from this line and label each one.
4. For individual facts, draw lines out from the appropriate line.

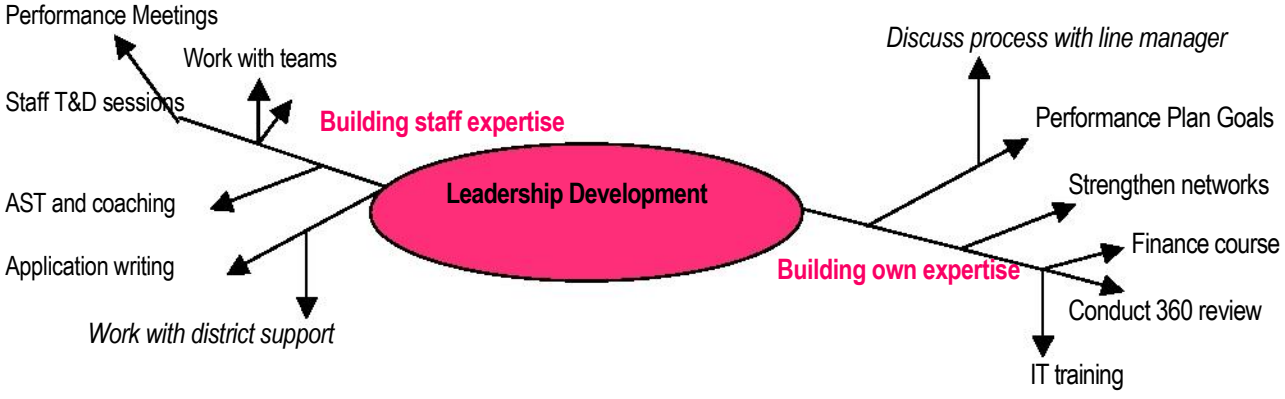
A large Mind Map may have main ideas radiating out in all directions, with related ideas, issues and facts branching off from these, like branches and twigs from the trunk of a tree. You do not need to worry about the structure produced just let it evolve of its own accord.

These ideas may help the effectiveness of your Mind Maps:

- *Use strong single words or simple phrases for information:*
  Excess words just clutter the Mind Map, and take time to write down.
- *Use colour to separate different ideas:*
  Colour helps visualisation and recall and to show relationships. If several people are constructing a joint map then give each person their own colour so that you can follow up ideas, understand viewpoints and see where you connect to ideas.
- *Use of symbols and images:*
  Symbols can convey more information than words and help with recall. Have fun, doodle!
- *Use arrows to show cause and effect*

## Application

Mind maps are a great form of note taking and a useful way to capture conversations and present your thinking. They can be used for note taking in meetings, conferences, lectures or lessons. As a shared too they visually map the conversation and build understanding. Mind mapping is a good process in group work and in structuring brainstorming activities. Related Gizmos include the Lotus and Affinity Diagrams and Cause and Effect Fishbone processes.

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