



Continuous Improvement Toolkit

World-Class Performance Tools for Business and

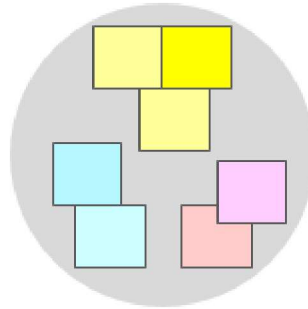
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Affinity Diagram

There are many methods available to analyze and group the outputs of brainstorming and problem solving meetings in order to collect



meaningful information. An affinity diagram (also known as **KJ Analysis**) helps categorize and organize a large number of fragmented uncertain information into logical cohesive groups. The goal is to create a limited number of groups which results in better idea selection or a problem that is better understood.

An affinity diagram is commonly used during idea-generation brainstorming sessions to stimulate creative right-brained thoughts. It is also used during problem-solving sessions when information is subjective or held by different people, but no clear picture of the problem is emerging yet.

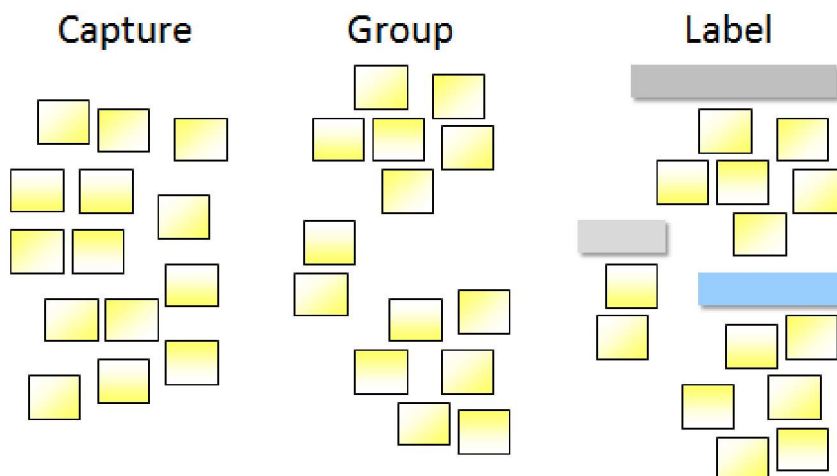
Affinity diagrams can also be used to capture the voice of the customer. Feedback from customers is a valuable source for improvement and needs to be collected, organized and

analyzed to make sense out of it. Affinity diagrams are used to find messages in customer statements which might come from different sources such as complaints, interviews, focus groups and telephone discussions.

How to Conduct an Affinity Session:

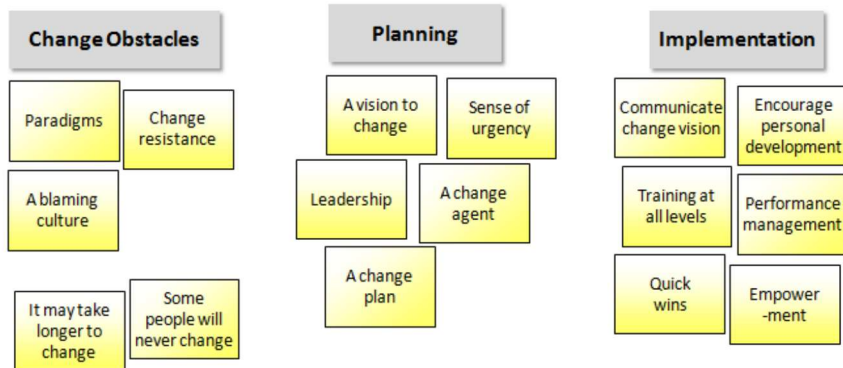
The affinity diagram is normally led by a facilitator to guide the team through the following steps:

- Present the topic or define the problem clearly.
- Give the team index cards or sticky-notes.
- Ask them to write an idea or issue per card.
- Call out the ideas or issues and hang them on the wall.
- Lead the team to silently sort the ideas or issues into categories.
- Lead them labeling each group of cards.
- Eliminate duplicate ideas.
- Add arrows between items and groups to show significant relationships.



Example:

Conduct a brainstorming session and use the affinity diagram to identify how to successfully implement and sustain change within an organization (see below).



Further Information:

- The ideas shouldn't be discussed until the final affinity diagram is complete.
- Record the actual spoken words when data is verbal (during interviews or observations).
- The best results tend to be achieved when the exercise is implemented by a cross-functional team.

Related Resources

The Ultimate List of Essential
Visual Brainstorming
Techniques



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