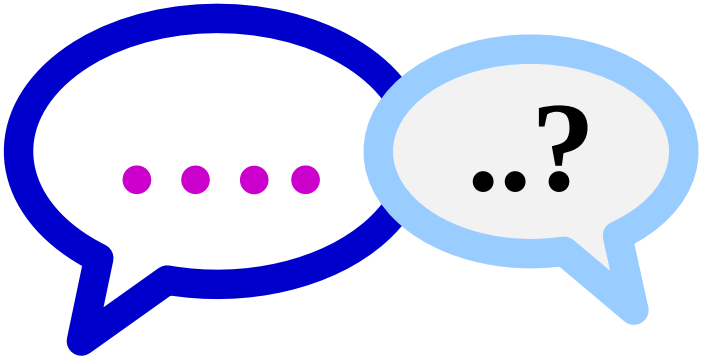
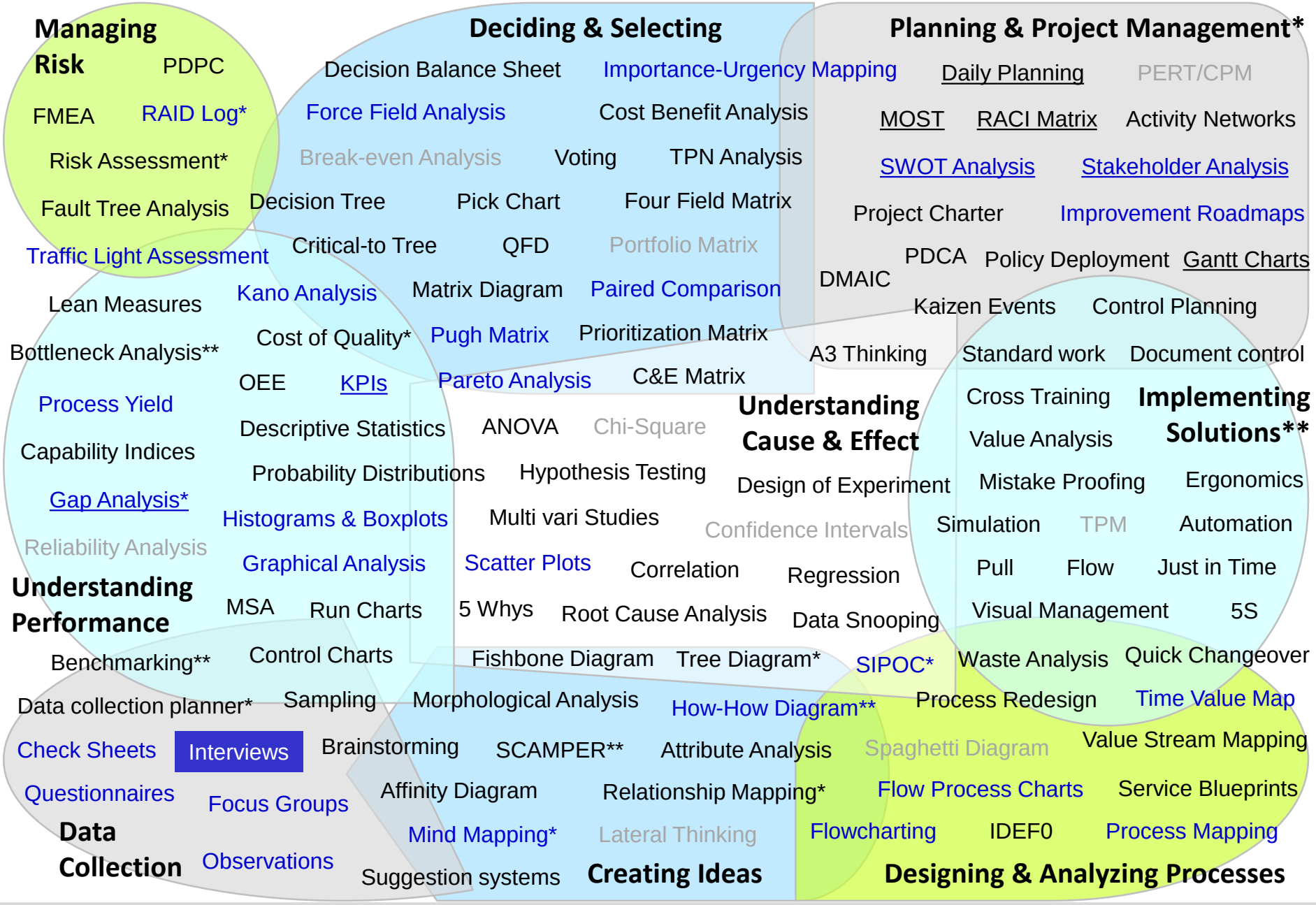
Continuous Improvement Toolkit

Interviews



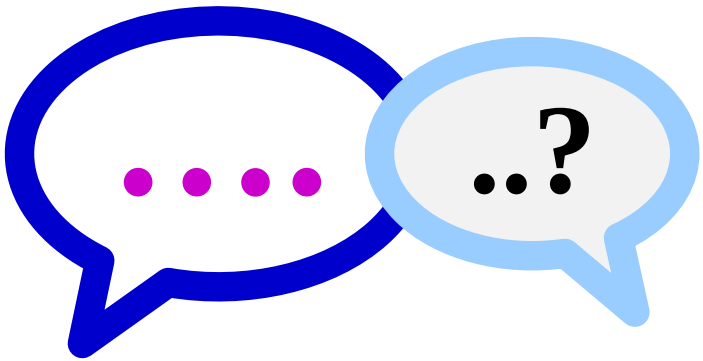
The Continuous Improvement Map



- Interviews

An Interview:

- A technique used to understand the experiences of others (customers, employees, etc.).
- Takes the form of a conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee.
- Often conducted in an informal and natural way:
  - Where the respondent can freely express his/her opinion in his/her own words.



- Interviews

When to Use:

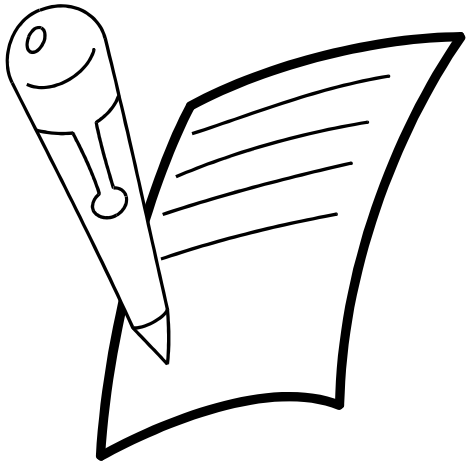
- **To learn about the product or service from the customer's perspective.**
- In project management and improvement initiatives to learn what is important or confusing (to the customer for example).
- In journalism and media reporting.
- When screening candidates for employment.
- When measuring the employee satisfaction level:
  - During organizational transformation.
  - On employee exit.

- Interviews

- **Can be undertaken through different media:**
  - Face-to-face.
  - Telephone.
  - Email.
  - Online meetings.

- Interviews

- **Data capturing methods:**
  - Forms and questionnaires.
  - Note taking.
  - Audiotapes and computer audio programs.

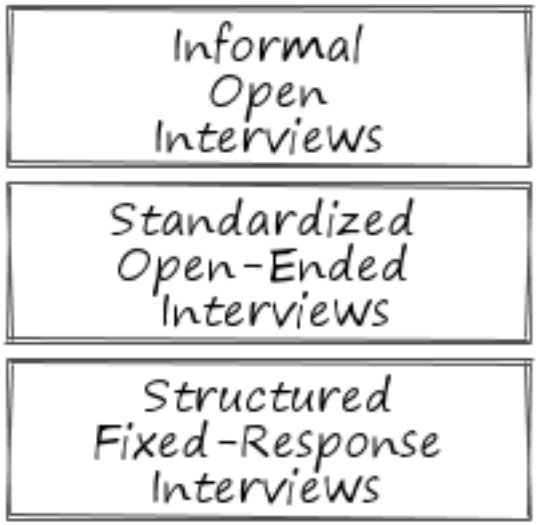


- Interviews

Types:

- **Open interviews** allow a degree of freedom and adaptability in getting the information.

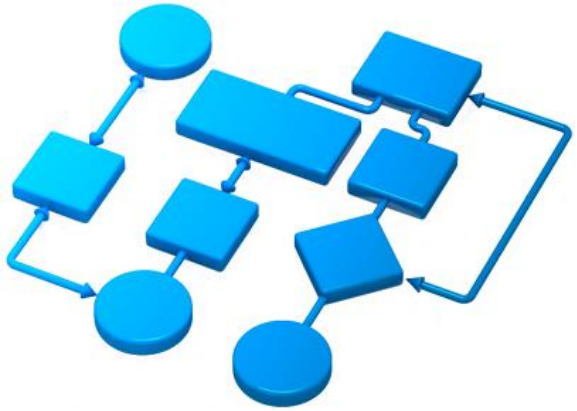
- **Structured interviews** are performed by using a well-designed questionnaire.
  - Forces the respondent to choose answers from among the same set of alternatives.
  - More focused questions can be asked and data can be more easily analyzed and compared.
  - More expensive.



- Interviews

How to Conduct an Interview:

- Start by clearly define the purpose of the interview.
- Identify the target respondents for the interview.
- Prepare a list of questions prior the interview.
- Decide the type of interview you will use.
- Decide the data capturing method.
- Contact the respondents before the interview.
- Do a pilot interview to refine the questions and the interview process.



- Interviews

How to Conduct an Interview:

- Conduct the interview at the scheduled time and date.
- Let the questions structure the conversation, but adapt to the discussion as needed.
- Take notes or record the interview.
- Listen, don't interrupt, make the participant feel comfortable and be respectful of boundaries.
- Before completing, ask for additional input or comments.
- Take time to document important ideas and findings soon after completing the interview.
- Process and analyze the data.

- Interviews

Further Information:

- Establish a rapport with the interviewee in order for him to be open and talk freely.
- You may clarify questions or ask follow-up questions on the spot to further probe for meaningful data.
- A test prior the interview will assure better data and avoid wasting time and money.
- Sometimes, interviews are used to validate data collected previously by other survey methods.