Creating Mind Maps

To make your mind map as effective as possible, be sure you follow the “laws” of mind mapping:

1. Use unlined paper (8.5 x 11 or larger works best) or mind-mapping software
2. Start in the middle of the page, using a picture or image for your central idea
3. Draw branches radiating from the center for your main points, with branches close to the main idea thicker than those further away from it
4. Use just one word or short phrase per branch, and make the branch the same length as the word
5. Use print or block letters for words (rather than cursive)
6. Make branches curve and flow
7. Connect sub-branches to main branches
8. Use colors and images throughout

When creating a mind map, ensure you also follow the 10 core memory principles listed below. Applying the principles in blue will engage your senses, ones in red your logic, and ones in purple your emotion. Use all 3 principle types in your mind maps to activate your whole brain!

1. **Senses** — use visualization (and other senses, if possible!) to create a stronger tie to memory
2. **Exaggeration** — draw absurd images to engage your mind’s eye
3. **Rhythm/movement** — curve lines to suggest movement and make images 3D to make them memorable
4. **Color** — choose at least 3 colors to make your mind map come alive
5. **Numbers** — use numbers to give order and help make memories specific
6. **Symbols** — create a code of symbols as a quick way to capture a lot of information
7. **Order/pattern** — instill order and sequence to help organize memories, making them easier to recall
8. **Attraction** — make your mind map appealing so you enjoy looking at it
9. **Laughter** — use humor to enhance your ability to recall
10. **Positive thinking** — create positive images so your mind will create pleasant associations with them