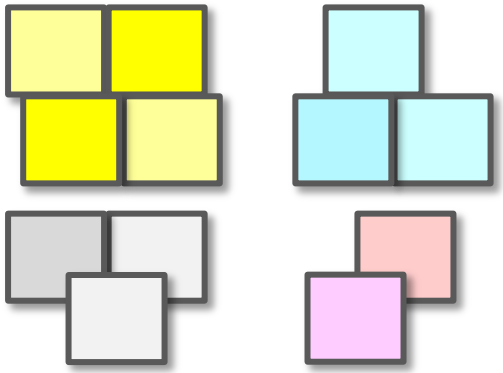
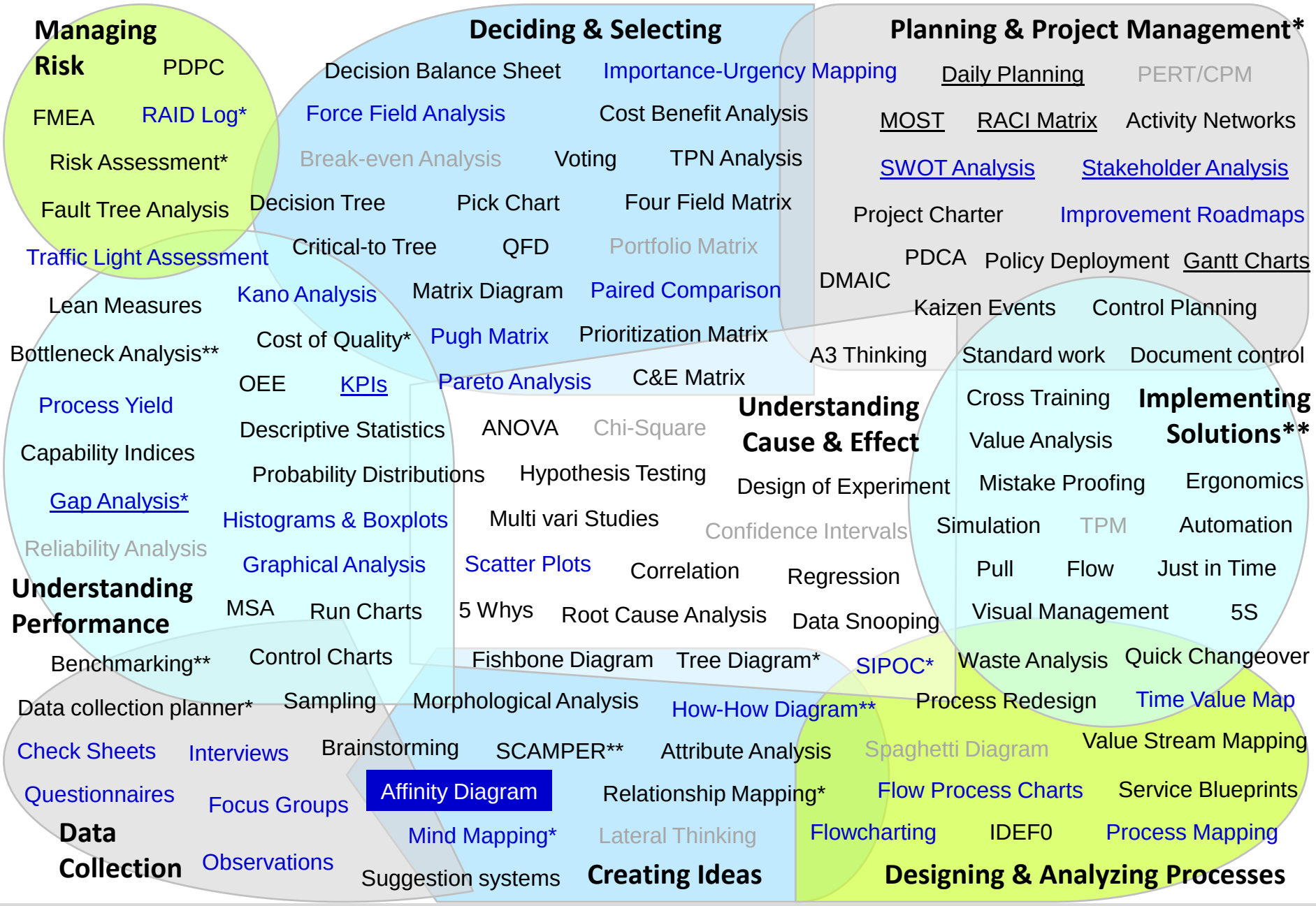
Continuous Improvement Toolkit

Affinity Diagram

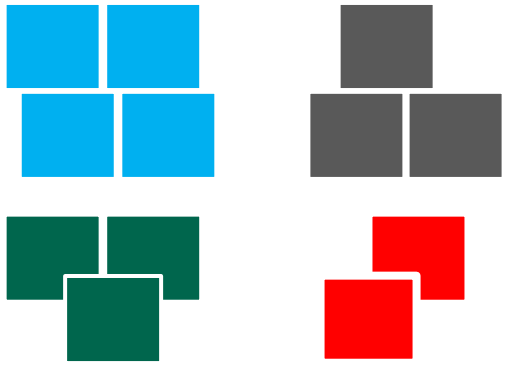


The Continuous Improvement Map



- Affinity Diagram

- Affinity Diagram 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.
- This results in better idea selection or a problem that is better understood.
- Also known as **KJ Analysis**.



- Affinity Diagram

When to Use It?

- **During idea-generation brainstorming sessions.**
  - It stimulates creative right-brained thoughts.

- **During problem-solving sessions.**
  - When information is subjective or held by different people, but no clear picture of the problem is emerging yet.

- Affinity Diagram

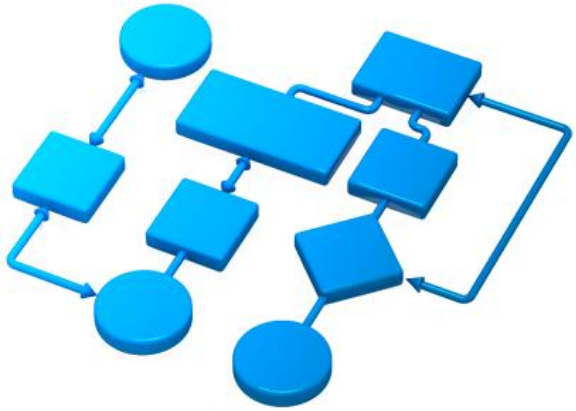
When to Use It?

- **To capture the voice of the customer.**
  - Feedback from customers is a valuable source for improvement
  - It needs to be collected, organized and analyzed to be useful.
  - Affinity diagrams are used to find messages in customer statements which might come from different sources:
    - Complaints.
    - Interviews.
    - Focus groups.
    - Telephone discussions.

- Affinity Diagram

How to Conduct an Affinity Session:

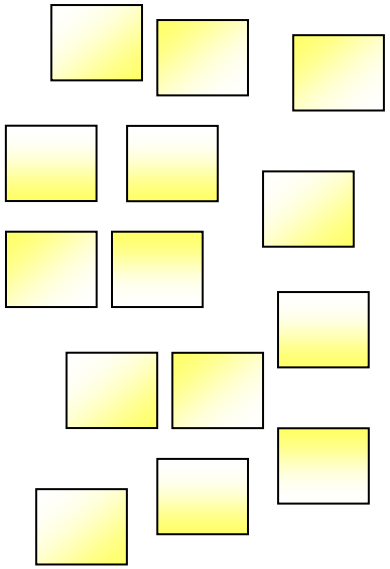
- Present the topic or define the problem clearly.
- Give the team index cards or sticky-notes.
- Ask them to write an idea or issue per card.
- Call out the ideas or issues and hang them on the wall.
- Lead the team to silently sort the ideas or issues into categories.
- Lead them labeling each group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



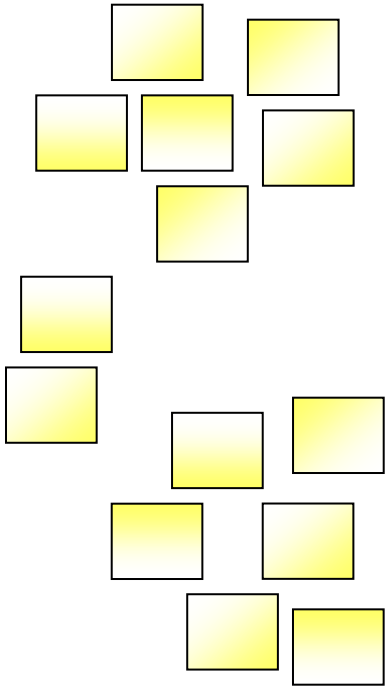
- Affinity Diagram

Three Basic Steps:

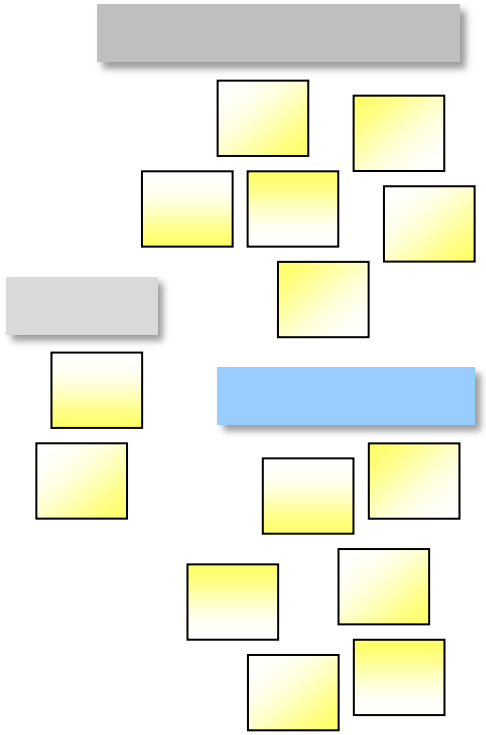
Capture



Group



Label



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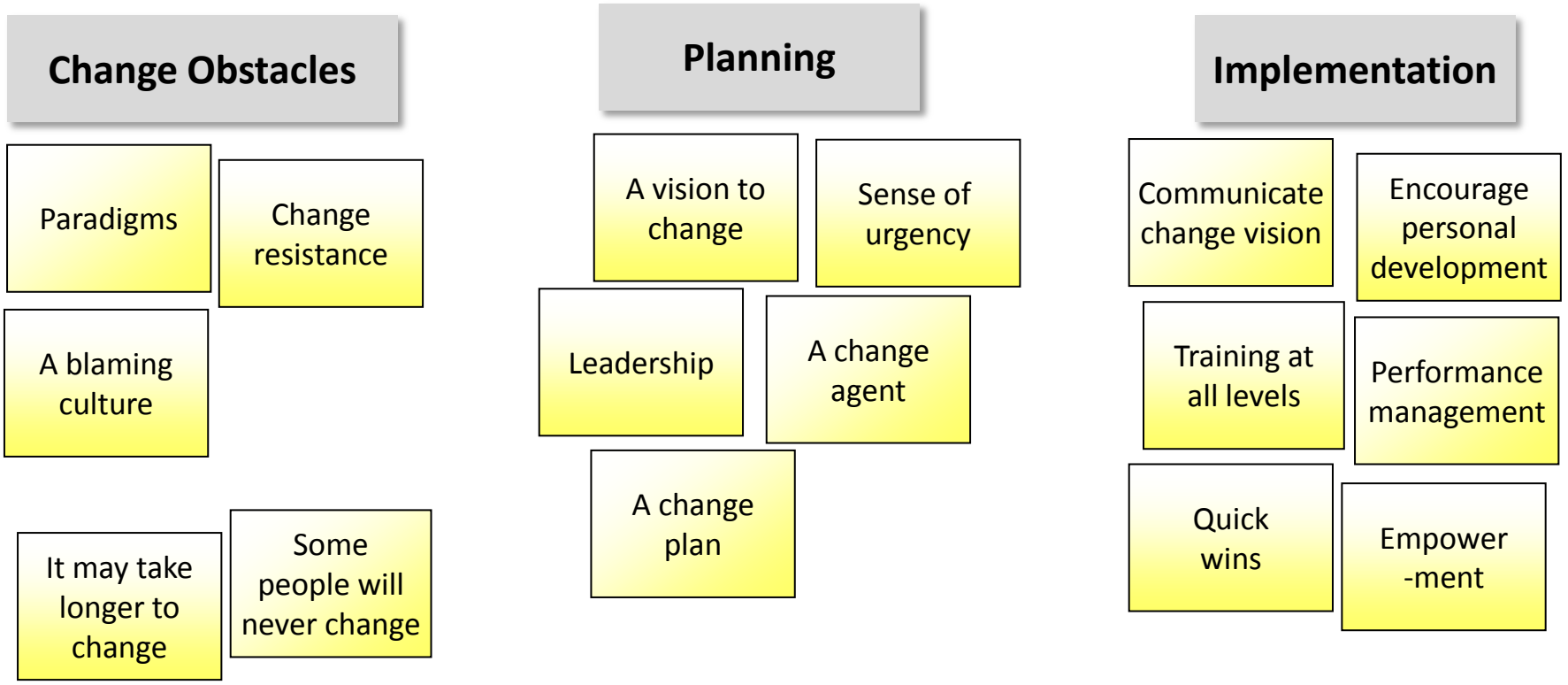
Example – Identify How to Successfully Implement Change:



- Affinity Diagram

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.