



Concept Mapping

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ac4d

Concept Map

A representation of a system that sacrifices accuracy for comprehensibility; a tool for sensemaking.

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A CONCEPT MAP/

1. Visualizes both the forest and the trees
2. Rarely has a "beginning" and "end"
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Concept Map

We'll use a concept map to understand the organization and boundaries of a complex system.

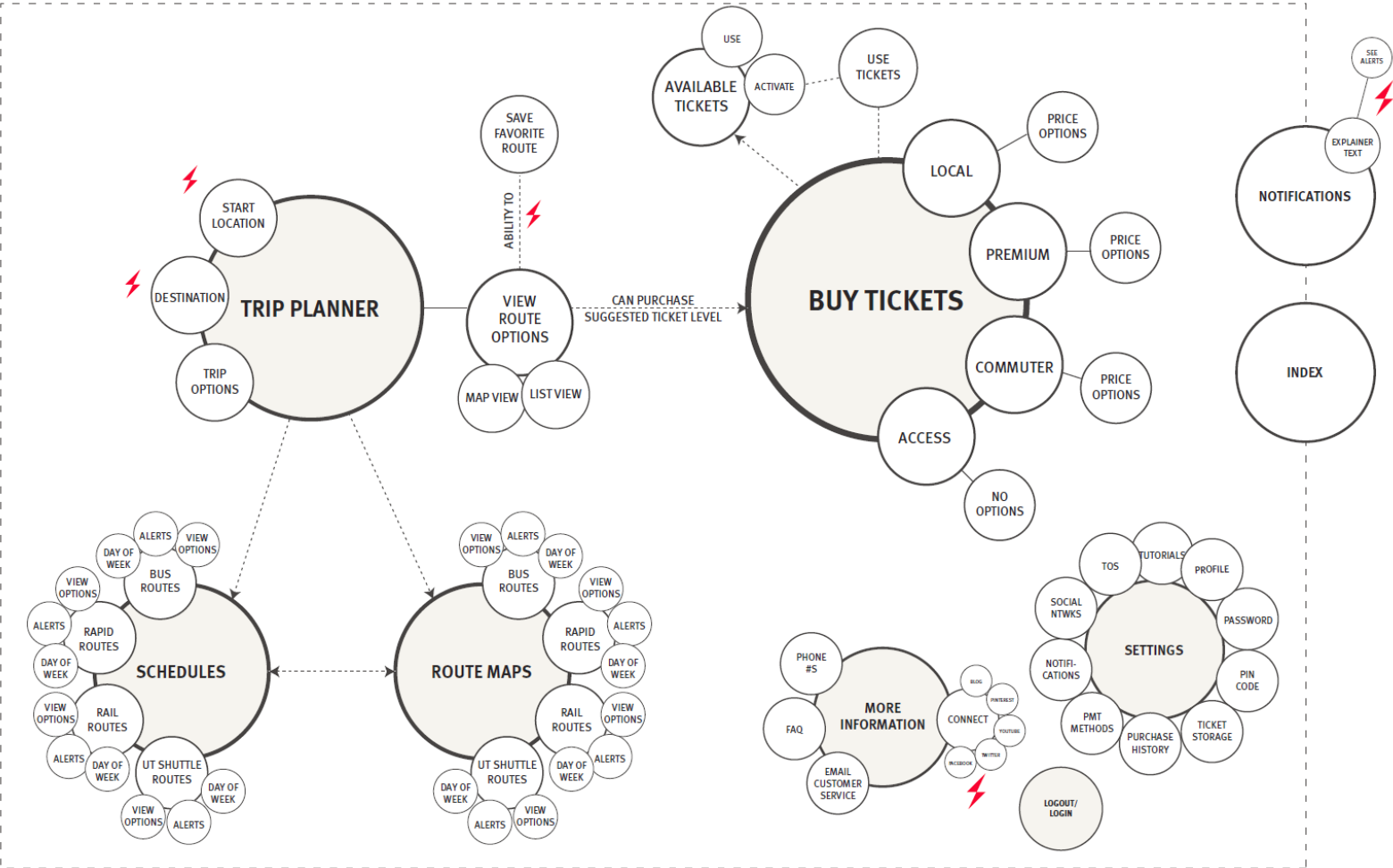
Think of it as a translation between words and visuals – a way of jumping from a set of written requirements to an initial design schema.

Creating a Concept Map

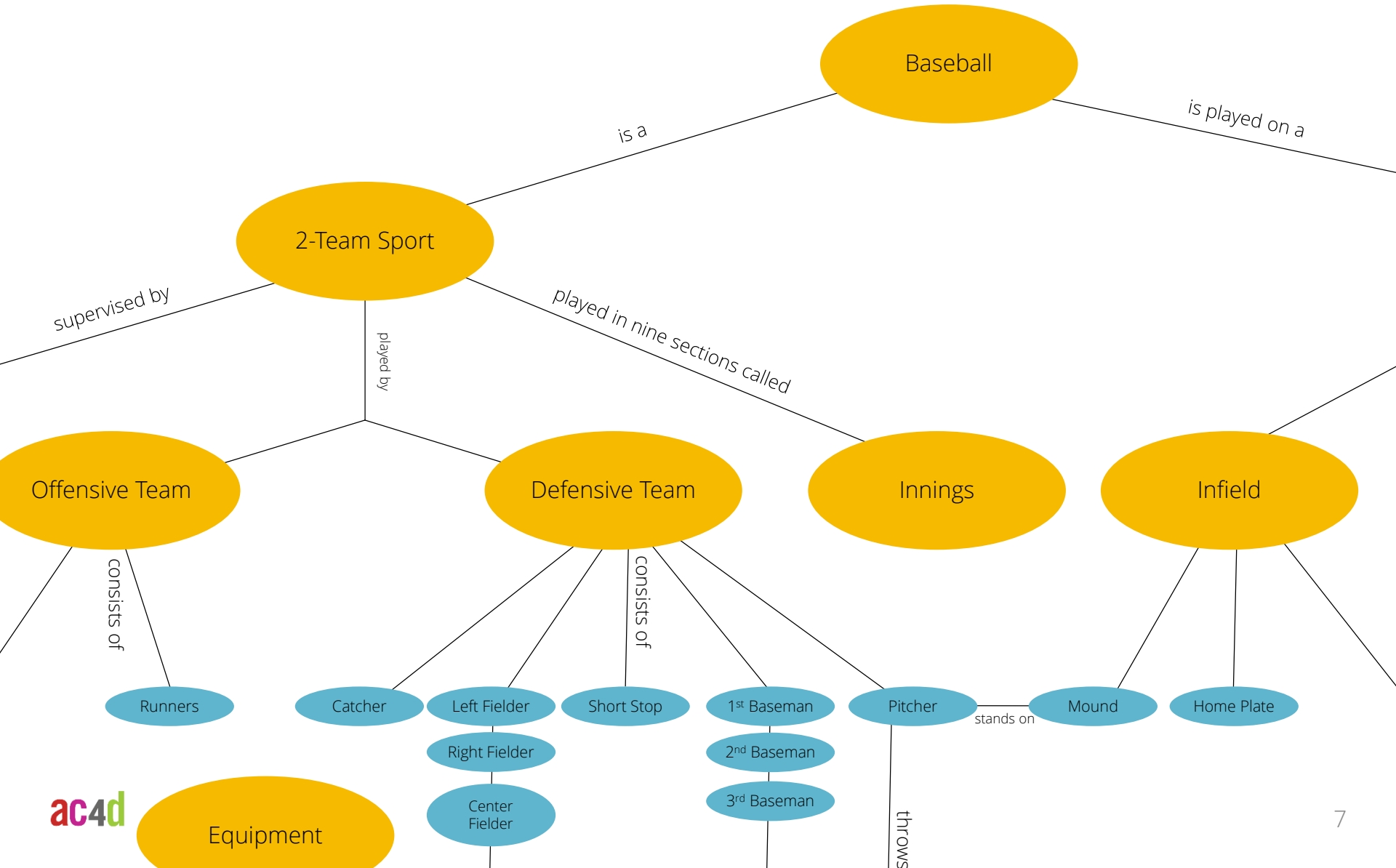
Two different approaches:

1. Representative of navigation and information architecture structures
2. Representative of the relationship between words and ideas

Representative of navigation and information architecture structures

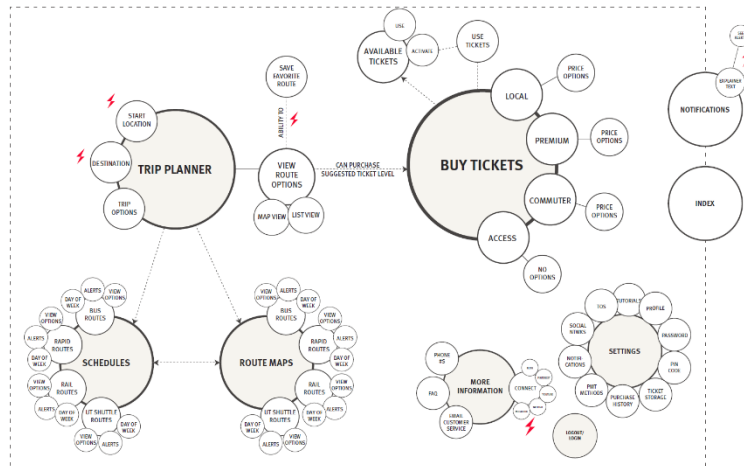


Representative of the relationship between words and ideas

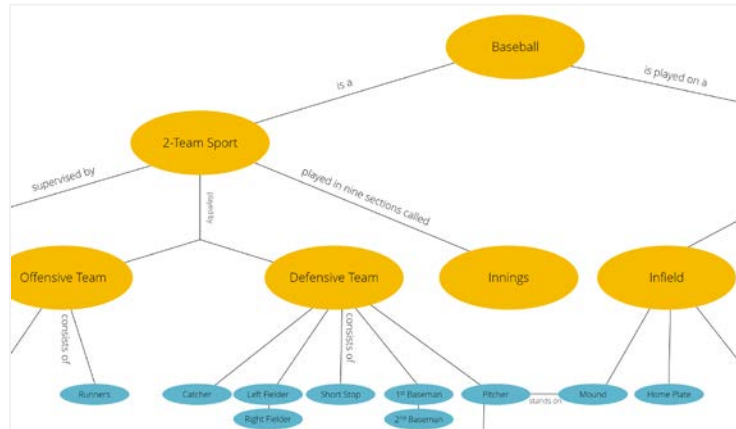


Comparing styles...

Representative of navigation and information architecture structures

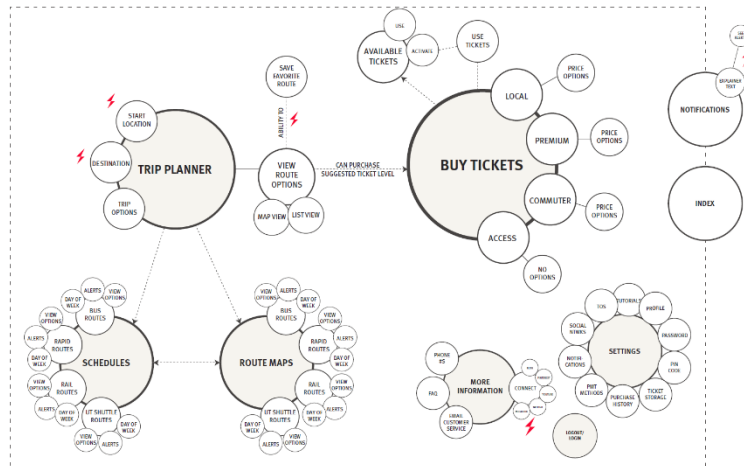


Representative of the relationship between words and ideas

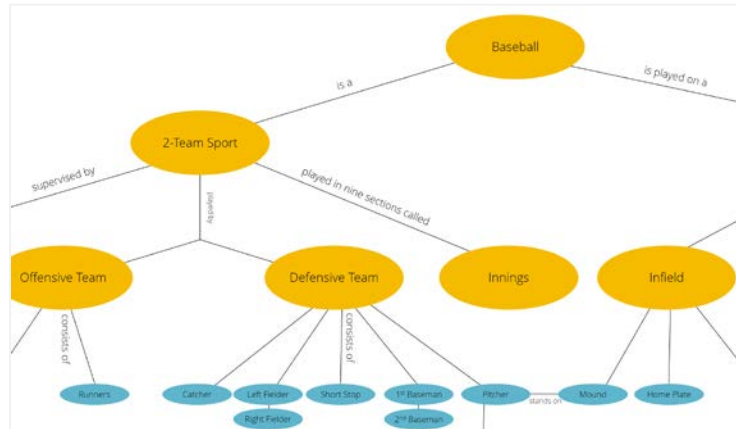


Creating an "Information Architecture" Concept Map

Representative of navigation and information architecture structures



Representative of the relationship between words and ideas



Creating an “Information Architecture” Concept Map

1. Walk through the application, and list the major “container” sections.

Often, these sections are described by the top level navigation – the way that a user navigates through the product.

Creating an “Information Architecture” Concept Map

2. Create a bubble diagram for the major sections.

On big paper, and for each section, create a large circle and label it with the section name or description. Repeat this for each section.

Creating an “Information Architecture” Concept Map

3. Add in the core functionality subsections.

Working through the application, identify the subsection of the product. Think about:

- How does the user move from place to place?
- Do elements exist in more than one place?
- Which areas exist “across” the product and are available everywhere? Which are unique to a given area or section of the product?

Creating an “Information Architecture” Concept Map

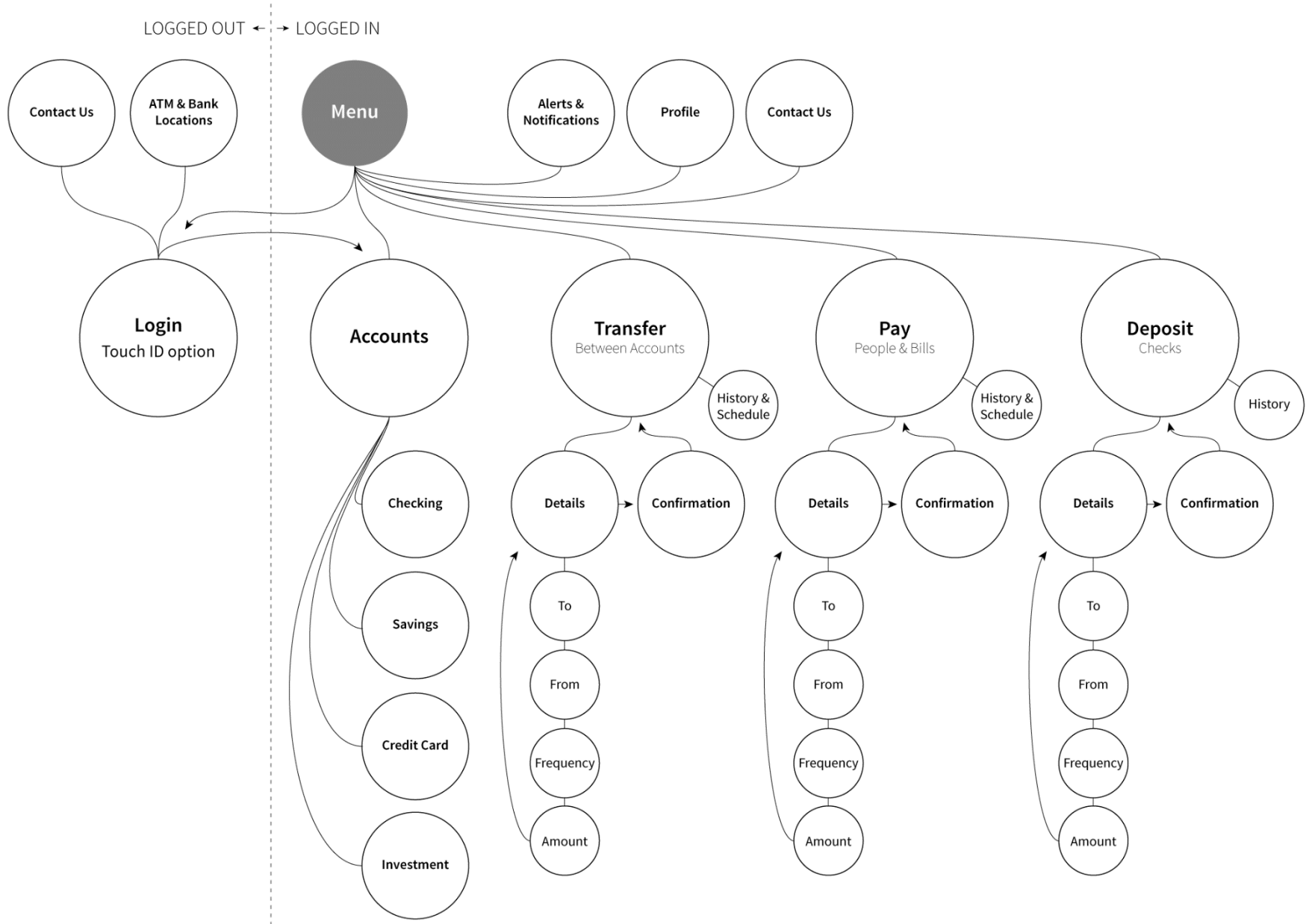
4. Add in the non-core functionality sections.

Most products have non essential functionality, like password changing and alerts or notifications. Add these in, and identify how they work on multiple pages.

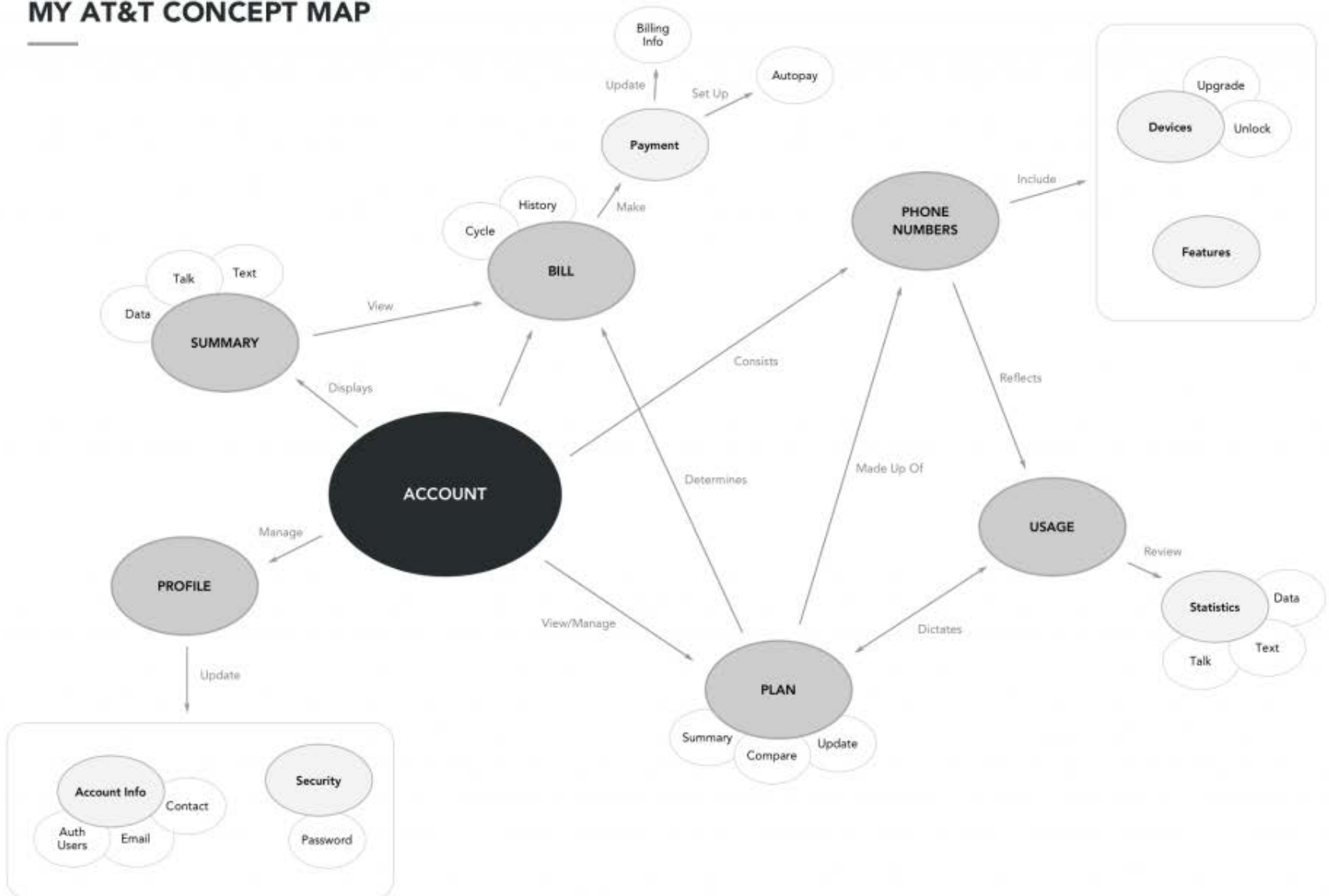
Creating an “Information Architecture” Concept Map

5. Add in the non-functionality sections.

Most products also have areas that aren't functionality at all; these may be things like legal disclaimers or advertising. Include these on your map.

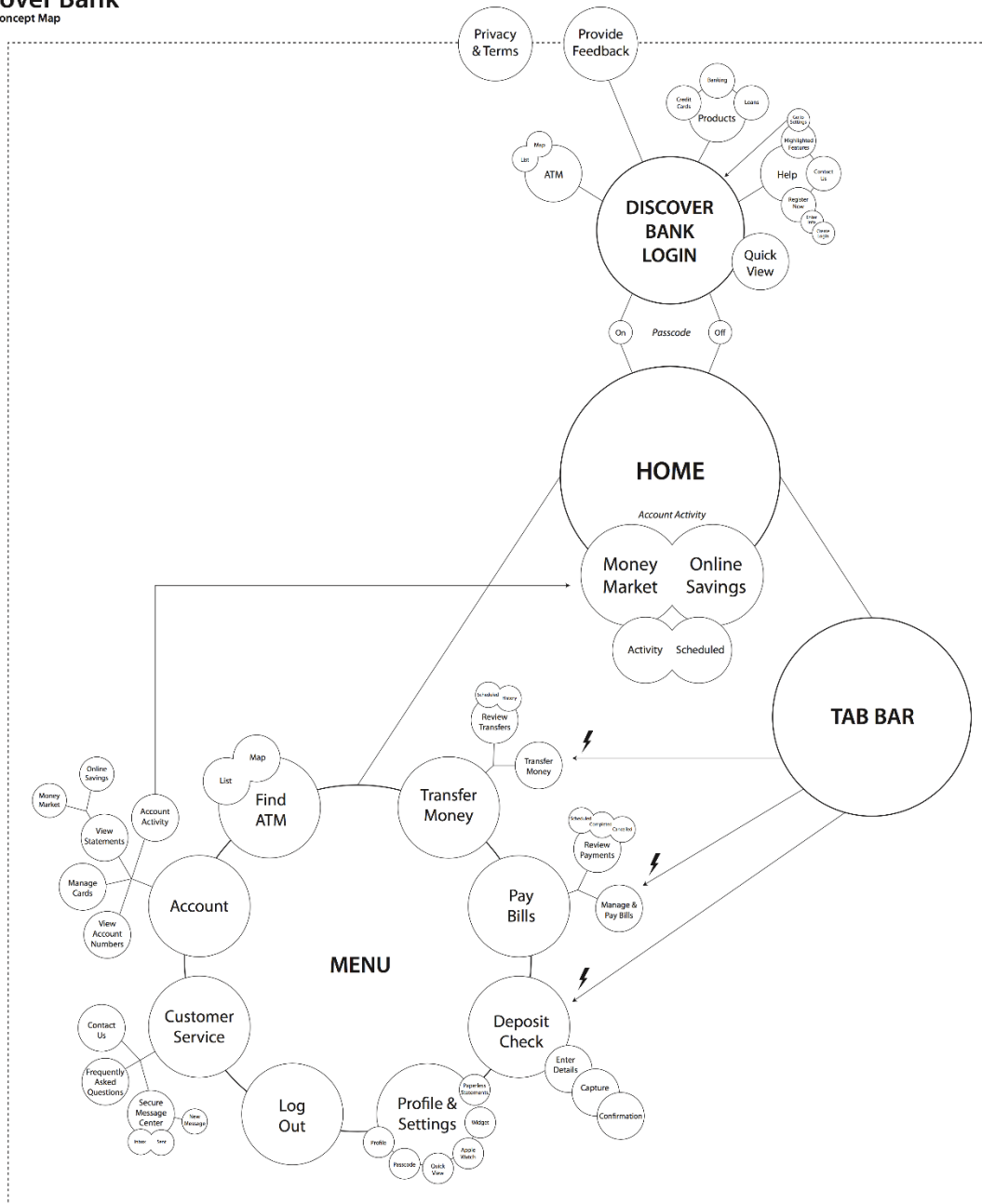


MY AT&T CONCEPT MAP



Discover Bank

Existing Concept Map



Creating a “Relationship” Concept Map

We'll focus on highlighting the relationship between words and ideas.

1. Create a matrix showing the relations of terms

List terms. Identify the main elements that make up the system; lean on your contextual research to understand the words that matter to the users the most.

Create empty matrix, plotting the words against themselves.

Identify relationships; these are qualitative and require interpretation.

Creating a “Relationship” Concept Map

2. Identify the main branches of the map.

Use frequency of connections, as well as common sense. Create the backbone or structure of the map so that it makes a cohesive sentence.

Creating a “Relationship” Concept Map

3. Fill in the rest of the structure

Be sure to represent all of the elements in the system.

Creating a “Relationship” Concept Map

4. Enhance with visual design

Use visual design to clarify and make the content more accessible .

For example...

Making a concept map of AC4D.

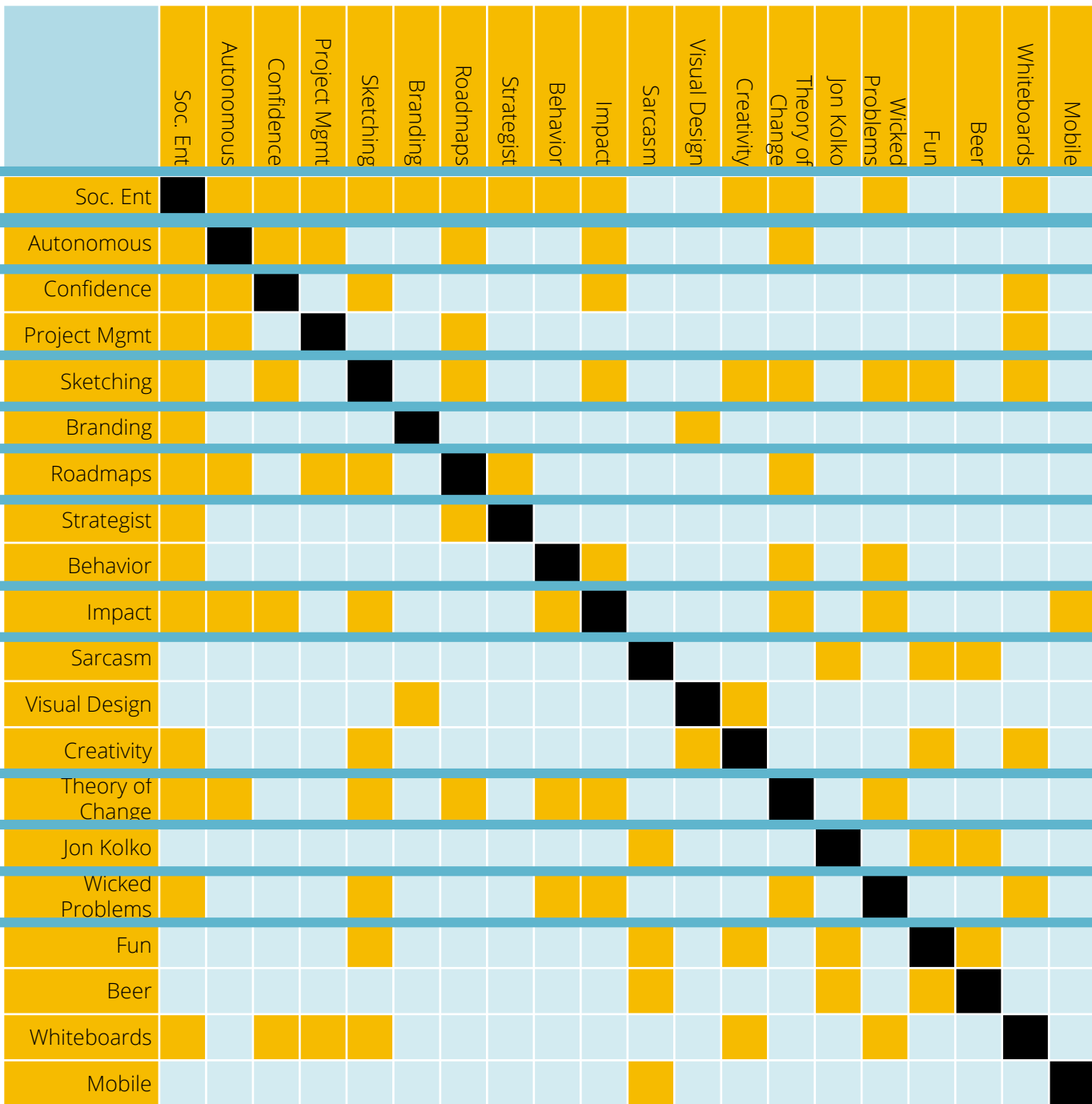
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Sketching	Branding	Roadmaps	Strategist
Behavior	Impact	Sarcasm	Visual Design
Creativity	Theory of Change	Jon Kolko	Wicked Problems
Fun	Beer	Whiteboards	Mobile

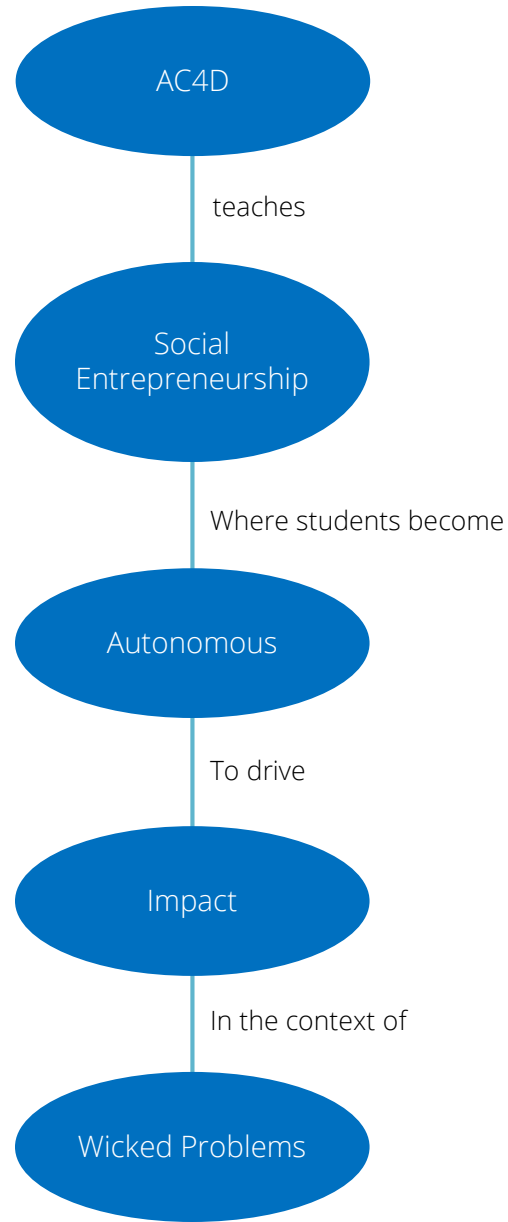
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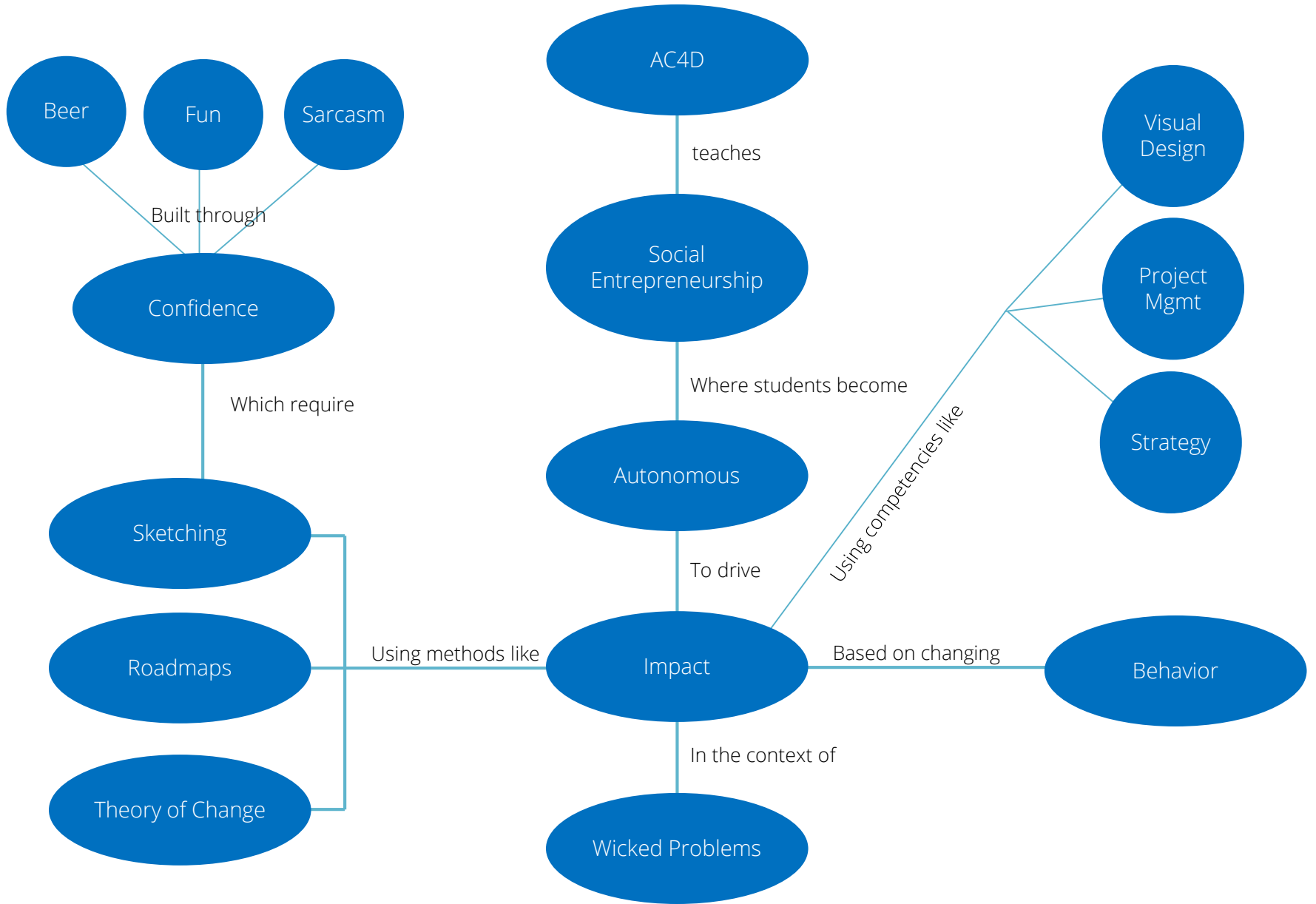
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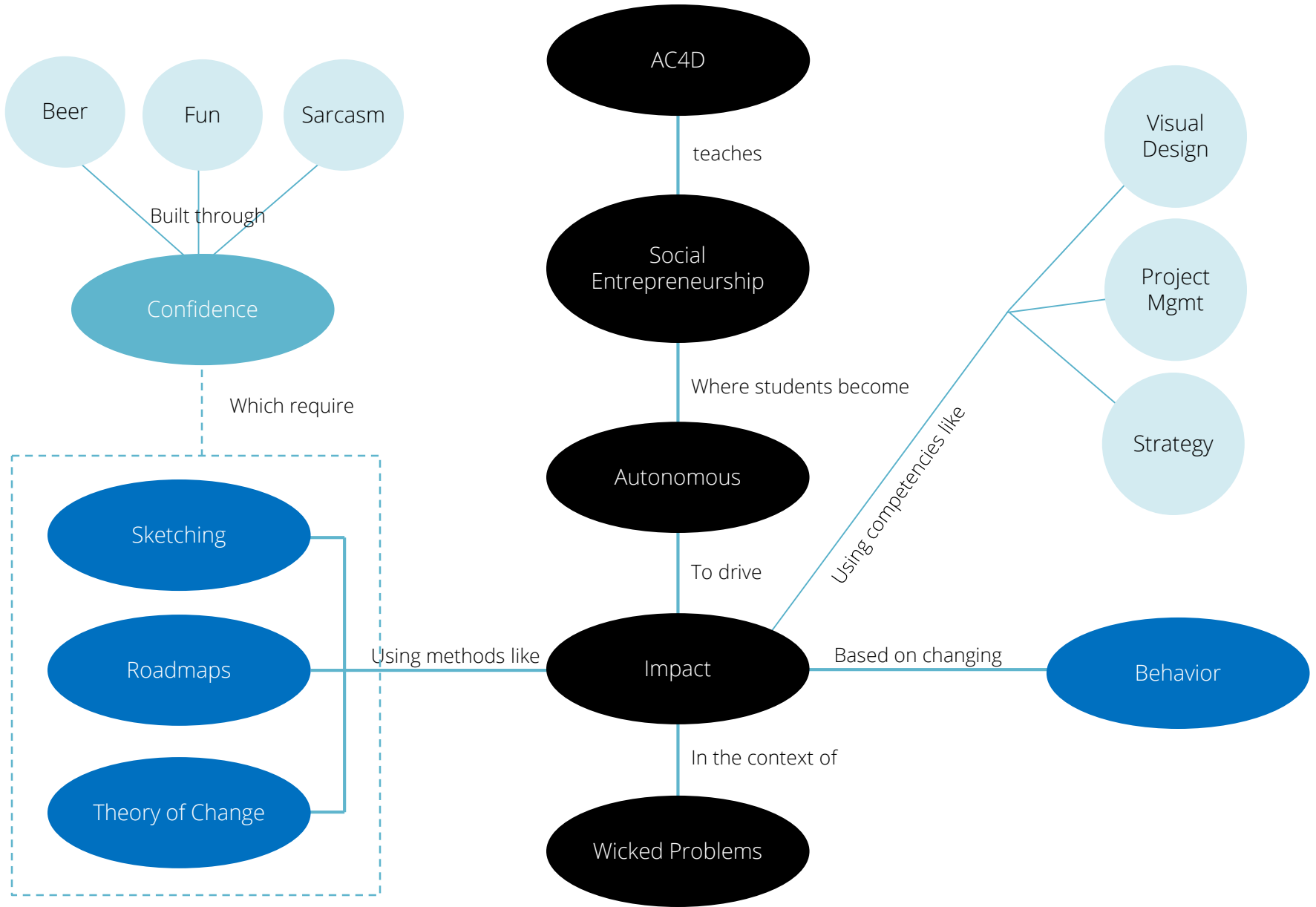
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Concept Map, Recap

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HOW TO MAKE IT – INFO ARCH/

1. List the main product areas
2. Identify subsections
3. Identify non-core functionality
4. Identify non-functional areas

HOW TO MAKE IT – RELATIONSHIP/

1. Create a matrix showing the relations of terms
2. Identify the main branches of the map
3. Fill in the rest of the structure
4. Enhance with visual design

ac4d

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Download our free book,
Wicked Problems: Problems Worth Solving,
at <http://www.wickedproblems.com>