

Affinity Diagram

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What

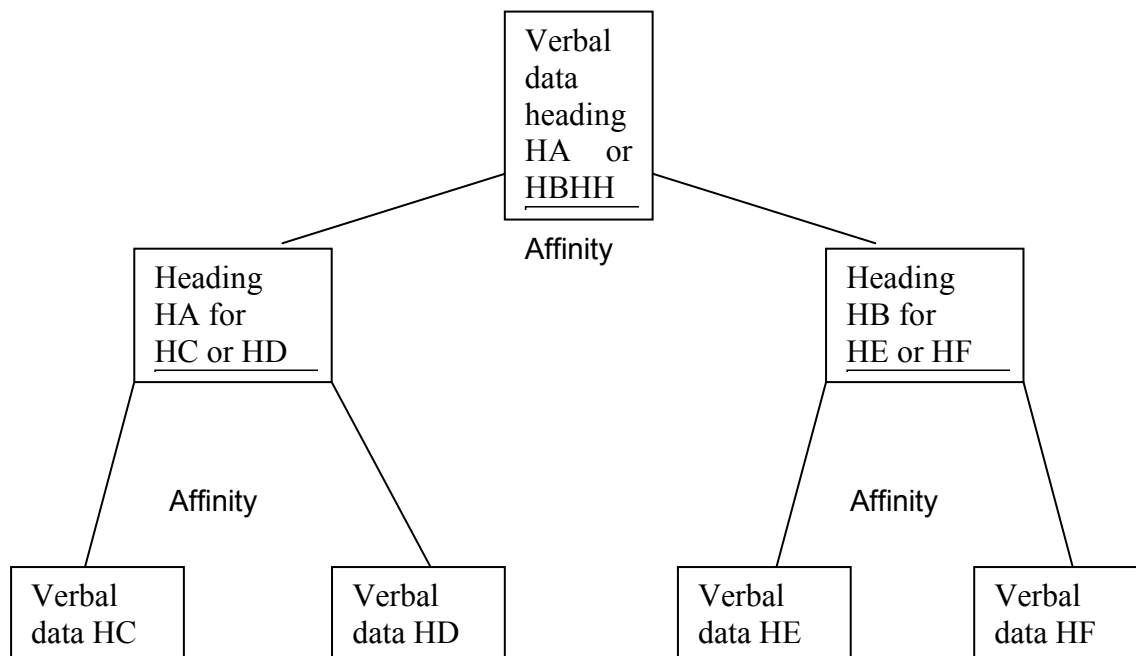
To organize large amounts of data in groups according to some form of natural affinity.

When

When a team is trying to ascertain customer needs with the intention of translating them into design requirements.

How

Each team member starts by writing ideas about customer needs on separate file cards. Then, laying the cards on a table without conversation to influence them, the team members should arrange them into the natural groups they can identify. Ideas which have an affinity for each other should be grouped together. An example of an affinity diagram is shown in Figure.



Why

Organizing data in the form of natural affinity can illustrate the associations rather than the strictly logical connections between customer needs.

Example

- 1 Define the subject that is to be considered, e.g. customer requirements for the product.
- 2 Arrange the data generated by the team under subordinate headings (see Figure):
 - Working in silence, arrange two cards which are related in some way.
 - Repeat this step.
 - Different opinions about the relationship between different data will be discovered.
 - Complete the work when all data have been organized according to a limited number of groups and different opinions have been resolved.
 - Find a heading for each data group.