

Minimal Valuable Collaboration

Create a Collaborative Map

When

Use this when your group is feeling overwhelmed or uncertain. This technique can start conversations about strategy, tool selection, task assignments, and more.

Basic Instructions

1. Ask your starting question. See the next page for examples.
2. Give everyone at least 5 minutes to silently write down all their answers on individual sticky notes (physical or digital). If possible, each person should use a different color note.
3. Team members take turns placing one answer at a time on the map until all the ideas are posted. Tell people:
 - If someone shares an idea that you wrote down too, go ahead and post it up at the same time. Let's keep the duplicates together.
 - If your idea is different but related, post your idea near to that first one. Let's share all the related ideas before sharing something entirely new.
 - If you don't understand an item, you can ask clarifying questions, but hold any critique for now.
 - If something new occurs to you, add it.
4. Discuss what you see and decide on your next actions.

Materials

In person: Sticky notes and pens

Online: Use a digital whiteboard, like Miro, Mural, or the one built into your meeting platform.



Sample Topics and Questions

When Your Team Feels Overwhelmed with Too Much To Do

Starting Question: What are all the things we're spending time on?

Use your map to discuss:

- What MUST get done?
- Are we duplicating effort? What can we streamline?
- What's wasting our time? What can we stop?

When Team Responsibilities are Unclear

Starting Question: What do we each own? Which tasks do you believe are your responsibility?

Use your map to discuss:

- Is this division of responsibilities appropriate?
- What should be reassigned?
- What are we missing? Are there tasks that no one owns yet?

And more...

- **Visualize Your Network**

Start: Who are we connected to?

Then: How might people in our network help us out? Who do we need to meet?

- **Map Your Knowledge and Skills**

Start: What do we each bring to this work?

Then: What does this make possible? Where do we need help?

- **Build a Simple Plan**

Start: What all needs to happen for us to reach our goal?

Then: What should we do first? Who's going to do what?

- **Tackle Collaboration Creep**

Start: What are all the collaboration tools we're subscribed to?

Then: What do we rely on? What can go?

*Example Map:
Tools we use at NR4W.*

Wow! Maybe we can simplify this.





Unleashing team creativity in pursuit of a brighter future.

Anytime. Anywhere. Everyone.

At the New Rules for Work Labs, we connect with the front runners who are out there mapping the uncharted waters of work and share their insights with you.

We then seek the simplest possible ways to put these insights into practice.

This handout describes an MVC – a Minimal, Valuable Collaboration technique.

MVC techniques are simple to use, apply to teams and individuals anywhere, work without any special tools or technology, and yield asymmetric returns on the time invested. Small actions that deliver big results.

Minimal refers to the effort required to learn and use these techniques, not their value.

The New Rules for Work project is hosted by Elise Keith and Dave Mastronardi.

We encourage you to share these techniques with your colleagues and friends, and invite them to become a subscriber

Join us at: labs.newrulesforwork.com



*Comments, questions,
feedback? Get in touch.
Let's experiment!*

- Dave & Elise