

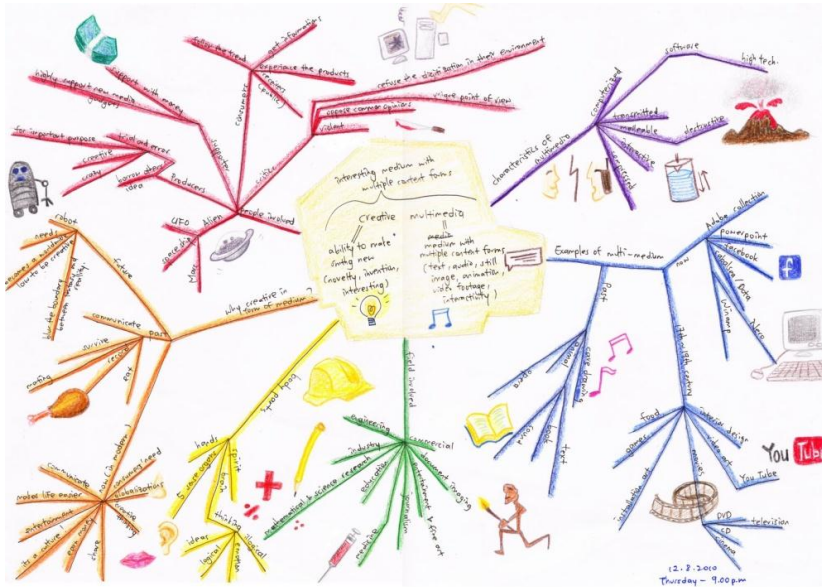
Production Schedule/Plan

Having attended a client briefing you should have a clear idea of the requirements for your product. The next stage of the project is to complete a production plan and schedule for the project.

Remember to:

- **Brainstorm the main activities in the project**

First, brainstorming (simply noting ideas and points at random), will help to gather most of the points and issues. Thereafter it's a question of putting the issues in the right order, and establishing relationships and links between each issue.



- **Consider appropriate timescales for each of the activities in the project**

Most projects come in late - that's just the way it is - so don't plan a timescale that is over-ambitious. If you have been given a fixed deadline, plan to meet it earlier, and work back from that earlier date. Build some slippage or leeway into each phase of the project (*see contingency planning below*). Some parts of the project will need other parts of the project to be completed before they can begin or progress. You must consider this when planning your timescales

- **Identify contingency planning**

Planning for and anticipating the unforeseen, or the possibility that things may not go as expected, is called 'contingency planning'. Contingency planning is vital in any task when results and outcomes cannot be absolutely guaranteed. Contingency planning is about preparing fall-back actions, and making sure that leeway for time, activity and resource exists to rectify or replace first-choice plans. It may be difficult to anticipate precisely what contingency to plan for in which case simply a contingency period is provided, to be allocated later when and if required.

• **Create a Project chart**

Charts are extremely useful project management tools. You can construct your project chart using Microsoft Word clearly showing; each project activity, the timescale for each activity and where you have provided contingency periods

The example below is taken from a production plan for the development of a Magazine Template. Use this as a guide for creating your own production plan.

Stage	Activity	Start Date	End Date
Planning Stage	Project Proposal	2/3/11	8/3/11
	Research	5/3/11	10/311
	Contingency		
	Sketches		
	Contingency		
Development Stage	Master page		
	Style Sheets		
	Contingency		
	Document pages		
	Contingency		
	Review		
Distribution Stage	Production (Printing)		
<i>And so on....</i>			

- Every activity has a separate row.
- Create a time-line for the duration of the project (start date and end date)
- You can colour code the time blocks to denote type of activity (e.g. pre-production, production, post-production, etc.)
- You can schedule review points to allow for changes/alterations if necessary.