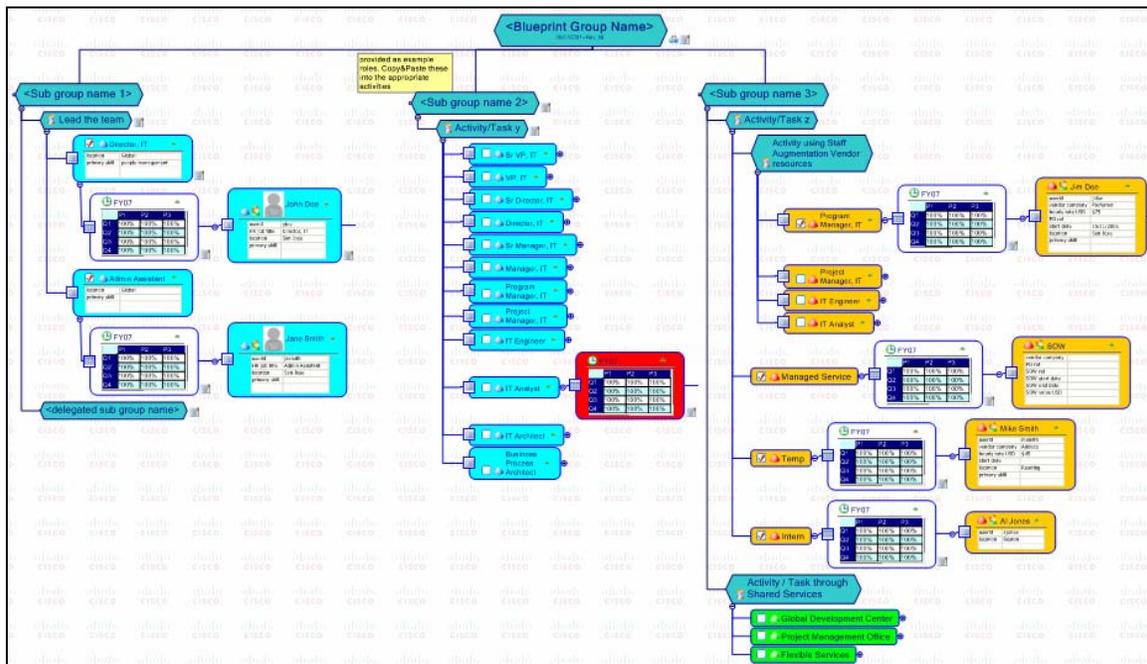


This case history is excerpted from Chuck Frey's recently revised and updated e-book, *Power Tips & Strategies for Mind Mapping Software – Second Edition*. To learn more and purchase it online, [please click here](#).

## Building an organizational blueprint

**Name:** Peter Verheeken  
**Company:** Cisco Systems  
**Job title:** Manager IT  
**Software used:** MindManager Pro 7



[Please click here](#) to download this template in the MindManager .mmap format

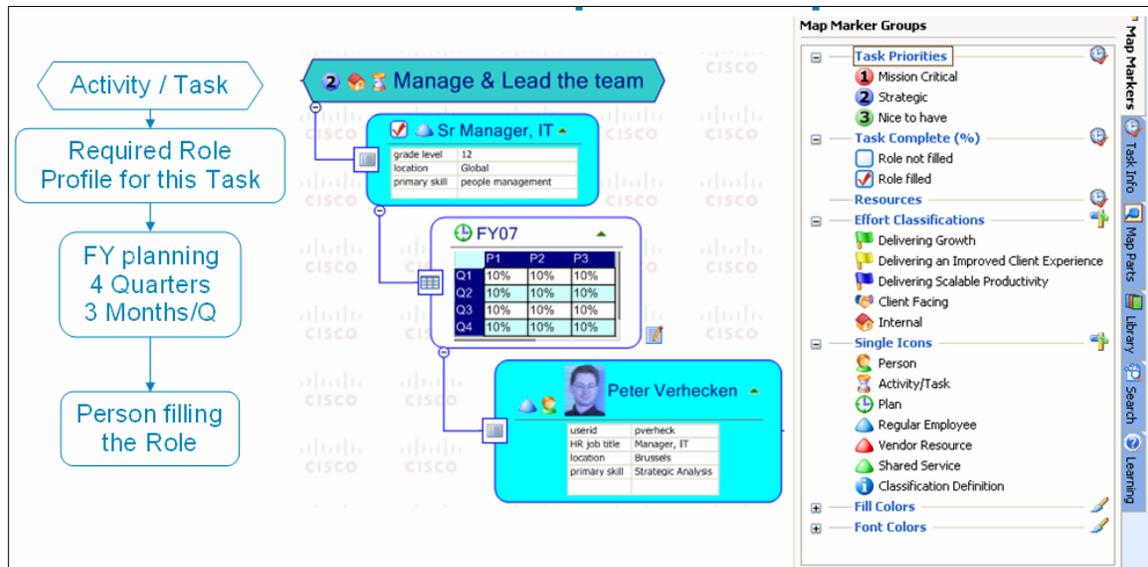
Implementation & Support Services, a department within Cisco Systems, has designed and implemented an "Organizational Blueprinting" process, based on a structure of hyperlinked MindManager maps that represent a complete organization with its resource allocations. Organizational Blueprints help the organization to develop the right organizational structure, because they trigger the right questions in managers' minds. They also provide a highly visual way for managers to understand who is doing what, and how they align to the bigger picture. In a sense, an organizational blueprint represents a virtual "walk through" of the organization, greatly enhancing the visibility and understanding of each of its components. In addition, they capture detailed resource allocation information in a format that is not only consistent but also re-usable.

The Blueprint helps to answer questions such as:

- What capabilities do we need to deliver as an organization?
- What type of people (role and level) do we need for what amount of time?
- Who do we actually have allocated to those roles?

- What percentage of our regular workforce is working on our top programs and initiatives?
- What are our resource and skill gaps?
- Where do we have vendors in core roles?

The Blueprint is much more than a traditional organization chart. It first of all describes what role profiles we need in order to deliver our business objectives, and then says who fills what role. Therefore, it can highlight skills and resource gaps and drive specific hiring or career development planning. In contrast, organizational charts typically only indicate who is doing what, but do not talk about skills match.



The Blueprint is completed by each manager, who uploads their part of it to an internal document management system. This ensures proper versioning and access control. A central operations person then uploads these blueprints to a central database for reporting. A MindManager macro creates an XML-formatted file with all the blueprint data in it. The XML format can be imported directly into an MS Access database or other relational database.

The Blueprint makes extensive use of MindManager's icons and filtering capabilities. Two types of map markers are used: specific icons, which differentiate between the main types of objects in the map (tasks, roles, plans and people) and custom icons, which are added to tasks and are used to add classification categories, mainly for MBO (management by objectives) alignment. These icons are translated in their corresponding classification description at XML conversion time. In the database, each task will include the specific MBO classifications for reporting purposes.

### Advantages & Efficiencies

This is a fairly new process. It has been rolled-out in a part of the Cisco IT organization and covers approximately 120 regular IT employees. The total blueprint consists of about 10 sub-blueprints maintained by different managers. The main advantages are:

- Managers now have a common process and guidance on designing organizations

- Consistency in identifying skills and resource gaps, so hiring and development plans can be aligned towards closing and avoiding these gaps.
- This process is finally re-organization proof. Each time the org structure changes, it is a simple matter of dragging and dropping elements in the MindManager blueprints. After uploading the adjusted structures, all metrics and reports are adjusted to the new organizational structure.

For more information, please contact Peter Verhecken at [pverheck@cisco.com](mailto:pverheck@cisco.com) or [pverheck@hotmail.com](mailto:pverheck@hotmail.com).

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