

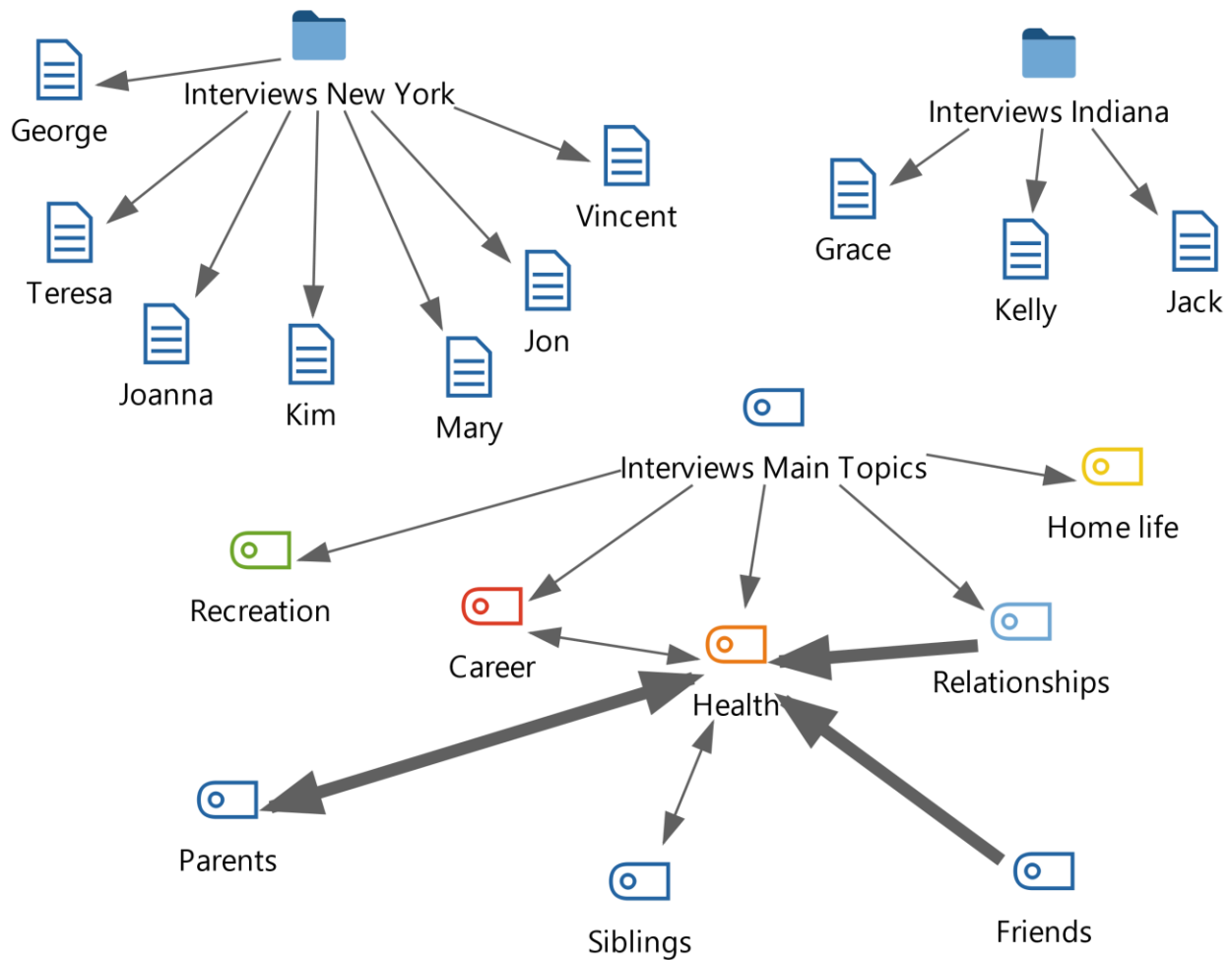
How to Effectively Visualize Your Project in a Graph – An Example

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Whether it be a presentation, a poster or a project meeting, showing your materials visually has the potential to greatly increase the level of understanding. In fact, all three software I teach (i.e., MAXQDA, NVivo, ATLAS.ti) have built-in functions to easily accomplish this. Let us look at an example using the MAXQDA→Visual Tools→MAXMaps function.

Please note that I created this MAXMap from the example project in just minutes. With practice, you can also create a graph to represent aspects of your project within minutes!

Life Satisfaction



Looking at this graph with minimal words, readers can get a LOT of information:

- i) **Study topic:** Obviously the research topic is Life Satisfaction as the header suggests!
- ii) **Source documents:** The main documents are a total of 10 interviews from New York and Indiana.
- iii) **Main themes:** Coding and data analysis result in 5 major themes that affect life satisfaction (recreation, career, health, relationships and home life).
- iv) **Subtopics under Health:** The theme Health is subdivided into parents, siblings and friends.
- v) **Direction of links:** The links tell you important information about the relations among the themes. For example, relationships lead to health, career is associated with health with no causal relationship.
- vi) **Thickness of links:** The strength of the relations is also visualized in the links. For instance, parents and friends are stronger indicators of health compared to siblings.

Last pointer: This graph may look simple but it does give readers a holistic view of the project and results. Just remember not to put too many objects into the graph or else it will look “too busy” to be understood!