GENERATION



PROVOCATION

10 IDEAS IN 10 MINS

Force your internal critic to shut up by generating as many ideas as possible.

Quantity over quality will help your mind to expand rather than contract. Set a stopwatch for 10 minutes to write down 10 ideas. Importantly, they down the work of the contract.

they don't have to be good ideas.

The reason we have great ideas in the shower

is that we're not doing anything else. Use your time in the shower, on the train, during your

Use random stimuli like reading out words from

the dictionary to provoke a response, or try using the last letter of one word as the starting

letter for another word. Alternatively try free associating words and concepts either verbally or visually to spark connections.

DRAW ON INSPIRATION



Instead of writing ideas, simply start sketching relevant concepts. By activating your visual cortex you'll open up new ways to think about things. Don't try to solve the problem right

makeitbrain.org

CREATIVE THINKING TOOLS

FUTURE NEWS

WHAT IF?



FIVE WHYS

SWOT NOW



0 0

Pretend you've already achieved success.
What would the newspaper headline or article
say? Writing this out will spur you to think of big,
newsworthy ideas. Explaining how and why it
worked so well forces you to consider the steps

Simply starting the thinking process with 'What if...' can elicit a creative response. Try saying it out loud or writing it down

eral times in a list to hack your brain to

This technique is often used to get to the root of a problem, but it can also discover insights that lead to innovative thinking. Start with a problem or solution, then keep asking why? to

SHOWER THOUGHTS



101 IDEAS

Give yourself or your team a deadline to compile 101 ideas in a list. By having so many ideas you give yourself permission to have more bad ideas, which in turn opens you up to

DEEP - RESEARCH / DEFINE

The more information you expose yourself to, the more your brain has to work with. Deep dive befor an ideation session and define the objective.

WIDE - CREATIVE / DIVERGENT Try to minimize critical evaluation while

NARROW - CRITICAL / CONVERGENT Use objective evaluation criteria where possible. The best ideas are vulnerable as they don't conform to expectations; so don't use critical analysis to leave only the safest ideas standing, but to find out which challenging ideas might actually business.

UP - SYNTHESISE / ITERATE Once you have an idea that works, it's tempting to cling to it. However, the best ideas often come from having the curiosity and courage to push beyond what works to something more interesting.

Keep playing to find a deeper synthesis.

LIMITATION

WRITE A CLEAR BRIEF

Falling to provide a clear and compelling brief does not, contrary to popular opinion, 'open up' creativity. Use the briefing template at schoolofthought.org/brief or at least provide an objective to deliver on in the form of a simple sentence. Ask: Why are we doing this? Focus on the strategic objective rather than the execution e.g. 'Help people think creatively' rather than 'Make a brainstorming poster'.



CHANGE OF SCENE

JOURNEY

Write your problem or starting point at one end and the ideal outcome at the other. Now fill in the gaps to map out what needs to happen to bring your objective into reality. What are the

mediums and milestones that will need to occur at different stages?

Go outside, to a bar for a few drinks, or to the

top of a mountain and see how the change of



WILL IT **BLEND?**

How could you combine two or more ideas / techniques / aspects / solutions / problems?
Try writing relevant keywords or ideas down on bits of paper then mashing them up randomly.

Create four quadrants and list Strengths,

Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Strengths and Weaknesses relate to internal

INSPIRATION



Use the room you're in as a visual inspiration canvas by finding visual references to print and put up on the walls, along with your rough concepts, sketches, headlines etc. Try some image searches for related ideas and save the ones you like as stimuli

PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS

INVERSION



ANOTHER'S SHOES



RECONTEXT



Imagine you're a historical figure, the customer, an inventor, etc. What might Gordon Ramsay, Barack Obama, Hitler, Jesus, Lady Gaga. The Devil, God. Napoleon, Einstein, Atticus Finch, Steve Jobs, The Fab Five, or the

Looking at extremes can bring insights into sharp relief. What would happen if you amplified the problem or solution? What if it was minuscule or all-consuming, what would a global response look like?

Write your objective in a bubble in the middle

of the page and branch out nested and associated ideas to discover new perspectives as stimuli. Try putting your

mind man on the wall while brainstorming.

CONCEPT WALL

To start your collaborative brainstorming

session, everyone writes or draws a few key concepts relating to the subject matter on sticky notes. Then put them up on the wall as stimulus for further brainstorming.

Group brainstorming is often affected by social factors, and confident voices thwarting more considered thinking. Familiarize yourself with

mon cognitive biases that can affect sion making, evaluation and group



ROLE UP



000

ANONYPOST

Each person writes or draws a single idea per sticky note and puts it up on the wall in a separate room. Take turns nominating your favorite idea that wasn't your own (and hasn't yet been nominated) and explain why.

IN GROUPS

YOUR **BIAS IS**



BRAIN WRITING

Everyone writes an idea on a piece of paper. Pass your piece of paper clockwise, the next person builds on the idea. Repeat until everyone has contributed to each others ideas with their own suggestions, extensions, iterations or perspectives.

Give each person in the group a role to play such as the customer, the rebel, the narrator, the joker, the sage, the CEO, the shareholder, the lunatic, etc. Then give a scenario involugi the product, problem, or situation to role play.

HEADS IN THE CLOUD

Rather than verbal collaboration, use a cloud-based service like Google does with open sharing permissions so everyone can anonymously collaborate, comment, and build on each other's ideas. Create a copy of the doc at **schoolofthought.org/cloud**

NO LIMITS



Removing limitations means removing assumptions, which can result in novel perspectives and solutions. Imagine you have unlimited superpowers, budget, time, or technological capability to solve the problem.

By flipping the perspective you can open up new insights. What's the opposite of the problem or solution? What would be the

worst idea? Who isn't the target audie

EXTREMIFY



CHALLENGE



Creative breakthroughs often arise from challenging conventions. What assumptions have already been made? Could they be wrong, or shifted? What if the brief is too narrow? To wide? Pestand to be a man consoling.

MENTAL MODELS

PARETO PRINCIPLE

About 80% of the output tends to come from 20% of the input. How might we optimise by focussing on the most relevant factors? How can we design for the



FIRST PRINCIPLES

Define the base principles to reason more clearly. Question what's actually fundamental to bring the problem (and solution) into sharp relief. What unnecessary

SOCIAL PROOF

As tribal creatures, we want validation before we act. How can we create and communicate social buy-in? Could the crowd itself contribute in some way?



CRITICAL MASS

effect whereby the idea spreads itself? How might we make it remarkable or useful



SCARCITY

We value things that are in short supply. Is there a way to create demand or the nerception of it? How might limitations be beneficial



THE THIRD STORY

Consider the impartial perspective. We're often blind to our own assumptions, and our perceptions are colored by our insider understanding. What might someone with no knowledge or bias think?



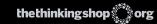
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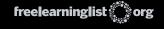
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