



How to teach innovation?

Various techniques to teach innovation

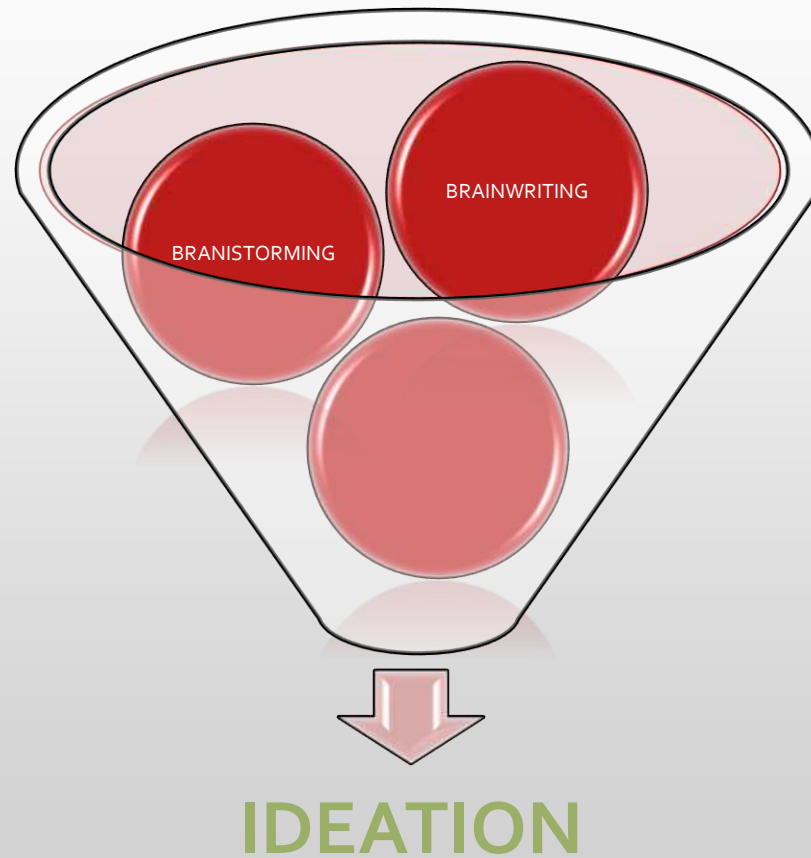
Creative mindset of students

- Curiosity:
 - „Why?“
 - „What interests you?“ - „Everything!“
- Openness: quieting the opinions of the judgemental mind long enough to allow creative mind the time and space to create interesting insights, associations, or connections
- Embracing Ambiguity: the capacity to entertain contradictory, ambiguous, or incomplete information
- Finding and Transferring principles:
 - the mental habit or discipline to continually indentifying the creative principles inhrent in the idea
 - adapting the indentified principle to the new idea – moving from the specific to the general

Creative mindset

- Searching for integrity: the desire to discover, and the belief that there exists, an insight or connection that will unite the seemingly disparate elements you are juggling in your creative mind, into a single integrated, conceptual whole.
- Knowingness: the confidence that with the enough creative effort, focus and attention, sooner or later, you will solve your creative challenge.
- World creating: the ability to imagine entirely new worlds and everything in them (eg. novelists, all children, game designers, fashion designers...)

Brainstorming → Ideation



Questioning assumptions

- Decide how to frame your creative challenge.
- Generate 20 to 30 assumptions, true or false, that you may be making about it.
- Pick several of these assumptions and use them as thought starters and idea triggers to generate new ideas. Be sure to consider all aspects of your business, including consumer or customer beliefs, manufacturing, materials, pricing, distribution and product positioning.

Opportunity redefinition

- Redefine the opportunity by selecting one word from each column at random, plugging them into the original opportunity statement and creating new variations of it. (How can WE SELL more insurance to CATHOLICS?" could become "How can we get FRIENDS OF CATHOLICS to BE INCENTIVIZED to sell life insurance to CATHOLIC GRANDPARENTS?")
- These crazy combinations are used as triggers or steppingstones to generate other new ideas.
- The bottom line is that opportunity redefinition is **a powerful way to help you remove "blinders" you didn't even realize were restricting your vision.** In other words, it enables you to see a wider range of possibilities than you may have ever considered before.

Triggered brainwalking

- An ideal way to ensure that everyone in your group gets an opportunity to contribute ideas. The group first selects several aspects of the problem around which it wants to generate ideas. These become the creative prompts for the group to work with.
- The facilitator tapes several pieces of paper to a wall. Each member of the group gets a marker. Participants write their ideas on a paper and then rotate, adding their own thoughts and ideas to the page as well as building upon those of their colleagues. This can also be done by having a group sit in a circle and have the papers passed one person to the right or left after several minutes of brainstorming.
- When each “pass” takes place, the facilitator can suggest different ideation techniques or triggers. This helps people who may not be able to think of any new ideas and may help them to see the ideas their colleagues have written in a new light. It also helps the team generate a wider diversity of ideas.

Semantic intuition

- A technique that can inject fresh energy into a group that is starting to feel brain dead toward the end of a brainstorming session. It prompts participants to create new ideas by having them combine several categories of key words to create a name for a new idea – even though they have no idea what the newly-named idea IS yet.
- The first step is to select the three categories of words that are related to your challenge. For a consumer product, Mattimore suggests that three possibilities would be places in a store, kinds of promotional appeals and benefits of the product or needs of the customer. Next, generate variations on each of these category words. Next, randomly combine one word from each list and spend time brainstorming around the mini-story they suggest.
- There are no “rules” to using this technique. Don’t be afraid to let the keyword prompts take you far afield from them. And don’t be concerned if you generated an idea that only uses two of the three words. The point of semantic intuition is simply to get you to think differently.

Picture prompts

- An easy and fast technique that any group can use to generate ideas.
- The facilitator hands out a series of pre-selected images, one to each participant, and asks them to write down ideas that are inspired by what they are seeing in it. These images should be visually interesting, depict a variety of subject matter and should show people in many different types of interactions and relationships with other people.
- Participants pair off and spend additional time discussing the ideas they have generated and brainstorming additional potential solutions to the problem at hand.
- Finally, the teams of two present their ideas to the group.
- Customize the visuals to the nature of the challenge you're trying to solve. For example, a personnel or corporate culture problem could be tackled using images like the ones we just talked about – depicting many kinds of people and relationships. For a manufacturing challenge, the images could be of an industrial nature. If you're trying to generate new product ideas, select images that are broadly evocative of your product category. Be sure to include some random or irrelevant images in your selections as well, because sometimes those types of stimuli can lead to the most creative solutions.

Worst idea

- This is another technique that can help to save the day when nothing else seems to be working and can re-ignite the energy levels of groups that are approaching creative burnout. The technique is simple: Ask the group to create a list of bad, terrible, stupid, illegal or gross ideas. This will get participants laughing and re-engaged. Once you've generated a list, challenge the group to turn those horrible ideas into good ones by either considering its opposite, or by finding some aspect within a terrible idea that can be used to inspire a good one. As the facilitator, be sure to push your group to generate really bad ideas!
- This technique works surprisingly well because it tends to mentally disarm brainstorming participants. They may feel under pressure to come up with a really Big Idea, but that often restricts their ability to be creative. By temporarily focusing on really bad ideas, it frees them to relax and have fun. Laughter is also a steppingstone to helping people generate surprising or unexpected connections – the basis of most humor. It's the nature of our brains, when thinking about one idea, to simultaneously consider its opposite.
- Another helpful way to think about the worst idea technique is "rooted" in nature: Many bad ideas can also contain the "seeds" of good ones. Consider each bad idea with the thought that at least some aspect of it has value and make it your goal to find it.

Sources

- <https://innovationmanagement.se/2013/05/30/the-7-all-time-greatest-ideation-techniques/>
- Bryan W. Mattimore (2012): Idea Stormers: How to Lead and Inspire Creative Breakthroughs