

SCAMPER

Description

SCAMPER is an acronym for a structured thinking process based on the notion that everything new is really just an addition or modification of something that already exists. There are seven different ways of thinking in the method:

1. **Substitute:** Think about replacing part of the problem, product or process with something else. By looking for replacements you can often come up with new ideas. You can substitute things, places, procedures, people, ideas, and even emotions.
2. **Combine:** Think about combining two or more parts of your problem to create a different product or process or to enhance their synergy.
3. **Adapt:** Think about adapting an existing idea to solve your problem. The solution to your problem may already be out there.
4. **Magnify:** Think about ways to magnify or exaggerate your idea. Magnifying all or parts of your idea may increase its perceived value or give you new insights about what is most important. Keep in mind, the M can also stand for Modify (as appropriate to the situation).
5. **Put to other uses:** Think of how you might be able to put your current idea to other uses, or think of what you could reuse from somewhere else in order to solve your own problem.
6. **Eliminate:** Think of what might happen if you eliminated parts of your idea. Through repeated trimming of ideas, objects, and processes, you can gradually narrow your challenge down to the part or function that is most important.
7. **Rearrange/Reverse:** Think of what you would do if part of your problem, product or process worked in reverse or were done in a different order.



Keep in mind the principle of force fitting. If you can't think of anything in response to the SCAMPER prompt, then force a response, no matter how ridiculous it seems, and think of ways to make the non-logical response work.

Purpose:

SCAMPER is a mnemonic used to generate ideas that innovate or improve existing products, services, processes, or challenges by using a series of thought sparkers or provocations to help you look through different lenses.

Resources:

Eberle, B. (1971) *SCAMPER: Games for Imagination Development*

Eberle, B. (1997). *Scamper On: More Creative Games and Activities for Imagination Development*

SCAMPER Worksheet

Questions	Response
<p>Substitute: What can I substitute or change in my product, problem, or process? Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What can I substitute to make an improvement?• Can I substitute the place, time, materials, or people?• Can I substitute one part for another or change any of the parts?• Can I replace someone involved?• Can I change the rules?• Should I change the name?• Can I use other ingredients or materials?• Can I use other processes or procedures?• Can I change its shape, color, roughness, sound, or smell?• Can I use this idea for other projects?• Can I change my feelings or attitude towards it?	
<p>Combine: How can I combine two or more parts of my product, problem, or process to enhance synergy? Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What ideas, materials, features, processes, people, products, or components can I combine?• Can I combine or merge this or that with other objects?• What can I combine to maximize the number of uses?• What can I combine to lower the costs of production?• What materials could I combine?• Where can I build synergy?• What elements can I combine to achieve a particular result?	

Questions	Response
<p>Adapt: What can I adapt in my product, problem, or process to solve my problem. Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What else is like this? What other ideas does it suggest?• What part of the product could I change?• Could I change the characteristics of a component?• Can I seek inspiration in other products or processes, but in a different context?• Does history offer any solutions?• What ideas could I adapt, copy, or borrow from other people's products?• What processes could I adapt?• Can I adapt the context or target group?• What can I adapt in this or that way in order to achieve this result?	
<p>Magnify/Modify: What can I modify or put more or less emphasis on in my product, problem, or process? Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What can I magnify or make larger?• What can I tone down or delete?• Could I exaggerate or overstate buttons, colors, or sizes?• Could I grow the target group?• What can be made higher, bigger, or stronger?• Can I increase its speed or frequency?• Can I add extra features?• How can I add extra value?• What can I remove or make smaller, condensed, lower, shorter or lighter—or streamline, split up or understate?• What can I change in this way or that way to achieve a different result?	

Questions	Response
<p>Put to another use: How can I put the thing to other uses? Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What else can it be used for?• How would a child use it?—an older person?• How would people with different disabilities use it?• What other target group could benefit from this product?• What other type of user would need or want my product?• Who or what else may be able to use it?• Can it be used by people other than those it was originally intended for?• Are there new ways to use it in its current shape or form?• Would there be other possible uses if I were to modify the product?• How can I reuse something in a certain way by doing what to it?	
<p>Eliminate: What can I eliminate or simplify in my product, design, or process? Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What can I remove without altering its function?• Can I reduce time or components?• What would happen if I removed a component or part of it?• Can I reduce effort?• Can I cut costs?• How can I simplify it?• What's non-essential or unnecessary?• Can I eliminate the rules?• Can I make it smaller?• Can I split my product into different parts?	

Questions	Response
<p>Rearrange: How can I change, reorder, or reverse the product or problem? Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What can I rearrange in some way?• Can I interchange components, the pattern, or the layout?• Can I change the pace or schedule?• What would I do if part of the problem, product, or process worked in reverse?• What can I rearrange what in what way such that this happens? <p>Reverse guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the opposites?• What are the negatives• Can I transpose positive and negative?• What happens if I turn it around? Up instead of down? Down instead of up? Backwards?• What happens if I reverse roles?	