

Methods for creative thinking in co-production to use in your working group meetings

1. **Gap Filling.** Identify your current spot – Point A – and your end goal – Point B. What is the gap that exists between A and B? What are all the things you need to fill up this gap? List them down and find out what it takes to get them.

2. **Disney method.** In Disney method a group uses three specific thinking styles in turn: the dreamer, the realist, and the spoiler (or critic).
 - Phase 1* – the objectives are looked at from the perspective of the ‘dreamer’. The creative and visual thoughts that come up should not be hindered by reality and possible risks. The Disney method is all about brainstorming power and the quantity of all the ideas that have been submitted.
 - Phase 2* – in this phase the possible ways to achieve the objective are looked at from the perspective of the ‘realist. This concerns the ability of making a dream a reality. Limitations and possible risks should therefore not be seen as obstacles but as challenges.
 - Phase 3* – the ‘critic’s’ perspective will be used to represent how the end user will experience the plan or idea. Possible risks and gaps will be critically examined and changes and areas of improvement will be submitted.

Note: Search the internet for the method. You’ll find plenty of information and videos!

3. **Six thinking hats.** By using the Six Thinking Hats, you can get everybody thinking about the problem in a collaborative way. There is six different hats you can put on or take off (can be imaginary or not). Think of the hats as thinking icons. Each hat has different colour and represents a different type of thinking. In group all wear the same hat (do the same type of thinking) at the same time. When hats change – your thinking changes.

Here’s the Six Thinking Hats:

1. White Hat – the facts and figures (What are the facts and figures?)
2. Red Hat – the emotional view (What’s your gut reaction? How do you feel about this?)

3. Black Hat – the “devil’s advocate” (Why can’t we do this? What prevents us? What’s the downside?)
4. Yellow Hat – the positive side (What can we gain? The benefits?)
5. Green Hat – the creative side (What are additional opportunities? New ideas? New solutions?)
6. Blue Hat – the organizing view (Plans for the action?)

Decide the subject you want to focus on. Prepare for the discussion. Collate information by using hats on sequence. Gather information and decide the best way. *Note: also worth searching the internet for more information on this technique.*

4. **Mind Map.** Old fashion but it works. Great tool to work out as many ideas as you can in hierarchical tree and cluster format. Start off with your goal in the center, branch out into the major sub-topics, and continue to branch out into as many sub-sub-topics as needed. There are tools on the internet to help with their creation, for example www.coggle.it.
5. **Medici effect** refers to how ideas in seemingly unrelated topics/fields intersect. Put your goal alongside similar goals in different areas/contexts and identify parallel themes/solutions. For example, if your goal is to be an award winning artist, look at award winning musicians, educators, game developers, computer makers, businessmen, etc. Are there any commonalities that lie among all of them that you can apply to your situation? What worked for each of them that you can adopt? *Note:* Look for the book *The Medici Effect* by Frans Johansson or search the internet for more information on this technique.
6. **Brain Writing.** Get a group of people and have them write their ideas on their own sheet of paper. After 10 minutes, rotate the sheets to different people and build off what the others wrote on their paper. Continue until everyone has written on everyone else’s sheet.

7. **Power of the group.** Everyone writes down their ideas on how to solve problem. Be creative. List everything that comes to your mind, realistic or unrealistic. What if money, time, people, supplies are not issues at all? Then divide participants into small groups. As a group put your individual lists together to create a new list. Delete the same solutions. Then start sharing your ideas to other groups one by one. See which group had the most solutions to the problem. Could any of these solutions be used for real?
8. **Changing Your Attributes.** You don't necessarily have to think of yourself as an entirely different person in order to see a fresh angle. What if there was just one attribute about you that was different--your race, gender, your occupation, or even weight can make a difference in how you see a challenge. Every time you change an attribute, your subconscious cracks open a new door that might lead to your answer.
9. **Reverse Storming:** This is an approach that attorneys love. Consider what most people would assume in your situation, and then figure out ways to do the opposite. One way is to ask yourself, "How could I stop this goal from happening." It's a way to look at new methods and approaches assuming it's your only option.
10. **Stepladder Technique.** This style of brainstorming encourages every member in the team to contribute individually before being influenced by everyone else. The session begins with the facilitator sharing the topic or question with the whole team. Once the topic is shared, everyone leaves the room except two members of the team. These two members will then discuss the topic and their ideas. Then, one additional member is added to the group. This new member will contribute their ideas BEFORE the other two discuss theirs. Repeat this cycle until everyone from the original group is in the room.

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