**Scamper**

Sprint toward solutions and innovations using this team brainstorming technique.

| Type | Workshop |
| --- | --- |
| Purpose | Organizational team building |
| Topics | Inclusion, collaboration, problem-solving, communication, brainstorming, teambuilding, challenging assumptions |
| Audience | General |

## **About this activity**

A study published in the journal Small Group Research found that brainstorming can be particularly effective for problem-solving tasks, as it leverages the collective intelligence of a group to identify solutions.

In this workshop session, participants will pool their collective brain power as they learn the SCAMPER technique which was developed based on the Idea Spurring Checklist of advertising executive and brainstorming pioneer Alex Osborn. SCAMPER, an acronym that stands for Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to Another Use, Eliminate, and Reverse, is a brainstorming technique that can be used by a team to solve a business problem, foster diverse perspectives, and encourage creative synergy, leading to a broader array of innovative solutions and a higher likelihood of successful problem resolution.

Scamper is an activity for a general audience and is optimal for groups 2-50 in an in-person, hybrid, or remote setting.

#### Important details

| Best for groups of | 2-50 |
| --- | --- |
| Preparation time | 15 minutes |
| Duration | 60-90 minutes |
| Required materials | * Flip chart with markers or whiteboard
* Meeting platform, if virtual
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| Required location | * Indoors
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| Noise level | Medium |

## **How it works**

#### Instructions

Before conducting the activity (15 minutes):

The facilitator will reach out to the session organizer to determine what idea or challenge should be the focus of the group brainstorming session. The facilitator will read the instructions and become familiar with the SCAMPER question framework.

Conducting the activity:

Introduction (15 minutes):

The facilitator will introduce the creative thinking technique SCAMPER, which is an acronym that stands for Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to Another Use, Eliminate, and Reverse. The method is based on the Idea Spurring Checklist originated by advertising executive Alex Osborn in the early 1950s and adapted by creativity author Bob Eberle in the 1970s.

The facilitator explains that teams use idea-generating questions in the SCAMPER method to explore various perspectives on a problem or opportunity. By systematically considering these different angles, SCAMPER encourages creative brainstorming, fosters innovative ideas, and helps individuals break free from conventional thinking patterns to find fresh solutions in a wide range of contexts. The facilitator will then walk the provided example of a coffee shop looking to build its customer and revenue base.

SCAMPER (30-45 minutes):

The facilitator will inform participants of the idea or topic they will be brainstorming together. Using a flip chart or whiteboard, the facilitator will ask participants SCAMPER questions that apply to the topic and record the answers as they are called out or placed in the chat, if virtual.

The framework for the SCAMPER questions is:

* S - What can we substitute?
* C - What can we combine?
* A - What can we adapt?
* M - What we can modify or magnify?
* P - What can we put to other uses?
* E - What can we eliminate or minimize?
* R - What can we reverse or rearrange?

Wrap-Up (15-30 minutes):

The facilitator should go back through each of the SCAMPER questions and ask participants to identify ideas and suggestions for follow-up. Next, the facilitator should ask the following questions and allow for responses as time permits.

1. What was the most original idea or suggestion that emerged from this exercise?
2. What is the benefit of using a brainstorming exercise like SCAMPER in your daily work?

The facilitator will conclude by thanking participants for their participation and encouraging them to add this brainstorming activity to their toolkit for when the team needs to generate original ideas and solutions.

Rules

None

#### Example

Here's how SCAMPER questions can be applied to a business scenario of a coffee shop that wants to attract more customers and grow its revenue.

1. Substitute:

 - What could we substitute in our coffee shop to make it more appealing to a different target audience?

 - Are there alternative ingredients or products we could use in our menu?

2. Combine:

 - How can we combine our coffee offerings with other products or services to create a unique experience?

 - Can we collaborate with a local bakery to offer fresh pastries with our coffee?

3. Adapt:

 - How can we adapt our coffee shop's layout or design to attract more customers?

 - What changes can we make to our menu to cater to specific dietary preferences or trends?

4. Modify:

 - How can we modify our pricing strategy to increase sales during off-peak hours?

 - What adjustments can we make to our branding to better reflect our values and mission?

5. Put to Another Use:

 - How can we use our coffee shop space during non-operating hours for events or workshops?

 - Can we repurpose underutilized equipment or resources for other revenue-generating activities?

6. Eliminate:

 - What products or services on our menu are underperforming and should be eliminated?

 - Are there any processes or tasks in our daily operations that can be streamlined or eliminated to save costs?

7. Reverse:

 - How can we reverse our approach to marketing to attract a different demographic?

 - What if we offered a subscription model for coffee delivery instead of focusing on in-store sales?

Using SCAMPER questions in this way can help the coffee shop owner and team generate creative ideas and strategies to grow their business, attract new customers, and increase revenue.

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## **Materials**

#### For facilitator

Flipchart and markers or whiteboard

Meeting platform, if virtual

#### For attendee

None