

## Help With Ideas



We have included information on several Idea Generation methods in this section. Everybody has the capability of thinking of new ways of doing things and are capable of business ideas.

Our work with many schools in the Dublin City area has shown that young people can be very good at creative thinking and with the use of the ideas generation tools covered on this site we think you should be able to come up with a very enterprising idea this year!

Having ideas is about opening your mind to new possibilities and on this website under [Innovation](#) we have given some ways in which you can challenge your thinking about business ideas.

Sometimes you need to look at little things that annoy you and see what you could suggest as a means of changing whatever it is about the thing that annoys you.

Sometimes a little change can make a huge difference and this takes thought. Thinking about what you would like to happen next in relation to a product or idea can help you come up with new ideas.

You need to put on your WHAT IF hat.

What if you changed the shape? What if you changed the colour? What if you changed the smell, touch, material etc.?

The possibilities are endless and the only limitation is YOUR IMAGINATION!

## Ideas Workshop



Our ideas workshops have proven very popular and everybody involved have agreed that they bring the reality of new thinking to everybody who attends. We explore ideas that are already out there and tell the story behind many of them. Sometimes what is right in front of us is the hardest thing to see. We bring along products that bring stories to reality for students and wake them up to thinking about the ordinary as extra-ordinary.

The format of the workshop is delivered in class time in you school to whatever number of students you require. We cover brainstorming, 5 W's and SCAMPER as recognised methods of ideas generation and engage students in the process.

Our workshop enables students to explore ideas which can be backed up by examples from our experience of dealing with new startups and mentoring people in the business world to bring their ideas to reality.

If you would consider taking part in and Ideas Generation Workshop please let us know and we will contact you to set up a time convenient to your timetable. There is no need for Audio Visual equipment as we bring what we need along.

After the workshop every pupil will be awarded a certificate of attendance which can become a part of an enterprise portfolio.

If you would like to have us visit your school to deliver this workshop please do not hesitate to contact us:

<tel:0869572409>

[student.enterprise@sealeodublin.com](mailto:student.enterprise@sealeodublin.com)

## Other Workshops

There is also the possibility to avail of our other **free** workshops on offer, such as our **Marketing and Finance** workshops that focus on helping students decide on pricing, product, promotion and place. Additionally, there is also a **Business Report Writing** workshop available to assist students in making decision on what to include in their business plan. **Presentation Skills** workshop is another one on offer that teaches students the essential tools needed in bringing their message across in an accurate and engaging manner.

Each school can request for up to three workshops. So choose wisely!

## Brainstorming



Effective brainstorming can take place in groups or individually.

Some of the ideas submitted to a brainstorming session may seem off the wall at first sight but after consideration may turn out to be perfectly good business ideas.

To make a brainstorming session work effectively you should:

- Be non-judgmental – if everybody has to worry about what others may think of their suggestion before they suggest it then you have immediately stifled the process. You have to let people say exactly what comes into their head as it comes in. In our Ideas Generation workshops we highlight how everybody looks to their friends to see what they think of what they say – don't do this. Just say the words as they come into your mind and leave them there.

Think as wild as you like – the wilder solution could actually turn out to be the real solution. One of our Ideas Generation Workshops investigated Toilet Paper and came up with a very good business idea for the Joke market!

- Grab and go – analyse what is good about what has been suggested and what could be added or taken away to make it workable. Suggest how it can be made viable and what market you think it would fit into.
- Have as many ideas as possible so that you can choose from as many options as you like – you may go with one idea and find it unworkable – you may then want to revert to another.
- Record everything that is said and review it later with the above points in mind. The way you actually record the brainstorming session can also be very important. Put somebody in charge of recording the session – this could be a tape recorder so everybody is free to participate.
- To keep a certain level of practicality - put somebody as a wise head – this may be just to ensure that everybody does not talk together and then have all the good ideas lost in the melee.

- Keep the session working by not making it too serious. Have fun and everybody will participate more freely.
- Set a time for the session – short timed sessions don't become jaded and uninspiring. People are still coming up with the spontaneous ideas and this is the most effective.
- Give everybody a copy of the details to take away and think about. This could be a transcript of the tape which was recorded. You can be sure people are going away with ideas they are working out either consciously or subconsciously.
- Analyse the session on another date.
- Repeat the process if necessary – it may mean a different central focus for each session which can be very effective. You can be sure that if the same topic comes out of each session there may be merit in investigating why this happens.

## Mindmapping



Mind mapping is an effective tool to use after the brainstorming session and is based on Tony Buzan's concepts of mind mapping i.e. finding connections from one thing to another in a method that comes up with an effective map solution to a problem.

Remember mind mapping is about making connections to come up with the best solution to a problem...

In the process you make similar solutions apply to various situations and in doing so develop association skills that stand to you for life. You may decide to mind map a particular product which will lead to a better use of the product, a new version of the product or indeed a similar product with better features. Either way you are thinking solutions rather than problems and this is a key feature of the Student Enterprise Awards process.

In everyday life we all come upon problems and we can allow them to define our limits or we can effectively overcome them and provide further opportunities for ourselves and in doing so open up new channels which enable us for the future. Give it a try!

## The 5 W'S



Other ideas generations skills include the 5W's.

As a basis for ideas generation, brainstorming has proven to be very effective and when combined with the 5 W's it can have immense application to the task of picking a business idea.

If any of you are familiar with W5 in Belfast it is a science museum based on the 5 W's – Who, What, Where, When and Why.

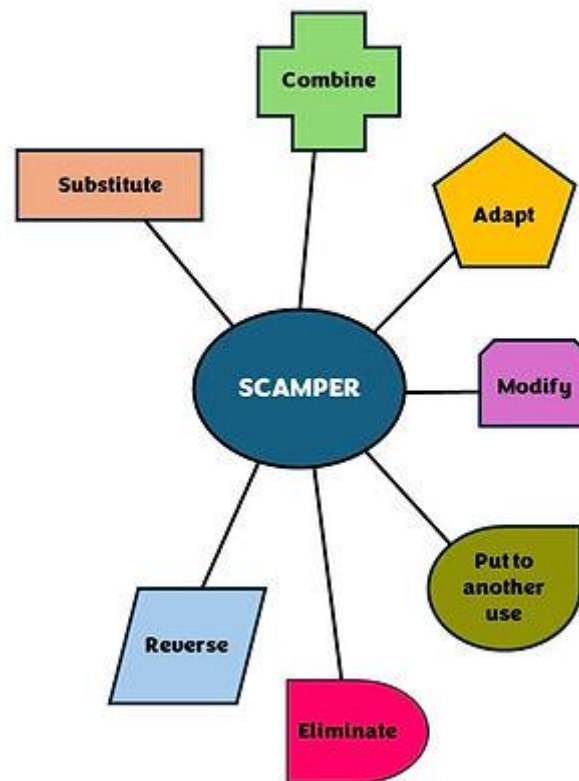
Just a few examples of what you can see at W5 such as a harp based on infra red that can be played without strings, stairways that are musical instruments in a similar way – you break the beam and a note is played – a different note for each stair step so you can effectively play music by jumping from one step to another.

The 5 W's in the context of ideas generation are:

1. **WHO** will do it, who for, who will supervise, who will buy it (may not always be the end user), who will benefit and who will be included?
2. **WHAT** is the idea, what are its characteristics, what does it do, what does it not do, what will influence it and what will ensure it is successful?
3. **WHERE** will it be done, where should it go, where will it be sold, where will the publicity come from?
4. **WHEN** will/did it happen, when should it start, when should it finish, when should an effect be felt if something new happens either expected or just supposed?
5. **WHY** should you do it, why should anybody think it is needed, why has the idea's time come, why do you feel you are the best person to do it?.

## SCAMPER

SCAMPER is another Ideas Generation technique created by Michael Mikalo in his book "Thinkertoys".



S – Substitute  
Parts, People, Ideas, Materials Or Components

C – Combine  
Mix, Combine, Use other service or methods

A – Adapt  
Alter, Change function, Use part of another things

M – Modify  
Increase, Reduce, Change shape, Colour etc.

P – Put to another use

E – Eliminate  
Remove elements, simplify

R - Reverse  
Turn inside out, upside down etc.



## Attribute Listing



Attributes are things about a product or service which distinguish it from something else. Listing a product's attributes often provides cues for creativity and can lead to many good ideas which can be developed.

### Physical Attributes

1. Shape
2. Colour
3. Texture
4. Material
5. Weight
6. Hardness/Softness
7. Flexibility
8. Stability (rolls, evaporates, decomposes, discolours)
9. Usefulness (edible, tool, aesthetic etc.)
10. State (powdered, melted, carved, painted)

Look at all the attributes of a product that you are familiar with and think about what it would be like if you changed some attribute - for instance if you changed something that is paper and made it card would it add to the value or even create something new. An example of this would be where you made an envelope and put bubble wrap inside then you would have what we know as a Jiffy Bag.

Doing this type of thinking allows you have fun with ideas and maybe come up with a new product in the process. A bigger than normal cushion can be a beanbag for instance and this type of thinking can be used with so many everyday things that it really does open your thinking up to possibilities!