

Random stimulus



What is this?

This tool generates fresh, new ideas by linking random words with the challenge. This is a good technique when the group is feeling tired as it gets them on their feet and gives them fresh air. Creative people find it fun to combine unusual concepts together. Some people find this challenging and may need good examples.

How it works

Step 1

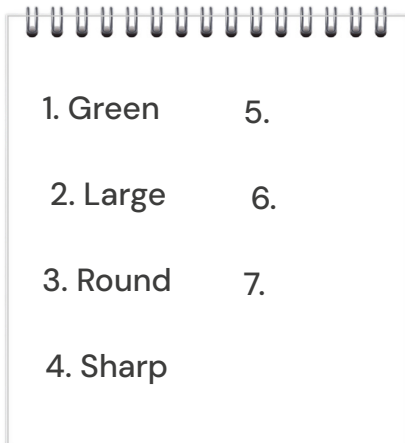
Ask the whole group to go outside and bring back a 'thing', it can be anything at all (make it legal, safe and moral).

Step 2

With one person noting down everyone's answers (on a piece of paper because you will need to hide it shortly), go around the group and ask each person to say three descriptive words about their 'thing'.

Step 3

When everyone has given three words, number the words on the list 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc. Then ask the list-maker to hide the numbered words from the rest of the team.



Step 4

Ask someone to shout out a number. Make a note of how many numbers you have between one and the highest number you have. Using the word that is next to that number on the list, get the group to think of links between the random word and the challenge, and note them down.

By selecting a word in this way, it prevents the group from subconsciously picking a word that is relevant to the challenge.

Step 5

When all the ideas are exhausted, pick another word. Note down the links and ideas that the word triggers related to the challenge. Keep repeating until the group has a big list of ideas or they have exhausted all the words. Keep the energy up, noticing when people are stuck and if they seem stuck, say 'pick another number!'

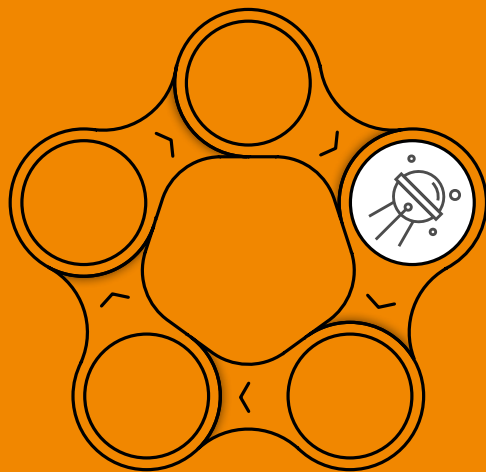
Why it works

By taking a step away from rational thinking and the limits we place on our thoughts, the group is able to open their minds to a new level of creativity.

Hint: *Be warned, this technique can cause trouble because people bring back surprising items!*

In the past someone has brought back safety signs from a swimming pool and the security guards soon came to retrieve them. On another occasion, someone brought back a person who they had asked to join the session! Another time, someone went to the local market and brought back a small bird...alive...and let it go in the room.

So be warned people can get very excited about being allowed outside!



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