

Creativity Brief

SEEKING POSSIBILITIES



Problem: State the problem here.

Vision: Turn the problem into a compelling vision statement, beginning with "It would be great if..."

Purpose: Why are we considering this right now? Why do we need it? What possibilities might result from us doing it?

Possibility Question: Turn the vision statement into a solvable possibility question, beginning with "What might be all the ways . . .?" or "How might . . . ?"

Creativity Brief

FINDING SOLUTIONS



Success: What does success look like? What outcomes do we want? What outcomes must we avoid?

Measurement: How will we measure success?

Resources: What resources (time, money, people) are we prepared to allocate? What's our budget?

Guidelines and Constraints: What must definitely be included in the solution? What must definitely not be included in the solution?

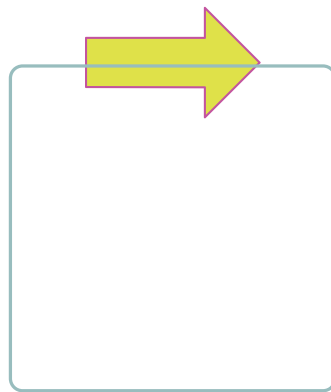
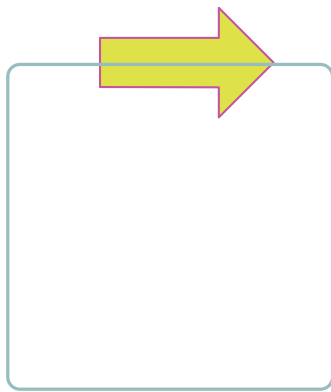
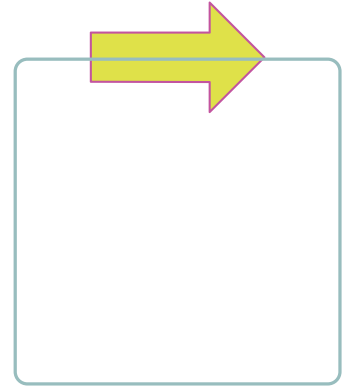
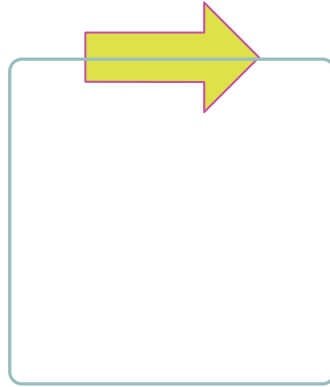
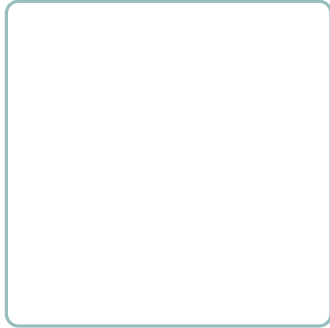
Stakeholders: Who do we need to get on board with our ultimate solution? In what ways can we start preparing the soil?

Timing: What is our timeline? Do we have a hard completion date? What's the pacing?

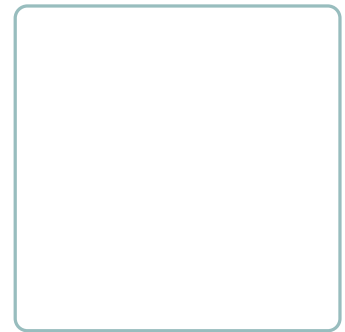
STORYBOARD



Current reality



It would be great if



Choose a problem that needs new thinking, and draw the current state of things in the first (top-left) section. Put in as much detail as you can, even if your drawing skills peaked in fifth grade like mine did.

Then, turn on your imagination and move to the last (bottom-right) section. If you could solve this problem, what would your future state look like? What would be happening? What would be possible? Imagine the future and draw it.

Finally, fill in the remaining four sections with a progression of scenes that represent what you must do to get from here to there.

As a last step, turn your problem into a vision statement. Capture the future state by beginning with: "It would be great if . . ."

IDENTIFY PATHWAYS



Those four middle boxes of your storyboard probably have a number of roadblocks. Ask yourself: What might be all of the challenges that must be overcome to get from the current reality to my desired future state?

Write down all the roadblocks you can think of, stream-of-consciousness style. Then, use the question starters to turn them into possibility questions that begin with: "How might . . . ?" and "In what ways might . . . ?"

Once you're done with that, take a look at all of the possibility questions and put a star by one or two that, if overcome, might yield the clearest path to progress. Use this question to brainstorm solutions or turn it into a reverse brainstorm.

ROADBLOCK

A large, empty rounded square box with a light blue border, intended for writing a roadblock.

CHALLENGE QUESTION

A large, empty rounded square box with a light blue border, intended for writing a challenge question.

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Adapted from Miller, B., Vehar, J. & Firestien R. (2001). *Creativity unbound: An introduction to creative process* (4th Ed.). Evanston, IL: THinc Communications.

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REVERSE BRAINSTORMING



ORIGINAL POSSIBILITY QUESTION

The principle of reverse brainstorming is to play with the absurd. Instead of using a possibility question that includes the desired outcome (What might be all the ways to attract customers?), your question centers around the result that you don't want (What might be all the ways to make sure we never, ever get a new customer again?) Be sure to have fun and use the Seeking Possibilities guidelines as you ideate.

REVERSE BRAINSTORMING QUESTION

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____

POPIT!

Give Productive Feedback

Positives

What's good?

Opportunities

What opportunities might result?

Problems

What are your concerns?

Inquiries

What might be all the ways...?
Turn problems into possibility questions.

Thoughts

What are all the new ideas to overcome the issues?

ASSISTERS AND RESISTERS



Getting buy-in is one of the most critical parts of the creative process. You could have what you think is the most perfect solution in the world but if you can't get people on board, it won't work. Here's an easy tool to help you figure out who or what will be your best allies and to whom you might have to apply extra creative thinking to get them on board.

Brainstorm a list of assisters and then a list of resisters. "What might be all the people or circumstances that will assist or resist my project?"

Assister

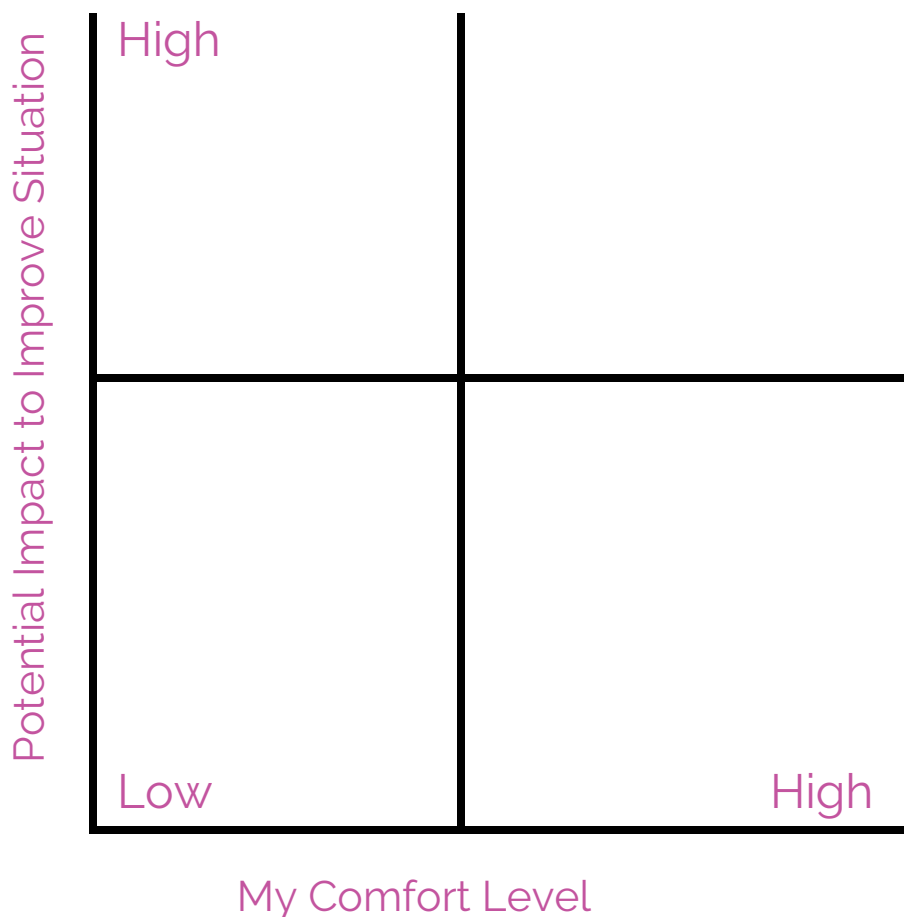
Resister

IMPACT COMFORT RADAR



How do you measure your new ideas against your own comfort level with them and the potential positive impact they may yield?

On the Impact-Comfort Radar, simply plot each viable idea in the quadrant according to where it rates in terms of both impact and comfort. Select the ideas that achieve a balance between both, or, if the idea you think is best comes with a lot of discomfort, turn it into a possibility question and solve the challenge.



TAKE ACTION!

There are many ways to create an action plan, and you probably have your favorites. Perhaps you use spreadsheets or an online system to plan out your projects.

I'm including this simple chart so we don't lose sight of the fact that implementation is key to the creative process, but the best approach is to use your preferred way of planning for action.

Place your final ideas into this chart to clearly see the steps to take and when to take them. Define your time based on your scope. Short term could be 30 days or 3 months.

	Action	By Whom	By Whom	Reporting To
Short Term				
Mid Term				
Long Term				

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