



## 5. CONVENE COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOPS **CREATIVITY TECHNIQUES.**

*"Co-creation is the difference between people creating a great idea for you and people working with you to make a good idea great."*

JOHN WILLIAMS

This is a compendium of **Creativity Techniques** that involve working with others. These techniques will ensure a productive session and are useful for anything from lateral ideas to new business models. You'll also find collaborative warm-up techniques to use early on in a workshop to promote a creative and collaborative mindset.



## CREATIVITY TECHNIQUES.



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### 1 CO-DRAWING.

Invite people to pair off with somebody they don't know. Break the news that their job is to draw four pictures together in one minute each, according to the following rules:

1. Choose a different colour pen from your partner
2. Take it in turns to draw one line at a time
3. No talking

**ROUND 1.** One of the pair takes the lead and suggests what to draw.

**ROUND 2.** The other person leads.

**ROUND 3.** Both discuss and agree what to draw

**ROUND 4.** No discussion – just start drawing and see what happens!

At the end the facilitator asks for a show of hands for which round was people's favourite. There will often be a balance in a group of people who like to lead, to follow, to co-create or improvise. This exercise gets people who rarely draw to be visual which sparks a new way of thinking. And even if their pictures are often a little silly, the responsibility for their creation is shared.



### 2 PERSONAL OBJECTS.

We need to ask people to bring along an object that is personal to them and that represents their link to the innovation topic. Each delegate gets 60 seconds to introduce themselves, describe their object and explain why they have brought it. This explanation should touch on what the object is, why it is important to them and what the connection to the project is.



### 3 CONSTELLATIONS.

Make sure there is enough space in the workshop so people can move around comfortably. First brief everyone to think of something personal to them such as their favourite toy when they were seven, their favourite holiday destination or the most profound innovation in history. Then ask them to arrange themselves in a line across the room in alphabetical order of what they thought of. This will produce a buzz of conversation and connection. Now ask each in turn to introduce themselves in ten seconds and say what they thought of. Repeat the exercise but this time ask people to arrange themselves in two dimensions. For example you could ask them to image that the room is a map of the world and ask them to stand where they are from.



### 4 TWO DEGREES OF SEPARATION.

In a room of at least thirty people, ask everybody to think of a project or problem they are working on right now where what would really help them is to be introduced to a specific person or organisation. Invite people to then take it in turns to shout out the name of who they are trying to reach, and also to briefly introduce themselves (if necessary) and why they want this introduction. Ask the whole group if anybody knows that person or organisation directly, or might know how to reach them, and if so to raise their hands. If so, just point them out to each other so they can chat afterwards and repeat the process a few times. This exercise works best with more diverse groups.



### 5 3-MINUTE JOINT VENTURE.

Participants are asked to get into pairs with someone they don't know. In their pairs they have three minutes to come up with a business idea and to give it a name. For the first minute they need to find out about each other's role and what their company does. For the second minutes they look for common areas of interest of complimentary skills. For the last minute they name their new company! Typically we would have two rounds of this exercise. After each round the facilitator does a quick debrief. Who came up with something in three minutes? Who just had a nice chat but didn't come up with anything? Invite a few pairs to feedback what they came up with. The outcome is an energised group that has new connections and a more collaborative mindset.





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100  
Open



### 6 BIRTHDAY PARADOX.

If you have a group of more than twenty-five people, you can do an interesting version of Constellations to make hidden connections in the room.

The way it works is as follows:

1. Ask people to raise their hands if they think there might be two people in the room who share the same birthday. Most people will keep their hands down.
2. Then get everybody to line up (or form a circle depending on space) in order of their birthdays. Help them by grouping in months first.
3. Once they have formed a line, ask people to raise their hand if their birthday is in January, then February, then March etc.
4. Then check that everybody has spoken to their neighbours on either side and knows each others birthdays.
5. Finally ask if any two people share the same birthday. The chances are there will be at least 2 people who do.
6. Finally make the point that there are lots of hidden connections in the room that we usually aren't aware of. The trick today is to find them.

**REVIEW THESE IDEATION TECHNIQUES AND CHOOSE A SELECTION.**

#### 1. RANDOM WORDS

Grab a book and point at a random word with your finger or a pen. Imagine how that word could be the answer that you need.

#### 2. HYBRIDISE

Take two old ideas and make a new one out of them. Read 'A technique for producing ideas' by James Young.

#### 3. BOX OF STUFF

Sit on the floor with a partner. Take turns to pull random imaginary objects out of an imaginary box calling out what they are as you do so. Expand on the random objects that your partner calls out that strike a chord with you.



### 4. MINDMAPPING

Start with an image of your topic at the centre of your paper and use different colours for different branches. Capture sketches, symbols, icons and codes throughout your mind map. Words are good but pictures will make your mind map easier to share.

### 5. THE WORLD CAFE

The room should be arranged in four tables/zones with equal sized groups and the maximum possible diversity of perspectives/ experience within the groups should be ensured. Each table has one chairperson (who remains at the same table throughout) and is asked to focus on a different question related to the workshop theme. Each group then has four consecutive discussions (timed and typically twenty minutes each) with groups rotating after each round. Each table builds on the the outputs of the previous group as follows:

**ROUND 1 - BRAINSTORM IDEAS/PROPOSITIONS** - To begin with delegates are invited to work on their own and in silence by capturing their responses to the question post-it notes. After five minutes they then take it in turns to share their responses.

**ROUND 2 - BUILD & CLUSTER** - The chairperson begins by summarising the main points emerging from Round 1. They invite the group to build on the contributions of the previous team, in particular focusing on adding any points that didn't come out of the previous round. The group are asked to cluster the responses into some emerging themes (session target is 5-10 big themes).

**ROUND 3 - BUILD & PRIORITISE** - The chairperson begins by summarising the main points emerging from Round 1 and 2. They invite the group to build on the contributions of the previous team, in particular focusing on adding any points that didn't come out of the previous rounds. The group are then asked to prioritise the emerging themes in order of importance.

**ROUND 4 - SENSE-CHECK & SELECT** - The chairperson begins again by summarising the main points emerging from Rounds 1, 2 and 3. The group is invited to build on the contributions of the previous team, in particular focusing on adding any points that didn't come out of the previous rounds. The group is asked to sense check the rationale and thinking of the previous three groups and, if it hasn't already become apparent by this stage, select the top three propositions to work on at the next stage.

