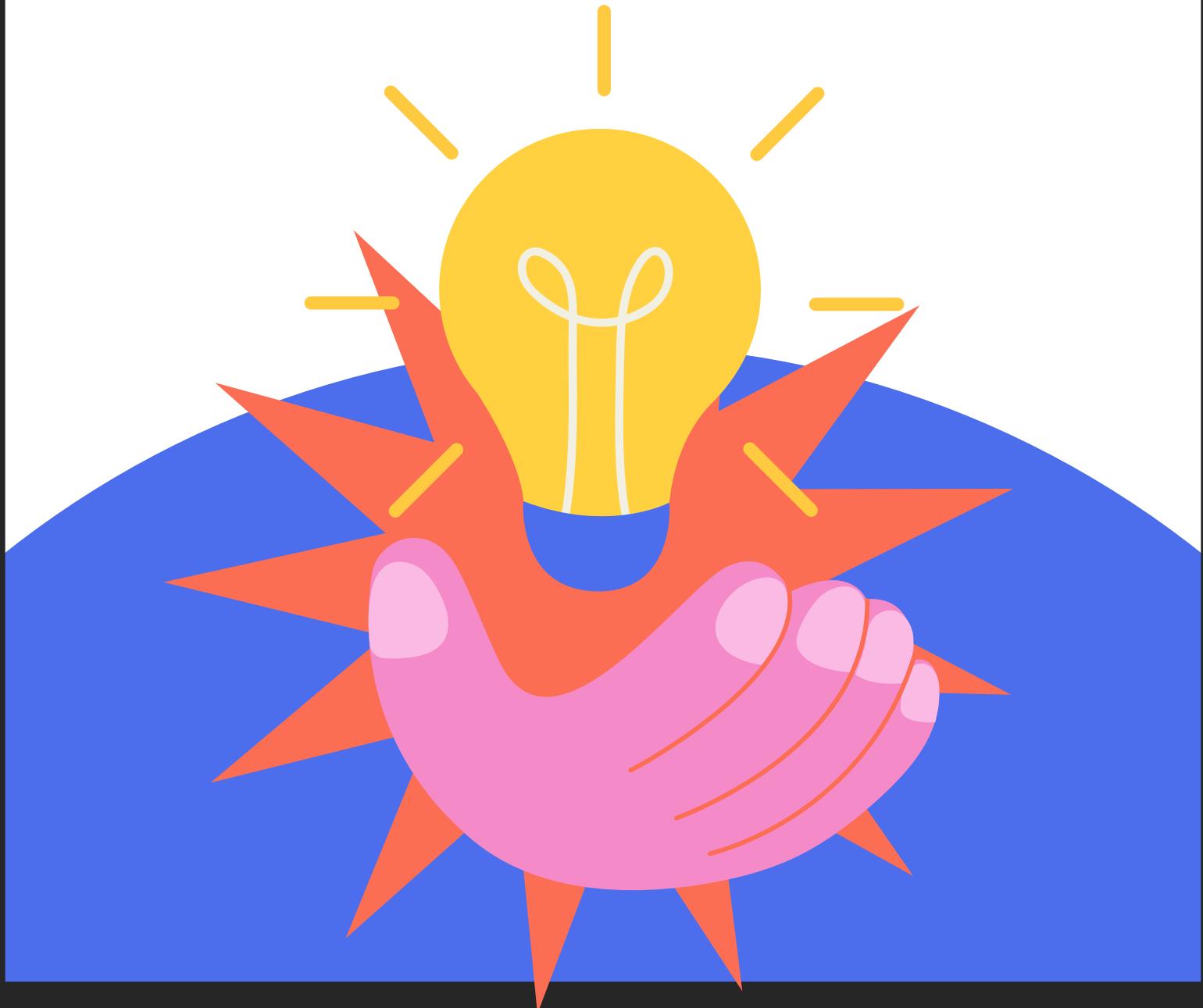


SUCCESS+

THE INNOVATION GUIDE

Strategies for Creative Development



Innovation doesn't happen by accident—it's the result of deliberate practices that unlock fresh ideas and inspire new ways of thinking.

As a leader, you play a critical role in sparking creativity within your team. This guide provides practical methods, prompts, and exercises to help you foster innovation, encourage collaboration, and generate breakthrough solutions. Whether you're leading a brainstorming session, tackling a challenge from a new angle, or encouraging bold experimentation, these tools will empower you and your team to think bigger, bolder, and more creatively.

Using the strategies in this guide, you can lead your team through a variety of exercises to generate unique ideas, expand thought processes, and collaborate on creative solutions.



Setting the Stage for Innovation



Purpose

Build a culture of openness, curiosity, and psychological safety before jumping into exercises.



Instructions

Begin by clarifying that all ideas are welcome and judgment is suspended during idea generation. Establish the goal of the session (e.g., “How can we improve the customer experience?”). Get things started with a quick two-minute “idea dump” where each person writes down any thoughts—no matter how wild.



Prompts

“What excites you most about solving this challenge?”

“If failure weren’t an option, what bold idea would you suggest?”

“If we had unlimited resources, what would we try first?”

“What’s one audacious move our industry hasn’t dared to make yet?”

“What frustrates us most about the status quo—and how might we flip it?”



Outcome

An environment where no idea is too outlandish and everyone is ready to contribute toward a common goal.

Notes

Brainwriting (aka Silent Idea Generation)



Purpose

Spark individual creativity before group influence sets in.



Instructions

Each team member writes down 3–5 ideas silently for five minutes. Then, pass papers to the right and build on the previous person's ideas. Continue until everyone has contributed to each sheet.



Prompts

“How might we use technology differently to solve this?”

“What would our competitor do in this situation?”

“What would a new team member suggest if they were seeing this with fresh eyes?”

“How could we reimagine this if technology didn’t exist?”

“What small tweak could create a big impact?”

“What would our customers’ wildest wish list include?”



Outcome

A wide pool of ideas, layered with multiple perspectives.

Notes

Reverse Brainstorming



Purpose

Spark solutions by turning worst-case scenarios into new opportunities.



Instructions

Instead of asking "How can we succeed?" ask yourself "How can we make this problem worse?" Capture the negative ideas, then flip them into positive strategies.



Prompts

"How could we waste resources?" (Example of a flip: "How could we maximize efficiency?")

"How could we frustrate our customers?"

"How could we make our product/service completely irrelevant?"

"How could we alienate our best customers?"

"What would guarantee this project fails?"

"How could we make our team dread this work/project?"



Outcome

An environment where no idea is too outlandish and everyone is ready to contribute toward a common goal.

Notes

Worst-Idea Challenge



Purpose

Reduce fear of failure and unleash bold thinking.



Instructions

Challenge the team to come up with the worst possible solutions for the problem. To encourage freedom of thought, have everyone write their ideas anonymously on small papers to pull out of a hat. Share them with the group and look for hidden sparks of brilliance.



Prompts

“What’s the most absurd idea we could try?”

“What would happen if we did the opposite of best practices?”

“What’s the most ridiculous way to solve this challenge?”

“If we were trying to sabotage ourselves, what would we do?”

“What’s an idea that would definitely make the news—for all the wrong reasons?”

“What would a 5-year-old child suggest?”



Outcome

Fresh insights, surprising connections, and a clearer view of untapped opportunities.

Notes

Rapid Prototyping & Next Steps



Purpose

Turn ideas into action



Instructions

Select 1–2 promising ideas and sketch out a “quick prototype” (this can be a drawing, outline, or role-play). Ask yourself: “What’s the smallest, fastest way we can test this idea?”



Prompts

“What would this look like in action next week?”

“What resources would we need to test it quickly?”

“What’s the simplest way to test this idea tomorrow?”

“What’s the least expensive version of this concept?”

“If we had to pitch this idea in one sentence, what would it be?”

“What’s one metric we could use to measure success quickly?”



Outcome

Concrete next steps that turn creativity into measurable progress.

Notes



Innovation is not a one-time event, but a practice that leaders can nurture daily.

By using these exercises, you empower your team to challenge assumptions, explore unconventional ideas, and transform creative energy into actionable solutions.

Remember that the most impactful innovations often begin as small sparks—encourage your team to test, learn, and refine continuously. As a leader, your role is to create the environment where imagination feels safe, ideas are valued, and collaboration thrives. Use this guide as a starting point to cultivate a culture of creativity that drives lasting growth.