

...
**The most
powerful
problem
solving
tool you'll
need**



Written By
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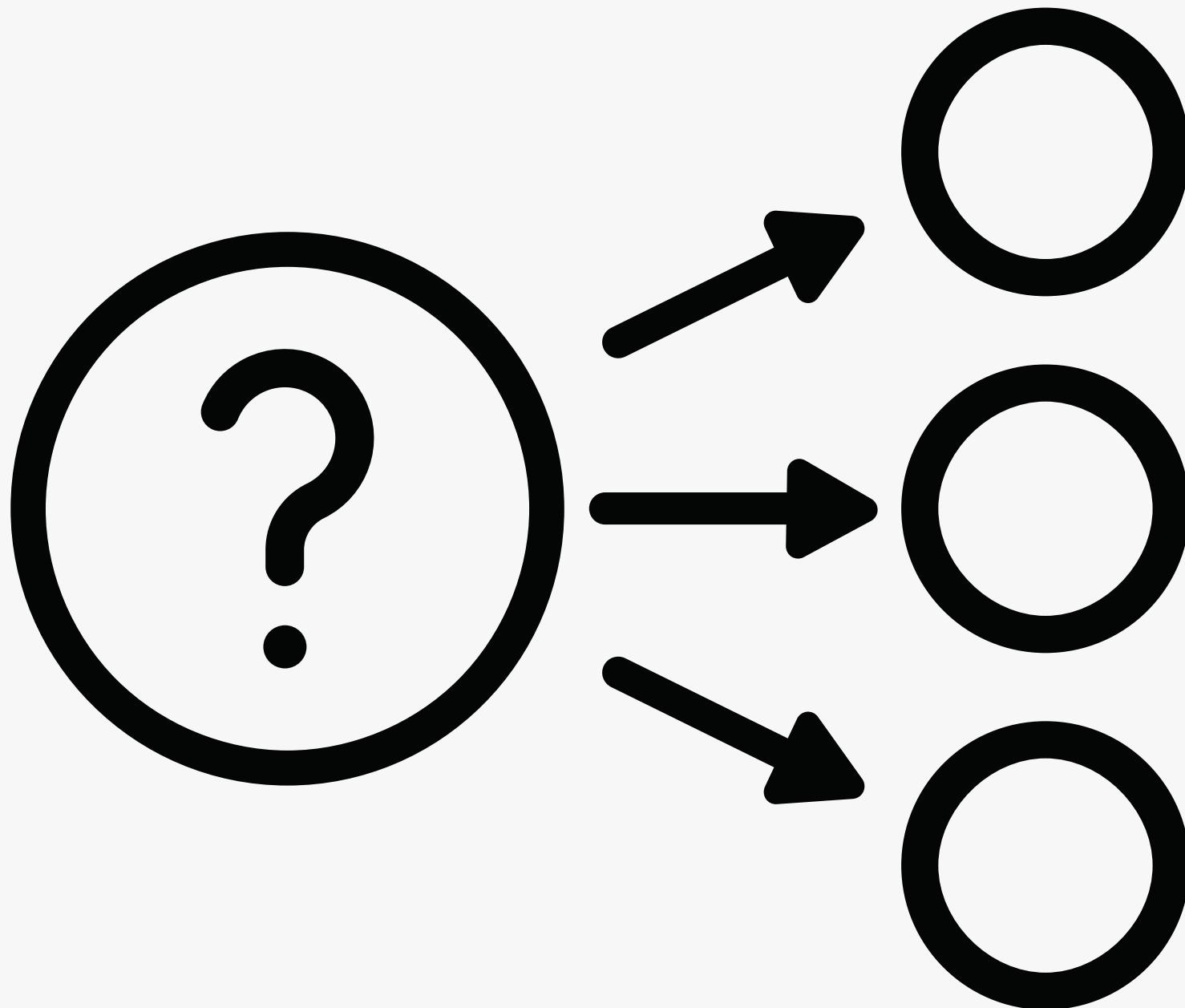
Tired of spinning your wheels
and not making as much
progress on your most
pressing problems?

It might be time to start

Challenging assumptions

Here are **6 ways** to help
you **identify and build**
lasting solutions:

1/ Identify Root Problems vs Symptoms





Ask yourself:

- How do we know that this is the real problem?
- What's the obstacle impeding us from moving from A to B?
- What would have to be true for the problem not to exist?
- Is there any evidence that supports or contradicts our assumption?

2/ Seek Different Perspectives





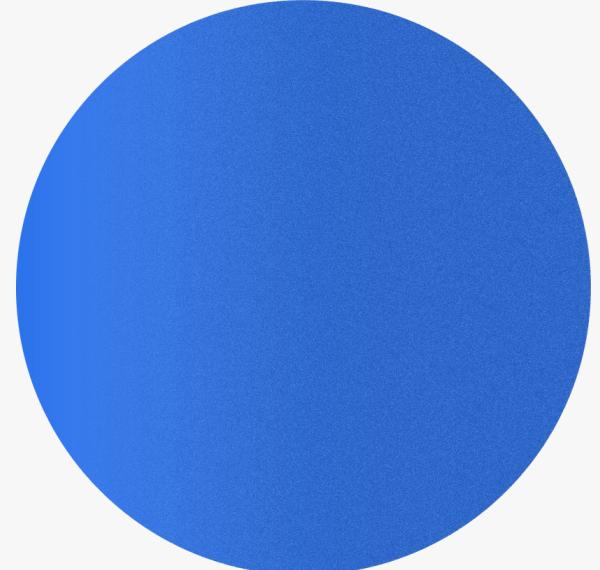
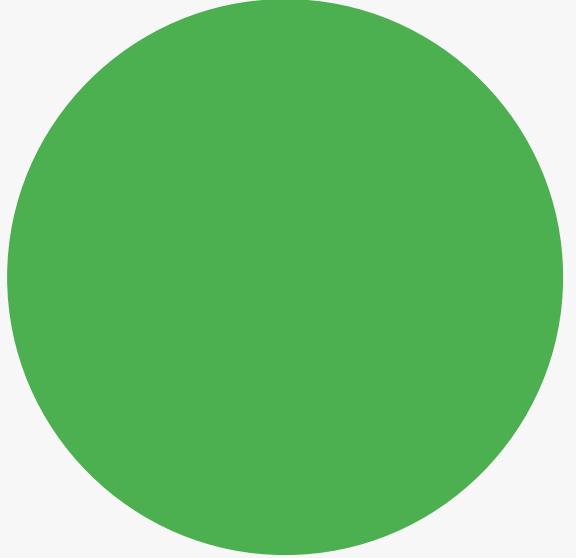
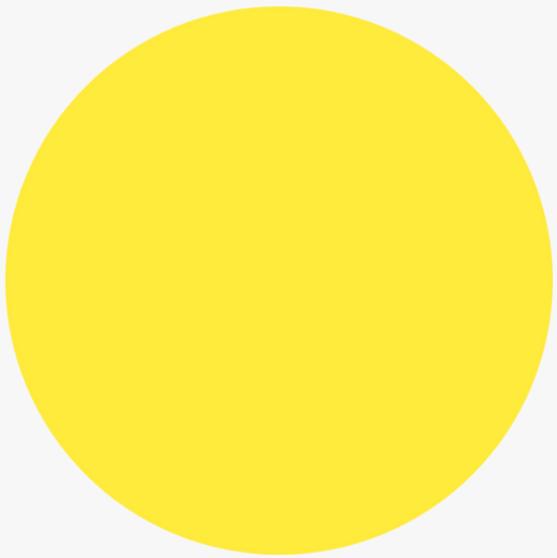
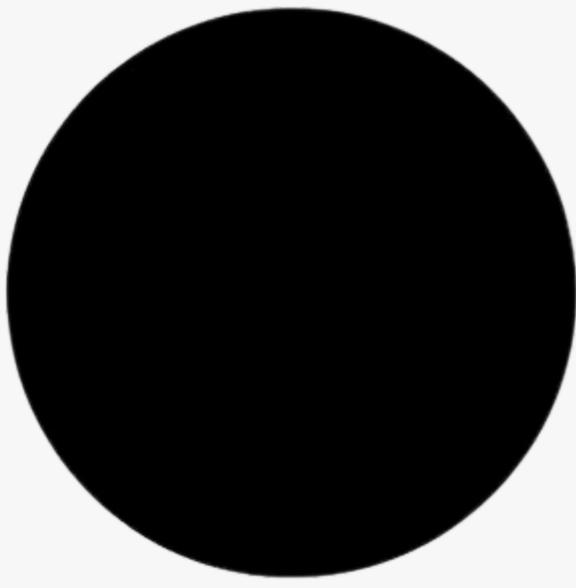
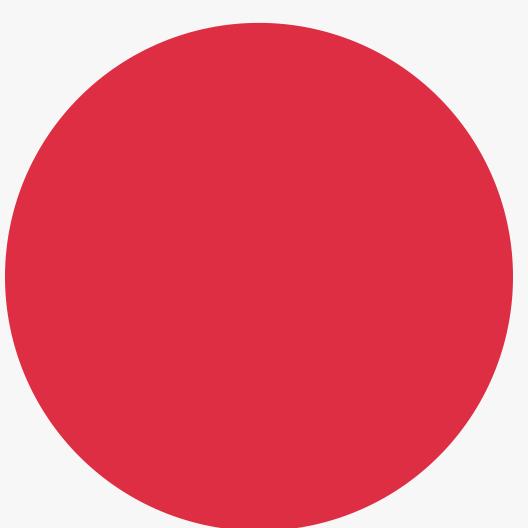
Ask yourself:

- Could there be other factors contributing to the problem?
- Have we asked those directly impacted by the problem for their input & feedback?
- Have we considered alternative viewpoints?
- What are the explanations of the counter-arguments?

2/ Wear the Six Thinking Hats

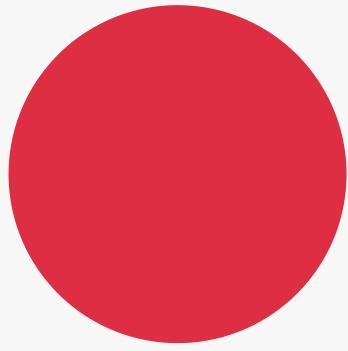


**Try the method by Edward
Bono to approach the
problem from multiple
perspectives.**

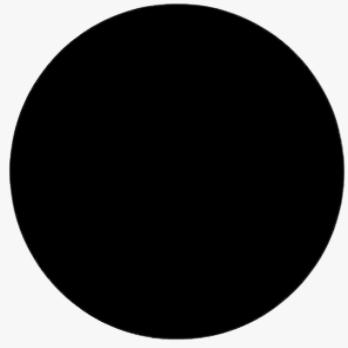




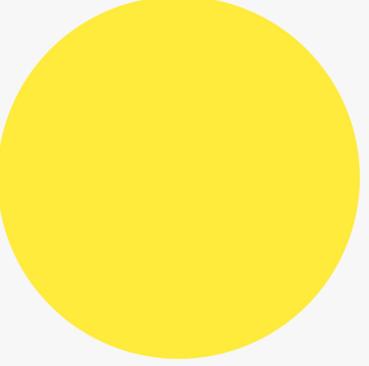
Facts & figures: Your focus is on hard information & data.



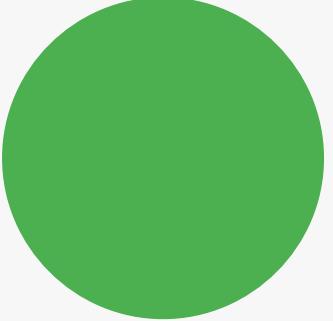
Emotions & feelings: Your focus is on intuition and gut feeling.



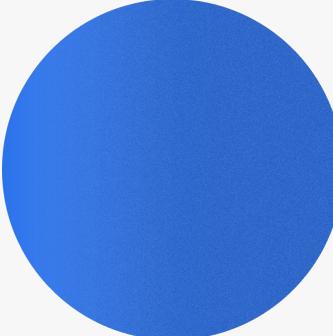
Caution & skepticism: Your focus is on the risk and negative aspects of ideas.



Optimism & positivity:
Your focus is on the
benefits and potential of
an idea.



Creativity & fresh ideas:
Your focus is on new
ideas and alternatives.



Organization & control:
Your focus should be on
process and order.

3/ Try the **SCAMPER** Method



It's a method for coming up with new ideas by modifying existing ones. It stands for:

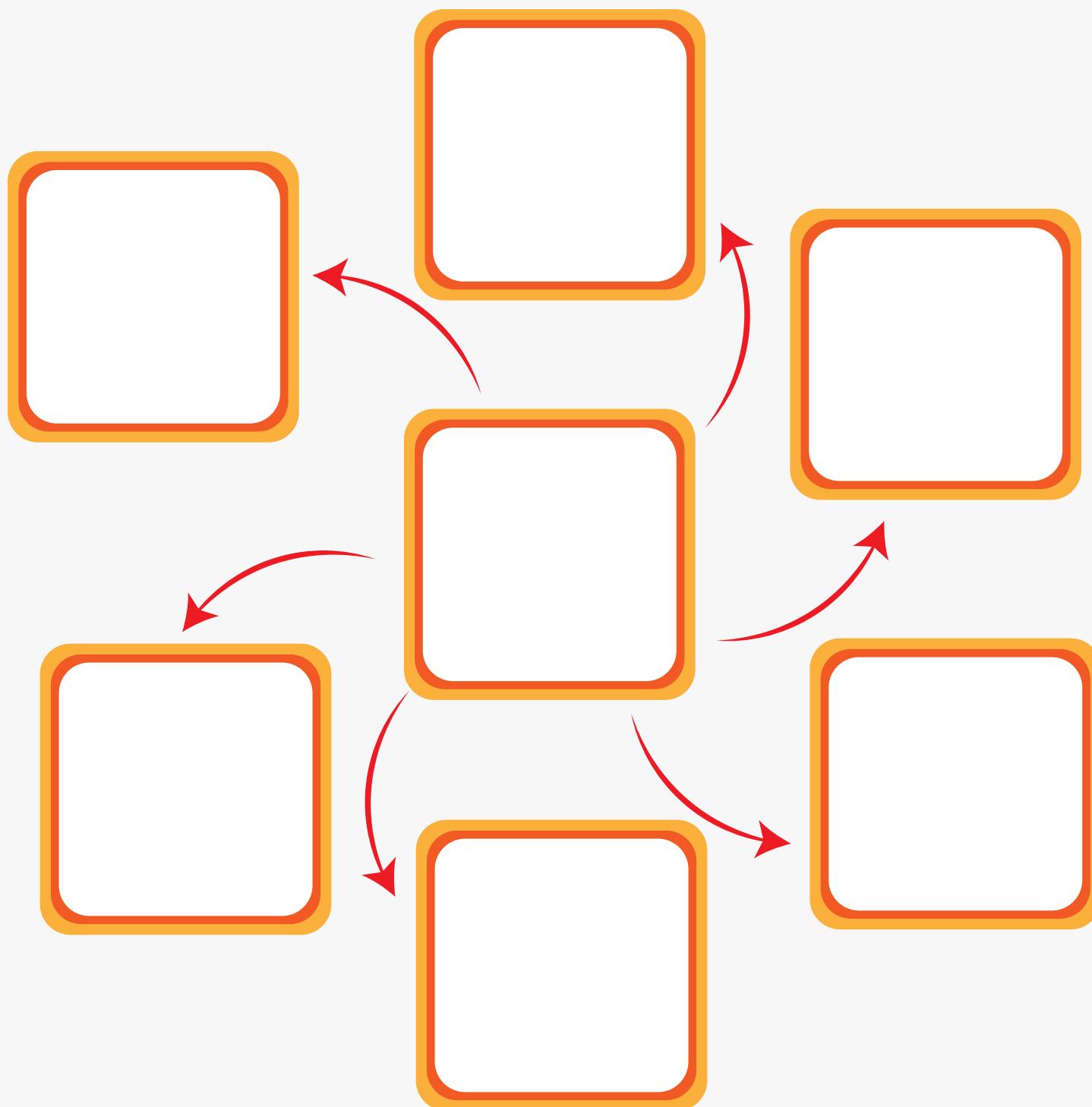
- Substitute
- Combine
- Adapt
- Modify
- Put to another use
- Eliminate
- Reverse

Let's break each down.

- **Substitute:** What can be substituted in the problem or solution?
- **Combine:** How can the problem or solution be combined with something else?
- **Adapt:** How can the problem or solution be adapted to a new context or use?

- **Modify:** How can the problem or solution be changed in some way?
- **Put to another use:** How can the problem or solution be put to another application?
- **Eliminate:** What can be eliminated from the problem or solution?
- **Reverse:** How can the problem or solution be done in the opposite way?

3/ Use Mind Mapping



Mind maps can help you see the problem differently and come up with new ideas.

When you mind map, you're **not just making a list of things**, you're making a visual representation of **how those things are all connected**.



4/ Look at Second-Order Consequences





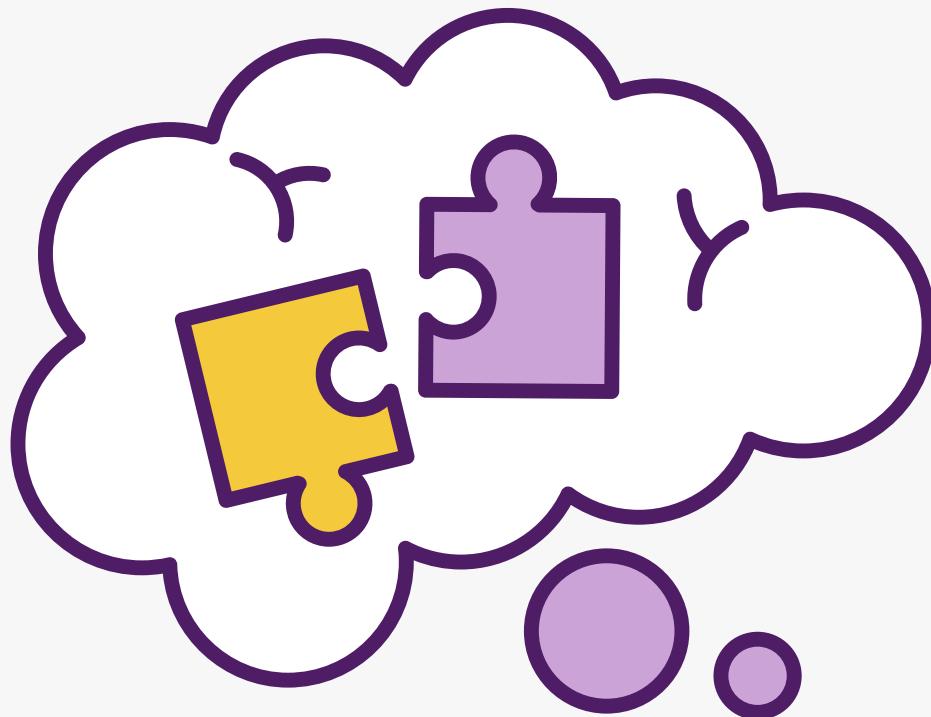
Ask yourself:

- **What is the upside if I do this?**
- **What is the downside?**
- **Can I live with the downside?**

In every key decision, you need to assess the **possible risks, probabilities, and costs of failure.**

Risks don't stop existing just because you ignore them.

TL;DR 6 ways to challenge assumptions:



- 1/ Wear Six Thinking Hats**
- 2/ Try the SCAMPER Method**
- 3/ Seek Different Perspectives**
- 4/ Use Mind Mapping Techniques**
- 5/ Identify Root Problems vs Symptoms**
- 6/ Look at Second-Order Consequences**



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