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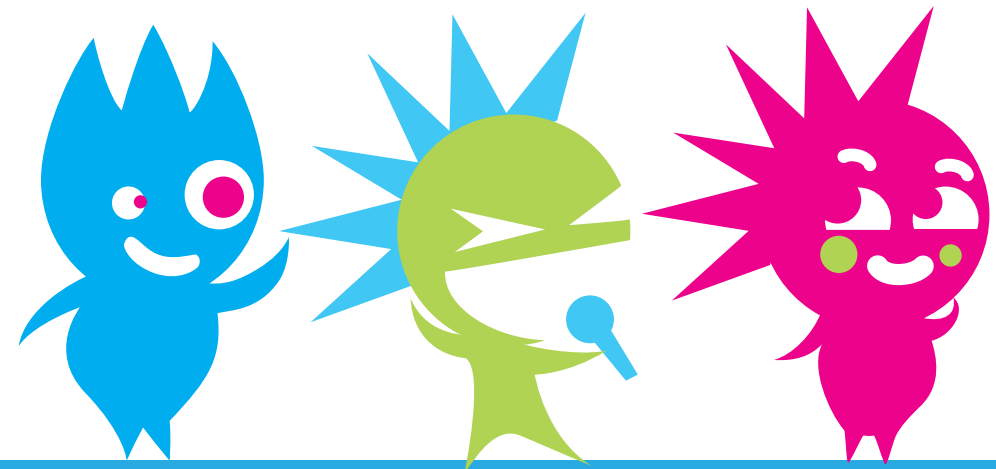
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DAVE STEWART &
MARK SIMMONS



THE BUSINESS PLAYGROUND

WHERE CREATIVITY AND COMMERCE COLLIDE

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PREFACE



You know it's weird, but you don't often find the words "business" and "playground" together in the same sentence.

One is serious, the other is, and well, sort of playful, and never the twain shall meet. Play is a vital ingredient for creativity (there are others too and we'll come to those in the following chapters) because it frees up the mind to new possibilities that otherwise just wouldn't have got a look in.

Music is creativity at play in one of its purest forms and its no coincidence that one of this book's coauthors is a prolific musician (the other being Dave Stewart. Ha ha, only kidding). When the creativity is allowed to come out and play, magic can happen. When the Rolling Stones first performed "Get off My Cloud" in 1965, their first song to top both UK and US charts, who would have thought that well over four decades later they'd still be playing it to huge audiences? They just wanted to make great songs and music and threw their hearts into it and as a result this creative spirit has made them one of the most enduring and iconic brands out there. Business Playground recently talked to Mick Jagger about how the band became a brand.

Mick has always been a very smart businessman as well as spell-binding performer and amazing songwriter (he also runs a successful film company, Jagged Films). His days are consumed with a myriad of film productions meetings, band strategy meetings and creative writing sessions, and yet he still makes time to work out for hours and he is one of the fittest people in the music industry. Mick was studying business at the London School of Economics (LSE) before dropping out in 1963 to form the Rolling Stones with Keith Richards and Brian Jones. When he left the LSE he thought that was the end of his involvement in business and saw music as his way to escape, but later began to realize to be continue to be successful he had to play a part in the business of the band.

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RICHARD BRANSON

CHAPTER ONE

HOW TO PLAY

**Creativity is inside every
one of us. It just needs
a little encouragement
to come out and play.**



Instructions

1. Grab a die and some coins to use as counters.
2. Come up with a genius idea you want to sell to the CEO.
3. Take turns throwing the die moving along the board.
4. Landing on certain spaces will shoot you up or send you down the board. Just follow the more detailed explanation on the following pages.
5. First to the top wins!

START

offsite meetings all day
MISS
A TURN

not created here

dead PDA day

competition just did something clever

boss went to innovation seminar

death by committee

elevator pitch

research it to death

if it's such a good idea how come nobody's thought of it before?

CEO

BOARD GAME: CEO

How it works: Making connections between seemingly unrelated things is at the very heart of creativity and this game forces us to make those connections to come up with something entirely new!

The board: A spiral of 36 spaces winding into the center of the board, each with a theme written upon it.

How it's played: A player roles two dice to find the first theme, then rolls them again to find the second. The number combinations of the dice identify which space to go to (e.g. throw a 4 and a 3 on the first roll means, go to the space that is 4 around the spiral and 3 in towards the center), and so which theme. Now players come up with as many ideas, sensible or crazy, as they can think of that link the two themes.

After every turn players count up the number of ideas they each came up with that are unique (meaning, distinct from one another), and move their counters to the corresponding number of spaces around the spiral of the board, moving inwards towards the enter of the spiral. So, if a player came up with three unique ideas then he or she moves three spaces around the boards towards its center.

Example: The first theme might be "sweets," and the second theme, "animals," and so players need to think of ideas that link the two – such as sweets shaped like animals, or sweets to give to animals as treats. Or maybe sweets made from chicken to give to children as a way to sneak protein into their diets. (We know, calm down...it's just an example.)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

KILL THE IDEA



**Choosing which ideas
to focus our time, money
and energy on.**

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

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"In the era when we were starting out it wasn't considered part of your remit to do anything but playing music," says Mick. "But, because we had no money, one of the first things I ever did was the music for Rice Crispies commercial. Some guy came up to us in a club and he obviously thought, 'Oh god, look.' Later on, doing this sort of work was not considered the right way to go and was seen as selling out. The Who even did an album called *The Who Sell Out* with a can of baked beans on the cover." The *Who Sell Out* album that Mick is referring to was released in 1967 had multiple versions of the cover depending on which country it was being sold in. One version shows on the front cover Roger Daltrey in a tub full of Heinz Baked Beans and Pete Townsend pitching Odorono deodorant, and on the back Keith Moon selling Medac pimple cream and John Entwistle promoting the Charles Atlas bodybuilding course. Part of the intended irony of the title of the album and cover art was that The Who were in fact making commercials at that stage of their career, and some of them were later included as bonus material on the remastered CD version of the album. Mick laughs, "That was like the epitome of that era because it was kind of like a joke. I don't know what Pete meant by that."

Then, in 1981, the Rolling Stones' tour *Tattoo You* became the first ever to be sponsored. "We did sponsorship for the first time and got a lot of attacks for it. It was a perfume company¹ and it was a real breakthrough," he says. **"I don't think any tour had ever been sponsored before. They approached us and we said, 'well, why not?'"** You know, we're not making a lot of money on this tour. In those days ticket prices were really low, so this would up the income. It wasn't very much money but it was a breakthrough thing. After that it became the norm and the next time we went on tour we got more money from a much bigger company." It's now part of the business-model to find corporate sponsors for tours. According to industry veteran Irving Azoff² third-party sponsorship is now the second biggest revenue stream for the

¹The sponsor was perfume-maker Jovan.

music industry after ticket sales (whereas in the past sponsorship didn't play a major role and the top earners were, first, record sales, second, ticket sales and, third, merchandize). Part of what makes **Mick Jagger a smart businessman is that he's a savvy marketer and** completely understands the importance of creating the right image. He told Business Playground, "Very early on I think I realized that **image-making was as important as the music**, if not in some ways more important. Visual imagery helps tell the story." He commissioned the Tongue and Lips logo for a Rolling Stones record label and it has since become one of the most recognized logos in music history. Created by John Pasche, a design student who was still at the Royal College of Art when he got the call from Mick's office, it was inspired by Mick's mouth and was a perfect visual summation of the band's anti-authoritarian image. It was first used on the inner sleeve of the 1971 album *Sticky Fingers* (Andy Warhol did the cover art) and then as a design element on a slew of other record, CD and DVD covers and merchandise. The Rolling Stones were definitely the bad boys of rock at the time and Mick Jagger immediately saw the beauty of the simple.



²Irving Azoff was interviewed for "The Price of the Ticket" – by John Seabrook for the New Yorker, August 10&17, 2009

Whether an idea is novel and useful to you depends on the purpose of your creation.

Sometimes it's just to fix your own shoe or some contraption so you can read in bed a bit better. My Stepfather, Julien, had amazing ideas every day and he put them to good use. He never worked, was a practicing Zen Buddhist (his own version) and he never touched money. Julien would only eat, read or play with what he found each day and he was a recycling genius. He also was a true pioneer against Global Warming. Back in 1970 he was marching up and down Hampstead High Street and Downing Street wearing his home made sandwich board on which he had written: "The Ice Caps are slowly melting. We are all in grave danger."

I'd go visit him and he would be sitting on the floor wearing a paper Xmas hat playing electronic chess with himself and eating salami, all three things he had just found thrown away locally on his morning stroll. But, I was more fascinated with some of the things he invented out of these discarded objects.

He would struggle home with old chair legs and coat hangers, 500 door handles,

all sorts of stuff, then the next time I went to see him (he lived with my mum around the corner in Maida Vale in London) he had turned these bits and pieces into fantastic inventions, some of which would have sold like hotcakes if they went into production, and he had already built the prototype.

Most of them were built out of necessity, as he was quite lazy and had bad vision so he wanted things to come to him as opposed to getting up to get them, and my favorite was his Aphrodisiac Bedside Lamp. He had found a female dummy's leg that they use in shop windows to display nylon stockings and he had then found a light bulb, a cord and plug and a lampshade. A brand new pair of stockings and, hey presto!, in a few hours he had it all working. He said, "Just imagine now every night to turn out the light I have to reach my hand inside a lady's skirt touching, her stocking and grope around for the switch."



SIDEBAR

For both versions

How to Win: Players write down as many ideas as they can and then after two minutes read them out. After three rounds, the player with the greatest number of ideas wins.

Topics for ideas: Make me healthier; improve my neighbourhood; get rich quick schemes; impress the boss.

CHAPTER THREE SCAVENGERS



**Always on
the hunt
for things
to innovate.**

WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

“Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.” Pablo Picasso



A question that on first blush might seem to have an obvious answer but really doesn't is: what is an idea?"

After all, each one of us has ideas everyday. Ones like: "I know, I'll go and get a coffee now. One with froth and chocolate sprinkles." Or, "I think I'll wear the tie with little fishes on it today. People made fun of me when wore it last time, but they can go stuff themselves." As ideas these are hardly earth shattering innovations. They don't involve much of our creative potential.

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Then there are things we do which aren't ideas, but can loosely be described as creative. We doodle in meetings, we make jokes and we help with our children's craft projects. Again, nothing that will bring us fame and adulation, but we've at the very least made something from nothing that has some sort of meaning to us, and possibly to others.

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Each station along the way represents one of the eight key stages of innovation. Starting at the top:

Questioning What can be improved upon? What is it about a product or service or situation that isn't quite right? Why would anyone be interested?

Exploring What can we find out about it? What information is there about the thing we're trying to improve?

Crafting What's the best way to describe the problem we're trying to solve? How can we capture it in its simple, clearest form?

Playing How can we solve the problem in a creative way? What creative techniques can we use to look at the problem in new ways and come up with innovative solutions to solve it?

Cutting What ideas should we focus on and which ones should we discard? Which are the ones that have the greatest potential for success?

Doing Now we've answered all the questions, let's put the idea into practice.

And so it continues, onto the first station again on the innovation journey without stopping. Back to...

Questioning What can be improved upon? What is it about a product or service or situation that isn't quite right?

The musicians and what they do: These 16 musicians all happen to be Welsh and, as for many traditional Welsh names, what each of them does is a part of their names. Introducing:

- Llewelyn the lead guitar

Hywel the bass guitar

Gwaladus the voice

Deyo the drum

Morvid the keyboard

Tacy the tambourine

Gwyn the violin

Leuan the sax

Mabilia the harp
- Hugh the trumpet

Maredudd the fiddle

Griffith the backing singer

Morvyth the banjo

Agnes the second guitar

Rhys the double bass

Gwervyl the clarinet

Dyddgu the cow bel

FOOD TYPE	PRICE RANGE	STYLE	DELIVERY
French	Cheap	Casual	Skateboarding waiters
Italian	Low	Family	Roman-style
Chinese	Mid Expensive	Business	Take out
Indian	Boy, that's pricey!	Trendy	Home delivery
English	Formal		Catapulted
Latvian			

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Children until a certain age are not hampered by self-doubt. My daughters Kaya (9) and Indya (7) are constantly solving stuff through creative ‘brain-sailing.’ To them everything is easy peasy.

Recently Kaya was in the car coming home from school and she was saying that the teacher was telling them that there needs to be more awareness about recycling and everyone should try to ‘go green.’ As she was telling me this we were stopped at a traffic light on red. When the light turned green Kaya immediately connected the dots and

said, “Why don’t they write recycle on every green traffic light!”

So simple a brilliant way to brainwash everyone on the planet plus it would be cheap and easy to do. In fact, after I write this I’m going to approach Mayor Villargaigosa in Los Angeles to ask if we can do a test in a small area. Don’t be surprised if by the time this book comes out that this is in effect all over USA!



Later on, doing this sort of work was not considered the right way to go and was seen as selling out. The Who even did an album called The Who Sell Out with a can of baked beans on the cover.” The Who Sell Out album that Mick is referring to was released in 1967 had multiple versions of the cover depending on which country it was being sold in. One version shows on the front cover Roger Daltrey in a tub full of Heinz Baked Beans and Pete Townsend pitching Odorono deodorant, and on the back Keith Moon selling Medac pimple cream and John Entwistle promoting the Charles Atlas bodybuilding course. Part of the intended irony of the title of the album.

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- Junk mail
- Bottled water
- Piped muzak
- Dog poop on the pavement
- Not enough time in the day
- Tasteless fruit
- Air travel
- Useless plastic toys
- Condoms
- Customer service
- Parking
- Naysayers
- "Special offers"
- Talking heads (not the band)
- Commercial radio
- We could go on...
- Airport security
- Shrink-wrapped packaging



You are a record label and in ten years time people will have stopped buying your music because they can get it elsewhere for free?

The observations:

- 1 In this picture by Bev Doolittle how many faces are there?



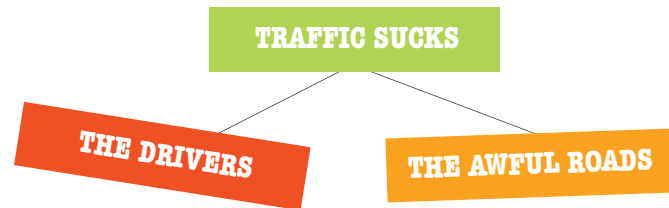
10 = left fork, 11 = right fork (answer: 10)

Another way to do this would be to design the map with faces or other objects hidden in it.

- 2 How times does the letter F appear in the sentence below?
"When I visited Phil, finches of Japan were flying around the flourishing bonsai placed on the left of the lounge's entry."
5 = left fork, 6 = right fork (answer: 6)
- 3 On a standard traffic light is the green light at the top or bottom?
top = left fork, bottom = right fork (answer: bottom)
- 4 How many curves are there on a paper clip?
3 curves = left fork, 4 curves = right fork (answer: 3)

SPLITTING THE CHERRY

Another way to look at a problem is to split it up into smaller chunks and explore some of those. We start by writing the problem in its simplest form, such as “traffic sucks,” and then split that problem into two pieces.



Now we split each of those cherries up into two more. For example, two big problems with drivers is that they don't pay attention (we of course are great drivers, it's just those other drivers that are so bad) and there're just too many of Them blocking our way, and two big issues for roads is that aren't enough of the bloody things and, anyway, they're closed half the time.



We carry on splitting up the cherry until we can't do it any more and end up with a tree diagram (a cherry tree!) of all the individual problems that make up the bigger problem. From these we can decide which ones to focus on.

(Just a thought, but how about redirecting all the really crap drivers into the holes made for the road works?)

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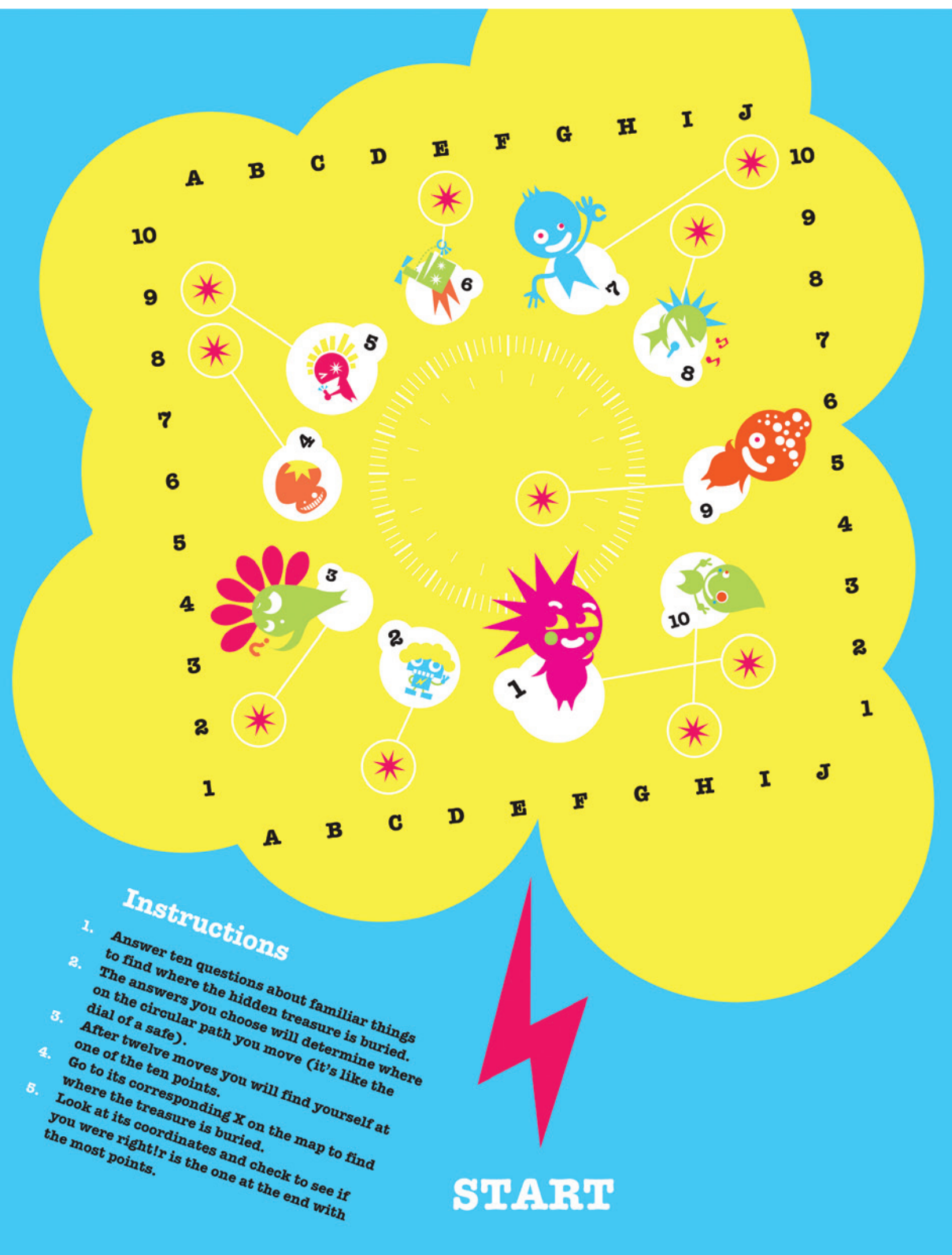


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BOARD GAME: SCAVENGER

How it works: The more ideas we think up, the more likely it is we'll have a good one. In this game the object is not so much to come up with a solution to a problem but to train our brains (in fact, it's a "brain-train") to generate lots of ideas (or spaghetti). We have two versions for you: one that tasks you with finding some simple bits and bobs to make your own game; and the other that's more straightforward. We hope you'll try both!

Version one

How to play: This is a bit of a do-it-yourself game. First cut up some small pieces of card into the shape of ingredients - like mushrooms, tomatoes, ham, cheese - and write on each one a topic to generate ideas for. Challenges could, for instance, be coming up with "new names for pasta", "uses

for a brick," or "ways to generate power." Players can choose to come up with their own challenges or use the list of suggestions given at the end of these instructions.

Players will have two minutes to come up with as many suggestions (or as much spaghetti!) for each challenge as possible.

But, first the players have to pick up one of the ingredients from the bowl to determine which topic they'll be generating ideas for. Attach a metal paperclip to each piece of card and place all the ingredients on a plate or in a shallow bowl. Now find some small magnets (maybe from that Travel Scrabble set, or perhaps fridge magnets) - one per player please - and tape them onto pieces of string (How long is a piece of string? In this case, about the length of a strand of spaghetti.) Tie the other end of the lengths