

GENERATING POSSIBILITIES

Thinking Agility Exercise 4

5 minute exercise:

How to generate large quantities of ideas and be more creative

**Your challenge should you choose to accept it:
To generate 125 ideas in 5 minutes**

In the first three exercises we explore three of the seven thinking principles: Reason Why, Define Goal and Self-Belief. We call these the 'internal' triangle, the WHAT and the WHY, and recommend you clarify, strengthen and check them before tackling the HOW, to avoid problems, mis-direction and wasted time and effort.

This exercise includes a tool to help you to generate quantity of ideas. Use it like a mind-map, ask yourself the questions in the bubbles and write down any thoughts you have. Stop yourself from evaluating them as this will stop your creative juices from flowing – when you've finished you can choose the ideas you are going to action and weed out the actions you will not be taking.

Typically using this for the first time, we have found people generate at least 20 ideas in five minutes. How many ideas do you want to generate? The more you generate the more likely you are to be creative. Set yourself a goal and celebrate whatever number you achieve.

This exercise moves you onto the 'how' part, the first part of which involves generating possibilities. Your role is to generate as many possibilities as you can in a defined amount of time. This involves using high quality questions to engage your imagination, thinking creatively, considering options and implications, challenging limited thinking and stretching beyond what you have previously thought of. The emphasis is on the quantity not the quality at this stage. The greater the number of possibilities, the greater the flexibility in making choices and the higher the likelihood of generating fresh, creative and innovative ideas.

When using Go MAD Solution Focused Thinking™ there are ten key areas for which possibilities are commonly generated.

1. Possible tasks and things to do.
2. Possible people to involve.
3. Possible ways to gain buy-in.
4. Possible reasons for involving others.
5. Possible ways to communicate the goal to others.
6. Possible obstacles and challenges.
7. Possible ways to overcome potential obstacles and challenges.
8. Possible implications and risks.
9. Possible resources required.
10. Possible assumptions and self-imposed limitations.

What are your goals for this week?

Pick one or as many of goals as you want to think about and use the ideas generation tool included, to generate as many possibilities as you can for each of the ten questions relating to the ten areas above. Typically in 5 minutes you can expect to generate at least 20 possibilities. The record for generating the most possibilities by someone using this tool for the first time is 125 possibilities in 10 minutes.

Go on stretch your thinking and see how many you can generate!

Possible reasons for involving others

Possible ways to gain buy-in

Possible resources required

Possible implications and risks

Possible ways of overcoming potential obstacles

Possible people to involve

Possible obstacles

Possible ways to communicate the goal to others

Possible tasks & things to do

Possible assumptions and self-imposed limitations