

# Free brainstorming template to help generate new ideas



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Reading time 7 mins

## Key Points

- Generating new ideas is a creative process that many of us struggle with
- Our free brainstorming template based on the SCAMPER method has been modified to facilitate collaboration and playfulness and is a great way to include team members who work remotely
- SCAMPER is a creative brainstorming technique that encourages teams to explore solutions from seven perspectives and asks how existing products, services, or elements can be: **S**ubstituted, **C**ombined, **A**dapted, **M**odified, **P**ut to another use, **E**liminated, or **R**eversed
- By turning it into a game, team members are given a challenge (e.g. tracking device for pets). They have 5 minutes to pick one of the prompts/actions and describe their idea that improves an existing product or creates a new one (e.g. collars with combined GPS and heart rate monitors)
- When time is up, each member pitches their idea to the rest of the group  
Play as many rounds as possible. With each round, members can add to other ideas to develop them, come up with new ones, or comment on why a particular one wouldn't work
- When all the ideas have been noted, the team votes on the strongest ones and draws up a shortlist

[Download the SCAMPER brainstorming template](#)

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[Overcoming the fear of creative thinking](#) goes hand-in-hand with using techniques to ignite creativity and generate new ideas (ideation): both require us to cultivate our curiosity, think out of the box, and look at things from a different perspective. Because ideation is a creative process, many of us struggle with it - so [techniques to get creativity flowing](#) are invaluable. Our [free brainstorming template](#) is based on the [SCAMPER method](#). It's designed to help you look at existing products/services in a new way, see problems/opportunities that nobody has noticed, and find solutions to fix them. We've modified the method to create a template that facilitates team participation and encourages playfulness - so if you have colleagues who work remotely, this is ideal:

- **Substitute:** are there different elements that can be used to substitute? e.g. wearable strap-on weights as a substitute for dumbbells
- **Combine:** can it be combined with something better to create something new? e.g. earbuds weren't new, neither was Bluetooth technology - but combined, a new product was developed

- **A**papt: what can be modified or adapted to suit another purpose? e.g. [Nokia localised phones](#) for diverse markets by using local designers to create more tailored products
- **M**odify: what would happen if you changed the size, shape, scale, or scope? e.g. Netflix modified the way we consume film and television content
- **P**ut to another use: does it have another purpose it wasn't intended for? e.g. Ignitec used SCUBA gear to make protective facemasks during Covid-19
- **E**liminate: What can be removed to improve/change its function or purpose? e.g. removing cigarette lighters from cars to make space for charging devices
- **R**everse: How can you change the order of things to add value or improvements? e.g. fast-food restaurants that reversed the order from eat first and pay later to pay first and then eat

While some may wait for a stroke of genius or lightbulb moment to develop an original product, many of the most successful products are based on developing or improving an existing one. What makes the SCAMPER method a great ideation technique is that even if you find creative thinking challenging, the seven prompts will guide you in the right direction, get ideas flowing and ignite a spark that could lead to something groundbreaking! [Download our free brainstorming template here](#), or keep reading to learn how to play.

## Get your team to play, collaborate, and create with SCAMPER

This version of the SCAMPER method is an active and collaborative brainstorming process that encourages a sense of play but highlights objectivity and transparency as everyone's ideas are shared.

### SCAMPER game step 1:

Define the challenge, product, or service you're tackling (e.g. tracking devices for pets), and share the template task with your team. It can be uploaded to an interactive whiteboard, a collaborative online team workspace, or transferred to an actual whiteboard if everyone is in the same office.

Ask each team member to pick one action from the list of SCAMPER prompts. Set a timer to 5 minutes and allow each member to fill out the action box they selected as they like (e.g. sketch, description, more questions, examples).

## Step 2:

Stop the clock and give everyone 1-2 minutes to pitch their idea.

## Step 3:

Ask everyone to pick another action and restart the clock for 5 minutes. Here, the team can build upon someone else's idea, add a new one, or comment on why an idea wouldn't work.

Stop the clock, pitch, and repeat for as long as the time or your team's participation levels permit.

## Please note:

A degree of overlap might cause some people to answer different prompts in the same way. For example, adapt and put to another use could be interpreted identically and generate similar ideas. Don't focus too much on interpretation, and remember that the goal is to ignite creativity and generate ideas that you and the team find exciting - the language is just a prompt.

Are you ready to play? [Download the SCAMPER brainstorming template](#); feel free to modify it as you see fit.

# SCAMPER Brainstorming

[Download our free  
template.](#)

## Step 4:

Once you're done, put the ideas to the vote and draw up a shortlist of the ones you'll pursue for further research and viability.

## Final thoughts on brainstorming templates

We get used to everyday things (habituation), and what was once cumbersome or tricky initially (e.g. learning to drive) quickly becomes second nature. For the most part, habituation is an essential part of the learning process – but what happens when we get used to an unpleasant user experience and accept it because ‘that’s just the way it is’?

[Tony Fadell](#) (originator of the iPod, iPhone co-creator, and author of over 300 patents) says that the [first secret of design is noticing](#) and fixing the problems in everyday things. It’s easy to solve a problem that everybody sees but challenging to solve one that nobody sees because of habituation. By ‘staying beginners’ we learn how to fight habituation and look for the invisible problems all around us that we can fix. His advice is to look broader (get a bigger perspective), look closer (see how minute details can be improved), and think younger (what kind of questions would a 5-year-old ask?).

We hope that our free brainstorming template helps you to fight habituation, stimulate creativity, and generate ideas that lead to new and exciting products! If you found this template helpful, please share it and signup for more free design templates and business tools.

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