

50 SCAMPER Questions

SCAMPER is well-known idea-generation technique based on the theory that every new invention or innovation is, in some way, shape, form, or function, an adaptation of something that already exists or has existed.

The word “SCAMPER” is an acronym that serves as an innovator’s checklist. Each letter of the acronym suggests a different way a group can tinker with the characteristics of a product, service, or process to stimulate totally new ideas:

- S** = Substitute something
- C** = Combine it with something else
- A** = Adapt something (another idea, part, process, etc.)
- M** = Modify, magnify, or minimize
- P** = Put to other uses
- E** = Eliminate (or simplify) something
- R** = Rearrange (or reverse)

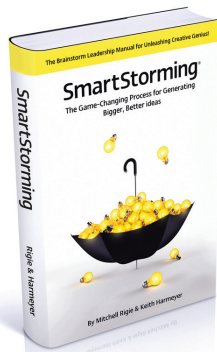
Alex Osborn originally developed a list of “idea-spurring questions” that are the basis of the technique. They were later arranged and further developed by author Bob Eberle.



How SCAMPER works:

1. Introduce the challenge to be addressed.
2. Take your group through each of the seven SCAMPER characteristics, one at a time. For example, begin with the letter “S” (for Substitute), then ask, “What can be substituted (ingredient, material, part, process, etc.) to address this challenge?”
3. Pause for five to ten minutes after each question to allow your group to generate as many ideas as possible.

See next page for 50 SCAMPER Questions.



Excerpt from the book, *SmartStorming: The Game-Changing Process for Generating Bigger, Better Ideas*.

Available at SmartStormingBook.com



50 SCAMPER Questions

Here is a selection of over fifty thought-provoking questions you can ask to help stimulate new creative problem-solving ideas and insights:

Substitute

- What other types of ingredients or materials can be substituted?
- What other people, places, or things can be substituted?
- What other methods, processes, or procedures can be substituted?
- What other parts, components, or technology can be substituted?
- What other power/energy source can be substituted?
- What else can be replaced/interchanged?
- What are the most obvious things that can be substituted?
- What colors, textures, details, or finishes can be substituted?

Combine

- What ingredients, materials, or parts can be combined?
- What two or more ideas can be combined?
- What else could be added, merged, or blended?
- What steps, functions, or processes can be combined?
- What features can be combined?
- What functions can be integrated/combined?
- How can we combine uses with something else?
- How can we combine our efforts and resources with others to succeed?

Adapt

- What else is like/similar to this?
- What can be copied or imitated?
- How can _____ be adjusted/changed to fit another purpose?
- What has worked before?
- Who is/what is a highly successful role model to emulate?
- What product, service, or process is worthy of copying/emulating?
- What are five other uses or purposes we can imagine for this?
- How can _____ be adapted to provide greater/additional value?

Modify/Magnify/Minimize

- In what ways can it be bigger, stronger, longer lasting, or more durable?
- In what ways can it be smaller, lighter, shorter, or more compact?
- In what ways can it be embellished, exaggerated, or more attention grabbing?
- How can it be faster or take less time?
- How can it be friendlier and easier to use?
- In what ways can color, form, function, or design be improved?
- What new/additional features can be added?
- What can add extra value?

Continued on next page.



50 SCAMPER Questions (Continued)

Put to Other Uses

- In what ways can _____ be used other than its original intended use?
- Who else might be able/interested to use _____ ?
- What other markets/niches can _____ be used in?
- What else can _____ be used for other than its original purpose?
- What are five different ways _____ can be used?
- What other unmet needs can _____ fulfill?
- What new ways can _____ be used, marketed, or sold?
- In what ways would a bunch of five-year-olds use/play with _____ ?

Eliminate

- What can be taken away, removed, or streamlined?
- What parts or pieces aren't really necessary?
- What rules, steps, or procedures aren't really necessary?
- What can be subtracted, deleted, or omitted?
- What would not be missed if eliminated?
- What is unnecessary or redundant?
- What aspect of our product or service provides little value?
- What can be minimized, condensed, or compacted?

Rearrange

- What parts or features can be rearranged?
- What components can be interchanged?
- How can _____ be laid out in a different pattern/configuration?
- What can be reversed?
- What can be reorganized or transposed?
- What can be redesigned or re-engineered?
- What can be reformulated?
- What would be unexpected/provocative?