



Seeing tomorrow's ideas...Today

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Focus on Innovation

Focus on Innovation is a monthly electronic newsletter designed to provoke thoughts and ideas on how to bring innovation to life within the organizations in which we work.

For Those on the Run

Looking for a strategy to help you get from "no idea" to "new idea" in a short period of time. Read this month's newsletter to find out how Transformative thinking can help you consciously twist and turn the gist of one idea into a fully developed new idea.

Creativity Technique - Transformative Thinking

"Few people think more than two or three times a year; I've made an international reputation for myself by thinking once or twice a week."

— George Bernard Shaw

Transformative thinking can be described as a form of mental aerobics that helps you consciously twist and turn the gist of one idea until you arrive at a fully developed idea. It utilizes the human mind's ability to apply various thinking strategies to a problem and to visualize or verbalize the results in advance. The transformative thinking technique can be used on your own or with a group of people brought together to come up with ideas for a tough challenge. Here's how the transformative thinking technique works.

Transformative Thinking Technique

1. Identify an issue or problem - business or personal - to which you can apply transformative thinking.
2. Using the grid provided below, look at the words in any order and apply them one at a time to your issue or problem. If a word triggers an idea in your mind, write it down; if it doesn't, move on to another word. Keep going until you run out of words.
3. Spend a few hours evaluating the strategies and see what you can do to advance your thinking about the issue or problem.

For example, if a small business owner wanted to increase her sales by 10 percent she might use the grid to get ideas like the following: **Trim** the prices to increase orders, **add** a free gift with purchase, **offload** some old stock, **shift** her next quarter orders into this quarter, **simplify** her ordering process to encourage her customers to buy more, **network** in her community to increase the number of orders, and so on.

The thirty-six words on the Transform grid will help unfreeze your mind, especially when you are under pressure to think, by triggering associations. It will help you take the seed of an idea to a new stage.

TRANSFORM GRID

T	Transfer	Transplant	Trim	Thicken	T
R	Reduce	Remove	Rearrange	Rotate	R
A	Add	Adapt	Accelerate	Adopt	A
N	Narrow	Naturalize	Neglect	Network	N
S	Substitute	Shift	Shrink	Simplify	S
F	Force	Fence	Flush	Frame	F
O	Organize	Off-load	Oscillate	Optimize	O
R	Reverse	Recycle	Reform	Relax	R
M	Magnify	Maximize	Minimize	Move	M

What's the Bottom line

The secret to Transformative thinking is to force the mind to think differently by twisting a issue or problem around or thinking about it from a different perspective.

Source: Transformative thinking was developed by Jordan Ayan in partnership with his colleague Deanna Berg. This technique and many others are described in his book, "AHA! 10 Ways to Free your Creative Spirit and Find your Great Idea, New York: Three Rivers Press, 1997.



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