

Scamper

Tool name: Scamper

Enabler: Diversity & Inclusion

Target Audience: Individual, Team & Organization

Ideal Group size: 3-15 participants

Time: 90 minutes

Facilitator Difficulty Level: 3

Why: A creative problem-solving and ideation technique used to generate new ideas or improve existing products, services, or processes.

- SCAMPER stands for Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to another use, Eliminate, and Reverse.

When:

- During brainstorming sessions for innovation or improvement.
- When facing creative blocks or limited ideas.
- At the start of a project to explore possibilities.
- During product development or process redesign cycles.

Expected Outcomes:

- Collaboration with diverse teams to bring in multiple perspectives
- Generation of new ideas

How:

Step: 0

Configuration: Make sure the participants have enough space to work face-to-face in pairs and foursomes

Step 1: Identify the Subject

- Choose a product, process, or problem you want to improve or innovate.

Step 2: Apply SCAMPER Questions

- Go through each of the SCAMPER steps and ask relevant questions to generate new ideas.

S – Substitute

Think about replacing components, materials, or people to improve the subject.

- What can be substituted?
- Can I replace a part to make it better?
- Can I change the method or resource used?

C – Combine

Try merging elements to create a new outcome.

- Can I combine this product with another?
- What ideas, resources, or processes can be combined?
- Can I integrate two steps into one?

A – Adapt

Modify or tweak elements for improvement.

- How can I adapt this for a different use?
- Can I use this in a different context?
- What can I modify slightly to improve efficiency?

M – Modify (or Magnify)

Expand, exaggerate, or make something bigger.

- What can I enlarge or add?
- Can I increase its frequency or strength?
- How can I make it more significant or extreme?

P – Put to another use

Find alternative ways to use the subject.

- Can I repurpose it for another industry?
- Are there new markets or customers for this?
- Can I use it in an unexpected way?

E – Eliminate (or Minimize)

Remove unnecessary elements to simplify.

- What can be removed without affecting function?
- Can I simplify the process?
- Can I reduce costs by eliminating something?

R – Reverse (or Rearrange)

Change the order or direction to gain a new perspective.

- Can I swap the sequence or layout?
- What happens if I do the opposite?
- Can I turn it upside-down or inside-out?

Step 3: Analyze and Develop Ideas

- Review the answers from each SCAMPER step and identify the most promising ideas.

Step 4: Implement and Test

- Select the best ideas, create prototypes or action plans, and test their feasibility.

Step 5: Refine and Finalize

- Adjust based on feedback and refine the best ideas into a final product or solution.

Additional Guidance:

Do's:

- Encourage an open, judgment-free brainstorming environment.
- Use SCAMPER prompts flexibly to fit the context.
- Explore even unconventional or “wild” ideas; they may inspire breakthrough solutions.
- Collaborate with diverse teams to bring in multiple perspectives.

Don'ts:

- Dismiss ideas prematurely; focus on generating quantity first.
- Limit the exploration to obvious or traditional changes.
- Overlook small improvements; they can lead to significant impacts.

- Use SCAMPER as a one-time exercise; integrate it into regular innovation practices.

Source: Methodology Origin: Based on Alex Osborn's brainstorming principles and later refined by Bob Eberle in his book SCAMPER: Games for Imagination Development.

Books and Tools: Creativity techniques in Thinkertoys by Michael Michalko.