

THE IDEATION CANVAS

Created by David Chislett

What is the Ideation Canvas?

An idea-generating tool that helps you to get a clear overview of what you are busy with and why it is important. It was developed to help people who are stuck for inspiration, do not consider themselves creative or are otherwise blocked and need to find good ideas.

HOW DO I USE IT?

Draw it up on a flipchart or print it out as an A1 sheet and use Post-It notes to record all your thoughts as you work through each block of The Ideation Canvas©.

You can do this as a team, OR on your own.

Get your head nice and clear and focus on the challenge you need an idea for and just focus on working through the Canvas.

Once you've covered all blocks, you can then develop your idea and work on applications.

WHAT ORDER MUST I FOLLOW?

Start at the top with the long, horizontal block PROJECT STATEMENT.

Then you dive into the thinking work,
First DIVERGENT THINKING,
Then CONNECTIVE THINKING
Lastly, CONVERGENT THINKING

Block-by-block instructions can be found in the Instruction Canvas pdf.

HOW MANY POST-ITS PER BLOCK?

As many as you like!

Don't limit yourself! Stack them up, place them next to the canvas... whatever you need to do. Just make sure you keep on diverging and exploring! When you run out of things to write, stop.

CAN I SHARE THE CANVAS?

Yes, please do.

My dream is to help EVERYONE have more good ideas, so spread the love! To be fair to me as the creator, please mention my website, davidchislett.com, when you share it - thanks.

WHO CREATED THE PITCH CANVAS©?

I did - David Chislett
Change Pilot, Creativity Activator... Keynote speaker and workshop facilitator.
I help people embrace the uncertainty of change to better navigate the unknown.

I NEED HELP!

Visit davidchislett.com - I'd love to hear from you.

Send me a mail from the website, subscribe to the newsletter for more cool tools and creative 'things!]

<https://davidchislett.com>

THE IDEATION CANVAS

Instructions

PROJECT STATEMENT

Before you start looking for ideas, make sure you are trying to solve the right problem. You want to end up with a short, open-ended sentence that sets out the problem you need an idea to solve. To do this, you can use clarification tools such as the 5 Why's. Why do I need an idea in this area? Why is it a problem? Why is that a problem, and so on, until you reach a root cause (around 5 WHYS) Other tools like a Problem Statement Canvas or Template are also very useful here. Here it is valuable to also consider the PURPOSE of your idea. What is it for? What end goal will it help you achieve? Make sure you are setting out to find an idea that is actually useful and not just a nice-to-have. Ask yourself: What do I already know about this topic/area? What do others know? What can you steal from others?

Connect it to a REAL situation and a REAL problem. Then, once you have done all of this, write up your final project statement sentence on a post it and stick it here.

DIVERGENT THINKING

Consider everything that is involved with your problem area

Tell yourself that: you have all the skills, aptitude, budget, time and help you will need to make ANY/ALL of these ideas real.

Surrender your judgement as to what is good, bad, useful, stupid or clever and let your mind roam free.

The wilder the ideas you find the better.

Go for quantity over quality. Try to get down as many thoughts/ideas as you can. 100 is amazing. 5 is WAY too little.

Write it all down, each piece of info/ideas on a separate PostIt and stick them all in this block

Use creative thinking tools like Bend, Blend, Break, Reverse Brainstorm, Random connection etc.

Some helpful tips:

Use Google search, Instagram/Pinterest for inspiration

Ask for input from peers/colleagues/friends

Ask yourself, what if (crazy idea) was true...

For example:

What if there was no competition?

What if we became the biggest in the field

What if French became the official language of the EU?

CONNECTIVE THINKING

Now is the time to turn your critical, rational brain back on and start analysing everything you have collected.

It is recommended to take a break between doing Divergent and Connective thinking. Coffee anyone?

Look at what you have collected in the previous block

Sort the notes into groups:

Things that are exactly the same

Things that are similar

Remove the duplicates of information to leave just 1 version

Now look at the groups.

Is there a pattern?

Are any of these thoughts the CAUSE of the issue you are looking for an idea to solve?

Are any of these thoughts SYMPTOMS of the issue you are trying to solve?

Do the ideas go somewhere? Do they point in a direction?

Or are they rather pointers than actual ideas?

In this block, it is necessary to find the relationships between the thoughts you have in the previous block

If necessary, go back and do the DIVERGENT THINKING block again.

CONVERGENT THINKING

Distil the Divergent, connected ideas into your ONE big idea. Take your time

Look at the connected material in the previous block.

Which idea speaks to you?

Ask yourself: Which of these thoughts have I never heard before OR which of them scare me?

If not, go back and repeat DIVERGENT THINKING block and repeat both blocks.

Select an idea that speaks to you.

(Teams can select more and assign people to each idea)

You can also BLEND two concepts to form one, or assemble many, or break a complex idea into its part and re-assemble those.

You must end up with one clear simple sentence that expresses the idea.

You can use these questions to help you:

WHAT is the thing (an object, an app, software, a process?)

WHY do I want it

WHO is it for?

HOW can I make this real

WHERE will this work/take place

WHEN can I do it?

NEXT STEPS

OK, so you've got a nice idea... what next?

Create a list of steps or action plan (with who is responsible and preferably a deadline) that is required to start getting this idea off the ground.

What can you do RIGHT NOW to get the ball rolling and this idea moving?

WHO needs to be involved?

WHAT materials do you need?

This block is to ensure that your ideas turn into an actual thing in the world by making sure you plot out the next steps that will make it real.

DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP!



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PROJECT STATEMENT

DIVERGENT THINKING

CONNECTIVE THINKING

CONVERGENT THINKING

NEXT STEPS