

SYNECTICS: CREATIVE DESIGN THINKING

Problem owner provides headline and wish: They describe the issue, how it is experienced, the background, what has been tried, and the possible scope of action. It is then expressed in one or more 'big wish' statements of the form: 'I wish (IW)...' or 'How to (H2) ...'. This is not a 'problem definition' but a wish reflecting the way the issue is experienced. The group listens imaginatively, rather than analytically.

1. **Group generates large numbers of 'springboards':** The mood here should be expansive and unconstrained. The springboards use the same formats as the 'big wish' (IW, H2, etc.). They are not ideas for solutions, but articulate further wishes to open up space for invention: 'It would be nice if we could do X but we don't yet know how to.'. A wide range of springboard triggering techniques have been developed, e.g. various uses of [Analogies](#); various types of [Excursions](#); the essential paradox/book title technique, and others ([Free Association](#), [Random Stimuli](#), [Drawing techniques](#), etc.)
2. **Select an interesting springboard:** The mood now switches to a more focused approach than in Steps 1-2. Problem owner and group members choose their favourite springboards (more on the basis of interest or appeal than on the basis of logical relevance). They share their choices, but final choice rests with the problem-owner. However, the process can always be repeated, so the choice is not critical. The assumption is that within any springboard will be creative possibilities that can usefully be explored.
3. **Ideas to help achieve the selected springboard are generated, using the trigger techniques mentioned in Step 2 (or any other idea-generation methods). The problem-owner selects some that seem interesting.**
4. **Check understanding of these by paraphrasing** them and checking with their authors until the paraphrase is correct. An idea is selected for the Itemised Response.
5. **Itemised response.** Every conceivable positive features of the selected idea is listed. Then (and only then), a single concern / problem / issue is expressed as a problem for solution (e.g. 'How to ...'). Solutions for these are expressed by all in terms of 'What you do is (WYDI)...'.
6. **Recycle or end:** Back to 4. until sufficient ideas for this spring board have been explored. Then back to 3. for another springboard. Cycle until the problem-solver has a solution s/he is happy to run with, or until time runs out.