Creative Canvas

This canvas helps you come up with new ideas by looking at the intersections of people and solutions. By mapping these out we can generate lots of different ideas quickly that fall into different categories.

Takes around 1 hour to complete

For individuals or teams

Must be worked on at the same time

Can be done remotely or in-person

Welcome to the Creative Canvas, this framework is used as a format for sparking new ideas at the intersections of distinct categories.

While total creative freedom might seem desirable at the start of a project, it is often within constraints that novel ideas are sparked. It may seem counterproductive to impose limits on the creative process, but when a problem is too broad or you're having trouble breaking away from conventional thinking, structure can help.

This activity will support cross-pollination by providing a template for generating new ideas where topics intersect in a Creative Matrix gird, each cell represents the intersection in different categories. The top column refers to categories related to people (persons, market segments or problem segments) and the rows relate to enabling solutions (e.g technologies, environments, or policies). We will use this mash-up of categories to help generate a wide range of ideas for each cell.

Getting started

Defining a Challenge Statement

A challenge statement is used to provide a prompt for unpacking a complex design challenge or problem often framed using a how-might-we or what if question to generates creative solutions while keeping teams focused on the right problems to solve. The trick is to frame an open questions without it being too broad to build on the collective intelligence of the participants and to build creative ideas for further exploration.

Using the Tool

1. Begin by reading the challenge statement / how might we..? We will be working through the matrix and building ideas in response to the category along the horizontal and vertical columns and rows.

2. Set a timer for 10 minutes and fill out the matrix with as many crazy, wild, realistic, practical, non practical ideas as possible. Anything goes.

3. Set the timer for another 10 minutes and now build on the ideas of your team mates. How can they be improved.

4. Set the timer for 5 minutes and as a group use the vote tool to select your top 4 favourite sticky notes.

5. We will place the top four in the box to the right.

6. Once the voting is complete there will be several areas of interest with shared consensus. Use a different coloured post-it note and decide on a heading. The section to the right hand side can be used to list the ideas / themes. These can then be expanded upon through application of another tool to continue working through the design process.

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Add your challenge statement...

These are examples - please use prompts relevant to your industry:

Social Media

Technology

Events

Environment

Hangouts

Policy

Games

Partnerships

Provocation

Challenge	Add people, place, org...	Add people, place, org...	Add people, place, org...	Add people, place, org...
Add prompt				
Add prompt				
Add prompt				
Wildcard				

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This is an example format for laying out the tool, please try to replicate it as best you can in a larger format, e.g. on a large whiteboard using sticky notes.

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