GETTING STARTED WITH CREATIVE MATRIX

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CREATIVE MATRIX
A tool to help organize and encourage the creative process

The Creative Matrix structure is useful if you want to generate many wide-ranging ideas in a short amount of time, or if you’re stuck and need to break away from conventional thinking. It stimulates cross-pollination by providing a template for generating new ideas where topics intersect.

Creative Matrix is a grid where each cell represents the intersection of two disparate categories. It’s best to use the columns as categories related to people (e.g., personas, market segments, or problem statements) and the rows as categories for enabling solutions (e.g., technologies, environments, or policies). You can then use this “mash-up” of categories to help generate a wide range of concepts in each cell.

Follow the steps on the next few pages to get ready to run a Creative Matrix brainstorm.
STEP 1: WRITE PROBLEM STATEMENTS

Write questions that encourage broad thinking. These will jumpstart a discussion about solving the right problem the best way. The goal is to uncover the focus of exploration.

HOW TO CREATE PROBLEM STATEMENTS:

1 Identify a set of problems or opportunities based on your research.

2 State each issue in the form of a short phrase.

3 Add a “starter” to the beginning of each phrase:

   How might we ________? In what ways might we ________? How to ________?

4 Use the new phrasing as a basis for ideation.

HELPFUL HINTS:

Consider adding a “starter” to a research insight.

Don’t embed solutions into problem statements.

Try different wordings to find the most powerful statement.

If working with a group, use voting to pick the best problem statements.
STEP 1: WRITE PROBLEM STATEMENTS

Write questions that encourage broad thinking. These will jumpstart a discussion about solving the right problem the best way. The goal is to uncover the focus of exploration.

THINKING ABOUT YOUR PROJECT, IDENTIFY AND WRITE DOWN A COUPLE OF PROBLEM STATEMENTS:

1

2

3

4
STEP 2: THINK OF ENABLERS

Think of categories that might enable your solution.

SAMPLE ENABLERS:

1. Technology and Digital Media (wearables; IoT; phones, tablets, watches, lifestyle trackers...)
2. Physical Variation (different sizes, forms and shapes; unusual materials...)
3. Partnerships (companies and strategic partnerships; spokespeople; celebrities...)
4. Environments (virtual Reality; mobile Installation; permanent structure...)
5. Public Policies and Laws (unwritten customs; future legislation; policy platforms...)
6. Internal Policies and Procedures (training; core company strengths; incentives and rewards...)
7. Gamification (rewards; teamwork....)
8. Accessories (fashion; cases; add-ons to existing infrastructure...)
9. Engage all senses (touch, smell, sight...)
STEP 2: THINK OF ENABLERS
Think of categories that might enable your solution.

THINKING ABOUT YOUR PROJECT, IDENTIFY AND WRITE DOWN SEVERAL ENABLERS:

1

2

3

4

5

6

7
STEP 3: PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Time to make your matrix, and ideate around your problem statements and enablers!

1. Create a large grid (5x5 is a good size; don’t exceed 7x7) on a poster or whiteboard.

2. Designate columns: These are your problem statements from Step 1 (“How might we ...?”).

3. Designate rows: List your most promising enablers from Step 2.

4. Leave a “parking lot” for interesting ideas that don’t fit into the grid. This gives people permission to think outside the grid.

5. Give each participant a pen and sticky note pad, and ask them to ideate at the intersections of the grid: How can a problem be solved with its intersecting enabler?

6. Instruct them to write one idea per sticky note, and stick it in its corresponding cell.

7. Limit ideation to no more than 30 minutes.

HELPFUL HINTS:

Urge the participants to draw pictures of the ideas.

Fill every cell of the grid.
## STEP 3: PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Time to make your matrix, and ideate around your problem statements and enablers!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED</th>
<th>PROBLEM STATEMENTS</th>
<th>PROBLEM STATEMENTS</th>
<th>PROBLEM STATEMENTS</th>
<th>PROBLEM STATEMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How might we ....?</td>
<td>How might we ....?</td>
<td>How might we ....?</td>
<td>How might we ....?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ENABLER**

**ENABLER**

**ENABLER**

**ENABLER**

**PARKING LOT**