

Handout – Creativity Techniques

Speaker: Timofey Golts (473178)

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Mechtild Becker

Presentation Date: 16.06.2025

Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Types of Creativity Techniques
3. Selected Methods
4. Application & Wrap-up

1. Introduction

Creativity is a critical skill in many areas of life, including science, business, communication, and the arts. It enables people to solve problems, think innovatively, and develop new approaches. Importantly, creativity is not a fixed trait; it is a skill that can be learned and trained.

According to Runco & Jaeger, creativity is defined as "the ability to generate ideas that are both novel and useful." Another definition by Robert E. Franken highlights creativity as "the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others."

Interestingly, creativity tends to decline as we age - not due to biological limitations, but as a result of learned behaviour. In a 1968 NASA study conducted by George Land, 98% of 5-year-olds scored at a "highly creative" level. That number dropped to just 2% in adults. This shows how essential it is to actively foster creativity throughout our lives.

2. Types of Creativity Techniques

Creativity techniques are structured tools and strategies that help individuals or groups generate new and original ideas. They are especially useful in problem-solving and innovation contexts, and they aim to break habitual thinking patterns, encourage idea development, and support open collaboration.

Common characteristics of creativity techniques include:

- They help overcome mental blocks and habitual thinking
- They stimulate new associations and perspectives
- They can be used both individually and in group settings

Creativity techniques can be grouped into three main categories:

| Type | Characteristics | Examples |
|------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Intuitive | Free-form, spontaneous, often associative methods to spark ideas | Brainstorming, 6-3-5 Method |
| Systematic | Apply step-by-step processes to guide idea | SCAMPER |

| | | |
|--------|--|---------------|
| | development | |
| Hybrid | Combine intuitive and logical thinking | Disney Method |

3.1 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one of the most commonly used intuitive creativity techniques. The goal is to generate as many ideas as possible without evaluating them during the creative phase. This separation of idea generation and evaluation helps maintain an open atmosphere.

The process typically follows these steps:

1. Define the framework – Determine group size, time, and required tools such as whiteboards or flipcharts.
2. Clarify the question – The central challenge must be clearly formulated and visible to all participants.
3. Introduce the rules – The moderator explains the technique and ensures that all understand the process.
4. Generate ideas – Participants share ideas aloud. The moderator records all ideas for everyone to see.
5. Organize ideas – At the end, ideas are sorted, clustered, and clarified. Duplicates are removed.
6. Evaluate ideas – Unfeasible suggestions are excluded. The rest are assessed (e.g. via matrix).
7. Follow-up – Define next steps, assign responsibilities, and reflect on lessons learned.

Key rules:

- Focus on quantity - The more ideas, the better
- No criticism - Ideas must not be judged during the session
- Build on others - Use other participants' thoughts as inspiration
- Allow wild ideas - Imagination should be encouraged
- Keep contributions short - Avoid deep dives during idea collection

3.2 6-3-5 Method

The 6-3-5 Method is a form of brainwriting developed by Bernd Rohrbach in 1968. It is used to generate many ideas quickly in a silent and structured way. The name stands for 6 participants, 3 ideas each, over 5 rounds - resulting in up to 108 ideas.

Steps:

- Six participants each receive a worksheet with a 3x6 table
- In round one, each person writes three ideas into the first row
- After 5 minutes, sheets are passed clockwise
- In each new round, participants read the previous entries and add three new ideas
- This continues until all six rows are filled
- Afterward, ideas can be reviewed, clustered, and discussed

The method is ideal when open brainstorming is not feasible - for example, when discussions might be dominated by some participants, or when group dynamics are tense.

3.3 SCAMPER

SCAMPER is a systematic checklist used to improve or transform existing ideas by asking seven types of questions. It is particularly useful in product development and service innovation.

| Element | Guiding Question |
|------------|--|
| Substitute | What can be replaced? |
| Combine | What can be merged? |
| Adapt | What can be adjusted or borrowed? |
| Modify | What can be magnified, reduced or altered? |
| Put to use | Can it be used differently? |
| Eliminate | What is unnecessary? |
| Reverse | What if you rearranged or flipped it? |

3.4 Disney Method

The Disney Method is a hybrid technique based on structured role play. It divides the creative process into four distinct roles, each offering a different perspective. This allows for both imaginative thinking and critical evaluation in a balanced way.

- Dreamer - Generates visionary and imaginative ideas, free from limitations
- Realist - Focuses on concrete implementation and practical steps
- Critic - Identifies problems, risks, and weaknesses
- Observer - Summarises, reflects, and moderates the discussion

4. Conclusion

- Creativity can be trained – it's not fixed
- Choose the method that fits your situation
- Each technique serves a different phase or mindset
- Creativity techniques help overcome blocks

5. Sources

California State University Northridge (n.d.) *Definitions of creativity*. Available at: <https://www.csun.edu/~vcpsy00h/creativity/define.htm> (Accessed: 1 June 2025).

Create Potential (n.d.) *The NASA test that reveals your creative potential*. Available at: <https://www.createpotential.com/the-creative-advantage/the-nasa-test-that-reveals-your-creative-potential> (Accessed: 1 June 2025).

dIPlex (n.d.) *Creativity Techniques*. profwurzer.com. Available at: <https://profwurzer.com/glossary/creativity-techniques/> (Accessed: 3 June 2025).

eology (n.d.) *Creativity Techniques – How to Develop Innovative Ideas*. eology Magazine. Available at: <https://www.eology.net/magazine/creativity-techniques> (Accessed: 3 June 2025).

Fluck, M. and van der Wal, D. (2024) *Creativity Techniques: When Brainstorming Is Not Enough*. adesso SE Blog, 11 November. Available at: <https://www.adesso.de/en/news/blog/creativity-techniques.jsp> (Accessed: 2 June 2025).

Herman, H. (2024) *Brainwriting: The better brain dump for (quietly) brilliant ideas*. Zapier. Available at: <https://zapier.com/blog/brainwriting/> (Accessed: 4 June 2025).

Indeed (2025) *16 Techniques for Creativity*. Available at: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/creativity-techniques> (Accessed: 1 June 2025).

innosabi (2025) 11 Bewährte Ideation-Techniken und Strategien, um das kreative Genie Ihres Teams zu entfachen. Innosabi Blog. Available at: <https://innosabi.com/de/blog/ideation-techniken/> (Accessed: 4 June 2025).

Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen (n.d.) *6-3-5-Methode – Beschreibung und Durchführung*. ILIAS. Available at: https://ilias.uni-giessen.de/ilias.php?baseClass=ilrepository&ref_id=69005 (Accessed: 2 June 2025).

Leopoldino, K. D. M., González, M. O. A., Ferreira, P. O., Pereira, J. R. and Souto, M. E. C. (2016) *Creativity Techniques: A Systematic Literature Review*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319321097_Creativity_Techniques_a_Systematic_Literature_Review (Accessed: 1 June 2025).

Markgraf, D. (n.d.) *Kreativitätstechniken*. In: Gabler Wirtschaftslexikon. Available at: <https://wirtschaftslexikon.gabler.de/definition/kreativitaetstechniken-39216> (Accessed: 2 June 2025).

Müller-Roterberg, C. (2020) *Design Thinking Creativity Techniques*. Dummies. Available at: <https://www.dummies.com/article/business-careers-money/business/general-business/design-thinking-creativity-techniques-271238> (Accessed: 3 June 2025).

Netzwerk Transformative (n.d.) *Handbuch Kreativmethoden*. Available at: <https://www.transformative.de/media/attachments/2024/11/04/hb01-kreativmethoden.pdf> (Accessed: 2 June 2025).

Project Management Knowledge (n.d.) *Group Creativity Techniques*. Available at: <https://project-management-knowledge.com/definitions/g/group-creativity-techniques/> (Accessed: 2 June 2025).

Runco, M.A. & Jaeger, G.J. (2012) *The standard definition of creativity*. Creativity Research Journal, 24(1), pp. 92–96. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254301596_The_Standard_Definition_of_Creativity (Accessed: 1 June 2025).

Sommer, K. (2024) *12 Creativity Techniques – Ideas for Successful Fundraising Campaigns*. FundraisingBox Magazine. Available at: <https://fundraisingbox.com/en/magazin/12-creativity-techniques/> (Accessed: 3 June 2025).

Stanford d.school / Robert Sutton (n.d.) *Who produces better ideas: individuals or teams?* Available at: <https://dlibrary.stanford.edu/questions/who-produces-better-ideas-individuals-or-teams> (Accessed: 2 June 2025).

Sustainability Methods (n.d.) *Disney Method*. Sustainabilitymethods.org. Available at: https://sustainabilitymethods.org/index.php/Disney_Method (Accessed: 3 June 2025).

University of Arkansas (n.d.) *Creativity techniques*. Available at: <https://uark.pressbooks.pub/mechanicaldesign/chapter/creativity-techniques/> (Accessed: 1 June 2025).

Zec, M. (2024a) *6-3-5-Methode: Mit Brainwriting in 30 Minuten zu 108 Ideen*. Kreativitätstechniken.info. Available at: <https://kreativitaetstechniken.info/ideen-generieren/6-3-5-methode/> (Accessed: 2 June 2025).

Zec, M. (2024b) *Kreativitätsmethoden – Übersicht und Beispiele*. Kreativitätstechniken.info. Available at: <https://kreativitaetstechniken.info/kreativitaetsmethoden/> (Accessed: 2 June 2025).