

METHOD MATURE YOUR IDEAS

Area of CoP Activity: Learning and Developing Practice


CoP Lifecycle Phase: Inquire




CoP Success Factor: Sharing Best Practice Strategy


EIGE Step: Step 1: Getting started
Step 6: What Comes After the GEP

Group Size: 3-6 per group

Difficulty Level: 

Time Needed: 

Facilitator Preparation: 

Participant Preparation: 

Description: Mature Your Ideas can help you select the most promising ideas, by maturing and refining them. This method is a structured and a solution-oriented way to build on ideas that at first appear compelling after a brainstorming session. This method evaluates the strengths of the ideas and suggests solutions to the challenges that these ideas may have.

MATURE YOUR IDEAS¹

Short Description

Mature Your Ideas can help you select the most promising ideas, by maturing and refining them. This method is a structured and a solution-oriented way to build on ideas that at first appear compelling after a brainstorming session. This method evaluates the strengths of the ideas and suggests solutions to the challenges that these ideas may have. This is similar to SWOT but not entirely the same.

When to use

Use it straight after a brainstorming activity or the 1-2-4-All activity to work with the stock of the generated ideas.

How to

A: Brief explanation

This method can be used as a group or individual activity. If using it as a group activity, divide the whole group into several sub-groups of 3-4 participants to work on one idea only and all four categories of strengths, potentials, challenges and solutions relating to this one idea. Each sub-group will work on a different idea. Alternatively, all the sub-groups can work on the same idea, but only focus on one of the categories of strengths, potentials, challenges and solutions.

If this is an individual activity, each participant can work in silence and then share their ideas to the group. You can then collect all the ideas and present them visually on a flipchart, or after the event collate it in a document which you share with the participants. Remember to emphasise the solutions so that the ideas become stronger and more viable.

B: Detailed Step-by-step guide

- Choose an idea that you would like to develop from your brainstorming session.
- Strengths: Write at least three strengths of the idea.
- Potentials: Write at least three suggestions on effects that the idea could help create.
- Challenges: Think about the challenges you foresee related to the idea. When writing the challenges, you can formulate them as development questions. If the challenge is that an idea is too costly, a development question could be "How can we mobilise more resources?"
- Solutions: Think how the challenges can be overcome. That is how the idea can be improved. Once you have completed the process, you are left with a stronger idea that could look quite different from when you began.

The Mature Your Ideas activity can be adapted online and be used in virtual meetings. As this is a rather complex activity, good planning and preparation are essential. In order to prepare for this activity, the facilitator needs to know beforehand the number of participants, in order to know in how many groups they can be divided into. It might also help to communicate in advance the topics to be discussed/ worked on. To do this activity as an online group activity the web-based application to be used should not only feature breakout rooms but ideally virtual whiteboards as well so that the groups can work with the template on those whiteboards. This can also be facilitated by combining two applications like Zoom and Mural. Other applications that can be used are Miro, Vispa, GoToMeeting, BigBlueButton, Braincert and Samepage.



ADAPTABLE
ONLINE

¹ Adapted from www.mind-lab.dk



Template

MATURE YOUR IDEAS

POTENTIALS

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing or drawing ideas related to potentials.

STRENGTHS

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing or drawing ideas related to strengths.

SOLUTIONS

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing or drawing ideas related to solutions.

CHALLENGES

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing or drawing ideas related to challenges.