IDEATION TECHNIQUES

IDEATION IS A CREATIVE PROCESS IN WHICH DESIGN THINKERS SPARK OFF IDEAS. IT'S THE THIRD STAGE IN THE DESIGN THINKING PROCESS. DESIGNERS UTILIZE NUMEROUS TECHNIQUES TO COME UP WITH NEW IDEAS. HERE ARE A FEW.

Sources: Universal Methods of Design, IDEO Design Kit, Six Creative Ways to Brainstorm Ideas, Introduction to the Essential Ideation Techniques which are the Heart of Design Thinking

BRAINSTORMING & FAMILY

BRAINSTORM
LEVERAGING THE SYNERGY OF A GROUP TO REACH NEW IDEAS BY BUILDING ON OTHERS' IDEAS

BRAINDUMP
SIMILAR TO BRAINSTORM, DONE INDIVIDUALLY. PARTICIPANTS WRITE DOWN THEIR IDEAS AND SHARE THEM WITH THE GROUP LATER

BRAINWRITE
SIMILAR TO BRAINSTORM. PARTICIPANTS WRITE DOWN THEIR IDEAS ON PAPER AND THEN PASS THEIR PIECE OF PAPER TO ANOTHER PATICIPANT WHO ELABORATES ON THE FIRST PERSON'S IDEAS. AFTER A FEW MINUTES THE PAPERS ARE PASSED AGAIN, AND SO ON. EVENTUALLY, THE PAPERS ARE COLLECTED AND POSTED FOR DISCUSSION

BRAINWALK
SIMILAR TO BRAINWRITING. INSTEAD OF PASSING AROUND PIECES OF PAPER, PARTICIPANTS WALK AROUND THE ROOM AND FIND NEW "IDEATION STATIONS" WHERE THEY CAN ELABORATE ON OTHER PARTICIPANTS' IDEAS

ILLUSTRATIVE TECHNIQUES

SKETCH
EXPRESSING IDEAS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS IN THE FORM OF QUICK, ROUGH SKETCHES INSTEAD OF MERELY IN WORDS

STORYBOARD
DEVELOPING A VISUAL STORY RELATING TO THE PROBLEM, DESIGN, OR SOLUTION WHICH NEEDS TO BE EXPLAINED OR EXPLORED. STORYBOARDS PROVIDE A VISUAL NARRATIVE THAT GENERATES EMPATHY AND COMMUNICATES THE CONTEXT IN WHICH A TECHNOLOGY OR FORM FACTOR WILL BE USED

RIGHT BRAINING
RELEASING CREATIVE THOUGHTS BY DOODLING INCOMPLETE IMAGES. LEAVING OUT PORTIONS OR ASPECTS OF AN IMAGE CAN SPARK CREATIVITY LATER. THE DIFFERENT IMAGES CAN LATER BE COMINED IN DIFFERENT WAYS TO GENERATE NEW IDEAS

UNPREDICTABLE TECHNIQUES

RANDOMNESS
A TECHNIQUE IN WHICH PARTICIPANTS FIND THE CONNECTION BETWEEN A RANDOM WORD OR THOUGHT AND A GENERAL TOPIC TO DEVELOP A NEW CREATIVE IDEA

MASH-UP
A FUN EXERCISE THAT BRINGS ODD OR UNEXPECTED THINGS TOGETHER TO SPARK FRESH IDEAS. MASH-UP INVOLVES COMBINING ELEMENTS FROM TWO BROAD, UNRELATED CATEGORIES

INVERTED TECHNIQUES

WORST POSSIBLE IDEA
FUN AND STRESS-RELIEVING. INSTEAD OF GOING FOR GOOD IDEAS, COME UP WITH THE WORST POSSIBLE IDEAS

PESSIMIST VS. OPTIMIST
FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FROM THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN A PESSIMIST AND AN OPTIMIST. BY BUILDING UPON THEIR RESPONSES, A GENERAL IDEA CAN EVOLVE INTO A MORE RELEVANT ONE

SYSTEMATIC TECHNIQUES

BREAK & BUILD
BREAKING DOWN AND BUILDING UP IDEAS TO GET A RANGE OF RELATED INFORMATION

MINDMAP
A GRAPHICAL TECHNIQUE IN WHICH PARTICIPANTS BUILD A WEB OF RELATIONSHIPS. THIS STRATEGY CREATES A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF RELATED TERMS AND IDEAS

BRAINSTORM GRAPHIC ORGANIZER
BRAINSTORMING WEBS, TREE DIAGRAMS, AND FLOW DIAGRAMS HELP VISUALLY STRUCTURE A DEEP DIVE INTO A PROBLEM SPACE

VISUAL TECHNIQUES

IMAGE BOARD
COLLECTED PICTURES, ILLUSTRATIONS, OR BRAND IMAGERY CAN BE USED TO VISUALLY COMMUNICATE AN ESSENTIAL DESCRIPTION OF TARGETED AESTHETICS, STYLE, AUDIENCE, CONTEXT, OR OTHER ASPECTS OF DESIGN INTENT

WORD CLOUD
A METHOD OF INFORMATION VISUALIZATION THAT ORGANIZES TEXT-BASED CONTENT INTO INTERESTING SPATIAL ARRANGEMENTS

COLLAGE
COLLAGING ALLOWS PARTICIPANTS TO VISUALLY EXPRESS THEIR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, DESIRES, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THEIR LIFE THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO ARTICULATE USING TRADITIONAL MEANS

PHOTO STUDY
THIS TECHNIQUE INVITES THE PARTICIPANT TO PHOTO-DOCUMENT ASPECTS OF HIS OR HER LIFE AND INTERACTIONS, PROVIDING THE DESIGNER WITH VISUAL, SELF-REPORTED INSIGHTS INTO USER BEHAVIORS AND PRIORITIES

JOURNEY MAP
THIS TECHNIQUE ALLOWS PARTICIPANTS TO IDENTIFY AND STRATEGIZE FOR KEY MOMENTS IN THE PRODUCT, EXPERIENCE, OR SERVICE