

Sound Creative When Coming up with New Ideas

When it comes to creativity, it's important to **draw inspiration from** various sources. Often, it is not possible to **come up with** creative and innovative ideas on your own. You will give yourself a much better chance if you gather together other like minded people and **bounce ideas around**. Casual brainstorming sessions should allow any suggestions in order to **foster** maximum creativity. The more suggestions that are welcomed in a free-flowing ideas zone, the more chance you have of **hitting upon** a truly innovative idea. To come up with something truly unique and **intriguing**, it is necessary to possess a real sense of adventure, a thirst for exploration and a willingness to move out of your comfort zone. It is under these conditions when people truly conjure up magical, exciting ideas. A truly great idea should **evoke** an emotional response from those who hear it, and then from your audience when you **bring the idea to fruition**. However, it's also essential **to test the waters** first in order to see whether your idea will work. **Unconventional** ideas can either be a real success or a real failure. Sometimes it's necessary **to buck the trend** and take a different approach to stand out from the crowd.



A) Match the phrases to the definitions

Based on the context of the article, can you match the words in the box to the definitions listed below? Then add the word into the example sentence. You may need to change the form of the word to fit the meaning of the sentence.

To come up with	to draw inspiration from	to bounce ideas around	
To foster	to hit upon an idea	intriguing	to evoke
To bring to fruition	to test the waters	unconventional	to buck the trend

1. Not following what is generally done or believed: _____

"We have an _____ approach to brainstorming."

2. To test something on a smaller group of people before introducing it to a larger group: _____

"If we want to know whether this new system is going to work, we should _____ with one department before rolling it out to other departments."

3. To produce (an idea or solution) especially when under pressure: _____

"We need to _____ a solution to the crisis as quickly as possible, otherwise we could face terrible consequences."

4. To bring a feeling, memory or image into your mind: _____
"Our branding really needs to _____ a strong sense of excitement."
5. To take inspiration from somewhere: _____
"I _____ from many people around me."
6. To make an idea really happen, to complete something successfully: _____
"It is a really ambitious plan, but I think that if we believe in ourselves we can _____ it _____."
7. Very interesting and fascinating: _____
"I read an _____ article about the benefits of artificial intelligence last week."
8. To encourage the development of something, especially a mindset, habit or behaviour: _____
"I really want to _____ a sense of loyalty in the company by introducing a new benefits scheme for long-term employees".
9. To share ideas in an informal manner, similar to brainstorming: _____
"Let's _____ and see what ideas we can come up with."
10. To go against what is currently normal among the majority. This is often used in a positive way: _____
"Our innovative solution really _____."
11. To discover or think of something especially by chance or through generating many ideas: _____
"If we bounce ideas around, we are certain to _____ an actionable solution soon."

B) Key Words in a New Context

Below you can find a paragraph. Can you fill in the gaps in the paragraph with the words from the box below? One of the words is used 3 times. You may need to change the form of some of the verbs in order for them to fit into the sentence.

to come up with	to draw inspiration from	to bounce ideas around
to foster (x3)	to hit upon an idea	to evoke
to bring to fruition	to test the waters	unconventional
		to buck the trend

Searching for Inspiration

We have all found ourselves in this situation in our business or personal lives, struggling to find inspiration and _____ good ideas. We've all been there, staring blankly at a screen or a notepad, wondering from where we can somehow _____.

The first step is to find a way to _____ creativity in yourself or in your team. Simply encouraging more creativity may sound like vague advice which is easier said than done, but let's look at some ways how you can achieve this.

Travelling to new places, listening to new music, even taking regular walks can help you to conjure up innovative and intriguing ideas, almost like a magician.

In your team, you can organise weekend trips and team building sessions in order to _____ a strong bond and team spirit. If you want to really encourage creativity, then take your team on trips to unusual places. You could also engage in _____ activities in your team building sessions, such as murder mystery games or a group art project. Then when it's time to get creative in your meeting and you are _____, you will be much more likely to _____ a creative idea or solution. New staff members can often bring fresh perspectives and ideas to the table. Make sure that with your team meetings you _____ an environment whereby everyone feels comfortable contributing their ideas.

If you are coming up with wild ideas which really _____, it is natural that these ideas have not been tried before. It takes a lot of courage to _____ them _____. You may receive a lot of resistance from others in the company, but remember that all innovative ideas have to encounter some kind of resistance. When the automobile was invented, it _____ really strong, negative reactions among the population, who thought that it was far too dangerous to ever become beneficial for society. With any idea, it is important to test it before you roll it out to a large audience. This is especially important with innovative, disruptive ideas. If you don't _____ with a small sample market size, then your idea can really backfire. In-depth market research and extensive customer feedback can also help you to refine your idea. It is unlikely that you will get it right the first time.

But let's be real - sometimes inspiration just doesn't come. And that's okay. Take a step back and recharge. The important thing is to keep trying and not give up. Remember, all of the most successful innovators have faced failure on more than one occasion!

C) Comprehension Questions

1. Can you think of a synonym for the verb 'conjure' in the 3rd paragraph, and how do you think it relates to a magician?

2. According to the author, why is a group art project a good idea for a team-building exercise?

3. In the 5th paragraph, what personal quality is essential for making an innovative idea work?

4. What do you think the word 'refine' means in the 5th paragraph?

5. Have you ever faced a situation whereby you struggled to find inspiration, what did you do to rectify this?

D) More Uses of Selected Key Words
To come up with the idea of

"Steven has come up with the idea of conducting a survey in order to obtain more information."

To foster

To foster is also an excellent Business English phrase with many collocations. It is similar to 'instil'. 'Instil' focuses mainly on ideas and attitudes, whereas 'foster' has a much broader meaning, focusing on ideas, attitudes, best practices or anything which could be positive:

to foster innovation / to foster creativity / to foster growth / to foster progress / to foster trust / to foster loyalty / to foster a strong team spirit / to foster sustainability / to foster collaboration / to foster motivation / to foster a positive atmosphere

To hit upon

This phrasal verb works very well with the following nouns:

To hit upon an idea / to hit upon a solution / to hit upon a new innovation / to hit upon a new product

To test the waters

We use the preposition 'with' after this idiom:

"We tested the waters with a sample size of 1000 customers."

E) Glossary of words for sounding creative when coming up with new ideas

to come up with
to draw inspiration from
to bounce ideas around
to foster
to hit upon an idea
intriguing
to evoke

to bring to fruition
to test the waters
unconventional
to buck the trend
to conjure
to refine