

Answers

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 bring to fruition	to test the waters	unconventional
		to evoke
		to buck the trend

1. Not following what is generally done or believed: **unconventional**

*"We have an **unconventional** approach to brainstorming."*

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

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

3. To produce (an idea or solution) especially when under pressure: **to come up with**

*"We need to **come up with** 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: **to evoke**

*"Our branding really needs to **evoke** a strong sense of excitement."*

5. To take inspiration from somewhere: **to draw inspiration from**

*"I **draw inspiration from** many people around me."*

6. To make an idea really happen, to complete something successfully: **to bring something to fruition**

*"It is a really ambitious plan, but I think that if we believe in ourselves we can **bring it to fruition**."*

7. Very interesting and fascinating: **intriguing**

*"I read an **intriguing** article about the benefits of artificial intelligence last week."*

8. To encourage the development of something, especially a mindset, habit or behaviour: **to foster**

*"I really want to **foster** 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: **to bounce ideas around**

*"Let's **bounce ideas around** 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: **to buck the trend**

*"Our innovative solution really **bucks the trend**."*

11. To discover or think of something especially by chance or through generating many ideas: **to hit upon**

*"If we bounce ideas around, we are certain to **hit upon** an actionable solution soon."*

B) Key Words in a New Context

Searching for Inspiration

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

The first step is to find a way to **foster** 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 **foster** 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 **unconventional** 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 **bouncing ideas around**, you will be much more likely to **hit upon** 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 **foster** an environment whereby everyone feels comfortable contributing their ideas.

If you are coming up with wild ideas which really **buck the trend**, it is natural that these ideas have not been tried before. It takes a lot of courage to **bring** them **to fruition**. 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 **evoked** 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 **test the waters** 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. What do you think the phrasal verb 'conjure up' means in the 3rd paragraph, and how do you think it relates to a magician?

To 'conjure' something means to make something appear by magic. For example, "The magician conjured a rabbit from his hat."

To "conjure up" a memory, image or idea means to make a memory, image or idea appear in your mind. This is an excellent phrasal verb for creative ideas, because its original meaning is related to magic.

"We managed to conjure up an innovative marketing campaign."

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

A group art project is an unconventional activity, which can encourage creativity and offer you a greater chance of hitting upon a good idea when brainstorming.

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

Courage is an essential quality for bringing innovative ideas to fruition.

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

'To refine' something means to improve something slowly by making continuous small changes to it. We can refine a strategy / solution / process / presentation / speech / pitch