

What is it?

This brainstorming technique is used to develop or improve products or services. SCAMPER is an acronym for Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify/Magnify, Purpose, Eliminate/Minimize and Rearrange/Reverse.

Why do it?

This process helps teams generate ideas around a product or service to make sure that it is the most effective it can be! The answers to the SCAMPER questions will probably be diverse and will typically include ideas that are not practical, do not suit, or even are silly. That's ok and is actually good! The goal is to generate as many ideas as possible.

Process Steps:

We recommend playing a warmup game first.

1. Grab a few random objects: a funny hat, a belt, a chair, some craft items, etc.
2. Gather your team in a room and throw the objects on the floor (or if virtual, show them on camera).
3. Have them start to ask questions based on SCAMPER:
 - Substitute: What can be replaced? (for example, components, materials, people)
 - ☞ Example: if you were making windows for a children's playhouse, you might substitute glass with plastic (for safety).
 - Combine: What can be combined? (for example, other features, devices)
 - ☞ Example: cell phones have combined phone features with cameras.
 - Adapt: What can be added? (such as new elements or functions)
 - ☞ Example: cars now have built-in wifi.
 - Modify, Magnify, maximize, minimize: What can be modified? (for example, change the size, shape, color, or other attribute)
 - ☞ Example: sunglasses reduced in size for babies or small children.
 - Put to other use (purpose): Could you put the product to a different use, or use it in another industry?
 - ☞ Example: during COVID19 pandemic, coffee filters being used as filters in masks for faces.
 - Eliminate or minimize: What can be removed or simplified?
 - ☞ Example: removing cigarette lighters from cars (to be able to use the space for charging devices?).
 - Reverse, reengineer, or rearrange: What would happen if you reversed the product's production process? What can be swapped or flipped?
 - ☞ Example: fast food restaurants rearranged the typical eat then pay model to pay then eat.
4. Now try it on your real project! Take a product, an aspect of a product, or a process and run it through SCAMPER.